

# OKEECHOBEE NEWS

Vol. 104 No. 26

Friday, March 1, 2013

50¢ Plus tax

**County makes appointments to boards... Page 12**

**Program encourages families to read ... Page 16**

**Dental health important ... Page 3**

**DUI checkpoint ... Page 2**

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## Lawyers want land case dismissed

Luna family fighting to keep their property, SFWMD trying to take land by eminent domain

**By Eric Kopp**  
Okeechobee News

Attorneys for a local ranching family argued this week that the South Florida Water Management District's (SFWMD) eminent domain case is riddled with errors, due to a lack of research, and should be dismissed.

The case (#472012CA000251) centers around the district's wanting to acquire over 300 acres along the Kissimmee River that belongs to members of the Luna family. The district is claiming the property is needed for the Kissimmee River Restoration Project.

Attorneys representing the Luna family on Wednesday, Feb. 27, presented oral arguments

to Circuit Court Judge Elizabeth Metzger as to why she should dismiss the district's case. They presented a number of reasons, which included: the district is trying to take more land than they need for the project; the petition submitted by SFWMD attorneys in this case does not match the resolution passed by the SFWMD governing board; the appraisal of the property was flawed; and, the district had not proven their case.

"Any of these errors are sufficient for dismissal of this case," said Orlando-based attorney Bruce Harris, who represents Bonnie Luna Byars and BLB Holdings.

Although she allowed time for the arguments, Judge Metzger told the attorneys that due to mountains of paperwork put into evidence she would not issue a ruling on the motion right away.

"I'm going to want to review it. I can't even carry all of the paperwork out of this court-

"The government has to pay for what they're taking. They can't take more than they need and they have to do it right. And, they can't give a value to a landowner that's based on an invalid appraisal."

**William Moore, attorney**

room by myself," she said.

Mr. Harris went on to argue that the errors in the district's case are abundant and could have been avoided by simply doing proper research.

"The errors are sufficient for the court to make a determination that a diligent search

See LUNA — Page 5



Special to the Okeechobee News

## Career and Technical Education Week

Students at the Okeechobee Freshman Campus participate in Career and Technical Education Week in February. For more on the story, see page 8.

## Okee-Tantie development proposal withdrawn

**By Pete Gawda**  
Okeechobee News

After many months of planning and negotiating with county staff and state officials developer Randall Henderson has withdrawn his proposal to build a world class RV park at Okee-Tantie Campground and Marina.

Mr. Henderson's bombshell came during the Okeechobee County Commission meeting on Feb. 28. He made the withdrawal after a lengthy discussion in which

See COUNTY — Page 5

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# DUI checkpoint planned

By Eric Kopp  
Okeechobee News

A checkpoint aimed at getting impaired drivers off the road will be conducted by the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO) today (March 1) on Southeast 28th St.

OCSO deputies and other law enforcement personnel will be stopping vehicles and looking for signs of possible impairment starting around 10 p.m.

Florida law considers a driver with a blood alcohol content (BAC) of .08 or higher to be impaired. Drivers under the age of 21 with a BAC of .02 or higher are also in violation of state law.

Sheriff Paul May said such checkpoints are a proven tool that are effective in reducing the number of people killed or injured in alcohol-involved crashes. Research shows that such crashes are reduced by an average

of 20 percent when well-publicized checkpoints are conducted.

Besides watching for signs of impairment, members of law enforcement working the checkpoint will also be checking drivers to make sure they have the proper licensing.

Taking part in the special enforcement action will be officers from the Okeechobee City Police Department and troopers from the Florida Highway Patrol.

Sheriff May pointed out that impaired drivers can expect to be arrested and jailed. Besides fines and other fees, impaired drivers can also expect to have their driver's license suspended and the cost of their insurance increased.

DUI classes and other expenses can exceed \$10,000, the sheriff added.

Motorists are reminded if they are going to drink they should: designate a driver; call a cab or family member; or, stay home.

## Red Cross has AmeriCorps position

Special to the Okeechobee News

The American Red Cross office in Okeechobee is seeking an AmeriCorps Community Outreach and Education Specialist, serving Okeechobee County and Indiantown.

The duties for this position include:

- Presenting to community organizations, schools, churches, businesses, and other audiences on the topics of disaster preparedness
  - Conducting outreach in the community
  - Working with and training volunteers
  - Attending public and community events
  - Assisting other AmeriCorps members with occasional projects or other presentations
  - Attending weekly meetings, progress meetings, and training classes as required
- This position requires frequent travel (in

a company vehicle) to audiences and events throughout the area.

Although this is a volunteer position, AmeriCorps members receive a bi-weekly living stipend (\$600 a month for part time, \$1000 a month for full time). If the entire year is completed, members receive an educational award that can be used to cover educational expenses or student loans (\$2,675 for part time and \$5,550 for full time). Full-time members also receive health benefits and childcare.

Anyone interested in the position can come by the office at 323 N. Parrott Ave. or contact Chuck Parker, Okeechobee Disaster Services Manager, between 9 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday at 863-763-2488 or Charles.Parker@redcross.org.

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**Today:** Partly cloudy. High of 68F. Winds from the NW at 10 to 15 mph.

**Tonight:** Partly cloudy. Low of 45F. Winds from the WNW at 5 to 10 mph.

### Extended Forecast

**Saturday:** Partly cloudy. High of 68F. Winds from the WNW at 5 to 15 mph.

**Saturday Night:** Partly cloudy in the evening, then overcast. Low of 45F. Winds from the NW at 5 to 10 mph.

**Sunday:** Overcast in the morning, then partly cloudy. High of 64F. Winds from the NW at 10 to 15 mph.

**Sunday Night:** Clear. Low of 37F. Winds from the WNW at 5 to 15 mph.

**Monday:** Clear. High of 68F. Winds from the NW at 5 to 15 mph.

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## Federated Republican Women's Club forming

Okeechobee has a new ladies' club, the Okeechobee County Federated Republican Women's Club has been established and is inviting new members to join us. We meet at Cowboy's in the private dining room on the last Tuesday of every month. Membership paperwork can be picked up at a meeting or by sending an e-mail to OkeechobeeCFRW@gmail.com. Any other information can be obtained by contacting the club President, Josie Weeks-Elliott at 863-634-8474.

## Seniors play bluegrass music

The senior country bluegrass music program has begun again this year at the Okeechobee Senior Center. All persons age 60 and over who has a musical talent are invited to participate every Wednesday from noon to 1:30 p.m.

# February was National Children's Dental Health Month

By Ann Bacher, RN

School Nurse, Florida Department of Health

February was National Children's Dental Health Month, so the school nurses from Okeechobee County Health Department and the dental students from IRSC teamed up to give all the first graders in Okeechobee County an awesome dental health presentation. During this presentation, the students learned all about the importance of good dental health. Every child also took home a goody bag filled with the tools they need to keep those pearly whites clean and bright.

It is easy to ignore our dental health and the state of our mouths, but evidence suggests a direct correlation between our overall health and the health of our mouths. The insides of our mouths are full of bacteria which form a sticky film called plaque. This plaque coats our gums and teeth, mixes with the food we eat and creates an acid that is powerful enough to dissolve our tooth enamel if left on our teeth for any length of time. Holes in the enamel of our teeth open the way for cavities, rotten teeth and abscesses.

There is more involved in keeping a healthy mouth than just brushing our teeth every day. Here are four key steps to follow for good oral health.

Step 1: Brush thoroughly at least twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste, especially after eating breakfast and before bedtime.

Step 2: Floss daily! Children under 8 years old will need a parent's assistance.

