

# OKEECHOBEE NEWS

Vol. 105 No. 17

Friday, February 7, 2014

50¢ Plus tax

**Teacher accused of being drunk may request hearing...Page 12**



**Cold weather aids manatee count ... Page 2**

## Lake Levels

**14.01 feet**

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## High court hears Middleton appeal

By Eric Kopp  
Okeechobee News

Florida Supreme Court justices heard oral arguments Thursday morning regarding the death-sentence appeal of convicted murderer Dale Middleton.

Middleton, 40, was convicted Aug. 6, 2012, of killing Roberta 'Bobbie' Christensen. The 12-member jury took less than 60 minutes to find him guilty of first-degree murder, armed

burglary and dealing in stolen property.

On Oct. 19, 2012, then-Okeechobee Circuit Court Judge Robert Belanger ruled Middleton should be put to death.

But in his Feb. 6, 2014, address to the seven justices Public Defender Jeffrey L. Anderson cited several points as to why Middleton's sentence should be changed to life. He claimed Middleton did not go to Mrs. Christensen's home with the intent to kill her and that Judge

Belanger was biased in his sentencing decision.

"He wasn't necessarily using reasoned judgement. He didn't give it a fair shot," said Mr. Anderson of the judge's sentencing.

Mr. Anderson argued that Middleton, who lived across the street from Mrs. Christensen in the Pine Ridge Mobile Home Park, did not go to her home with the intent to kill her. He was,

See MIDDLETON — Page 5

## More dike repairs planned this year

By John H. Campbell  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineer

The Jacksonville District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is putting the finishing touches on a risk assessment report for the 143-mile dike that surrounds Lake Okeechobee. The report is expected to be the source

of much conversation in light of huge water releases last summer from the lake due, in part, to the poor condition of the dike.

"This is the most comprehensive analysis that's ever been done on the risk associated with Herbert Hoover Dike," said Tim Willadsen, project manager for rehabilitation at the dike. "This report identifies the challenge,

which helps drive discussions on the remaining solutions needed to reduce the risk at the dike."

2014 is shaping up to be a very busy year for rehabilitation at the dike. Jacksonville District continues to press on with construction projects, and will move closer toward completing

See DIKE — Page 5

## Former OHS ace helping Brahmans

Charles M. Murphy  
Okeechobee News

When anybody talks about Brahman baseball history these days, it doesn't take long before the subject of Blake Marsocci comes up.

Marsocci was one of the main reasons Okeechobee reached the final four in 2005. His pitching arm and his bat were at its best as Okeechobee beat three talented teams in route to the final four in Sarasota.

Marsocci went on to pitch for Stetson University where he earned a master's degree.

Marsocci said he really appreci-

ated all of the support he received from the community when he played and he figures coaching is one way he can give back.

"I still have a lot of love for this game and as a coach I can still be a part of it. I will enjoy every minute of it," he explained.

The modest Marsocci downplays talk that he was the reason OHS went to the final four. He is quick to praise his talented teammates and their contributions.

"It definitely wasn't just me. There were a bunch of different guys who contributed. I wasn't out there striking everybody out I

See BASEBALL — Page 5



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy  
Blake Marsocci (right) tutors sophomore hurler Elijah Finney at a recent OHS baseball practice.

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# Cold weather helps aid 2014 manatee count

Biologists with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) reported a preliminary count of 4,831 manatees in Florida during this year's statewide aerial survey, conducted in late January.

Over two days (Jan. 24 and 27), a team of 20 observers from nine organizations counted 2,317 manatees on Florida's east coast and 2,514 on the west coast of the state. The final numbers will be available following verification of survey data.

"This year's manatee count is the third highest we have recorded since the first statewide aerial survey in 1991," said Gil McRae, director of the FWC's Fish and Wildlife Research Institute. "We are encouraged by the relatively high count, especially given the high number of manatee deaths documented recently. Information on warm-water habitat use from this year's survey will be integrated with manatee survival and reproductive rates to update future population projections."

The goal of the aerial manatee survey is to count as many manatees as possible, providing researchers with a minimum number for manatees in Florida waters and a snapshot of where they are at the time of the survey. Weather conditions and manatee behavior during the survey have a large effect on survey counts. Because these factors vary from year to year, this count cannot be used to determine long-term population trends.

"After two winters of above-average temperatures, this year we received several consecutive, strong cold fronts that helped to gather manatees at warm-water sites where they could be more easily counted," said FWC manatee biologist Holly Edwards.

The surveys highlight the importance of warm-water habitat to manatees in the winter, increasing researchers' understanding of manatee distribution and relative use of these areas that are essential to manatee health and survival. The survey information helps managers better protect this endangered species.

Researchers have been conducting statewide aerial surveys since 1991, weather permitting, to meet the state's requirement for an annual count of manatees in Florida waters. Statewide aerial surveys were not conducted during the winters of 2012 and 2013 due to warm-weather conditions.

Florida residents can help manatees by purchasing a manatee specialty license plate and a manatee decal. Funds from the license plate and decal support manatee re-



This photo taken at Tampa Electric-Apollo Beach shows manatees gathered to enjoy the warm water.

search and conservation. Go to BuyAPlate.com to learn more about the license plate and MyFWC.com/ManateeSeaTurtleDecals to purchase a decal. Both items are available at county tax collectors' offices.

To learn more about statewide aerial surveys, visit MyFWC.com/Research/Manatee and click on "Population Monitoring

and Aerial Surveys." To learn more about manatee conservation, go to MyFWC.com/Manatee.

## Report shows wading bird population improving

WEST PALM BEACH — Federally endangered wood storks, white ibis and great egrets led a moderate improvement in overall wading bird nesting efforts in 2013, according to the 2013 South Florida Wading Bird Report released last week by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD).

"Along with being icons of Florida's Everglades, wading birds represent key indicators of ecosystem health," said SFWMD Executive Director Blake Guillory. "The construction projects we have underway will help achieve restoration targets that focus on cleaning water and improving wildlife habitat."

An estimated 48,291 wading bird nests were documented throughout South Florida in 2013. This represents 57 percent above the average for the past three years and is similar to the average of the past eight years. Highlights of the report include:

- Wood stork nests increased by 97 per-

cent over the three-year average.

- White ibis nests increased by 90 percent over the three-year average.
- Great egret nests increased by 46 percent over the three-year average.

Scientists attributed the increase in nesting for these species to multiple years with above-average rainfall, which promoted the production of prey for the birds. Further, rapid drying leading into March 2013 helped concentrate prey for feeding.

Nesting numbers also increased in the Water Conservation Areas and the mainland area of Everglades National Park. An estimated 35,580 nests were documented in these areas, representing 74 percent of all nests in South Florida. This is a moderate improvement over the 24,191 nests in 2012 but similar to the 10-year average of 34,732 nests.

Other findings in the report include:

- Everglades National Park has become

more attractive to nesting wading birds in recent years.

- The Lake Okeechobee marsh had the fourth highest nesting numbers in 33 years.
- Snowy egrets and tricolored and blue herons experienced steep declines in 2013.
- For six of the past seven years, wood storks failed to breed in the Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary.

The South Florida Water Management District is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state – 16 counties from Orlando to the Keys. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. The agency mission is to manage and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply. A key initiative is cleanup and restoration of the Everglades.

## Okeechobee Forecast

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**Today:** Mostly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. Highs around 80. North winds 5 to 10 mph. Chance of rain 20 percent.

**Tonight:** Mostly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. Lows in the lower 60s. North winds around 5 mph becoming east after midnight. Chance of rain 20 percent.

## Extended Forecast

**Saturday:** Partly cloudy with a chance of showers. Highs in the lower 80s. South winds around 5 mph becoming west 5 to 10 mph in the afternoon. Chance of rain 50 percent.

**Saturday Night:** Considerable cloudiness with a slight chance of showers. Lows around 60. Chance of rain 20 percent.

**Sunday:** Partly cloudy. A chance of showers in the morning. Highs in the lower 80s. Chance of rain 30 percent.

**Dr. Rajinder Singh**  
 announces the closing of his  
**Dental practice**, effective  
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## Public Forum/Speak Out

*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!*

### Teacher accused of drinking

• First it was a bus driver accused of drinking and now a teacher. Guess those middle school kids will drive you to drink.

• If I was drunk at my job, I would be fired, as I should be. Zero tolerance.

• A student doesn't get these kinds of chances. A student would have been kicked out by now.

• I have to wonder if the union contract is part of the reason they let someone who had been arrested on drug charges return to the classroom after going through drug court.

• I can't think of any other business that would not have fired an employee who was charged with felony doctor shopping. The school board and the teachers union should be more concerned about the children and how situations like these affect the kids.

### Deadbeat parents

• Regarding the article 'Millions owed in child support' the article appears to leave the burden of support on the recipients who fail to convey information on those who are to pay support. I personally was compelled to do so last year and learned quite quickly that the state's attorney fails to prosecute these cases.

### Up in the sky

• Mystery solved about the triangular light in the sky. My UFO turned out to be the reflection of the electric billboard at the intersection of SR 78 and 721. When the night sky is overcast with a very low atmospheric ceiling, the top edge of the light reflects off of the mist and forms a huge white triangle in the sky. I'm a little disappointed.

