



OKEECHOBEE NEWS

Celebrating Our Centennial!

Vol. 105 No. 92

Friday, August 1, 2014

50¢ plus tax



Kids enjoy skateboard camp ... Page 18

Doctor is a voice for hope ... Page 13

Lake Levels

13.91 feet

Last Year: 15.82 feet



Source: South Florida Water Management District. Depth given in feet above sea level



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Schools budget set at \$65.9 million

Union negotiations under way

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

The Okeechobee County School Board approved resolutions to adopt tentative millage rates and a tentative budget for 2014-15, while appointing their district and school administrators at a public hearing Tuesday night.

The budget approved totals \$65.9 million

which is about a \$614,000 increase in spending this year. The millage was reduced from 7.463 mills to 7.391 mills. One mill equals \$1 in taxes for every \$1,000 of property value.

Local taxes collected will total \$11.3 million, an increase of \$62,035.

The required local effort this year totals \$7.87 million. The discretionary local effort is \$1.145 million. This represents a 2.87 percent decrease in property taxes.

The average homeowner with a taxable

value of \$100,000 will pay about \$7.20 less in taxes.

The capital projects millage will generate \$2.3 million, an increase of \$34,628.

Superintendent of Schools Ken Kenworthy said they were pleased with the budget this year. About 25 percent comes from local dollars and with the millage going down, most homeowners will see the slight property tax

See **SCHOOL** — Page 12

Youth football league starts new season

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

The Okeechobee Youth Football League begins another season Saturday as five local teams compete in a jamboree in Sebring.

The teams compete in the Mid Florida Youth Football League. Their division this year includes teams from Sebring, Lake Placid, Lee County and Vero Beach. Avon Park has left the league to compete in the Central Florida Police Athletic League.

The teams include a Flag team with kids from 4 to 6 years old, Mighty Mites 7-8, Pee Wee 9-10, Juniors 11-12, and a senior team, 13-14.

Coaches this year include Jeanne Billie for the Flag team, Javaris Johnson for the Mighty Mites, Marvin Roberts for the Pee Wee, Chaka Smith for the Juniors and Bruce Snell for the senior team.

Roberts also serves as president of the league. He pointed out the teams continue to build up their rosters and that he is optimistic about how the squads will fare this year.

"We are very excited about the teams. We have a lot of returning players, and we'll have players at every position," he said.

Each team has an unlimited weight requirement. The senior team can use players who are 15 years old but only if they are not going into the freshman campus or high school.

Roberts said the league emphasizes that kids play competitively, give 100 percent, are respectful to opponents and that they play for Okeechobee and their parents.

"We are out here trying to get better every



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy

Marvin Roberts (left) and Quentin Smith get the OYFL Pee Wee team ready for practice Wednesday.

day. I think each year the organization improves. We are excited about the teams and we are headed in the right direction," he noted.

There are 35 kids on the Pee Wee team this year.

Marcel Richardson, assistant coach for the Junior squad, said he feels pretty good about the team this year because they have veteran coaches and a lot of returning players. His

message to the players is focus, hard work, conditioning and doing the basics correctly.

"These kids pick things up quickly and they go hard all the time, I'm very proud of them," he added.

There are more than 150 kids in the program this year. Richardson said Okeechobee

See **FOOTBALL** — Page 12

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FP&L team meets with community leaders



Special to the Okeechobee News

Pam Rauch, vice president of external affairs at FP&L, spoke at last week's meeting.

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Okeechobee community members turned out July 25 for a meeting with top officials with Florida Power and Light who will help decide when and where they will build a lucrative combustion turbine combined cycle power plant.

Members of the county commissioners, city officials, the school board, chamber of commerce, and economic council were all in attendance to sell Okeechobee and its assets.

The theme of the event was working together for the common good.

FP&L's Nick Blount said he was blown away by the turnout.

"I really appreciate all the support you have shown us," he said.

Pam Rauch, vice president of External Affairs at FP&L, said they were very excited to explain the planning process and hear the concerns of the community.

"Probably the most important piece is the collaboration with the community. When we go someplace and are not welcome, it's not a good thing for anybody," she said.

She noted the support of local government was also appreciated.

"It was very optimistic, when I got up to speak it was such a warm welcome to the development team of FP&L. The message was clearly received that Okeechobee

County welcomes FP&L and any proposed project that we might bring forward," she said.

She was also happy to see what Indian River State College can do to train workers. She said a trained work force is critical. She was also impressed with an industrial park that could be placed right next to the FPL site.

"The economics of the project and what the county can do for us as a partner is critical," she said. "The partnership is what makes a project successful."

Ms. Rauch noted the company looks forward to meeting with the county to discuss specific tax incentives they might provide. She said they expect to make a decision by the end of the year and said Okeechobee will be in the running.

"Okeechobee is definitely one of the final sites. We are looking at a few sites and things are fluid because our load and demand forecasts change. Okeechobee County is definitely in our final selection group," she added.

Okeechobee County administrator Robbie Chartier said she hopes the county put their best foot forward in an attempt to get this opportunity. She viewed the county's chances at 50-50.

"I think it was a very positive meeting. FP&L was very positive. I think we both feel a mutual benefit from this project and I hope they will look at all that we've considered for them," she added.

Sean Miller, director of business development at FP&L, said the power plant is a big deal to the company because they serve over half of the state of Florida with 4.7 million customers.

He pointed out the typical residential bill is 25 percent below the national average and they do that with cost effective investments. "We want our plant to be cost effective, and Okeechobee County would be a good place for this plant."

The plants are also cleaner and environmentally friendly. The proposal includes 1,523 megawatts of power and will cost \$1.1 billion. He noted it takes five years to plan a project like this.

"Right now the work would begin in early 2015," he said.