Step 3: Limit the number of times you eat or drink sugary snacks each day. Sugar left on our teeth feeds the bacteria that make the holes in our teeth. If you eat or drink a sugary snack, go ahead and brush your teeth as soon as you finish the snack. This also applies to infants who can wind up with a condition called "bottle rot." Don't give infants sugary drinks and never allow them to go to sleep with any type of bottle in their mouth. Infants' gums and teeth can be brushed with a soft toothbrush or wiped with a soft cloth.

Step 4: Visit a dentist regularly! For some people, visiting a dentist can be a source of anxiety. Rest assured though, you will be in good hands. At a typical dental appointment, the dentist or dental hygienist may:

- Clean and polish the teeth
- Floss the teeth
- Apply fluoride treatments to the teeth
- Apply dental sealants to protect permanent molars

- Take x-rays of teeth
- Do an oral cancer exam
- Provide education on proper oral care and answer any questions you may have.

It is important to establish a dental routine early in life, even while your child is still an infant. Baby teeth are important teeth and cavity prevention starts even before the first tooth appears! Just because your baby's teeth are not yet visible does not mean that they cannot get cavities. Losing a baby tooth too early due to cavity or injury can cause problems with the adult teeth later in life. Some tips for caring for your infant's mouth include:

- Begin cleaning your baby's gums within the first few days after birth. This can be done by gently wiping the gums with a clean, moist gauze pad or washcloth.
- When the first teeth begin to appear around 6 months of age, gently brush the teeth with a soft, child-sized toothbrush and water.
- Once the child is older than 2 years, begin using a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. Be sure they spit it out and do not swallow it.
- Continue to brush your child's teeth

twice a day until you are sure they can do it correctly on their own.

• Once the child has two teeth that touch, begin flossing their teeth daily. Continue to do this yourself until you are sure you child can safely and correctly do it on their own.

It is recommended that you schedule your child's first dental exam as soon as the first tooth erupts. This will allow the dentist to evaluate the overall condition of the mouth, gums and tooth.

When planning a trip to the dentist with your child it is important to keep a positive attitude. Children often mirror the attitudes and behavior they witness in their parents and if you indicate fear or anxiety, it can easily be transferred to your child. Also, don't make negative comments in your efforts to encourage your child to take on healthy dental hygiene habits as these may feed any anxiety or fears they may already have. A threat to "get your teeth drilled" even sounds scary to adults! Some tips for making sure your child's dental appointments go smoothly include:

- Make the appointment for a time when your child is rested and cooperative.
- Never bribe your child to go to the

dentist. This just reinforces the idea that it is something to be feared.

• Talk to your child before going. Explain some of the things they might see or hear while in the dental office. Be sure to keep a positive tone.

By teaching your children the benefits of brushing and flossing, you are helping them develop lifelong healthy habits.

We have many wonderful dental providers in the Okeechobee community for both children and adults. Prior to making your appointment, check with your health care or dental insurance provider and find out which dentists provide service under your coverage plan as well as any out-of-pocket cost that may be anticipated. When you make your appointment, it is also a good idea to discuss this with your dentist. If you are having a problem finding dental coverage for your child, speak with your school nurse as she will have a list of available resources.

By following these dental tips and seeing your dentist regularly, you will be taking a step in the right direction for yourself and your children. Having a healthy mouth is an important part of living a healthy life so take care of that beautiful smile

**References:**

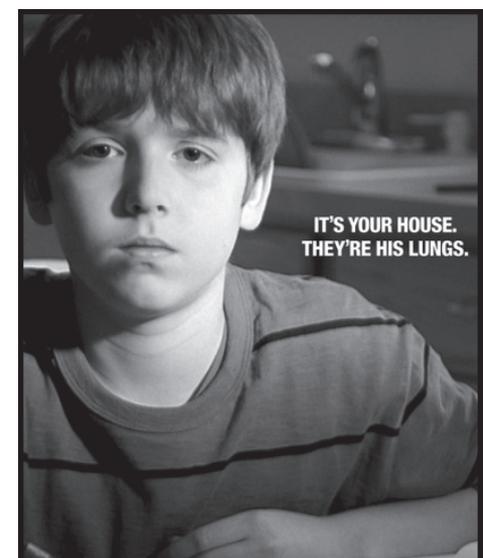
- (1) <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/dental/DE00001>
- (2) <http://www.mouthhealthy.org/az-topics/b/baby-bottle-tooth-decay.aspx>
- (3) Colgate "Bright Smiles for Children", Oral Health Guide for Early Childhood Educators, 2010.



Special to the Okeechobee News

## Youth Group donates to OSS

Okeechobee Missionary Baptist Church Youth Group donated bags containing health care products to Okeechobee Senior Services Home Delivered Meals Clients. Pictured Will Costillo and Courtney Murphy. Many Thanks from OSS Staff.



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*Speak Out has moved online, where it is quicker and easier to share your ideas and converse with others. Go to [www.newszap.com](http://www.newszap.com), click on the community name and your local or state Public Forum. There, you can create new topics or comment on existing topics. What follows is a sampling of some of the discussions currently taking place. Thanks for participating!*

### Graduation party

• I noticed in an article about the Glades County graduation lock-in that every graduate at that event goes home with a prize. I think that is a great idea that Okeechobee County should adopt. Instead of a few students getting big prizes because they are good at gambling, how about doing a door-prize drawing where you have to stay to the end to get anything but everyone goes home with something? You could still have a few big prizes, but everyone would have an equal chance to win one and no one would go home empty-handed. I think the gambling idea is troubling anyway because some students cannot participate due to their religious beliefs. Surely they can find more fun things for the kids to do instead of playing poker. They could still play cards if they wanted to, for fun, but it shouldn't be tied to the prizes at the end of the night.

• I think doing a door-prize type drawing at the end would be more fair to all the graduates. It would also give more an incentive to stay to the end of the party since anyone might wind up with a good prize if they stay. If they see others are racking in the play money and they aren't, they know they have little chance of getting anything so why stick around? That makes it more likely the graduates -- who the parents think are still at the party -- might leave and get into trouble. Instead of play money used later to bid on the prizes, just give trophies to the winners of a card game tournament, a bowling tournament, a dance competition, a singing or talent competition, video game tournaments, etc. Then give out the prizes in a drawing at the very end,

• I see the idea of "something for everyone" as pandering to teaching collectivism. High school graduates should understand that you win some and you lose some.

• The point of giving prizes at the party is to give kids the incentive to stay there at the no-alcohol event, rather than go to other celebrations where alcoholic beverages might be involved. The events started after there were bad accidents following parties on graduation night. If they gave away the prizes by a drawing rather than bidding with fake money, it would give all of the kids more incentive to stay -- not just the ones who were winning at the poker tables.

### Mudfest

• So the sheriff's office stated it didn't cost the taxpayer of Okeechobee County anything? If they're off-duty, why are they driving a car that my tax money is paying for? Who put the gas in it to get back and forth?

### County spending

• How did the county come to be responsible for housing the Division of Drivers License when that is a state agency?

• Since the services are available online and more and more people will be using them online, I would think there would be less need for new office space. Sometimes I think all they want is a nicer building for their employees to go to work in.

• Online services help, but you have to go into the office to renew when you are required to e-verify. Some people have to go several times because of all the paperwork involved if a name has changed. And of course new drivers have to go in person. So I think we do need an office. It stinks that the state is "saving money" by passing the expense along to the counties.

• Why did the county decide to spend money for a new building instead of securing and refurbishing an empty building; did that even get mentioned at the commissioners' meeting?