• I saw something in the sky on Jan. 14 about 10:30 a.m. I was on my way to Walmart. I was going south on Parrott Avenue. There was not a cloud in the clear, blue sky except this one oblong cloud. From the ground it appeared to be about three feet wide and 5 feet long. After I got to the parking lot and got out, I was looking at it, and someone said "what are you looking at?" I said, "that," pointing up to the object in the sky. When I came out of the store about 5 minutes later, the cloud was gone. Weird, I say.

• Lots of strange things happen in Florida. It would not surprise me if we were visited by aliens from other planets. They could be among us now, in our churches and schools and even county government.

### Free Fair

• Thank you to the American Legion for hosting the Free Fair and inviting the special needs people to enjoy it. A great time was had by all.

### Made in America

• I recently went to the store looking for light bulbs, made in the USA. I used to buy GE, but all of them were made in China. I finally found, happily, Sylvania bulbs, that were made in the USA. I bought six hoping that they would last me a long while. The American-made light bulbs were almost on the bottom row, but after searching, I found them!

## Letters to the editor

### Rotary Club dinner a success

On Saturday, Jan. 25, the Rotary Club of Okeechobee held its first wild game dinner at Quail Creek Plantation. What a perfect setting! Even the weather warmed up enough, though the electric heaters blew a fuse near the end of the evening. Overall, we had a fabulous night, thanks to our sponsors, donors and attendees.

Huge thanks go to our presenting sponsors: Quail Creek and Okeechobee News. Quail Creek Plantation, an upscale facility, was a delight; owner Maria Fanizzi offered assistance, decorations, use of the kitchen, as well as the pavilion itself. Wild game and the rustic setting complemented our event. Okeechobee News ran 1/2 page, color ads in every edition, plus their insert, beginning before Christmas. What calls and inquiries that generated! Those local ads resulted in near daily calls and dozens of tickets sold. The Pennysaver also ran our ad several weeks.

Please patronize our local sponsors. Results are guaranteed.

Other sponsors that made our night so successful were: Garcia and Garcia, MDs; Joey and Dawn Hoover; Taylor Rental; CenterState Bank; TD Bank; Thompson Jewelers; State Rep. Cary Pigman; State Sen. Denise Grimsley; Okeechobee The Magazine/Pennysaver; Okeechobee Dodge, Chrysler, Jeep; and Susan Giddings.

Without their monetary and in-kind contributions, the event could not have been the over-the-top night that it was.

The donations we received for the live auction, Chinese auction and gun raffle were awesome! Thank you, Okeechobee, for supporting us so well. The proceeds from the Walk on the Wild Side are earmarked for OHS scholarships, Okeechobee Educational Foundation mini grants, Real Life Children's Ranch and other local and international projects.

Our donors for the live auction were: Lawrence Beckett, Dr. Trini Garcia, Hampton Inn, Anna Ivey, Gayle Molyneaux, Okeechobee Dodge, Thompson Jewelers, Taylor Rental, Williamson Cattle Company and Rob Willson.

For the Chinese auction, donations came from the following: AutoZone, Bass Pro, Lonnie Beckett, Beef O'Brady's, Kristy Crawford, CVS, Eli's Trailer Sales, Donna Gaiser, Phyllis Gildner, Golden Corral, Home Depot, Hunter's Den, KM Nails, KOA, Lehman Auto Body, Lightsey's, Okeechobee Dodge, Okeechobee Feed, Okeechobee High School/Digital Design, Pueblo Viejo, Carla Santangelo, Seacoast National Bank, Serenity Coffee Shop, Spring

Lake Golf Resort, Thompson Jewelers, Tire Kingdom, Tires Plus, Bridgette Waldau, Walgreen's and W&W Lumber. Thank you very much!

Volunteers. What would any function be without them? Special thanks go to Tom, Susan and Roscoe McCoin for the wonderful menu and amazing food! Wild game without the "game." Good Job! Also helping in kitchen duties were Jim Benton, Frank Decarlo, Sean Downing, Mike Costopoulos, Carl Gaiser, Rocky (The Gun Shop), and Trini Garcia. Our masterful auctioneer was our own Jim Benton of Faith Farm Ministries. Other committee members were: Lonnie Beckett, Terry Burroughs, Kristy Crawford, Susan Giddings, Donna Helton, Debi Large, Lisa Lumpkin, Darlene Mayers, Gayle Molyneaux, Rob Willson and Denise (and Smiley) Whitehead.

Our club's special presentation of the Carl T. Durrance Award for outstanding community service and "Service above Self" went to John Ed Burdeshaw. As the "oldest" past president and longest serving Rotarian of our club (at nearly 58 years, he was this year's unanimous choice. Congratulations, John Ed! Thank you for sharing our history and traditions.

Since the Walk on the Wild Side was such a hit, our next wild game dinner is scheduled for March 21, 2015. As details emerge, we will keep everyone informed via our Facebook and Twitter pages.

**Thanks again, Okeechobee!  
President, Donna Gaiser  
Rotary Club of Okeechobee**

### We Recycled!

Kudos to all those involved in the recycling at the Health Fair Saturday in Okeechobee. It was successful and I want to thank all those who made it happen and to all the volunteers who helped in so many ways to make the fair what it was. Thank goodness the weather warmed up and it was a beautiful day.

Next year we will make an effort to make sure that the cardboard is recycled also.

The biggest issue is educating the public as to what can and will be recycled by Waste Management. The small half orange juice bottles were thrown away by the public but, the public thought that the plastic juice glasses could be recycled. It took some sorting in the end. It amazes me that a person will stand right next to a recycle bin and still throw their water bottles and cans in the garbage in the adjoining receptacle. We need to educate them and we are on our way.

**Joyce Bussell**

## Pet of the Week

**Honey Bree is a Carolina Dog mix with a nice temperament. She does very well with other dogs. She is house trained, neutered and up to date on all shots. She is available for adoption at Okeechobee Humane Society/Pet Rescue on Highway 98, next door to the Livestock Market. For more information, contact Humane Society Pet Rescue Florida, at 863-357-1104. To see more available animals go to [petfinder.com](http://petfinder.com). Homes are also needed to "foster" animals who are waiting for a permanent adoptive home.**



Okeechobee News/4-H Picture Perfect Photography Club

# OKEECHOBEE NEWS

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### Staff

**Editor:** Katrina Elsen  
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### Our Purpose...

The Okeechobee News is published by Independent Newspapers of Florida. Independent is owned by a unique trust that enables this newspaper to pursue a mission of journalistic service to the citizens of the community. Since no dividends are paid, the company is able to thrive on profit margins below industry standards. All after-tax surpluses are reinvested in Independent's mission of journalistic service, commitment to the ideals of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, and support of the community's deliberation of public issues.

### 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.
- To provide the information citizens need to make their own intelligent decisions about public issues.

- 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.
- To disclose our own conflicts of interest or potential conflicts to our readers.
- 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.



# MIDDLETON

Continued From Page 1

instead, only planning to ask her to loan him some money.

He had seen Mrs. Christensen counting her tip money on July 27, 2009. Mrs. Christensen, 49, was a server at the Golden Corral Restaurant.

On July 28, 2009, Middleton walked the 139 feet from his home to hers. Even though Ms. Anderson said Middleton had no intentions of killing the woman, he did put a knife in his back pocket before he left his mobile home.

"Are you intending he walked across the street to see the lady and was then going to leave? Is that what you are intending?" asked Justice James E.C. Perry.

Mr. Anderson replied that at some point, after he had asked her to give him some money, Mrs. Christensen ordered Middleton out of her mobile home. They then began to struggle and Middleton grabbed the smaller woman, drug her to her bedroom and killed her.

When he couldn't find the cash, Middleton stole a 42-inch flat screen television Mrs. Christensen had won at a Golden Corral Christmas party. He later sold that TV for \$200.

Justice Jorge Labarga didn't seem to agree with Mr. Anderson's argument that the killing wasn't premeditated.

"We're not only talking about the money, but the TV. He could have gone (back) when she wasn't there," reasoned Justice Labarga.

But, the public defender argued that taking the television wasn't part of Middleton's plan.

"He wanted money," offered Mr. Anderson.

When Justice Peggy A. Quince spoke of the killing, she didn't mince words and described it as heinous and atrocious.

"He did this because he wanted something that didn't belong to him," she said.

And Assistant Attorney General Lisa Marie Lerner didn't mince words either when she described for the justices the grisly manner in which Mrs. Christensen was killed. When Middleton entered Mrs. Christensen's home on that day "... his intent was to kill her," said Ms. Lerner.

"He was in her house the day before and could have robbed her then. But, he went back the next day," she told the justices.

She went on to address a statement by Mr. Anderson that Middleton has an IQ of 83 and that he had been doing drugs, specifically prescription pills and methamphetamine, that day.

"He played with the psychologists to get

the best results because he knew he going to get the death penalty," said Ms. Lerner, of his pre-trial examinations. "He attacked her within a foot-and-a-half of the front door. The evidence showed she retreated — she did not attack him."

She went on to say Middleton used a paring knife to kill the 5-foot-3, 130-pound, woman.