Consultant John Rhodes spoke on the tax incentives the county has proposed and tried to sell Okeechobee to the FP&L contingent.

The company spent \$14 million to purchase 2,800 acres in the county near the Florida Turnpike. The county has labor trained or ready to be trained to build and run the plant. Indian River State College has an award-winning energy program. The site is in close proximity to customers. Transportation access can come from route 60 and 441. There is an abundant water supply.

"We really mean business and we are ready to offer competitive tax incentives," he added.

County Commission Chairman Frank Irby thanked Fred Fanizzi and his staff at Quail Creek Plantation's Lodge for their support of Okeechobee. He recognized the dignitaries in attendance from FP&L.

The county tax proposal includes a 30 percent valuation for the first year with an increase to 100 percent by year 11.

"We are willing to work with you to come up with a tax base that works for you," said Mr. Irby.

The county will ensure the land use and zoning is ready for the plant. Mr. Rhodes said they will engage in public education to make the community ready.

The county also wants to add another industrial site to share utilities, create more jobs and even a training center, near the site that would measure 1,000 acres.

He said the county wants to make the business climate attractive to FP&L which

includes paying a portion of the impact fees required for this project.

Mr. Irby said the county will do what it takes to get this plant.

"We hope that Florida Power and Light believes they spent their time well by attending this meeting and we will continue to be a good partner with them," he said.

Okeechobee Forecast

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Today: Scattered showers and thunderstorms after noon. Partly sunny, with a high near 91. Light and variable wind becoming east southeast 5 to 10 mph in the afternoon. Precipitation is 30%.

Tonight: Scattered showers and thunderstorms before 11pm. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 73. East southeast wind around 5 mph becoming calm in the evening. Chance of precipitation is 30%.

Extended Forecast

Saturday: Isolated showers and thunderstorms after noon. Partly sunny, with a high near 91. Light northeast wind becoming east southeast 5 to 10 mph in the afternoon. Chance of precipitation is 20%.



Special to the Okeechobee News
County Commission Chairman Frank Irby said the county wants to create an attractive business climate for FP&L.

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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, 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!

Okee-Tantie

• The county has no idea how to run a positive cash flow in a business. A private company would pay a monthly fee and no more county employees feeding out of the bucket. Either rent it out or leave it closed. If rented out it would be a positive to the economy,

• I think the county staff proposal to start by fixing up 50 spaces in area B makes sense. They would fix these spaces up for the big RVs with nice pads for them, and have the utility lines and roads done for the whole section so they could expand as demand grows. If we had these spaces available, they would be used because the bass fishermen have their own RVs and it would be attractive to them to park right there at the lake. Give the tournaments the option to reserve spaces in advance, just as you book a hotel in advance for a convention. I think they will need to invest some money fixing it up just to get it open again. How about dipping into those reserves? Isn't that what they were saving the money for?

• Go to a private source to rent the facilities and then it would be a positive cash flow not the drain on county tax payers.

• I do not want a bond issue to fix up Okee-Tantie. That would just add to the tax bill which is already too high. They should use the reserves to fix the place up. Why borrow money, and pay interest, when the money in the reserves is not drawing any interest to speak of.

Water, water

• If you are planning to buy or build a home or a business, take a drive around the county during the wet season and see what each area looks like. If it's under water now, it will be under water next summer too. Every year the same areas have problems during the rainy season. So, just don't buy or build in areas that are flooded during the wet season. You can't fight Mother Nature. Follow the example of the Florida pioneers and build on high ground.

Tips

• In response to the comments about tips, I said if given excellent, professional service, then a decent tip should be given. I never said people should not go out and eat if they can't afford a big tip. I was asking to tip fairly. I appreciate those who do tip a reasonable amount and appreciate the tips very much. Buffets are one thing and a full-service restaurant is another.

• In response to the comments about tips, I worked as a waitress and I know firsthand how hard the work is. But tips have to be earned. Pay attention to the customers. Don't make them wait while you gossip with a co-worker. Don't flirt with customers, especially when a man is out to dinner with his wife. Make sure the iced tea glasses stay full, especially in the summer. And if a woman is dining alone, give her terrific service, just in case she was once a waitress too.

• What's an appropriate tip? When I was working in food service, if tips averaged 10 percent of our food and beverages sales, we were happy. Some people tip more. Some people tip less.

• I doubt if reading a comment in Speak Out is going to change how anyone tips. I think most people tip 10 or 15 percent at a full-service restaurant, if they get good service. At a buffet, you might leave a dollar or two, and they should be happy to get that since they aren't taking orders or bringing the food to the table.

Reserves

• How about taking the money in the reserves and using it to build things that the citizens of Okeechobee can enjoy? For example, I like the idea of extending the catwalk at Okee-Tantie from the marina along the river so folks could fish here. Visitors and locals could enjoy that. How about putting in a splash park for the kids like they have in Clewiston? How about a nice theater for concerts and shows like the Dolly Hand Center in Belle Glade? What is the point of building up money in the reserves for some rainy day? Why not use those funds to improve the quality of life in Okeechobee right now?

• I thought the county was going to publish a detailed list of the county's bank accounts showing the reserve funds and restrictions, if any, on how the various funds can be spent. They discussed this at a county meeting, after Commissioner Culpepper asked for it. What's up with that?

Letters to the editor

County budget

I appreciate the Okeechobee News attending and reporting on the issues being discussed by the Board of County Commissioners because it is opportunity to inform the citizens about decisions which will affect them, either financially or in level of services provided.

At the meeting on July 10, 2014, the board voted to set the ad valorem tax at 10 mills because of the need to do two things: establish the maximum level of taxation for the trim notice and have some assurance that we will have enough money to cover the requested expenditures minus \$1.5 million for the five constitutional officers and county government.