## Correction

The article in the Feb. 27, 2013, Okeechobee News headlined "Okeechobee Community Collaborative Council meets" contained an error. The workshop instructor's name is Harry Hernandez, not Harry Henderson as reported. We regret the error and any confusion it might have caused.

## Letters to the editor

### Pageant appreciated

Thank you, moms, dads, and respective family members for sharing your lovely child with the community, by participating in the Speckled Perch Pageant this year. It is such a joy for me to have the permission to take all the photographs of each child who entered, whether they "won" or not. Whether they received a crown or not. To be a small part of their lives as they continue to grow up here in Okeechobee, year by year, as I watch each of them mature and coming to age is a joy.

I love to hear the stories of how each dress was purchased, on-line, in a store, borrowed from a fellow classmate, or made and created, specifically for this particular pageant. Knowing how much time, effort and money goes into each applicant just makes this all the better. I look at the mothers, grooming each child, fussing with their hair, adding the "adornments" to the wrists, earrings and it just makes me smile. The amount of caring, understanding of each child's personality, moods, tears, is what makes a pageant what it is. Some of the little ones are so unaware of what is going on, the naiveness of the moment, is the purity of it all. They just know they are on stage, and they love it. Love the attention, the glamour, and the lights. What's not to love about it??

Again, thank you for sharing them with me, as it just plainly makes me happy to be a part of each and every pageant here.

Blessings,  
**Bobbi Poole**

### Puppy Pageant a success

Okeechobee Main Street would like to extend a hearty thank you to everyone who assisted in making the Inaugural Puppy Pageant on Feb. 9, such a huge success! Over 25 pups participated in the competition for coveted titles such as Most Obedient, Best Dressed, Friendliest, Best Trick, Parent/Pup look-a-like and of course, Most Adorable. First Place trophies

were awarded with Second Place receiving a ribbon. All participants received a Certificate of Participation. We would like to extend a big congratulations to all of our winners and especially Rosco, an adorable dachshund who won the Bandanas and Bows special "Best of Show" trophy.

Kudos to sponsors of the event, Bandanas and Bows, Love on a Leash and Heartfelt Memories. Thanks to Katie's Pets who provided a gift certificate to go with the trophy making the win even more exciting. Our puppy vendors helped to make our day more rewarding. We appreciate Bandanas and Bows, Heartfelt Memories, Photography by Bobbi and Bark "n" Style. A special appearance was made by the Humane Society Pet Rescue, with Belinda Forlifer leading her dogs onto the stage with Main Street President Maureen Burroughs and Commissioner Bryant Culpepper. By the end of the event we are pleased to announce that at least one dog was sent to live with a new loving family.

Thanks to our judges and wonderful DJ Stevie, who entertained us with the likes of "You ain't Nothin' but a Hound Dog" and "I Love My Dog."

Thanks to all of our participants and of course our loyal volunteers, but especially Shelly Doyle, emcee of the event! We are looking forward to next year!

**Cindy Birdshaw**  
**OKMS Executive Director**



# OKEECHOBEE NEWS

### To Reach Us

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### Staff

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### Our Purpose...

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### We Pledge...

- To operate this newspaper as a public trust
- To help our community become a better place to live and work, through our dedication to conscientious journalism.
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- To report the news with honesty, accuracy, purposeful neutrality, fairness, objectivity, fearlessness and compassion.
- To use our opinion pages to facilitate community debate, not to dominate it with our own opinions.
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- To correct our errors and to give each correction the prominence it deserves.
- To provide a right to reply to those we write about.
- To treat people with courtesy, respect and compassion.



## IRSC to host job fair at Okeechobee County campus

Indian River State College will conduct a free job fair for IRSC students and graduates seeking employment on Wednesday, March 13, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the IRSC Dixon Hendry Campus, Williamson Conference and Education Center, 2229 N.W. 9th Ave., in Okeechobee. Representatives from several employers will be invited for interviewing and networking with prospective candidates. Attendees should dress professionally and bring a resume. Register now by visiting [www.irsc.edu](http://www.irsc.edu), click Career Services, and click Students Register Here. For more information, contact Jacqueline Burke at 772-462-7448 or email [jburke@irsc.edu](mailto:jburke@irsc.edu).

## Okeechobee Rotary Club plans L.O.S. T. Bike Ride

The Okeechobee Rotary Club will hold their 10th Annual L.O.S.T. Bike Ride on the Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail on April 20, starting at 8 a.m. The L.O.S.T. ride is a great trek for people of all ages and abilities. With rides of 12, 20, 40 and 54 miles as well as a 5K walk there is something for everyone. The L.O.S.T. trail itself is world-renowned for its stunning vistas and numerous forms of wildlife. It has become a world-wide destination for bird-watching and world class fishing. This great fundraising event promises to be fun for all. All entrants are provided a goody-bag with a commemorative t-shirt and more. A barbecue meal will be provided for all entrants as well as a 50/50 and a raffle for prizes. All proceeds benefit the charities of the Rotary Club of Okeechobee. For more information, email [OkeechobeeRotary@live.com](mailto:OkeechobeeRotary@live.com) or call Center State Bank at 863-763-5573.

## LUNA

Continued From Page 1

was not done," he told the judge. "In Florida, the transfer of property is supposed to have exactness to it."

To illustrate that point, he reminded the judge that no survey of the property to be taken by the district was ever done. Instead, surveyors testified earlier in this trial that they used survey techniques. They also testified that they straightened boundary lines to make things, such as fencing, easier.

"The district is required to survey the lines of taking, and they didn't do that," argued Mr. Harris.

During last month's portion of this trial, the respondent's (Luna family) attorneys told Judge Metzger the family is willing to grant the district easements across their properties. However, the district is wanting to take about 263 in fee simple. This means the district would own the property outright and could do whatever it wants with the land.

In all, water managers want to acquire 373 acres belonging to the family.

"At the base of the argument is the government has to pay for what they're taking," argued William Moore, a Sarasota-based attorney representing MBL Holdings. "They can't take more than they need and they have to do it right. And, they can't give a value to a landowner that's based on an invalid appraisal."

Mr. Moore was alluding to facts gleaned from the testimony of Phil Holden, an appraiser hired by the district.

He pointed out that no appraisal was done on MBL property and that none of the property used as comparable sales in the appraisal had river frontage, as does property belonging to Montoya Ranch—which is owned by the Luna family. He added that the MBL property, owned by Mark Luna and his wife, does not have an easement to the river.

John W. Little III, who represents Montoya Ranch, Patrick Luna and Glendoria Sutton, told Judge Metzger that Mr. Holden's "... appraisal methodology was deficient."

During his testimony Mr. Holden said he did not appraise the MBL property "... be-

cause the district didn't ask him to," said Mr. Moore.

He also told the judge that Mr. Holden has property in the 5-year flood plain along the river but the district has not tried to take his property in fee.

"Mr. Holden was allowed to have an easement on it," said Mr. Moore, adding that Mr. Holden still has access to the river. "But, Mark Luna doesn't. His wife doesn't. His son doesn't. It's not within their (the district) right to take property without paying for it—that we know."

"They (SFWMD) have failed the validity of appraisal test," Mr. Moore added.

Mr. Harris also pointed out to Judge Metzger that the district was going to take 7 more acres than needed, and that the legal description of the property had been altered in that a line was added that not only put in an access easement, but increased the acreage that would be taken.

"The legal description does not match the properties to be taken," he said. (And) There's no evidence the (SFWMD) governing board heard anything about preserving rights. Once the governing board said this is what we're going to take, that's all that can be taken."

The district also failed to complete and attach a copy of the governing board's resolution to the petition, he continued.