As for the trial judge being biased in his sentencing of Middleton, Ms. Lerner explained that Judge Belanger gave weight to such mitigators as his IQ and his poor childhood.

Both sides will now have to wait for the justices to render a decision.

Middleton is currently being held in the Florida State Prison in Raiford.

## Volunteers sought for advisory board

The Okeechobee High School Automotive class is looking for community business leaders and general public, along with the parents of current automotive students, to become members of the advisory board.

The board meets a minimum of two times a year and discusses ideas, and class progress. They ask and need input for what to focus on throughout the school year. This is very helpful in malomg productive employees.

For information, contact Jason Anderson at 863-634-5272 or 863-462-5025, ext. 1801.

## Widows and Widowers Support Group to meet

The Widows and Widowers Support group meets every Tuesday morning at 7:30 a.m. at the Lodge at the Lake.

For information, call Darlene at 863-467-5351.

## Real Life Children's Ranch hosts a yard sale

Real Life Children's Ranch yard sale is open Wednesday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Come out for great bargains.

# DIKE

Continued From Page 1

a study that will provide options on the remaining measures needed to reduce the risk of dike failure.

The completed risk assessment will be used to develop and formulate solutions through a process known as a Dam Safety Modification Study (DSMS). The goal of the DSMS is to identify and prioritize the remaining measures necessary to finish rehabilitation. It is anticipated that the final Dam Safety Modification Report (DSMR) will be ready in 2015.

Rehabilitation work has been ongoing since 2007. However, previous risk analyses weren't as comprehensive as the current effort.

"When we started work, the intent was to fix Reach 1, and then move on to Reaches 2 and 3 on the south side of the lake," said Mr. Willadsen. "Now, we want to make investments in dike repairs that will lower the risk across the entire system, not just one portion of the system."

One measure that's already known is addressing the 32 federally owned water control structures, commonly known as "culverts." These structures currently pose the greatest risk of dike failure.

"The culverts were identified as the greatest risk to failure due to loss of material into and around them," said Mr. Willadsen. "Replacing these structures is the current priority."

Culvert replacement construction began in 2012. By the end of 2013, contracts had been awarded to replace 16 of the 32 culverts needing attention. Culvert 11, located south of Port Mayaca on the east side of the dike, is furthest along in its replacement.

"These structures aren't like driveway culverts," said Mr. Willadsen. "To replace a culvert, we have to install a cofferdam to hold back the lake while crews do their work, remove the old culvert, and pour the concrete to install the new culvert. It sounds simple, but it's a very complex and time-consuming process."

Jacksonville District anticipates awarding additional contracts to replace culverts later this year. Those opportunities will be advertised on the FedBizOpps website ([www.fbo.gov](http://www.fbo.gov)) when solicitation packages are ready.

While culvert construction presses ahead, Jacksonville District continues to work through the DSMS process. Staff from nearly every district organization as well as other corps offices across the nation have been developing and reviewing options for the next phase of dike rehabilitation.

"We started off with a lot of ideas," said Mr. Willadsen. "Now we're narrowing the large number of ideas into a suite of alternatives that we believe are worthy of further investigation."

Mr. Willadsen said the district would like to present a tentatively selected plan this summer, so environmental reviews can begin. Public participation will be a key part of the process.

"For various reasons, there's a lot of interest in what is going on with the dike and the rehabilitation," said Mr. Willadsen. "Our goal is to ensure we are reducing the risk of dike failure by making appropriate investments on behalf of the nation's taxpayers. Rehabilitation of the dike is necessary to protect lives and property in the adjacent communities."

# BASEBALL

Continued From Page 1

had defense behind me, I hit a little bit, but there were other guys who had some clutch hits," he added.

The one thing he always remembers is going to the then Cincinnati Reds spring training stadium in Sarasota and walking out onto the field to see 4,000 yellow T-shirts that showed Chobee baseball. He said he'd like to return to the final four as a coach.

"That is something I will definitely never forget. Sooner than later, I want to go back there as a coach and let these kids experience that," he added.

Marsocci was named pitching coach this season by new coach Eric Kindell. He said his goal is to mentor these young men and show them hard work pays off. Marsocci was praised for how hard he worked when he played at OHS. He remembers swinging a baseball bat in the batting cage while the football team played their homecoming game back in 2004. He was always working and that showed up in his performance.

"I want the kids to get the most out of their ability. We don't have any big power arms and no one will light up the radar gun. I want the kids to hit the corners, change speeds, locate the ball, get ahead of hitters, throw a lot of strikes and get a lot of ground balls," he noted.

Marsocci spotted a few flaws in his young pitching staff during workouts and has solved a few of their mechanical problems. He said he thinks the young pitchers have talent and can improve throughout the year.

"We have a very good group of younger pitchers coming and I look forward to working with them. There are some guys, who potentially, could be standouts," he noted.

This year's staff is led by seniors Kutter Crawford and Christian Crews. Crawford

always shows up in great shape and is teachable. He is affable and polished on the mound. Marsocci likes his command and his versatility.

Marsocci also praised sophomore Elijah Finney. He predicted Elijah will get better throughout the year and that he is not afraid to throw him against any team.

"He's started to grow into his body and he has a lot of movement on his pitches," he added.

Crews should also be a steady contributor with solid arm action and pitches. He also is healthy for the first time in his high school career.

Marsocci said he won't throw the younger pitchers to the wolves and will bring them along slowly. He doubts if there will be many complete games this year. His goal is to have his pitchers throwing well when the district tournament comes around in April.

Marsocci found out himself the formula to pitching just after the start of his senior year. Instead of trying to throw the ball past everyone with a mid-80s fastball, he started to listen to then pitching coach Mark Ward, and became a pitcher.

"I put my ego aside, listened to coach Ward, and found out I didn't have to blow batters away. I got ahead with the fastball, hit my spots and got people out," he added.

Other pitchers in the mix this year include Paul Jackson, and younger pitchers on the junior varsity like Gabe Greseth, Baron Stuart and Cody Louthan. He said all could graduate to the varsity should an older pitcher get hurt this year.

"We are young but I think we will surprise some people. I want to win every game and I'll coach to win every day. We will see what happens, but a 15-10 season wouldn't surprise me," he added.

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### Eagles hosting dinners

The Cypress Hut Eagles, 4509, will serve choice rib eye steak dinner, shrimp or fish, starting at 5:30 p.m., on Friday, **Feb. 7**. Entertainment will be provided by Sax On The Beach. Saturday, Feb. 8, dinner is cook's choice. Entertainment will be by Private Practice. Sunday, Feb. 9, southern fried chicken will be served. Tuesday, Feb. 11, is the weekly dart tournament with hamburgers being served. The public is welcome. Proceeds from Tuesday goes to local Cystic Fibrosis. For information, call the Cypress Hut Eagles at 863-467-1154.

### VFW offers bingo, karaoke

VFW Post 4423, 300 N.W. 34 St., on Friday, **Feb. 7**, and Saturday, Feb. 8, will have bingo at 1 p.m. and karaoke at 7 p.m. The kitchen will open at 5 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 9, dinner will be from 1 until 3 p.m. with roasted chicken. For information, call 863-763-0818. All proceeds go to local veteran organizations.

### Quarter auction is Feb. 8

Okeechobee Women of the Moose, 159 N.W. 36th St., Chapter 956, is sponsoring a quarter auction Saturday, **Feb. 8**, at 6 p.m. It is open to the public. Food will be available. The Moose is now serving Sunday breakfast from 8 until 11 a.m. in the dining room only. Social quarters will open at 1 p.m. Thursday, bingo starts at 1 p.m. and lunch will be available. Friday, bingo bonanza starts at 6:30 p.m. Proceeds go to support Moose charities programs.

### Theater events planned

The Okeechobee County Public Library will host two musical theater presentations Saturday, **Feb. 8**, starting at 1 p.m. The event will feature the third extract from the "Cabaret-Sinatra Era," which will be followed by "A Tribute to Stephen Sondheim, Part 1."

### Elks hosting show

The Bud and Donna Show will be held Saturday, **Feb. 8**, from 7 until 9 p.m. at the VFW Lodge on U.S. 441 S. Admission will be a \$10 donation. All proceeds will go to Elks Charities. For information or tickets, call Jim at 863-623-5161.

### Masons hold breakfast

The Masonic Lodge, 107 N.W. Fifth St., will host a breakfast with all the fixings Sunday, **Feb. 9**, for \$6 per plate. The public is welcomed and carry-out is available. Breakfast will be served from 8 until 11 a.m. All proceeds will go to local Mason giving.

### Legion offers Sunday bingo

American Legion Post 64 will host Sunday night bingo **Feb. 9** starting at 6:30 p.m. Doors will open at 5 p.m. in the bingo area. The kitchen will offer a limited menu.

### O.R.E. will meet Feb. 10

The Okeechobee Retired Educators (O.R.E.) will meet Monday, **Feb. 10**, beginning at 11 a.m. in the meeting room of Beef O'Brady's, 608 S. Parrott Ave. Members need to bring their volunteer hours log, their books to donate to Hooked on Books and any school supplies intended for donation to Lee Jolicoeur's Haiti mission. Any retired educator is invited.