State statutes require us to establish a millage rate before we know the final valuation of the property in the county or the actual approved budgets for these six entities, so trim notices generally are higher than the final millage.

Beginning with our budget discussion for the 2012-2013, we have spent a great deal of time looking at the financial situation of the county and attempting to establish expenditures which are sustainable for the next 3 to 5 years. These discussions were greatly improved when we began using the Burton and Associates financial modeling software which allows us to calculate the impact of changes in property valuations or implementation of different types of fees or assessments will have on generating revenue to pay for government services.

This process has clearly shown that the county is faced with some difficult choices:

1. Significantly raise taxes and fees and reduce expenses, or
2. A moderate increase in taxes and reduce expenses.

Either choice requires a reduction in requested expenses.

For a base line we chose to use 2004/2005 for comparison to evaluate requested budgets for the five constitutional officers and county government. A chart included in the 7/10/2014 BOCC meeting agenda shows an increase in the 2014/2015 request of \$2.85 million over the 04/05 budget; \$2.45 million of which is attributed to law enforcement, corrections, and courthouse security. The next highest variance is the Clerk's office at \$500,000. County government is less than 04/05 expenditures.

If our financial modeling is accurate as

it regards to sustainable revenues, then we must make the necessary reductions in expenses because the county commissioners have a fiduciary responsibility to the taxpayers of this county. We must ensure that the cost of services provided by the constitutional officers and the county are in line with the taxpayer's ability to pay.

Frank Irby

Ranch rodeo

The Okeechobee County Cattlemen's Association held a ranch rodeo on Saturday, July 26. Fulford Ranch was the big winner of the day with awards in Team Tying, Steer Decorating, and over all first place. Adams Ranch came in second place, Russakis Ranch won the award in Bronc Riding, Trinity/Syfrett Ranch won Team Branding and Bar Diamond Arrow G won Team Sorting. Congratulations to all teams!

Thank you!

VP, Fritz Brewer

Concert appreciated

The Okeechobee Steelers presented a concert for us at Grand Oaks Assisted Living facility, July 14, and they were amazing! If you have never witnessed one of their performances you have missed a blessing. Their trainers, as well as the teens involved deserve a hand of applause for the great job they are doing. We got to meet each one of them and they are exceptional! I hope they come here again. Keep up the good work!

God Bless

Betty Smith

Agri-Civic Center open to public for exercising

Unless an event is taking place, the Okeechobee County Agri-Civic Center grounds are open to area residents for exercise activities such as walking, running, and bike riding on a daily basis. The gate on State Road 70 is open from 7 a.m. until dusk for residents to access the roads and parking lots within the facility. While the county encourages area residents to take advantage of the opportunity to use the facility grounds for exercise, the staff asked everyone to help keep the facility clean by not littering.

OKEECHOBEE NEWS

To Reach Us

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Our Purpose...

The Okeechobee News is published by Independent NewsMedia Inc, USA. 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.

MEMBER OF:



Letters to the editor

Death of an old friend

These days, losing old friends happens quite frequently. Another one of my acquaintances passed away last month. This one was born in 1926, during the roaring '20s. Even though I was not born in that era, I have heard of the great impact made by this special arrival. Many people will attest to the importance of this happening.

We had a special relationship from my childhood into adulthood. My first remembrance of this structure, which was the Seaboard Railway Station, occurred during World War II in the 1940's. An older sister of mine took me to the railroad depot and purchased tickets for us to travel to Miami. We waited inside this historic stuccoed building. I recall the huge fireplace, the wooden benches and the ticket-master, wearing a visor-type cap. He stood in a windowed, caged-in office, selling tickets and answering the telephone.

Another item I especially remember, is the large bottle of water, turned upside down in a metal rack with small disposable cups, standing in the back of the room. I was enthralled with the cold water and the throwaway cups. Needless to say, I knew where the restrooms were located after several trips to this attraction. To understand my fascination with the water cooler, is to know, I came from a poor family, which had no refrigerator, our water came from a pump, and we drank from jelly glasses.

A loud blast from the train whistle was heard as the train neared the depot. Anxiety

was felt by the local residents, waiting for the arrival of someone important, to them. Other were queuing up to step on the train when it arrived. The outgoing mail was placed on a large hook to be picked up by an employee for the railroad. The incoming mail would be placed on the platform and picked up by the ticket-master.

Choosing a seat on the Sliver Meteor, which traveled from New York to Miami was hard, as many service men and women were on board. I stared at the uniforms of the members of the woman's Air Corp. (WAC.) They looked so different from our local ladies. The WACs wore their khaki uniforms, long-sleeved shirts with neckties and brown laced up shoes with such pride. Even the shoes seemed smarter in appearance than my mama's black pumps. The two most fun looking parts of the apparel was the cute cap placed on their heads at an angle, with short hair sticking out very stylish and sling-style purse crossing their shoulders. I remember seeing Tillie the Toiler, in the comic strips, getting her hair cut and joining the service. The men in the Army uniforms looked to be around 18, the age of my brother, who was in the Navy. Patriotism was everywhere during the "Big War."

Through the years I have seen the weathered old depot looking shabbier and shabbier. The waiting room was closed years ago and the public no longer had access to it.

As adults, my husband and I purchased tickets from a Travel Agency for us to take our three children on the train. Traveling to Washington D.C. was fun but I had great

nostalgia for the interior of the old Depot. Waiting by the tracks to board the train gave little to remember. However, we old-timers, do have fond memories of this important old structure.

Betty Williamson
Okeechobee

2014 Tournament of Champions is huge success

Okeechobee Citizens Recreation Association and Dixie State Girls Softball would like to express sincere gratitude toward our generous community for making the state championship tournament a huge success. Without the hard work and countless hours of dedication from volunteers and donated goods and services from our community members, none of this would have been possible.