Mr. Harris went on to add that the whole thing boils down to money, or credit, the district will receive from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

"Federal funding, or the opportunity for federal funding, is not enough to justify taking more property than is necessary. The district is wanting to take property in fee to get more reimbursement from the Corps," he said, adding that a 2007 letter from the USACE stated that a perpetual easement was fine and the district didn't need to take property in fee to the 5-year floodplain.

Adding to Mr. Moore's earlier argument, Mr. Harris pointed out that the district was not going to take Mr. Holden's property in fee up to the 5-year floodplain.

Judge Metzger heard arguments Thursday from SFWMD attorney Keith Williams as to how the district's case has been proven, and why she should deny the motion for dismissal from the respondents.

Closing arguments will be held next week.

## COUNTY

Continued From Page 1

he had offered a second proposal and commissioners brought up new questions about the proposed development.

To complicate the matter, there is now a second developer proposing a plan for the improvement of the park. During the course of the discussion there were several references by commissioners to a second developer, but no details were given. County Administrator Robbie Chartier later confirmed that another developer had submitted a proposal. She said it came last week and had not yet been made public, however, she said commissioners had been informed of the new proposal.

Mrs. Chartier informed the commissioners that the state has a reverter clause on the portion of the park formerly known as Hog Island. She said that if the county wants to lease the property, the state wants a specific proposal and a revenue stream. She said the state wants 50 percent of the revenue on the property. However, she added that the percentage is negotiable and they might take less if there are extenuating circumstances. About 220 lots in the proposed RV park would come under state restrictions.

Planning official Bill Royce said the state wants all specifics of a proposed lease before they would give approval.

"One of the problems is determining what comes under the revisionary clause and what doesn't," stated Commissioner Joey Hoover. There seemed to be some question about the legal description of the state-controlled property. Commissioner Hoover was in favor of determining what property was involved. "I don't know how I can negotiate with someone when I don't know what I am selling."

"It would appear to me that biggest stumbling block is the amount of revenue coming to the county," stated Commissioner Frank Irby.

They are asking for 50 percent of the 200 lots," said Commissioner Bryant Culpepper. "It is a one-time cost to the county."

Commissioner Irby noted that if the county came to an agreement with a developer and the state wanted too much money the county could back out of the deal.

Mr. Henderson explained his new proposal of a 50-year lease for the RV park and a 25-year lease for the marina and bait shop. Originally he had asked for a 99-year lease. He said his proposal included enlarging the functional public use areas. He said his proposal doubles the size of public use area and elevates the bandstand to make it more visible. "We have no desire to exclude the present population." He said he was willing to leave the marina and bait shop out of his proposal.

As for payments to the state Mr. Henderson said, "I think you have a very strong argument for not paying a dime. You are not changing the use, you are trying to improve it."

Mr. Henderson said his proposal includes an outside loop road to provide direct access to the airboat launching area.

"I don't have any other tools in my chest.

We have the best park on the lake. It is by far the worst managed property on the lake. It is an opportunity missed, in my opinion."

— Travis Chambers

We are trying to do it at a quality level. Disney didn't cut anybody off by doing quality."

"I really felt like if this project came about it would help us through tough times," asserted Commissioner Culpepper.

"I have some concerns about the financing and what interests would have to be subordinated," County Attorney John Cassels said. He told the board that a private landowner could walk away from a similar deal that went bad. However, he said the commissioners have a responsibility for public lands. He explained to the board that there is a lot more to the proposal than tying up public property for 50 years.

Commissioner Ray Domer said he thought there was a 3-to-2 vote not to pursue this matter. He did not know why it was on the agenda again.

"I think we should have to readvertise to protect the county," asserted Commissioner Margaret Garrard Helton.

Mr. Henderson said his first lease proposal had been turned down. He said there was not a motion to rescind the action taken in June to work with him in developing the concept of leasing the park for private development.

"I happen to really believe in your property," he said. "We want to bring you a quality facility. If you are going to prolong it, I would like to withdraw."

"I withdraw without prejudice," Mr. Henderson concluded.

Larry Gabor expressed his feelings over the board's opinion. "This is a dark day in Okeechobee and I am ashamed of you county commissioners." He said this was a project that would generate instant revenue and had been proposed by a man who has been successful in developing 31 other RV parks.

Winter visitor Marilyn Johnson said she has been coming to Okee-Tantie for 20 years.

"We don't need an RV resort," she said. "We just need a nice campground to be able to go fishing. I cannot believe you are not going to do something with that property that has the best access to the lake and the river."

"We do not need that property sitting vacant," expressed Chris McArthur.

"We're not quitting," said Commissioner Hoover. "We had one proposal on the table and the numbers did not come out right."

Travis Chambers called attention to a park in Belle Glade that is inside the dike and is run by private developer. "We have the best park on the lake. It is by far the worst managed property on the lake. It is an opportunity missed in my opinion."

**Post your opinions in the Public Issues Forum at [www.newszap.com](http://www.newszap.com). Reporter Pete Gawda can be reached at [pgawda@newszap.com](mailto:pgawda@newszap.com).**

# Community Events

## KOA hosting party

Okeechobee KOA will hold a party on Friday, **March 1**, with a night of dancing, music and libations. Howard Livingston and the Mile Marker 24 band will perform. Their original Trop-rock music is a soundtrack to a lifestyle of flip flops and tank tops! Bid on a margarita blended with a 1952 Johnson outboard motor. This Keys favorite band has won music awards for song of the year, entertainer and band of the year. All proceeds from this KOA care camp event benefit children's cancer programs administered by American Cancer Society. Ticket on sale at the KOA office or call 863-763-0231. \$17 admission or \$100 for a table for six. 7 to 10 p.m. Doors and cash bar open at 6:15 p.m.

## Eagles #9985 plan events

Eagles North, 9985 U.S. 441 N., on Friday, **March 1**, will have steak night, NO FISH, from 5:30 - 9 p.m., followed by music with those Rockin' Harpers. On Saturday, March 2, card bingo at 5:30 p.m. On Sunday, March 3, that fantastic breakfast from 9 - 11 a.m. On Tuesday, March 5, bingo starts at 1 p.m. On Wednesday, March 6, bingo at 5:30 p.m. All proceeds go to the FOE 4137 community benefit fund.

## Cypress Eagles host dinner

Cypress Hut Eagles will serve choice rib eye steak dinner for \$14, shrimp \$10, or fish \$8, starting at 5:30 p.m. Friday, **March 1**, Music by Wes and Deb. Saturday, March 2, serving baby back ribs for dinner with two sides for \$10 from 4-7 p.m. Music by Hard Country Band. Sunday, March 3, Southern Fried Chicken served from 1-5 p.m. for \$6. Dart tournament Tuesday, March 5, starting at 6 p.m. hamburgers will be served. The public is welcome. Tuesdays proceeds go for the Fraternal Order of Eagles Diabetes Research Center, and the rest go to the community and national charity funds. For more info, please call 863-467-1154.

## Group hosting yard sale

Samaritan Community Outreach Center, 2602 N.W. Eighth St., will host a yard sale Saturday, **March 2**, from 7 a.m. - 1 p.m. Traveling north on 98, turn left on street before the railroad tracks. Look for the signs! All proceeds benefit the Samaritan Community Outreach Center, Inc. Come out and shop!

## Bake sale set for March 2

The Okeechobee Presbyterian Church Woman's Group, 312 N. Parrot Ave., will hold its annual bake sale Saturday, **March 2**, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Proceeds will go to help support the church's food pantry.

## Fair Board to meet

The Okeechobee County Fair Board will hold their next meeting on Monday, **March 4**, at 6 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Chamber of Commerce office.