### Tax preparation offered

Free tax preparation and e-filing by AARP Taxaide volunteers will begin Monday, **Feb. 10**, at the American Legion, 501 S.E. Second St. (east side entrance), on Monday and Tuesday from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. You must bring photo identification, Social Security cards for all dependents, last year's tax return and all 2013 financial papers. No appointment is necessary. You will be helped on a first come, first served, basis. Doors open at 8:45 a.m. Do not call the American Legion. For information, call 863-357-1694 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

### Shrine hosting dinner

The Okeechobee Shrine Club, 1740 S.W. 53rd St., will hold a spaghetti dinner Tuesday, **Feb. 11**, from 4 until 7 p.m. Reservations are not required. The club offers smoke-free dining. For your listening and dancing pleasure, music is provided from 5 until 8 p.m. All proceeds benefit Shrine charities. For 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.

### Benefit aids burn victim

The Okeechobee City Police Department (OCPD) and the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO) will take part in a celebrity server night Wednesday, **Feb. 12**, from 5 until 8 p.m. to benefit Walter Morgan, 19. The teen was injured while lighting a campfire and received third-degree burns over 85 percent of his body. He is the son of OCPD Detective Scott Morgan. The Golden Corral Restaurant, 700 S. Parrott Ave., will host the event. Tickets are \$11 in advance or \$14.50 at the door and will include dinner and a drink. For information contact: Michele or Connie at the sheriff's office, 863-763-3117; or Betty Taylor or Kelley Margerum at the police department, 863-763-5521. Walter is a patient at Tampa General Hospital and is currently in the intensive care-burn unit. All proceeds will help defray his mounting medical expenses.

### Judge to speak at library

Retired Judge William Hendry will speak at the Okeechobee Library Thursday, **Feb. 13**, starting at 5:30 p.m. He will talk about how the local court system was created. For information, call the library at 863-763-3536.

### Valentine dinner planned

AMVESTS Post 200, 8591 S.R. 78 W., will host a Valentine's dinner Saturday, **Feb. 15**, at 7 p.m. for a donation of \$7. Friday, Feb. 21, there will be a bar bingo at 12:30 p.m., and Gator races at 7 p.m. For information, call 330-556-1576.

### B.R.A.T. dance is Feb. 15

The Okeechobee B.R.A.T. Club will host a teen dance party at the Okeechobee Freshman Campus, 610 S.W. Second Ave., on Saturday, **Feb. 15**, from 7 until 10 p.m. The cost is \$7 and includes pizza, soda and chips. For information, call 863-697-9096.

## Obituaries

*Obituaries should be submitted to the Okeechobee News by e-mailing obits@newszap.com. Customers may also request photos and links to online guest books. A link to the obituaries is available at www.newszap.com*

### Doris Hogan, 84

OKEECHOBEE — Doris Hogan of Okeechobee died Feb. 5, 2014.

She is survived by her husband, Ray Hogan; three sons; two daughters-in-law; six grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren.

Burial will be 12 Noon, Friday, Feb. 7, 2014 at Ortona Cemetery.

Those wishing to leave a message of condolence may sign the register book at, www.OkeechobeeFuneralHome.com

All arrangements are entrusted to the direction and care of the Buxton, Bass and Conway families of the Buxton & Bass Okeechobee Funeral Home, 400 North Parrott Avenue, Okeechobee, Florida, 34972.

### Thomas Michael Godwin, 57

OKEECHOBEE — Thomas Michael Godwin of Okeechobee died Feb. 3, 2014. He was born April 6, 1956 in Stuart, Florida to Thomas and Faye Godwin.

He was a commercial fisherman and enjoyed yard work, fishing, hunting, the outdoors, football and NASCAR. He moved to Okeechobee eight years ago.

Mr. Godwin is survived by his mother, Faye Godwin of Okeechobee; two sons, Michael Taylor Trevisan of Deland, Fla., and Brant Garrett of Port St. Lucie; daughter, Tiffany Perri of Stuart, Fla.; three sisters, Linda Nieto of Okeechobee, Louise Burke and Tina O'Dell (Shawn) of Danville, Ill.; grandchildren, Brant Andrew Garrett, Jr., Ariella Marie Garrett of Port St. Lucie and Weston Perri of Stuart.

Memorial services will be 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 8, 2014 at Resurrection Life, 1803 SW 3rd Avenue, Okeechobee, FL 34974 with Pastor Dave San Martin officiating.

Those wishing to leave a message of condolence may sign the register book at www.OkeechobeeFuneralHome.com

All arrangements are entrusted to the direction and care of the Buxton, Bass and Conway families of the Buxton & Bass Okeechobee Funeral Home, 400 North Parrott Avenue, Okeechobee, Florida, 34972.

### OCCA plans yard sale

A yard sale will be held Saturday, **Feb. 15**, at the Holiday Inn Express, 3101 U.S. 441 S., and will be hosted by the Okeechobee County Cattlewomen's Association to help raise money for their scholarship fund. For information, call Janette at 863-801-4426 or Jackie at 863-634-1980.

### Girl Scout fundraiser set

A golf tournament to aid Girl Scout Troop 60005 will be held Saturday, **Feb. 15**, at the Blue Heron Golf Club. The entry fee is \$160 per team. For information, call Robin at 863-801-3413.

### Robert Ervin Coker, 80

OKEECHOBEE — Robert Ervin Coker of Okeechobee died February 3, 2014. He was born January 4, 1930 in Bradenton to John and Doris Coker. A resident of Okeechobee for over 20 years, he worked at ranches, took care of Polo grounds for 45 years all over the country and drove for Walpole.

He enjoyed participating in rodeos bull-dogging and calf roping.

Mr. Coker is survived by his daughter, Melody Cook of Bradenton; two grandchildren, Jamie and Jason; and one great grandson, Gavin Lee.

Visitation will be 10 a.m. until services at 11 a.m. Monday, February 10, 2014 at Buxton & Bass Okeechobee Funeral Home.

Memorial contributions may be made to Hospice of Okeechobee, PO Box 1548, Okeechobee, FL 34973.

Those wishing to leave a message of condolence may sign the register book at, www.OkeechobeeFuneralHome.com

All arrangements are entrusted to the direction and care of the Buxton, Bass and Conway families of the Buxton & Bass Okeechobee Funeral Home, 400 North Parrott Avenue, Okeechobee, Florida, 34972.



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Special to the Okeechobee News/EES

## Students of the week

Everglades Elementary students achieving excellence in the classroom for the week of Feb. 7 include: kindergarten students, Francisco Garcia-Montoya, Aryan Karki, Adriana Kelley, Adrian Garcia, Sebastian Leon; first graders, Brooklin Quinlin, Ernesto Flores, Thomas Alvarez, Tatyana Youngblood, Aquilina Torres, Lanaya Strozier; second grade students, Lindsey Hamilton, Natalie Jimenez, Damien Johnson, Tucker Myers, Shyla English; third grade students, Connor Peacock, Ty Easterday, Jacob Tumoszwiw, Taylor Elgin, Isis Guerrero, Brayam Yoc-Godines; fourth grade students, Westyn Boone, Allyson Broadrick, Makayla Burham; fifth grade students, Jasmine Chapman, Jennifer Dougan and Kase Myers. Congratulations to our many outstanding students.



Special to the Okeechobee News/SEMES

## Students of the Week

Seminole Elementary would like to congratulate their Students of the Week for the week of Jan. 31: Yahziel Torres, Jesse Cooper, Hailey Salazar, Bryan Cortez, Jamie Tyson, Rosalinda Yanez, Natasha Moore, Enrique Urbano, Nathalia Peresse, Jonathan Hernandez, Alex Vasquez-Garcia, Danny Leal, Joel Alaniz, Jonathan Thurman, Tyler Comer, Bryanna Castillo, Leonardo Ibarra-Medrano, Aundre Baker, Anai Bustos, Chance Chaplin, Kavion Thomas, Chloe Warner, Adam Moore, Kailey Raulerson, Ja'Khious Cooper, Samantha Teardo, Miranda Watson, Juan Baltazar, James Hallett, Destiny Tagle and Rocky Garcia.

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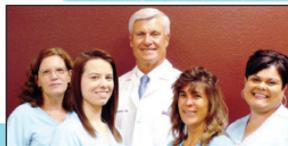
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Special to the Okeechobee News

## 100th Day of School Pajama Party and Celebration

The students in Mrs. Sickels' and Mrs. Mullens' classes at Seminole Elementary celebrated the 100th Day of School with a Pajama Party and full day of activities! Utilizing dozens of different items, they learned to count to 100, a hundred different ways! The day started by stringing 100 Fruit Loops on a necklace and ended with a gigantic party in which they had to count out 10 pieces each of 10 different snacks, so they could feast on the fruits of their labor!



Special to the Okeechobee News

## FDOT working with area leaders

Secretary of State FDOT Ananth Prasad gives an update on Florida's status to delegates from Okeechobee, Glades and surrounding areas. Mr. Prasad states that the FDOT is the engine which supports commerce for our counties. Florida is in a great position with Economic Development. Unemployment rate is down to 6.2 percent, 462,000 jobs were created in 2013 and \$1 billion was created in revenue for Florida. Mr. Prasad is eager to work for the business workforce and supports the America's Gateway project developing in Glades County. Pictured are: Paul Carlisle, Glades County manager; Teresa Chandler Waste Management/EDC board Glades County; Secretary of State FDOT Ananth Prasad; Kevin Hatfield Gilbert, Chevrolet/EDC Board Glades County; Libby Maxwell, district secretary to Representative Dr. Cary Pigman; and, Jeri Wilson Beck, Real Estate agent.