On July 10, 33 teams from all over the state of Florida descended on Okeechobee for opening ceremonies and their banquet. Games began on July 11 and championship games finished on July 14. Division winners go on to play in the Dixie League World Series held in different states.

Thank you to the following business owners and individuals for donating items and services for support for the tournament: 1Stop Party Shop, 3D Ice, 4S Security, Advance America, Applebee's, Believer's Fellowship Youth, Billie Family, Brahman Theater, Brown Cow Sweetery, CenterState Bank, Chico's Burritos, Chuck Parks & Rec., CISPAL, Cowboy's, D1 Team Sports, Diamond R Fertilizer, Dollar General, Eli's Western Wear and Trailer Sales, Everglades Farm Equipment, Ferrell's Market, Gilbert Snapper/Line-X, Penrod Construction, Praxair, Harbor Community Bank, Hibbitt Sports, Home Depot, JD Mixon, MDO Engineering, Nutmeg's, Okeechobee HS Football team, Preston & Mona Baker Family, Raulerson Hospital, Seminole Tribe of Florida, Shared Service of Okeechobee, Sunset MHP, Taylor Rental, Teez 2 Pleez, Tin Fish Restaurant, Tobacco Free Partnership Okeechobee, Tony & Denise Lopez Family, Tourist Development Council, Triple D, Tropics, Uncle Larry's Restaurant, Unique Boutique, Waste Management, Wendy's and Zippy's.

Special appreciation goes out to all of our volunteers who worked nonstop to make this a memorable event for these young ladies.

Heather Hancock
2014 Tournament of Champions Committee

Moon landing anniversary

On the occasion of the 45th anniversary of man's landing on the moon....

"A poem that day resting"

We were three
Our boat was small
Could hold only two
Alone
I waved goodbye
In the early afternoon
Charles J. Hornbach



Every Voice Counts.

"In a democracy, the highest office is that of citizens."
— US Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter.

We agree. Yet too many citizens feel powerless to influence the flow of events.

We give people a voice. Our Speak Out column is just one example. We consider it an extension of the secret ballot and a return of the values of the American Revolution.

How are we doing?

Let us know by emailing feedback@newszap.com or calling your editor.

OKEECHOBEE
NEWS

*Community Service
Through Journalism*



Special to the Okeechobee News
The first train came to Okeechobee in 1915, the same year the City of Okeechobee was incorporated. The station that was recently demolished was built in 1924 and was originally served by the Florida, Western and Northern Railroad, a subsidiary of the Seaboard Air Line Railway. (Source: greatamericantrainstations.com)

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Local blood drives announced

Blood supplies are low right now as donor participation is slow. Choose one of these drives and donate to Save Okeechobee Lives.

•Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 1 – 3 at Walmart, special three-day drive from 11 a.m. until 7 p.m. Donors receive a \$10 gift card.

•Thursday, Aug. 14, at Okeechobee Correctional from noon until 5 p.m. The public is invited.

•Friday, Aug. 15, at the Health Department on N.W. Ninth Avenue from 1 until 4 p.m.

•Friday, Aug. 15, at Publix, from 5 until 7 p.m.

•Sunday, Aug. 17, at Golden Corral, from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m.

•Tuesday, Aug. 26, in the Raulerson Hospital parking lot from 1 until 6 p.m.

Eagles offering steak dinner

The Cypress Hut Eagles will serve choice rib eye steak and seafood dinners Friday, **Aug. 1**, starting at 5:30 p.m. with entertainment by The Harpers. The public is invited. Saturday, Aug. 2, is the monthly birthday bash with a spaghetti and meatball dinner by Lorraine and crew with Hard Country providing the entertainment. Monday, Aug. 4, hot dogs are served at the bar. Tuesday, Aug. 5, is the weekly dart tournament with burgers being served. For information, contact the Cypress Hut Eagles at 863-467-1154.

School supply drive starts

Children's Home Society of Florida is now accepting new backpacks and school supplies or cash donations for its Back-to-School Drive, through **Aug. 1**, to help children and teens go back to school. Check out details at www.chsfl.org/bts. For information, call Ashleigh Gaultney at 405-250-4762.

'Chobee Wildcat grid registrations are open

Okeechobee will field two teams in the Glades Tri-County Youth Football program this season. Signups for ages 7-8 will be free this year. Anyone with information can contact Tarrance Pryor at 863-532-8623. Parents should present the child's birth certificate to a league official. The league will also have a team of 11 and 12-year-old players this year. The league includes six teams from Belle Glade, three teams from Pahokee, three teams from Moore Haven, three teams from Indiantown and the Okeechobee squads in various age groups. The Okeechobee league will host a pre-season jamboree on Saturday, Aug. 9, at the youth soccer fields across from North Elementary School. Games will be played throughout the day and begin at 9 a.m.

Blood Round-up meeting set

Helping save Okeechobee lives is the purpose of the Okeechobee Blood Round-up. Join the organizers at a planning meeting Friday, **Aug. 1**, 9 a.m. in room 21 at First United Methodist Church, 200 N.W. Second St. Newcomers are welcome. Coffee will be provided. For information, call Raye at 863-467-2557.

Legion offers Sunday bingo

American Legion Post 64, 510 S.E. Second St., will host Sunday night bingo **Aug. 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. The American Legion now has free WIFI for its lounge and dining room patrons.

Cheerleader parents to meet

Children Services Council (CSC) All Star Cheerleading will host open house and a parent meeting on Monday, **Aug. 4**, at 5:30 p.m. in their gym at 810 N. Parrott Ave (Glades Gas Company Plaza). Anyone age 4-18 who would like to cheer competitively is invited. The air conditioned gym has a full 42 x 42 floor. Coaches are USASF certified, ACCAA certified and First Aid/CPR. The program is supported by Children Services Council of Okeechobee.