## DAR program at library

Dr. Sue Commerford will bring an interesting program about "The Letters of Abigail Adams" written to her husband, John Adams, the second president of the United States, to the Okeechobee Library at 10 a.m. on Saturday, **March 2**. Dr. Commerford is a Past Regent of Seminole Chapter, a docent at the West Palm Beach History Museum, and helped on the DAR project to move the Battle of Okeechobee Monument to the State Park site.

## Graves family benefit slated

A benefit barbecue for the Graves family will be held on Saturday, **March 2**, at the Believer's Fellowship Church, 300 S.W. Sixth Ave. Several music groups are scheduled. A silent auction and a drawing for a handmade wooden glider are planned. Serving will be from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. tickets are a \$10 donation for a chicken dinner with baked beans, slaw, bread, dessert and tea. For tickets or information, please call Micki at 863-634-4327 or Cathy at 863-763-4843.

## March 2 yard sale

### benefits March of Dimes

A benefit yard sale will be held on Saturday, **March 2**, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Okeechobee Freshman Campus, 610 S.W. Second Ave., from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Proceeds will benefit the March of Dimes. Tables will be \$10 each, while the supply lasts. Spaces to set up your own table are \$5 each. Any donations would be appreciated. To reserve a table or space, or to donate your items, please e-mail or call Marnie Ayers at 863-462-5288 or 863-677-6378.

## Legion hosting Sunday bingo

American Legion 64 will once again host Sunday night Bingo beginning on Sunday, **March 3**, at 6:30 p.m. Doors open at 5 p.m. in the bingo area. The kitchen will offer a limited menu. Payoffs will be determined by player attendance. All proceeds to benefit the American Legion veterans' programs. The event is open to the public.

## Abortion Recovery class set

Do you know someone who has had an abortion? Have you? Many suffer with the pain of an abortion for years and years. You don't have to! There is FREEDOM and HOPE!! Here at the Pregnancy Center of Okeechobee, 55 N.W. Sixth St., we will start a 10-week class for those who have had an abortion. The class is taught by someone who has "been there and done that" and has great compassion for anyone in that situation. There is forgiveness and freedom available. The class will begin Monday, **March 4**. Please call the Center at 863-467-8748 today to get signed up.

## Shrine to host dinner

The Okeechobee Shrine Club, at 1740 S.W. 53rd St., will hold a spaghetti dinner on Tuesday, **March 5**, from 4 - 7 p.m. and reservations are not required. Shrine Club is pleased to offer smoke-free dining. Music is provided 5-8 p.m. Dinner is available for a \$6 donation. Proceeds benefit Shrine charities. For more information on the activities of the Okeechobee Shrine Club, contact Kip Gardner at 863-357-0427, Dr. Randall Mims at 863-763-9200 or the Shrine Club at 863-763-3378.

## Commissioner hosts coffee

Coffee with the Commissioner will be hosted by Commissioner Bryant Culpepper on Tuesday, **March 5**, from 10 a.m. to noon and will be held in the meeting room at the Lodge at the Lake Restaurant, 1111 S. Parrott Ave. No appointments are necessary. All citizens will be able to speak to the county commissioner.

## Local tobacco group to meet

The Tobacco Free Partnership of Okeechobee will hold its quarterly meeting on Tuesday, **March 5**, at noon at the Thompson Hall located next to the Pentecostals of Okeechobee at 405 S.W. 10th Ave. Lunch will be provided, so please RSVP.

## ConKerr Cancer "sit & sew"

ConKerr Cancer's mission is to provide children with cancer or other life-changing illnesses a feeling of warmth and love through the simple gift of a pillowcase. Our next "sit & sew" will be held on Tuesday, **March 5**, from 10:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. at the Okeechobee Presbyterian Church on Parrott Ave. Bring your sewing machine and fabric and sew with other ladies in our community who want to help make a difference to a sick child. Easter is just around the corner so this month we will be 'hopping down the bunny trail' with our Easter pillowcases. If you have child-friendly cotton fabric you would like to donate, please call Joan at 863-467-0290.

## Health Start group to meet

Okeechobee Healthy Start Coalition board of directors will meet Wednesday, March 6 at 11 a.m. at their office, 1132 S. Parrott Ave., in the White House Plaza. This meeting is open to the public. The Okeechobee The Okeechobee Healthy Start Coalition is made up of citizens interested in promoting healthy families and healthy outcomes for babies in Okeechobee. For information, please contact executive director Kay Begin at the coalition office, 863-462-5877.

## Ladies group seeks members

The Garnett Ladies, a new Red Hat group, is looking for new members. They welcome both part-time and full-time residents. The first meeting is Wednesday, **March 6**, at 11 a.m., location to be announced. If you are interested in having fun, call 863-824-2271. Please call ahead, so we can make lunch reservations.

## Parade applications taken

Okeechobee Main Street is currently taking applications for the 48th Annual Speckled Perch Festival and Parade which will be held on March 9 and 10 in Flagler Park Festivities begin at 10 a.m. in the parks, with the parade following at 11 a.m. Okeechobee Main Street is looking for anyone interested in vending food, crafts, demonstrations, or entertainment. Participation in the parade is free, vendor rates vary. The deadline for the applications are **March 6**. For further information, please contact Cindy at the Main Street Office, 55 S. Parrott Ave. or call 863-357-6246.

## Quit smoking class offered

The Okeechobee County Library, 206 S.W. 16th St., is offering Quit Smoking Now Classes on **March 6**, 13, 20 and 27 at 5:30 p.m. and Raulerson Hospital located 1796 U.S. 441 N. in the inservice classroom will have Quit Smoking Now Classes on March 6, 13, 20 and 27 at 3:30 p.m.

## Tobacco lecture offered

Rick Bender, A Living Testimony to the Dangers of Tobacco, **March 6**, from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. At the Okeechobee County Health Department Auditorium 1728 N.W. Ninth Ave. This presentation will last an hour and is open to the public. Call Candace Pope for more information, at 863-447-9140.

## Surgeon to discuss advances

The Oakview Baptist Church Senior Adult Ministry Group will present an informational program by Dr. Benjamin Epstein, an Orthopaedic Surgeon at Orthopaedic Specialists at Raulerson, on Thursday, **March 14**. Dr. Epstein will discuss the latest advancements and procedures in joint replacements, as well as informing the audience of the resources available in Okeechobee. The public is invited to attend. No admission fee or other fees will be charged. The program will be held at the church, 677 S.W. 32nd St., in Building A and will begin at approximately 12:45 p.m., following a covered dish luncheon at 12:00 noon. It is not necessary to attend the luncheon. Persons wishing to attend the luncheon MUST make reservations with the church office, 863-763-1699, no later than Thursday, **March 7**.

## Shared Services meeting set

The executive roundtable of the Shared Services Network of Okeechobee County will conduct its bi-monthly meeting at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, **March 8**, in the board room of the Okeechobee County School Board office. This forum provides a mechanism for dialogue and problem solving in our community through the collaborative efforts of our local decision makers. The public is invited to attend. For more information, please call Sharon Vinson 863- 462-5000, ext. 257.

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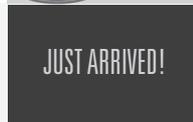
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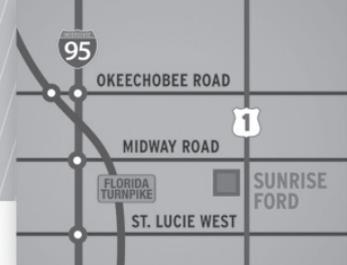


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# OFC hosts Career and Technical Education Week

Special to the Okeechobee News

CTE Week in February began with a visit by OHS Career Specialist, Heather Gillis, to the Okeechobee Freshman Campus.