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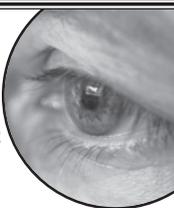
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## In the military

### Hagan graduates boot camp

Private Ryan Austin Hagan, 18, of Okeechobee, graduated from United States Marine Corps boot camp at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island on Jan. 24. Private Hagan successfully completed 13 weeks of intensive basic training at MCRD Parris Island as one of 57 recruits in Training Platoon 1004. While in recruit training, Private Hagan achieved the following: squad leader and expert rifleman. Following ten days home on leave he will report to Camp LeJeune for one month at Military Combat Training then on to Military Occupation Specialist School.



### Aquatic Plant Management Task Force to meet

The Lake Okeechobee Aquatic Plant Management Interagency Task Force Meeting will be held Wednesday, Feb. 12, from 10 a.m. to noon at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers South Florida Operations Office, 525 Ridgelawn Road in Clewiston. Members of the public are welcome to come or call in and participate, and are invited to speak during the first part of the meeting. Call-in number is: 1-877-336-1839; Access Code: 3923394; Security Code: 1234.



Special to the Okeechobee News

# Your Medical and Health Care Directory

## Hip Replacement Surgery Helps Thousands Annually

The hip joint is one of the body's largest weight-bearing joints. It's a ball-and-socket joint. This helps the hip remain stable even during twisting and extreme ranges of motion. A healthy hip joint allows you to walk, squat, and turn without pain.

The most common cause of chronic hip pain and disability is arthritis. Osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, and traumatic arthritis are the most common forms of this disease.

Hip replacement surgery helps more than 200,000 Americans each year to relieve their hip pain, and get back to enjoying normal, everyday activities. Total hip replacement surgery almost always:

- Stops or greatly reduces hip pain. Even the pain from surgery should go away within weeks.
- Increases leg strength. Without hip pain, you'll be able to use your legs more. This will build up your muscles.
- Improves quality of life by allowing you to do daily tasks and low-impact activities in greater comfort.



- Provides years of easier movement. Most total hip replacements last for many years.

Don't let hip pain keep you from what you enjoy doing. You may live for scenic walks, playing doubles with friends or swimming laps in the pool. Don't let hip pain stop you from moving! Get the treatment you need to comfortably move with ease.

Dr. Benjamin Epstein, Board Certified Orthopaedic Surgeon at Raulerson explains "My patients seeking relief from joint pain love having access to great orthopaedic

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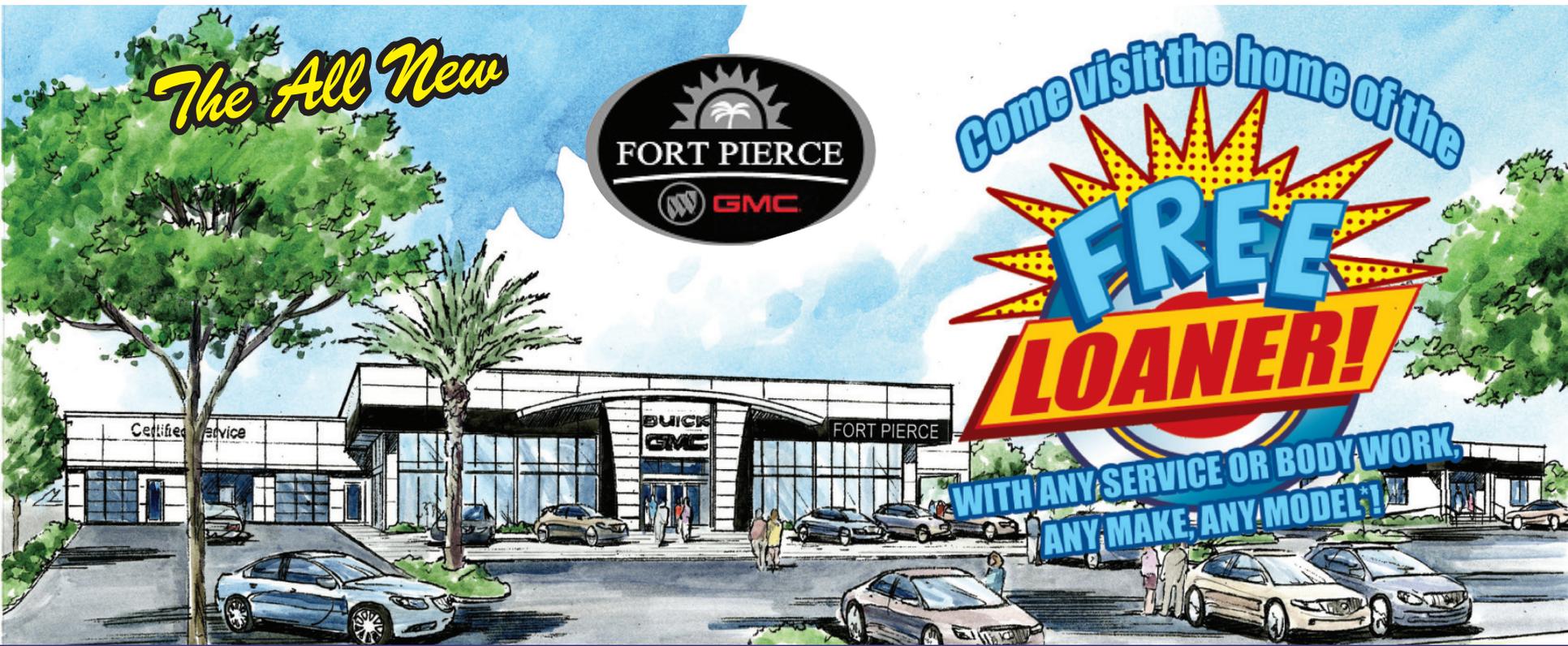


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# Middle school teacher suspended without pay

## YMS teacher accused of being intoxicated in class

By Eric Kopp  
Okeechobee News

The investigation surrounding a local middle school teacher who was allegedly intoxicated in front of her class is continuing, stated a press release from the Okeechobee County School District.

That release goes on to point out the teacher — Catherine Ann Jones — has been suspended from her teaching duties at Yearling Middle School without pay.

“School board policy provides an individual 15 days to request a hearing on any decision which affects his/her substantial interest,” stated Joni Ard, assistant superintendent of administrative services for the

school district, in that release. “In the event a hearing is requested, it will take place March 11.”

The seventh grade teacher was removed from her classroom Jan. 27 after a school resource officer and YMS principal Andy Brewer stood in the open doorway of her classroom and watched her.

According to a report by Deputy Joseph Hall, of the Okeechobee County Sheriff’s Office and a school resource officer at YMS, Jones was “... stumbling around the class, had slurred speech and could barely stay awake.”

At one point, continued the report, she tried to take a drink from a cup “... but had a difficult time doing so.”

After she was removed from her classroom Jones, 47, reportedly denied being under the influence of alcohol, added the

deputy’s report. She purportedly told Deputy Hall she was not sick and is not a diabetic.

Deputy Hall went on to indicate in his report Jones “... appeared and smelled to be intoxicated.”

Jones has not been arrested or charged in connection with this alleged incident.

However, that was not the case four years ago when she was arrested by a detective with the Okeechobee Narcotics Task Force on seven felony counts of doctor shopping.

She was arrested Feb. 5, 2010, for going to seven different local doctors and receiving prescriptions for oxycodone and hydrocodone pain pills, stated that detective’s arrest report.

At this time, Jones was a language arts teacher at Osceola Middle School.

That report pointed out that during one span — Sept. 7 through Oct. 26, 2009 — she

received scripts for 540 painkillers. She apparently filled her prescriptions at four different local pharmacies.

Following that arrest, Jones entered a local drug court program on April 7, 2010. She successfully graduated from that program on April 7, 2011, and the felony charges filed against her were dismissed.

Upon her completion of drug court, Jones was allowed to resume her teaching duties in the local school district.

Jones has been a teacher in the local district for 14 years.

In an earlier interview, Mrs. Ard stated Jones’ classes are being covered by a substitute teacher.

“The district wants to assure all parents that we are committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students,” she said.

## Feb. 3-7 is School Crossing Guard week

By Michele Bell  
OCSO Public Information Officer

It’s hard to miss them in their new eye-popping, neon-yellow school crossing guard uniform — and that’s the idea.

Okeechobee County has three very special men we would like to recognize during this special week who keep our children safe while heading to and from school each day.

Those school crossing guards are Robert (Bobby) Sippert, Robert (Bob) Baker and Glenn Thomas.

School Crossing Guard Appreciation

Week in Florida is Feb. 3-7.

“These folks are dedicated to the safety of our children traveling to and from our schools. They are there when it’s raining or freezing,” said Okeechobee County Sheriff’s Office Major Noel Stephen. “We appreciate their dedication to the children and our sheriff’s office.”