ConKerr Cancer to meet

ConKerr Cancer's next sit & sew will be held Tuesday, **Aug. 5**, from 10:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. at the Okeechobee Presbyterian Church on Parrott Avenue. Bring your sewing machine and child-friendly cotton fabric. Pillowcase kits will also be available for you to sew at this meeting. Our local chapter is also sewing pillowcases for Martha's House and the Okeechobee Healthcare facility and is accepting donations of suitable material for those causes too. For information or to donate material, call Joan at 863-467-0290.

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All Obituaries now include *Online Guestbooks* where family and friends can share reflections, remembrances and condolences.

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For a complete list of Obituary Notices, click on your community, then click on "Obituaries".

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Coalition board meets Aug. 6

Okeechobee Healthy Start Coalition board of directors will meet Wednesday, **Aug. 6**, at 11 a.m. at their office located in the White House Plaza, 1132 S. Parrott Ave. The meeting is open to the public. The coalition is part of a statewide network responsible for planning and implementing services for pregnant women and infants. The coalition is made up of citizens interested in promoting healthy families and healthy outcomes for babies in Okeechobee. For information, contact executive director Kay Begin at 863-462-5877.

Menus for diabetics offered

Join us at Raulerson Hospital to learn about diabetic cooking ideas with Executive Chef Ron Corrado on Wednesday, **Aug. 6**, at 5:30 p.m. at Raulerson Hospital in the cafeteria, 1796 U.S. 441 N. Learn new recipes and sample some of the creations. There is no fee to participate, but space is limited. RSVP at 863-763-9228.

Firefighters collect supplies

Okeechobee Firefighters Union Local 2918 will collect back-to-school supplies at Okeechobee Walmart Friday, Saturday and Sunday, **Aug. 8, 9 and 10**. All supplies will be given to My Aunt's House (501c3) for distribution to local foster and needy children. For information, call Matt Vinson 863-697-1205.

Political Forum is planned

Okeechobee Political Forum will be held Wednesday, **Aug. 13**, at the Osceola Middle School Gymnasium, 825 S.W. 28th St., from 5:45 - 9 p.m. Candidates from the following races are invited: U.S. Representative – District 17, Commissioner of Agriculture, Circuit Judge – Circuit 19, City Council, School Board – District 1, County Commission – Districts 2 & 4. Concessions will be available and those sales will benefit local students.

Mission plans school drive

Big Lake Missions Outreach is currently sponsoring their annual school supplies drive for needy families. Last year we helped many children with their list, but this year the need is even greater. We will accept donations up until **Aug. 15**. Most all school supplies are needed such as three-ring notebooks, pencil pouches, colored pencils, marker hi-liters, backpacks, etc. No trapper keepers. For a complete list, check out the local stores or call the school. All donations stay in Okeechobee County. We accept checks made out to Big Lake Missions Outreach or gift cards and our staff does the shopping. Call 863-763-5725 or 863-610-1815 for information or drop-off locations.

Benefit for Pilgrims slated

Okeechobee Quarters for a Cause will host their monthly auction Tuesday, **Aug. 19**, at American Legion Post 64, 501 S.E. Second St., with doors opening at 6:30 p.m. They will be supporting Lee and Larry Pilgrim who have both been through a lot of health issues in the past year and need funds for their medical bills. Wear boots and pearls to be entered in a special prize giveaway. For information, call Christy at 863-697-1247.

Sr. class photo sessions set

Attention Okeechobee High School Class of 2015: Senior pictures are coming. Visit prestigeportraits.com/fl to view your session options and get answers to some frequently asked questions. You can book your appointment online or call 800.749.2796, ext. 1.

Photo sessions will be held:

Aug. 26 (1 until 9 p.m.)

Aug. 27 (1 until 9 p.m.)

It is your responsibility to set up your appointment. If you have questions, contact Mr. Pung at pungc@okee.k12.fl.us for information.

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Tropical Popsicles coming to an event near you

By Tammi Kelly
Okeechobee News

Tropical Popsicles opened in Okeechobee the beginning of June, relocating here from over on the coast.

"We came here because we want to provide jobs, to feed families," said owner Shawn McCreery.

"Being in the center of the state is ideal for us," he explained.

Husband and wife team Shawn and Elizabeth McCreery have been running Tropical Popsicles for many years.

Tropical Popsicles is a food truck business with a twist. Its popsicles can be made from any alcoholic or nonalcoholic frozen drink you can think of.

Can you say Rum Runners on a stick? They are the first to do this!

"We are the first ones in the state of Florida to be licensed by Agriculture to sell hand-

made alcoholic popsicles at public events," said Mr. McCreery.

The popsicles are licensed as a food product.

If you need something different to bring to your events or parties, they are the people to call. They hope to hire more people in the near future and add more trucks to their business.

"The more involved the community gets, the faster we can supply jobs," said Mr. Creeery.

At every event that the Tropical Popsicles attends, they hand out free non-alcoholic popsicles for the kids to enjoy, no purchase needed.

For more information or to book them for an event, give them a call at 561-667-8662 or email at tropicalpopsicles@gmail.com. Don't forget to check out their website at tropicalpopsicles.com.



Special to the Okeechobee News

Tropical Popsicles is Okeechobee's newest food vendor. If you are looking for something different this is it!