Mrs. Gillis spoke to students about what CTE is: Career and Technical Education. She also explained the CTE programs offered at Okeechobee High School as well as how these programs and the industry certifications many of them offer are valuable as students graduate and begin a degree or enter the work field. The programs offered at OHS include: Digital Design, Accounting Operations, Architectural Drafting, Automotive Service Technology, Ag Mechanics, Nursing Assistant, Building Construction Technologies, Animal Science and Services. Introductory courses for these programs are offered at Osceola and Yearling Middle Schools. (More information on the CTE programs offered in Okeechobee Schools is available on the district website under Departments/Career & Technical Education: [http://www.okee.k12.fl.us/pages/OkeeCSD/Departments/Career\\_Technical\\_Education](http://www.okee.k12.fl.us/pages/OkeeCSD/Departments/Career_Technical_Education).)

The Career Specialist will also brainstorm

with students to create a list of questions to ask of the CTE teachers as they consider the programs. The second component of CTE week was a special event where the CTE teachers from the high school along with students from their programs, set up booths at OFC to give the students the opportunity to meet them and ask the questions they have about the programs.

The culminating event for exposing freshmen students to all the opportunities awaiting them in our CTE programs at OHS was a "Sneak Peek @ OHS." OFC students visited OHS to observe CTE classes and see the programs in action which will better prepare them for when they schedule their sophomore classes in early spring. The goal of CTE week is to bring students to the point where they are now able to make informed choices as they choose the career path they may continue into adulthood.

February was also National and State Career and Technical Education Month. Okeechobee CTE teachers were also recognized at the Feb. 12 school board meeting for a Perfect CTE Audit this fall conducted by DOE.



Special to the Okeechobee News

Carey Pung (right) explains to OHS freshman how the web design class is conducted.



Special to the Okeechobee News

A senior ROTC member (center) told freshman about how the class and club is operated.



Special to the Okeechobee News

Gary Howard explained the importance of his woodshop class to the freshman.



Special to the Okeechobee News

While teaching his accounting class, Daryl Roehm (left) explains the importance of the class to freshman.

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Heel pain is one of the most common problems we see in our podiatry office. It is like the common cold for a Podiatrist. The majority of patients have a problem called plantar fasciitis. However, there are other causes. So a full exam is recommended to rule out these other causes.

Plantar Fasciitis is an inflammation of the plantar fascia. The plantar

fascia is a ligament that runs along the bottom of the foot from the heel to the ball of the foot and even has slips that go into the toes. The main job of the plantar fascia is to hold the arch up. As you walk and your arch falls, it puts extra strain on the plantar fascia. This causes small tears and eventually thickening of the plantar fascia. The thickening causes pain on the bottom of the heel.

If someone's plantar fasciitis becomes so advanced that surgery is required, we at Florida Foot Specialist perform a minimally invasive endoscopic procedure to release the tension on the plantar fascia and resolve the patient's heel pain. The procedure is performed at a hospital but is an outpatient procedure with the patient walking out of the facility later that day. If you currently have any problem in your feet or ankles make an appointment to see us in the office today. Delaying treatment can increase the problem and require more extensive treatment. Call us at: 863-357-1166

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Special to the Okeechobee News

### Rotary Guest Speaker

Wanda Klesper, project director for Retired Senior Volunteer Program, spoke at the Okeechobee Rotary Club this week. She is spreading the word of the volunteer opportunities locally for those individuals 55+. Ms. Klesper is pictured here with Tom Byrd, local Rotarian. Rotarians meet weekly on Tuesday at noon at the newly-remodeled Golden Corral.



Special to the Okeechobee News

### Valentine's Day party

Grand Oaks Assisted Living Facility celebrated Valentine's Day with a Party and Dance. Residents cooked baked goods and treats earlier that morning during the Country Kitchen program. The highlight of the evening was the karaoke presentation. There were performances from residents, employees and special guests Sarah Rose Dodd and Savannah Wilson.

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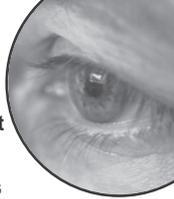
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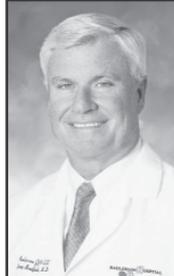


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# Man accused of taking, scrapping appliances

By Eric Kopp  
Okeechobee News



**Bryan Lee G. Walburn**

An Okeechobee man is being held on bond in the county jail and is charged with entering a home and stealing some appliances then selling them for scrap. Bryan Lee Gene Walburn, 19, S.W. Third St., Okeechobee, was arrested Tuesday, Feb. 26, on two felony counts of grand theft and two felony counts of burglary of an unoccupied dwelling. He is being held in the Okeechobee County Jail on \$16,000 bond.

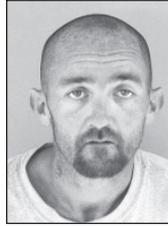
Detective Javier Gonzalez, of the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO), stated in an arrest report that Walburn apparently helped people move out of a home. He later went back to the home and took a stove and a refrigerator.

The detective stated in his report that the front door of the home was unlocked and Walburn entered the home on one occasion and took a stainless Frigidaire glass-top stove. He then reportedly returned and took a white refrigerator, added the report.

According to Detective Gonzalez the items were taken to a local recycling center where they were sold for scrap. Walburn received \$40 for the two items, added the detective.

# Local man charged in forgery case

By Eric Kopp  
Okeechobee News



**Jason Collier Smith**

A city detective has stated that a suspect in a local forgery case has a similar mode of operation in that he allegedly takes checks from the elderly, forges the victim's name on the instruments and cashes them.

Jason Collier Smith, 33, S.E. 34th Ave., Okeechobee, was arrested Tuesday, Feb. 26, on felony charges of exploitation of the elderly, uttering a forged bill and grand theft. He's being held in the Okeechobee County Jail in lieu of \$15,000 bond.

In an arrest report Detective James Pickering, of the Okeechobee City Police Department (OCPD), stated that Smith took checks from an 81-year-old man and cashed them for a total of \$1,300.

The detective also stated that Smith was arrested earlier this month on charges of uttering a forged instrument and forgery after he apparently took checks from a 75-year-old victim and cashed them.

"The cases are similar in that Smith gets hired to do yard work, receives a check and then cashes or attempts to cash other checks

from the victims that are not authorized," stated the detective in his report.

In the latest case, Detective Pickering indicated that Smith was paid \$350 by the victim for doing some yard work. But then, Smith reportedly cashed three other checks for \$400, \$500 and \$400 that were not legitimate.

The victim's name was forged on those last three checks.

"I reviewed copies of all four checks and was able to notice a significant difference in the three checks the victim advised he did not sign, compared to the one he did sign," stated Detective Pickering.

The city investigator went on to state that he asked Smith to provide a handwriting sample, but he refused.

Detective Pickering pointed out that the latest victim has been reimbursed by his bank, meaning the bank is now the victim in the case.

# Okeechobee Arrest Report

The following individuals were arrested on felony or driving under the influence (DUI) charges by the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO), the Okeechobee City Police Department (OCPD), the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP), the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) or the Department of Corrections (DOC).

- Sally Huey Hatfield, 49, S.E. 66th Ave., Okeechobee, was arrested Feb. 26 by the Okeechobee Narcotics Task Force on a felony charge of possession of a controlled substance (roxycodone) without a prescription. Her bond was set at \$2,500.

- Linda Chivari Beaty, 42, S.E. 13th St., Okeechobee, was arrested Feb. 26 by Officer Belen Reyna on a felony charge of resisting a law enforcement officer with violence, and a misdemeanor charge of battery. Her bond was set at \$1,000.