These men are truly unsung, everyday heroes of Okeechobee County. They deserve a friendly smile and a cheerful greeting from all of us for a job well done.

The next time you see one tell them thank you, give them a wave or a simple smile.



Submitted photo/OCSO

The week of Feb. 3-7 is School Crossing Guard Week in Florida and three crossing guards with the Okeechobee County Sheriff’s Office were recently honored in conjunction with the special week. On hand for that ceremony were (left to right): OCSO Deputy Captain Gary Bell; OCSO Deputy Sergeant Mark Roberts; crossing guard Glenn Thomas; crossing guard Robert Baker; crossing guard Robert Sippert; and, OCSO Major Noel Stephen.

## 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).

- David Ray Chadwick, 42, S.E. 19th Court, Okeechobee, was arrested Feb. 4 by Deputy Megan Holroyd on an Okeechobee County warrant charging him with felony battery. His bond was set at \$5,000.

- Tobey Kathleen Long, 69, Trout St., Okeechobee, was arrested Feb. 4 by Deputy Megan Holroyd on a DOC warrant charging her with the felony of violation of probation - grand theft. She is being held without bond.

- Elizabeth Danielle Skipper, 32, Arbor Lane, Moore Haven, was arrested Feb. 4 by

Deputy Timothy Porter on an amended DOC warrant charging her with the felony of violation of probation - possession of methamphetamine. She is being held without bond.

- Dustiyn James Hayda, 22, N.W. 36th St., Okeechobee, was arrested Feb. 5 by Deputy Yero Todman on a Brevard County warrant charging him with the felony of violation of probation - burglary of an occupied dwelling. He is being held without bond.

- Tammy Dalain Lynn, 49, C.R. 721, Lorida, was arrested Feb. 5 by Deputy Yero Todman on a DOC warrant charging her with the felony of violation of probation - possession of oxycodone. He is being held without bond.

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.



Submitted photo/OCSO

## 30 years service

Deputy Sergeant Cliff Gill (right) was recently honored for his 30 years of service to the Okeechobee County Sheriff’s Office (OCSO). Congratulating him and presenting him with a special pin is Sheriff Paul May (left). Sgt. Gill is a member of the OCSO road patrol.

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# Cold temps keep deer hunting season going strong

## Outta the Woods

By Tony Young  
FWC

There's one thing good to say about the second wave of seriously cold temperatures that invaded the Sunshine State last week. It reminded us hunters that deer season is still going strong in parts of Florida.

General gun season remains open on private lands in zones B and D through Feb. 23. And then if you don't mind hunting with a primitive weapon, Zone D's late muzzleloading gun season runs a week longer until March 2. This unique late season, which occurs only in Zone D, was established to give hunters the chance to hunt the rut, which occurs from mid-January through February in the Panhandle.

A \$5 muzzleloading gun permit is required to hunt during this season. On private land, hunters have the choice of using a muzzleloader, bow or crossbow.

On wildlife management areas, this post-season is referred to as the archery/muzzleloading gun season. Hunters can use bows or muzzleloaders but not crossbows, unless they possess a disabled crossbow permit. Hunters who choose to hunt with a bow must have the \$5 archery permit, and those using a muzzleloader need the muzzleloading gun permit.

The most common kinds of game to hunt during this season are deer and wild hogs. Only bucks may be taken (even if you use a bow), and one antler must be at least 5 inches in length. If you're hunting deer, make sure you have the \$5 deer permit. On

private land, the daily bag limit is two. Bag limits and antler size for deer on WMAs can differ, so please consult the area brochure before you hunt.

Wild hogs aren't considered game animals on private lands. Because of this, they can be taken year-round by most weapons with no bag or size limits. On most WMAs, there also are no bag or size limits, and hogs are legal to take during most hunting seasons except spring turkey. On selected WMAs, specific bag and size limits do apply, so check the area's brochure to make sure.

No dogs may be used in the pursuit of deer during this season. However, leashed dogs can be used to track a wounded deer if necessary. And it's important to note that no turkeys may be taken during this season.

Bows and crossbows must have a minimum draw weight of 35 pounds, and hand-held releases on bows are permitted. Broadheads used in taking deer must have at least two sharpened edges with a minimum width of 7/8 inch.

During this season, you may use only muzzleloaders that take black powder or a non-nitro-cellulose substitute and are fired by wheel lock, flintlock or percussion cap ignition (including 209 primers). You may not use muzzleloaders that require smokeless powder or those with self-contained cartridge ammunition capabilities. For hunting deer, muzzleloaders that fire single bullets must be at least .40-caliber, and those firing two or more balls must be 20-gauge or larger.

You're allowed to take deer and hogs over feeding stations on private land, but it's illegal to do that on WMAs.

Twelve of the WMAs in Zone D have a late archery/muzzleloading gun season. If you plan to hunt any of 'em, you must have the \$26 management area permit as well. Ten of those areas don't require a quota permit during this period: Apalachicola, Apalachicola River, Beavercreek, Blackwater, Choctawhatchee River, Econfina Creek, Escambia River, Point Washington, Tate's Hill and Yellow River WMAs. The two that do require a quota permit are Chipola River and Perdido River WMAs.

You can get all of the licenses and permits you'll need at any tax collector's office or retail outlet that sells hunting and fishing supplies, by calling 888-HUNT-FLORIDA or by going online at License.MyFWC.com.

So if you're not quite ready to give up on deer hunting, have no fear, 'cause February's here! Grab your favorite primitive weapon and head over to Zone D, where the rut is still on.

As hunters, we all know that it's nearly impossible to score every time we're in the woods. But the thrill of the hunt lies in the appreciation of the woods, watching the wildlife and never knowing when that trophy animal might decide to show itself.

Tony Young looks forward each year to hunting Zone D's late muzzleloading season, because the deer are still in rut on a couple of properties he hunts.



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Special to the Okeechobee News

## Community Based Care explained

Devereaux Community Based Care of Okeechobee and the Treasure Coast was recently rewarded a contract with the Department of Children and Families to coordinate and oversee childhood welfare services for Okeechobee and the Treasure Coast (Indian River, St. Lucie and Martin counties) Christina Kaiser is a representative of Devereux and attended a recent Kiwanis Club of Okeechobee meeting. Ms. Kaiser presented to the club with the goal of explaining Community Based Care. Admittedly, the subject can be very complicated. Ms. Kaiser explained that the job of Devereux is to partner up with local children and family services and make sure they have the tools to succeed. Ms. Kaiser said the ultimate goal is the elimination of child abuse and neglect. Also pictured are J.D. Mixon (left) and Dowling Watford (right).

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 Contact Eric at 863-634-0379 for details. Access [www.southeastmilk.org](http://www.southeastmilk.org) for an Employment Application  
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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.

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## Public Notices

### Public Notice

The Okeechobee County Board of County Commissioners will hold its **Regular Session on Thursday, February 13, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.** in the "Judge William L. Hendry Courtroom" at the Historic Courthouse, 304 N.W. 2nd Street, Okeechobee, Florida.

Any person deciding to appeal any decision made by the Board of County Commissioners with respect to any matter considered at this meeting will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purposes, he or she will need to ensure that a verbatim record of such proceedings is made, which record shall include the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons with disabilities needing special accommodation to participate in this proceeding should contact the County Administrator's Office not later than four (4) working days prior to the proceeding at 304 N.W. 2nd Street, Room 123 Okeechobee, Florida 34972, or call 863.763.6441. If you are hearing or voice impaired, call TDD 1-800-222-3448 (voice) or 1-888-447-5620 (TTY).

Frank Irby, Chair Board of County Commissioners Okeechobee County, Florida

Sharon Robertson, Clerk Board of County Commissioners Okeechobee County, Florida /s/ Paula Poskon/ Deputy Clerk 460938 ON 2/7/2014

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## Public Notice

### NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF A SPECIAL EXCEPTION

**NOTICE: A PUBLIC HEARING** will be held before the Okeechobee County Board of Adjustments and Appeals on **Tuesday, February 25, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Health Department Auditorium, 1728 NW 9th Avenue, Okeechobee, Florida to consider amending a condition of a Special Exception granting a density of 8 units per acre in a Residential General (RG) zoning district. The property owner is N&A Construction, Inc. The applicant is Naser Abuegab. The property address is 114 SW 18th Avenue and is more particularly described as follows:

A PARCEL OF LAND LYING IN SECTION 20, TOWNSHIP 37 SOUTH, RANGE 35 EAST, OKEECHOBEE COUNTY, FLORIDA, BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: COMMENCE AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SAID SECTION 20, THENCE S 00°04'02" E ALONG THE EAST LINE OF SAID SECTION 20, A DISTANCE OF 246.75 FEET; THENCE N 89°54'24" W, A DISTANCE OF 20.01 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE S 00°04'02" E, PARALLEL WITH AFORESAID EAST LINE OF SECTION 20, A DISTANCE OF 130.62 FEET TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF CLAY DEVELOPMENT SUBDIVISION, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 3, PAGE 19 OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF OKEECHOBEE COUNTY, FLORIDA; THENCE N 89° 54'24" W ALONG THE NORTH LINE OF SAID CLAY DEVELOPMENT SUBDIVISION, A DISTANCE OF 637.71 FEET TO THE EAST R/W LINE OF S.W. 18TH AVE. (BEING 20 FEET IN WIDTH); THENCE N 00°04'26" W ALONG SAID EAST R/W LINE, A DISTANCE OF 130.62 FEET; THENCE S 89°54'24" E, PARALLEL WITH AFORESAID NORTH LINE OF CLAY DEVELOPMENT SUBDIVISION, A DISTANCE OF 637.61 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

LESS AND EXCEPT FROM THE ABOVE DESCRIBED PARCEL A 17 FOOT WIDE STRIP OF LAND IN SECTION 20, TOWNSHIP 37 SOUTH, RANGE 35 EAST, OKEECHOBEE COUNTY, FLORIDA, LYING NORTH OF, PARALLEL TO AND CONTIGUOUS TO LOT 4 AND THE EAST 10 FEET OF LOT 3, CLAY DEVELOPMENT, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 3, PAGE 19, PUBLIC RECORDS OF OKEECHOBEE COUNTY, FLORIDA.