Okeechobee Civil Air Patrol cadets fly R/C planes

Special to the Okeechobee News

On the Saturday morning of July 19 the cadets of the Okeechobee Civil Air Patrol were invited to fly radio-controlled (R/C) models under the direction of instructor pilots of the OMAC (Okeechobee Model Airplane Club) at their new field located at the Agri-Civic Center on Highway 70 East. Since the gate to the Ag Center is now opened at 7 a.m., not only can the R/C pilots have access to the facilities, but it is also open to bikers, walkers and joggers. The R/C field is located in the extreme northwest corner of the facility bordered by Nubbins Slough on the West and Highway 70 on the north. Now equipped with a paved and grass runway, even the smallest Park flyer type aircraft can be flown there.

Several cadets got to fly and I am happy to report that there were no mishaps. With

the cadets controls wired into the Instructors transmitter, any loss of control by the cadet could be quickly corrected by the instructor before the plane met the ground in a configuration other than a landing one. The cadets did well. For some it was their first time, for others they have flown before and understood how the plane performed. Each cadet got several flights in before the wind started coming up around 10 a.m.

Anyone interested in Radio Control should stop by the field, especially on a Saturday morning and check it out. That is when it is the busiest and there are plenty of club members there to answer any questions you may have. If your interested in how a R/C plane flies (aerodynamics), you might want to look into the Civil Air Patrol. We teach aerospace education, leadership, integrity, volunteer service, excellence and

respect as part of our mission to anyone from the age of 12 years and up. For more information call Capt. Gernat at 863-357-2888



Special to the Okeechobee News/Capt. Greg Gernat

Instructor Rich Chivari overseeing the flying abilities of Cadet/Amn. Alexandria Rennie.

or 1LT Garcia at 863-532-1901.

Civil Air Patrol, the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, is a nonprofit organization with 60,000 members nationwide, operating a fleet of 550 aircraft. CAP, in its Air Force auxiliary role, performs about 85 percent of continental U.S. inland search and rescue missions as tasked by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center and is credited by the AFRCR with saving an average of 70 lives annually. Its unpaid professionals also perform homeland security, disaster relief and drug interdiction missions at the request of federal, state and local agencies. The members play a leading role in aerospace education and serve as mentors to more than 25,000 young people currently participating in the CAP cadet programs. Performing missions for America for over 70 years, CAP will receive the Congressional Gold Medal in 2015 in honor of the heroic efforts of its World War II veterans. CAP also participates in Wreaths Across America, an initiative to remember, honor and teach about the sacrifices of U.S. military veterans. Visit www.gocivilairpatrol.com, www.capvolunteernow.com and www.capgoldmedal.com for more information.



Special to the Okeechobee News

OCRA hosts successful event

Board members from OCRA accept a Successful Tournament plaque from Dixie Softball state director Danny Brooks. Thirty-three teams from across the state competed in Okeechobee for the state championship on July 10-14. Division winners go on to the Dixie League World Series events being held in different states. Congratulations to OCRA for holding a successful event! Pictured left to right are: Mike Slayton-tournament director, Micki Slayton- OCRA president, Danny Brooks- Dixie State director, Tracy Harding-tournament committee member and Neal Jewel-OCRA vice president.

BIRTHDAY

KATHERINE WORTH

Katherine is celebrating her 90th birthday today. She was born August 1, 1924 in Naples, Florida to Forrest and Adnie Walker. She enjoys working on her family tree and likes to brag that she has over 50,000 names listed.

Her family would like to invite all her friends to join her for cake and conversation on Saturday, August 2, 2014 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., in the fellowship hall at Believers Fellowship Church 300 SW 6th Ave. (behind the ROC).

Happy Birthday to our Mom, Daisy and Mema.



Brotherhood Ride honors fallen firefighters, officers



Special to the Okeechobee News
Tim Elder has been an active member of the Brotherhood Ride since 2012.

Some people cycle for fun and fitness; some ride to raise money for a good cause. In an effort to honor the memory of two fallen state firefighters and to raise money for their families, Florida Forest Service Okeechobee District Manager Tim Elder will ride in the Brotherhood Ride.

Mr. Elder has been an active member of the Brotherhood Ride since 2012.

The Brotherhood Ride is a non-profit public charity organization dedicated to honoring emergency responders who died in the line of duty.

"I will be honoring Brett Fulton and Josh Burch's memory by riding through the state of Florida in four days, covering over 400 miles," said Mr. Elder. "My family, friends and neighbors are invited to share in this adventure by supporting this great cause. My

journey, along with other cyclists begins in North Naples, on Aug. 1 and will end in Port Charlotte, Aug. 4."

Florida Forest Service's Wildland Firefighters Brett Fulton and Josh Burch died on June 20, 2011.

The ride will pass through Okeechobee County on Sunday, Aug. 3, with Brotherhood Riders departing Port St. Lucie at 8 a.m. and arriving in Lake Placid at 4 p.m.

Mr. Elder has been training in Sebring for months for this event. He is an active triathlete, including last year's Miami Man Triathlon.

This ride will specifically honor four Floridians, all law enforcement officers who

died last year. They are: Deputy Sergeant Gary Morales of the St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office; Deputy Sheriff Daniel Rivera of the Broward County Sheriff's Office; Master Deputy Sheriff Joseph "Shane" Robbins of the Polk County Sheriff's Office; and Deputy Sergeant Mike Wilson of the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office.

To find out how you can support the Brotherhood Ride, visit www.brotherhoodride.com

Proceeds from 2014 ride will benefit the families of Florida's Fallen Heroes.

Former recovery center head accused of theft

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

A minister and former president of the Lamb of God Recovery Center in Okeechobee has been arrested for allegedly stealing over \$5,000 from his employer.



Michael Lewandowski

installed James Don Fugate as the new president of Lamb of God Recovery Centers, which is primarily located in Pompano Beach. Mr. Fugate, on April 17, talked to LPPD investigators and filed a complaint against Lewandowski.