- Camille Lamar Leach, 31, N.W. 11th St., Okeechobee, was arrested Feb. 27 by Officer

Cesar Romero on a St. Lucie County warrant charging him with the felony of false imprisonment. His bond was set at \$7,500.

- Naseem Assamad, 68, N.E. 28th Terrace, Okeechobee, was arrested Feb. 27 by the Okeechobee Narcotics Task Force on felony charges of possession of cocaine, possession of cocaine with intent to sell and sale of cocaine. His bond was set at \$25,000.

- Anthony Todd Summers, 30, S.E. 23rd St., Okeechobee, was arrested Feb. 27 by Deputy Corporal Randy Thomas on a felony charge of possession of a controlled substance (oxycodone), and misdemeanor charges of possession of drug paraphernalia and driving while license suspended. His bond was set at \$3,500.

*This column lists arrests and not convictions, unless otherwise stated. Anyone listed here who is later found innocent or has had the charges against them dropped is welcome to inform this newspaper. The information will be confirmed and printed.*

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# Commissioners make appointments to boards

By Pete Gawda  
Okeechobee News

At their meeting on Thursday, Feb. 28, Okeechobee County Commissioners made appointments to various boards and committees. Many of the seats on these organizations expire on March 1.

Children Services Council members are appointed by the governor. The board recommended that all seven applicants to that organization, Wendy Coker, Heather Hancock, Melisa Jahner, Patricia McCoy, Elizabeth Maxwell, Marty Thomas and Donna Watson, be recommended to the governor.

Regular members of the construction industry licensing board Elbert Batton, Jeff Sheffield and Tony Stark were named to new terms. Scott Chapman was moved from alternate to regular member and Carl Shumate was appointed alternate.

Regular board member Tommy Hoover and alternate John Cressman were reappointed to new terms on the Okeechobee Utility Authority Board of Directors.

Turning to the planning board/board of adjustments and appeals, Debra Sales was moved from alternate to regular member and Rob Wilson was appointed as a regular member.

Frank Cunningham and Carl Shumate were reappointed to new terms on the Agrivic Center advisory committee and Frank DeCarlo was named to the committee.

Judith Mix was reappointed to another term on the library advisory committee and

Brad Goodbread was named to the tourist development council.

Commissioners approved an amendment to the contract with Waste Management that is designed to make the landfill more competitive.

No members of the public spoke at the first of two required public hearings to consider a proposed amendment to the Okeechobee County Comprehensive Plan. The proposed amendment addresses the compatibility of land uses in the county that are adjacent or near the Avon Park Air Force Range. The purpose of the amendment is to prevent encroachments that would restrict the use of the range. The proposed amendment will now be transmitted to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and other state agencies for review. A second public hearing will be held after the appropriate state agencies have commented.

Gary Ritter, director of South Florida Water Management District's Okeechobee Service Center, had some good news concerning the rehabilitation of the Taylor Creek locks. After many delays, Mr. Ritter said that if last minute details go smoothly the locks will reopen on Thursday, March 7. The next day, Friday, March 8, at 10 a.m., Mr. Ritter said a land assessment meeting will be held at the Okeechobee Service Center.

In the afternoon commissioner held a follow-up strategic planning session at the public safety complex. They reviewed the vision statement that was formulated at the last planning session on Dec. 13. They also

reviewed the mission statement that was discussed at the last session and discussed strengths and weaknesses facing them.

## Salvation Army offers rental assistance

The Salvation Army Service Unit of Okeechobee is currently taking applications for Rental Assistance. Applications can be picked up at the Service Unit office, 1600 # B (New Horizons bldg.) S.W. 2nd Ave. Mondays and Tuesdays, between the hours of 10 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. The Salvation Army has FPL (Florida Power and Light) funding available to assist qualified consumers. Please call 1-863-763-6020 for guidelines and information, Mondays and Tuesdays, between the hours of 10 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

## Homestead exemption nears

Applications for Homestead exemption, Additional Senior Exemption for Person's 65 years or older, Agriculture Classification and all other exemption applications should be filed with the Property Appraiser's Office by March 1. Agriculture renewal cards (green cards) are also due March 1. The Property Appraiser's office is located at 307 N.W. Fifth Ave. in the Alderman Building. For more information, contact the office at 863-763-4422.

## Okeechobee Sports News in Brief

By Charles M. Murphy  
Okeechobee News

• Vero Beach prevailed over Okeechobee in a pitcher's duel, 2-0, as Autumn Green pitched a five-hitter Tuesday night in a **high school softball** game played in Indian River County.

Jaryaca Baker pitched a strong game for Okeechobee as well as she allowed only two hits and struck out seven batters. Vero Beach tallied runs in the first and in the sixth innings to improve to (9-2) on the year. OHS fell to (4-3).

• **OHS baseball** coach Jeff Blackstone said his team continues to work hard despite a slow start to the season. The Brahms were rained out on Tuesday night against Sebastian but the game was rescheduled to Wednesday night.

Blackstone said he was impressed with several players in their loss to Port St. Lucie Friday. Relief pitcher Kutter Crawford threw four shutout innings, allowed just two hits and two walks. Alex Estremera scored the Brahman run on an RBI single by Ethan Revels.

"We have had a few guys start to step up on the mound and they keep us in games a little bit better," Blackstone said. "The focus now is to improve our offensive approach and to start to put runs on the board."

Blackstone said every game on the schedule this year is tough and his team will have to play better to win games.



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# Lincoln Park Academy tennis teams beat OHS

**By Charles M. Murphy**  
Okeechobee News

Tennis players braved wind gusts of close to 30 miles per hour as Lincoln Park defeated Okeechobee in boys and girls tennis Tuesday at the Okeechobee Sports Complex.

The Greyhound boys won 4-3 in a very competitive match while the Lady Greyhounds defeated Okeechobee 6-1.

In the boys match, Okeechobee got singles wins from Cody Walker, who defeated Juan Morales 8-4 in a pro-set. Colton Root defeated Andrew King in an exciting match 9-8. The doubles team of Walker and Brendon Jonassaint defeated the team of Cameron Slack and Morales 9-7 for the Brahmans third point.

LPA dominated in both the first and second seed matches as Kethan Rao and Cameron Slack won by shutout over Otto Ramirez and Lucas Penido. Penido got into a lot of long rallies with Slack but was unable to solve his ground strokes. The wind was so bad that serves that normally would be in by two feet, were blown out of bounds in the boys match.

The Lady Brahmans were led by Jenna Rath who stubbornly traded ground strokes with Alyssa McGarity before the senior pre-

vailed 9-7. Samantha Rivero was competitive before she lost to Jennifer Gosney 8-5.

Brahman Tennis Coach Morgan Ungerott said the boys match was a heartbreaker but that her team fought through the tough conditions.

"We went in knowing it would be a tough match for us (LPA is 5-2), we just couldn't get the clinching point," she noted.

Jonassaint's singles match with Koushal Rao turned out to be the turning point as the two players went into a tie breaker before Rao prevailed 9-8.

Ungerott said the team had too many unforced errors at critical points. She praised Walker for his excellent play in the singles match.

"It is nice when we have guys on that team that take care of business from the first point," she admitted.

She also praised Root for his singles win. He got an early lead and was able to win a tough tie breaker.



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy  
Jenna Rath earned the Lady Brahmans point in their match with LPA on Tuesday at a windy Okeechobee Sports Complex.



Lucas Penido returns a volley against LPA Tuesday. Penido made every point tough but couldn't solve the ground strokes of Cameron Slack of the Greyhounds.