In the event that all items scheduled before the Board are not heard, the hearings shall be continued to Wednesday, February 26, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. in the Okeechobee County Health Department Auditorium, 1728 NW 9th Avenue, Okeechobee, Florida.

ALL INTERESTED PARTIES SHALL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEARD AT THIS PUBLIC HEARING. Any person deciding to appeal any decision by the Board of Adjustments and Appeals with respect to any matter considered at this meeting or hearing will need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made and that the record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal will be based. Planning and Development tapes are for the sole purpose of backup for official records of the department.

William D. Royce, Planning Director  
Petition 5-2014-0729  
461434 ON 2/7/2014

### LEGAL NOTICE

A public auction will be held at B M J Towing, Inc. Lot at 414 South Parrott Avenue, Okeechobee, Florida 34974 on **FRIDAY THE 21st day of FEBRUARY 2014** from 10:00-11:00 A.M. Pursuant to Florida statute 713.78 for unpaid towing and storage. Year, Make, Model & Vin's as follows:

**2004 FORD TAURUS SE 4 DOOR** 1FADP53U04A103880  
**1991 DODGE RAM 150** LE REG CAB 1B7GE16Y2M524113

Terms of sale are cash, and no checks will be accepted. The seller reserves the right of final bid. All sales are final. No refunds will be made. Said automobiles will be sold in "AS IS" with no guarantees. 461472 ON 2/7/2014

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### NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

Notice is hereby given that the following vehicles will be sold at public auction pursuant to F.S. 713.78 on the sale dates at the locations below at 9:00 a.m. to satisfy towing and storage charges.  
**1996 Toyota** 4TAVL52N5TZ102570  
**Sale Date: 02/18/2014**  
**2000 Dodge** 1B7HC13Z5Y1139833  
**Sale Date: 02/24/2014**  
Location: Rapid Auto Disposal 4870 US Hwy 441 SE Okeechobee, FL 34974  
Lienors reserve the right to bid. 461435 ON 2/7/2014

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Any person deciding to appeal any decision made by the Board of County Commissioners with respect to any matter considered at this meeting will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purposes, he or she will need to ensure that a verbatim record of such proceedings is made, which record shall include the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons with disabilities needing special accommodation to participate in this proceeding should contact the County Administrator's Office not later than four (4) working days prior to the proceeding at 304 N.W. 2nd Street, Room 123 Okeechobee, Florida 34972, or call 863.763.6441. If you are hearing or voice impaired, call TDD 1-800-222-3448 (voice) or 1-888-447-5620 (TTY).

Kathy Scott, Tourism Coordinator  
Tourist Development Council  
Okeechobee County  
461562 ON 2/7/2014

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## Public Notice

### NOTICE OF REMOVAL OF NAMES OF POTENTIALLY INELIGIBLE VOTERS

Pursuant to Section 98.075(7) of the Florida Statutes, the following persons are hereby notified that they are potentially ineligible to be registered to vote. Failure to respond within thirty (30) days of this notice may result in determination of ineligibility by the Supervisor of Elections and removal of the registered voter's name from the statewide voter registration system.

**April Brown**  
Last known address: 5251 SE 128th Ave Okeechobee, FL

**Joel C. Nettle**  
Last known address: 4222 SE 28th St Okeechobee, FL

If further assistance is needed, please contact the Okeechobee County Supervisor of Elections.

Diane Hagan,  
Okeechobee County Supervisor of Elections  
304 NW 2nd St, Room 144  
Okeechobee, FL 34972  
(863)763-4014  
461388 ON 2/7/2014

### NOTICE

There will be a meeting of the Tourist Development Council (TDC) of Okeechobee County on **Tuesday, February 11, 2014, at 5:30 p.m.** in the Tourist Development Council Office located at 2800 N.W. 20th Trail (Airport Terminal Bldg.), Okeechobee, Florida.

Any person deciding to appeal any decision made by the TDC with respect to any matter considered at such meeting will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purpose, he or she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

Kathy Scott, Tourism Coordinator  
Tourist Development Council  
Okeechobee County  
461562 ON 2/7/2014



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Level: Advanced

# SUDOKU

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ANSWER:

# Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

- ACROSS**  
1 It eases tension  
11 Not kosher  
15 Online identification  
16 Meteorological effect caused by refraction  
17 Blue blood  
18 Kennedy Space Center attraction  
19 Orders  
20 Certain pilgrim  
21 "Our House" songwriter  
22 Some ER admissions  
23 Campus letters  
25 Must  
27 Autos featured in the John Wayne film "Big Jake"  
29 Mine sight  
31 Hurt  
32 Chubby Checker's real first name  
34 Bond  
36 Yielding  
38 Its motto is Latin for "Always prepared": Abbr.  
39 Measure of interpersonal skills  
43 Like the conjunction "since"  
47 "Bed-in for Peace" figure  
48 Shock  
50 Cap-\_\_\_: from head to toe  
51 Subsidized grad student  
53 Charge carriers  
55 Subway under B'way  
56 Hill worker  
57 Zipped through  
59 Bristles  
61 Five-time 1970s Phillies All-Star shortstop  
62 Cooking aid  
64 JFK postings  
65 Singer/actress discovered by Mahalia Jackson  
66 Old Dodge  
67 "Next?"
- DOWN**  
1 Joe Lieberman's middle name  
2 1957 Chuck Willis hit  
3 11th-century explorer  
4 Letter sign-off  
5 Do a road crew's job  
6 Roxy Music alum  
7 Linchpin  
8 Waters off Siberia  
9 Key with four sharps: Abbr.  
10 Biometric identification technique  
11 Biblical possessive  
12 Fast time for many  
13 Flexible  
14 Front creation  
24 2004 historical film set in Africa  
26 Heath family shrub  
28 Automatic opening?  
30 Actor Gulager  
33 Defunct defense gp.

- 35 Eau across the Pyrenees  
37 Soul maker  
39 Convertible of a sort  
40 The least bit  
41 Bygone CIA concern  
42 Without a fuss  
44 Eponymous mail-order magnate  
45 It may follow a front  
46 "I'm thinking ..."  
49 \_\_\_ operation: division calculation in computing  
52 Numerical extreme  
54 Gawk  
58 Battle of Normandy city  
60 Part of a CSA signature  
63 Bled

### ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:

P	I	N	G	S		R	H	E	T		M	E	M	O		
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xwordeditor@aol.com

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By Barry C. Silk (c)2011 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

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	<p><b>2000-C: Lake Access Taylor Creek Condo</b> 1/1 completely furnished. Ceramic tile throughout. Amenities: clubhouse, boat slip &amp; storage, seawall, pool and more. A fisherman's dream! \$55,000 MLS #207714</p>	 <p><b>2001-M: Very nice 2006 DW</b> on a cul-de-sac. 2,318 Total sq ft/2,048 under air, split plan, large living rm, dining rm, master bath, large utility room, shed, front and back porch. \$71,900 MLS # 207502</p>
<p><b>NEW LISTING</b></p> 	<p><b>4007-M: Turtle Cove Rim Canal access,</b> with full length addition mobile, plus closed in porch overlooking water. Extra lot across street included. \$70,000 MLS #207703</p>	<p><b>NEW LISTING</b></p>  <p><b>1012-H: Blue Heron</b> Beautiful house right on the golf course! 3BR/2BA with 2,795. Ceramic Tile throughout house and carpet bedrooms. Screened back porch. \$169,900 MLS # 207681</p>

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# New-look Brahmans eye diamond campaign

By Charles M. Murphy

Okeechobee News

The Okeechobee High School boys baseball team knows it has nowhere to go but up in 2014 as they come off a lackluster five-win season in 2013.

There will be almost a completely new team in the OHS dugout this year. Eric Kindell, OHS baseball star and Embry-Riddle University alumnus, knows all about success in baseball -- he was taught by Brahman coaching legend Tim Gillis.

The new Brahman coach has preached fundamentals and playing the game because you love it.

He's also brought in a group of former Brahmans for coaches like Lonnie Sears, Brian Morgan and pitching coach Blake Marsocci. Rob Lawson returns from his work on the junior varsity squad last year.