That complaint stated Lewandowski went on the web site www.Sunbiz.org and removed all four members of the board of directors, and replaced them with his name. He apparently made himself the chief executive officer, president and treasurer of Lamb of God Ministries, Inc.

He then used that false information to open a new bank account at TD Bank in Lake Placid in the name of Lamb of God Ministries, Inc., stated the report. Lewandowski then allegedly closed out the initial Lamb of God Ministries' account that contained \$5,442.73 and put that money into the account he had just created.

All of that money has been recovered and returned to the ministry.

Lewandowski, a Vietnam veteran, has had prior brushes with the law while heading at the local recovery center. In May of this year, he was arrested in Martin County on a felony marijuana possession charge. Court records indicate that case has been assigned to drug court in another venue.

Michael Lewandowski, 67, Indiantown, was arrested last week on a Highlands County warrant by deputies from the Martin County Sheriff's Office. That warrant charged Lewandowski with grand theft, obtaining property by false impersonation and giving a false statement as to financial condition or identity.

He was booked into the Martin County Jail and has been released on bond, said Detective Stuart Troutman of the Lake Placid Police Department (LPPD).

Lewandowski, stated the detective's arrest report, was the president of the local recovery center located on South Parrott Avenue. He was removed from that spot by the board of directors on April 1 due to his felony arrest in Broward County on a charge of possession of marijuana over 20 grams in December of 2013.

According to arrest reports the board

Break-in at Humane Society reported

By Eric Kopp
Okeechobee News

Nothing was reportedly taken during an apparent break-in at the Okeechobee County Humane Society building on U.S. 98 N.

A report by Deputy Richard Varnadore, of the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office (OCSO), indicated the break-in was found by an employee at 9 a.m. Monday, July 28.

The employee reportedly told the deputy she noticed the front gate was locked differently than the way she had locked it when she closed the night before. The employee also pointed out she could not enter a building where quarantined dogs are housed because the door was locked.

Deputy Varnadore stated he was told that door is never locked. Also, there was a dog being held in a cage in that building but it was now loose and running freely about the building, added the deputy.

The employee went on to tell the deputy they got into the building by crawling "... through a window because there is no key for the door."

According to the deputy there were no signs of forced entry to the front gate or the outer buildings.

After going through the building, the employee said it appeared everything was in its place and nothing was missing.

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Special to the Okeechobee News

Swim to win

The OHS swim team is desperately in need of funds to keep their program afloat. Jersey Mike's recently stepped up to help keep them paddling. Donating a percentage of their sales for a day, they were able to raise \$571 to help the swim team purchase new swimsuits and assist in travel expenses. Left to right are Haley Burkhalter, Bert Culbreth, Gabby Corrales, Stephen Neafsey, Mallorie Jones and Krissy Culbreth.



Special to the Okeechobee News

Pigman visits Waste Management

Florida Representative Dr. Cary Pigman recently visited Waste Management Okeechobee Landfill, Inc. Rep. Pigman learned about operations, composites, recycling and wildlife habitat certified sites. Pictured are: legislative assistant Bryan Mickle, WM Community Relations Teresa Chandler, District secretary Libby Maxwell and WM Sr. district manager Tony Bishop.

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What is Cyberknife Radiation Therapy?

By Dr. Ramesh Kumar
Big Lake Cancer Center

How many cancer patients would jump up and consider a treatment option that is proven to be highly effective, does not need surgery, painless, completed in 5 days or less, without significant side effects, while continuing to maintain their full level of activity and function?

Radiosurgery is a technique that utilizes specialized machines that allow large amounts of radiation to be delivered with sub millimeter accuracy thereby killing the cancers without damaging surrounding normal tissues. It is as simple as going out to get a chest x-ray!

Cyberknife Robotic Radio surgery system, created at Stanford University over 10 years ago is unique and better than other systems in the fact that it is the only Radio surgery system that can achieve what is called "real-time tracking and killing of tumor."

What kind of patients can be helped by Cyberknife? There are several situations too numerous to mention here where Cyberknife would be extremely useful and safe. The following are just a few of them:

Patients with Trigeminal Neuralgia, pituitary tumors and tumors of the acoustic nerve called Acoustic Neuroma can avoid major surgical procedures on the brain by getting treated with Cyberknife.

Patients with cancers of the brain, spine, lung and prostate are but a few of the cancers that can be helped with

one to five sessions of Radio Surgery. An article that was published in the Journal of the American Medical Association in 2010 showed that patients with patients with lung cancer who received Radiosurgery had a survival rate of 55.8% at 3 years versus 20 to 35% for those patients treated with traditional radiation over several weeks.



Submitted Photo/Big Lake Cancer Center
Cyberknife: Cutting edge technology at work for our patients in Okeechobee.

As one of our patients commented, if it is good for patients at Stanford University, it is good for patients from the Okeechobee area!

If you or someone you know has any

form of cancer, please call us so we can explore the possibility of treating it with this cutting edge technology. This 4.5 million dollar machine is available at the offices of Dr. Kumar in Saint Lucie County. Courtesy transportation is available to get to this office for those patients in need. Please call 863-467-9500 for more information.

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SCHOOL

Continued From Page 1

reduction.

"That assumes that their property values didn't go up too much, so we were pleased to see a tax reduction. We are thankful to have the budget we are working with and thankful to the taxpayers for helping us to operate for another year," he said.

While the budget goes up slightly, student enrollment continues to decline, this year by 87 students. The state increased the per student allocation from \$3,752 to \$4,031. The district will only receive 96 percent of this total because the state assumes that its cost of living is lower in Okeechobee County.

Mr. Kenworthy pointed out the biggest budget change was federal programs in which the district saw a decrease of \$851,946. Total state funds increased by \$582,328 to \$34.99 million. The budget funds 600 employees.