Ungerott also praised the doubles team of Jonassaint and Walker that continue their winning ways. It was a tough battle as the Greyhounds kept the ball in play and caused a lot of long rallies.

Ungerott said the team will work on being

more aggressive and putting pressure on their opponents, "We need to get back to work and put pressure on our opponents in these tough matches. The guys are hungry to get better and will continue to work hard in practice."

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## Baseball skills/coaches clinics planned

On Saturday, **March 2**, a baseball/softball coaches and players clinic will be held in the Okeechobee County Sports Complex. \$10 per player, \$5 per coach. Coaches from 9 to 10 a.m. The clinic will include practice organization skills, hitting and fielding drills, conditioning and fundamentals, and Q&A. From 10:30-12:30 p.m., a players baseball/softball skills clinic will be held in the County Sports Complex. The clinic will include hitting, fielding, pitching, infield, outfield and base running. For more information about either of these clinics, call 561-762-4533 or 772-260-9647. The clinics are presented by Hit After Hit, Inc.



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Buying a car? Look in the classifieds. Selling a car? Look in the classifieds.



**READING A NEWSPAPER MAKES YOU A MORE INFORMED AND INTERESTING PERSON.**

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## Financial

### Business Opportunities

#### NOTICE

Independent Newspapers will never accept any advertisement that is illegal or considered fraudulent. In all cases of questionable value, such as promises of guaranteed income from work-at-home programs - if it sounds too good to be true, chances are that it is. If you have questions or doubts about any ad on these pages, we advise that before responding or sending money ahead of time, you check with the Better Business Bureau at 772-878-2010 for previous complaints.

Some 800 and 900 telephone numbers may require an extra charge, as well as long distance toll costs. We will do our best to alert our reader of these charges in the ads, but occasionally we may not be aware of the charges. Therefore, if you call a number out of your area, use caution.



## Merchandise

### Computer/Supplies

Dell Desk top computer like new, with Brand new printer with ink. asking \$250.00 for all. Call for details. 561-924-5772

## Furniture

White Ratan Dining set, 6' round beveled glass top, 6 matching chairs with cushions and casters, very good condition. Call 863-763-6706

## Miscellaneous

Home Theater Surround system model KA4210 new in box cost \$3,495 will sell \$1,200 o.b.o.  
1969 Rock-ola Juke Box with over 1,500 45's, 15 Elvis Presley albums \$1,000 o.b.o. Call 863-623-4412 leave message.



## Agriculture

### Lawn & Garden

**COMPOST** for Organic Gardening and Farming - Okeechobee Recycling Facility, enter at Waste Management, 10800 NE. 128th Avenue. Pickup or Delivered \*Public Welcome\* Please call. (216)956-0949



## Rentals

### Apartments

**Beautiful Samantha's Garden Apartments**  
2BR/2BA, in town, W&D, \$800 mo. + \$500 sec. Call (863)467-9250 or (863)634-5780

**TAYLOR CREEK** Condos  
1br/1ba, Partially Furnished \$650 mo. 1st, last & sec. dep. 561-352-4243

### Houses - Rent

**2BR DUPLEX**, CLEAN, QUIET, DIXIE RANCH ACRES AREA. PETS ALLOWED UPON APPROVAL. \$550/MO., WATER & LAWN MAINTENANCE INCLUDED. \$400 SECURITY. 863-610-0001

**For rent:** 2bd/2ba 1 car garage, split plan Oak trees on lot, great area for children. Call: 863-634-9330 863-467-2541

## Houses - Rent

Everybody loves this charming 2bd/1ba house in Lake Port, cracker style, very private and quiet. \$600/mo. Room for 2 people and references required  
Call: (863)946-0456



## Real Estate

### Houses - Sale

**OKEECHOBEE HOME FOR SALE**  
\$69,900, Well Maintained 2 bd/ 2 ba home, eat in kitchen, formal dining, living room, Florida Room, new A/C, additional storage building and 4 car detached garage wired for 220 and 110 Volt Electric, and 3 car carport. Public access dock about 1/2 mile from Community.  
For more info Call Optima One Realty @ (239)848-2071 or (352)243-6784

### Lots - Sale

**BHR** - Waterfront double lot for sale on Trout St. 100'x135' w/135' of solid seawall. Ready for your mobile home w/utilities. \$48,000. Call 561-908-1959.

**Use Your Tax Money for a Down Payment Recently Foreclosed, Special Financing Available, Any Credit, Any Income Vacant Land, 6+Acres, located at, 20 NE 363rd Ct., Okeechobee, \$28,900. Visit [www.roseland-co.com/82H](http://www.roseland-co.com/82H). Drive by then call (866) 523-5742.**

How do you find a job in today's competitive market? In the employment section of the classifieds



## Mobile Homes

### Mobile Home Lots

**2RV Sites** for sale in Quiet Okeechobee 5 Star RV Park. One priced at \$76,000 the other \$91,000 buy directly from owner and avoid Real Estate fees for more info call 701-260-1364

### Mobile Home Rent

**BUCKHEAD RIDGE** - Dbl. Wide 2BR, 2BA, C/Air. \$500 mo. Large 3BR, 2BA, C/Air. \$550 mo. No pets. Yearly lease, plus sec. (863)763-4031

**FOR RENT 2 BEDROOM 1.5 BATH MOBILE HOME, WASHER & DRYER, CENTRAL AIR, FURNISHED, NICE PARK.**  
\$450.00 MONTHLY  
CALL 812-989-3022

**On The Rim Canal 2 sm travel trailers not in a park 1br each 1 with enclosure \$450. mth, the other is \$400. mth incd ele/gas, sec dep \$300. no pets. 863-697-0214.**

### Treasure Island

For Rent Waterfront 1/1 furnished trailer, Direct Tv and electric included \$125.00 weekly plus security Call 863-517-5111

### Mobile Home Sale

**Older Single** Wide in 55+ Park, w/screened room, porch and dock on Taylor Creek. 1/2 mile from Walmart \$6,500. or best offer Call 828-208-0980

Grab a bargain from your neighbor's garage, attic, basement or closet in today's classifieds.



# Everglades Elementary hosts Readers of the Caribbean

Special to the Okeechobee News

The final "Readers of the Caribbean" program was held at Everglades Elementary to a packed house in mid-January. "Readers of the Caribbean" teaches children how to become "Bookaneers" by using the five major components of reading.

The program's creator, Dr. Angela Martin-Walker, also recently presented her newest program, "Readers Raise the Roof!" for all Okeechobee County Schools' pre-k and kin-



Two teachers dress up to get into the spirit of the program and make it fun for the kids.

dergarten families as a preview. The Department of Grants & Special Programs is hoping to bring this program back in the fall for all K-2 families at all five of the elementary schools using Title I Parental Involvement funds.



Here the "foreman" is leading the participants through an activity.



The children participate in this interactive activity.

"Readers Raise the Roof" is a "home improvement" family literacy workshop for PreK - 2nd grade. The fun-themed learning experience is led by a "foreman" who guides participants through a series of interactive demonstrations that highlight key things parents can do to nurture reading and writing development at home. Each family receives a READesign blueprint that guides them through the process of creating a cus-

tom home literacy plan that fits the unique needs of their household. Construction elements such as the foundation, tools, and windows are used as analogies for major concepts taught in the workshop.

Dr. Walker is an amazing presenter who is able to create meaningful connections with parents in order to teach strategies they can walk out of her workshops with and start using in the car on the way home!



The program teaches the children how to be "Bookaneers."

Special to the Okeechobee News



The program was viewed by a packed house when it was presented in mid-January.

Special to the Okeechobee News

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