"I'm very excited for the kids and the coaching staff," Kindell said during practice Monday. "Everyone has bought into the program and the kids are ready to start the new season. I want to continue the winning tradition we've had in the past."

Kindell went to college with Scooter Gillis, the son of coach Gillis, and grew up around the sound baseball strategy of pitching and defense. He knows his team will have to perform well in those areas in order to be successful this year.

"The defense is the key for us to be suc-

cessful. We have to throw strikes for us to win," he added.

Small ball is another strategy to expect from the Brahmans this year. Sacrifice bunts, bunting for base hits, hit and run plays, stolen bases, and other things will be used to try and score runs.

Kindell said as long as the kids improve each day and take steps in the right direction, he will be satisfied this year. He also had several players competing at every position. He notes that should keep all the players smart.

"When someone is sitting around at ease, that makes it easy for them to lay off and that is not what we want. We want 100 percent every day from these players," he explained.

Kindell admits the team is young, they have only two seniors, and that will make it tough when you play solid programs like Port St. Lucie and South Fork.

"The freshmen and sophomores are two of the strongest classes we've had in a long time," explained Kindell. "If these kids stick to it and make baseball a part of their life, they can be a success in the future."

Kindell also thanked the community for all of their support, financial and otherwise this year. The team held a successful 100-inning game on Saturday. Onlookers got to see Brahman legend Jonathan Crawford crank out a home run in the game.

"I've been really overwhelmed with the support I've had. I don't have enough words to thank these businesses and individuals" he added.

Here is a position-by-position break down of the team.

Catcher: Freshman Brian Greseth is the only ninth grader to make varsity. He will compete with sophomore Arthur Woodruff for playing time throughout the year. They will be counted on for solid defense and to work well with the pitching staff.

First base: Bailey Kirton, Kevin Coleman and Mason Joyner are in the mix for playing time. None of them have much varsity experience.

Second base: Jarrod Morgan and Paul Jackson are both in the mix at second. Jackson batted .184 last year but did drive in eight runs. Morgan, only a sophomore, batted .176 and was used more as a relief pitcher.

Shortstop: Elijah Finney and Kutter Crawford will share the position with Crawford expected to be the ace of the pitching staff. Crawford batted just .214 last year but led the team with 12 runs batted in and had 15 hits.

Third base: Jackson and Coleman are both in the mix for playing time at third. Crews was the starter here last year when he batted .256 and led the team with 20 base hits.

Outfield: Trenton Hickman, Crews, Layton Thomas, and Evan Faulk figure to com-



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy  
OHS coach Eric Kindell (right) shows the players how it is done during a recent drill at baseball practice.

pete for playing time in the outfield. Thomas had the team's only homerun last year.

The pitching staff will be led by Crawford and Crews. Crawford had a 2.84 earned run average last year. Crews was slowed by elbow surgery and pitched to a 5.25 earned run average when he returned to the mound. Crawford recently signed a scholarship to pitch for Indian River State College.

Other pitchers in the mix include Morgan, Finney, Baron Stuart a freshman, Greseth, and Armando Rodriguez.

Key losses from last year include Tyler Barber, Jack Radebaugh, and two Indian River State College players Dalton Murray, the Pioneers starting catcher this year, and Alex Estremera who will serve as a utility player this year at IRSC.



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy  
Trenton Hickman (right) participates in a sacrifice bunt drill at OHS baseball practice.

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# Brahmans' hoop season ends with tourney loss

By Charles M. Murphy  
Okeechobee News

South Fork shut down Okeechobee's offense and out worked the Okeechobee High School Brahmans in a 73-42 victory at the District 14-6A Boys Basketball Tournament Tuesday night at Fort Pierce Westwood High School, ending the Brahman season.

Okeechobee shot poorly, 10-30, in the first half, and couldn't take advantage of South Fork's first half struggles as they ended their season at 8-16.

Chris Watson routinely hit jumper after jumper from 14 feet and closer to the basket as he scored 22 points. Stanley Spence came off the bench to spark South Fork with 16 points.

Jacob Stewart played a solid game for Okeechobee with 19 points, four rebounds, three steals and three assists. Eddie Neal added 10 points and five rebounds for the Brahmans.

After Okeechobee scored the first basket of the game, South Fork (8-13) ran off 10 straight points. Although the Bulldogs shot only 37-percent in the first half, they still led 10-2 after the first quarter and 24-14 at the half.

Brahman coach Shawn Hays said he was disappointed his team didn't take advantage of their opportunities in the first half.

"It is hard to believe that we didn't bring it tonight. We have struggled to find some energy and a semblance of an offense for the past two weeks," he explained.

Hays said both teams knew each other and what they like to do and that played a role in the game plan. The two teams split games during the regular season.

Bulldog coach Tommy Swager has scouted four Brahman games in recent weeks and said his team wanted to stop Neal, Stewart and Roshell Thomas from getting off to good starts.

"We didn't stop them but we did slow them down early and that helped us. We feel fortunate to come out with the win tonight," he said.

Swager also wanted to avoid a slow start and his team came out with tight defense



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy  
**Blake Lucky steals a pass despite the best efforts of Brahman Tyrell Taylor (right) during Tuesday's District Tournament game.**

and although they shot poorly, still took the lead.

South Fork really dominated the second half. Okeechobee hung around and trailed by 12 points midway through the third before South Fork went on a big run. They led 43-28 after the third quarter and scored 30 points in the fourth quarter to finish off the blowout.

Forward Michael Rivan said the Bulldogs worked hard and really didn't want their season to end.

"It was exciting to play in a district game and I'm glad we won," he said.

Rivan had five points and four rebounds. Kaiman Patterson and Blake Lucky only had six points and six assists but they played great defense for South Fork.

Tyrell Taylor had six points and 10 rebounds for Okeechobee. Thomas had five points, four assists and two rebounds for the Brahmans.

Hays said he hopes the team has more leadership and more energy next year. He said the program does have some exciting young players coming back.

"I can't be the one yelling all the time because the kids will tune you out. We weren't able to find that one guy who could get us going this year," he added.



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy  
**Eddie Neal (left) and Chris Watson exchange pleasantries during the District 13-6A Tournament on Tuesday. Watson had 22 points to lead South Fork to victory.**

## NOTICE OF ZONING DISTRICT, PERMITTED USES, AND SPECIAL EXCEPTION USES CHANGE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the City Council of the City of Okeechobee, Florida, will on Tuesday, February 18, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter possible, at City Hall, 55 SE 3rd Ave., Okeechobee, FL conduct a Public Hearing for the first reading of the following Ordinance into law: **1108: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF OKEECHOBEE FLORIDA, PROVIDING FOR AMENDMENT TO PART II-CODE OF ORDINANCES, SUBPART B-LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, CHAPTER 66-GENERAL PROVISIONS, BY ADDING A DEFINITION FOR LIMITED AGRICULTURE TO SECTION 66-1; CHAPTER 90-ZONING, ARTICLE III-DISTRICT AND DISTRICT REGULATIONS, CREATING DIVISION 15-RURAL HERITAGE (RH) DISTRICT, TO ADDRESS THE PRESERVATION OF PROPERTY FORMERLY ZONED HOLDING IN SECTIONS 90-434 THROUGH 90-438; DIVISION 2-RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-FAMILY ONE (RSF-1) DISTRICT, DIVISION 5-RESIDENTIAL MULTIPLE-FAMILY (RMF) DISTRICT, DIVISION 10-INDUSTRIAL (IND) DISTRICT, BY ADDING LIMITED AGRICULTURE OF A COMMERCIAL NATURE TO THE LIST OF PERMITTED USES TO SECTIONS, 90-102, 90-192, AND 90-342; DIVISION 13-RESIDENTIAL PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD-R) DISTRICT, BY ADDING LIMITED AGRICULTURE AS A PERMISSIBLE INTERIM USE TO THE LIST OF PERMITTED USES IN SECTION 90-417; AND PROVIDING FOR FINDINGS OF FACT; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

The Public and all interested parties, calling **SPECIAL ATTENTION TO** any **4-H** or **FUTURE FARMER OF AMERICA MEMBERS** who raise **LIVESTOCK** and/or **FOWL** for Exhibits, **LIVESTOCK SHOWS**, and/or **COUNTY FAIRS**; or any **PERSONS** with **LIVESTOCK** or **FOWL** on property within the City Limits are encouraged to attend the meeting and be heard. Comments may be submitted orally or in writing before or at the hearing.

The proposed amendments may be viewed on the City website or at the Office of the City Clerk, during normal business hours, at the address above.

**ANY PERSON DECIDING TO APPEAL** any decision made by the City Council with respect to any matter considered at this meeting will need to ensure a verbatim record of the proceeding is made and the record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal will be based. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), any person with a disability as defined by the ADA, that needs special accommodation to participate in this proceeding, contact the City Clerk's Office no later than two business days prior to proceeding, 863-763-3372.

**BE ADVISED** that should you intend to show any document, picture, video or items to the Council in support or opposition to any item on the agenda; a copy of the document, picture, video, or item **MUST** be provided to the City Clerk for the City's records.

Published BY: Lane Gamiotea, CMC, City Clerk

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