Board member David Williams asked

FOOTBALL

Continued From Page 1

has done a great job supporting the program and that will continue this year.

Snell said the senior team is down in numbers this year but they still have talent and should be very competitive. The last two senior teams were in the mix for a league championship.

"We will do our best to keep the tradition going. We are few in numbers but we will go out and work hard and see what we can accomplish. As long as they play hard and don't quit, I'm happy with it."

Jennifer Lafferty is the new cheerleading coordinator for OYFL this year. There are 38 girls in the program from age 4-13. She also has a group of volunteers who are assisting her this year.

The girls exercise, learn new cheers and support the players at each game.

"You need the cheer leaders to get the crowd going, keep everybody excited, and keep the guys going on the field," she said. "I want them to have fun, and win or lose, support the team either way."

Safety coordinator and Gulf War veteran Quentin Smith recently attended a camp that discussed concussions in football. He noted statistics show that soccer and bicycling result in more concussions than football. He said he has emphasized proper techniques, hydration, fundamentals and ways to keep football players safer. He played football for Tampa Robinson and later at Tennessee State before entering the military.

"I played the sport and I figured it was time to give back to the kids. The kids love it. It's not only about football, it's about leadership and commitment and growing. This sport will give the kids everything they are looking for and what the coaches teach they will follow. I feel it's a great experience," he added.

OYFL will host home games on Saturday, Aug. 23 against Lake Placid, Sept. 13 against Winter Haven, Sept. 20 against the Four Corners Bucs, Oct. 4 against the Poinciana Predators and Oct. 11 against the Central Florida Saints.

about the capital project budget with a concern about only four school buses. Mr. Kenworthy said the district has the third youngest school bus fleet in the state and decided to cut back on bus purchases for one year.

The expenditures include \$450,161 for new instructional materials and \$550,000 for terminal leave while \$301,095 is budgeted to improve technology in the digital classroom initiative. The total fund balance for operating will increase from \$2.76 million to \$3.3 million.

The capital projects budget includes \$475,000 for new school buses, \$214,745 for computer hardware and software, \$206,373 for wiring and electrical upgrades, and \$225,000 for demolition of the old New Endeavor High School.

The board voted unanimously to approve the tentative millage rate and operating budget.



Rafe Erwin (right) is among a group of volunteer coaches that help the Okeechobee Youth Football League. Games begin Saturday, Aug. 2, with the first home game Aug. 23.

Mr. Kenworthy said union negotiations continued on July 31 and they are hopeful of having enough funds to offer a raise to employees this year.

"We will look at salary enhancements because it is always important to invest in human capital," said Mr. Kenworthy. "We want to have competitive salaries so we can attract good employees. We are very interested in giving our employees a raise."

The board lost 20 employees to retirement and will employ 35 new teachers this year. As of Wednesday, 14 teaching positions remained vacant.

Mr. Kenworthy said the board is in a better financial position this year thanks to an increase in the state allocation per student.

"Despite declining enrollment, the increase from the state will mitigate that decline. It is all about the number of students and that is what generates the funds to operate the school system," the superintendent said. "The state legislature was very kind to us this year. We have a pretty good fund balance. We can meet all our operational needs and give employees a raise."

Malissa Morgan said new regulations from the federal government may have driven up the cost of food service by \$120,000. More fresh fruits and vegetables will be offered to the students.

The board appointed Brian Barrett as the new director of operations. Erin Ellinger was appointed to replace Mr. Barrett as assistant principal at Seminole Elementary. Margaret Lewis was named assistant principal at Central Elementary.

Tuuli Robinson was named assistant principal at North Elementary.

Eight new bus drivers are currently in

training.

The move of the fifth grade back to South Elementary School was completed Tuesday.

Mrs. Morgan said the board should install video cameras in all school campuses.

"It is student protection, staff protection, it is a necessity and a need," she said.

The cost of the video cameras might be an issue. Chairman Joe Arnold said it could be a multiple-year plan and could be done in phases. Mrs. Morgan said the cameras are already installed at Okeechobee High School, Okeechobee Achievement Academy and the middle school campuses and have worked well.

"I believe video cameras have a purpose and that is to be a constant eye, a constant watch, and this is for the protection of our schools, our students, our teachers and it is something we need to put in place," she added.

Mrs. Morgan pointed out to recent events at school that resulted in costly investigations and hearings. She submitted this would likely save the district money in the long run. She noted cameras have helped to solve vandalism cases at the high school. She noted the board not only has video cameras on school buses but also GPS on school buses now to determine where they are at all times.

Mr. Williams said he supported the cameras to improve school security and safety.

The board will meet Aug. 21 at 6 p.m. to discuss strategic planning and hold a hearing on Aug. 21 at 1 p.m. The district will also host the state teacher of the year on Aug. 13 at the high school gym for a pep rally for all staff.

Open house is set for Thursday, Aug. 14. The first day of school is Monday, Aug. 18.

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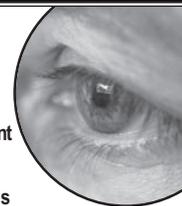
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Dr. Kumar: Okeechobee's voice of hope

By Tammi Kelly
Okeechobee News

Dr. Ramesh Kumar was born in Bangalore, India. He was 18 when his father, the provider for the family, died in 1976.

His brother-in-law, who was married to his second oldest sister, came in and took him, his three siblings and their mother under his wing and provided for them on his meager salary.

In 1977, when Dr. Kumar was attending college in India, his brother-in-law Rayappa was diagnosed with testicular cancer. He underwent surgery but was only given a few months to live.

Dr. Kumar drove his brother-in-law to radiation and many of his doctors' appointments, watching him slowly deteriorate. All he wanted to do was drop out of college and get a job to help support his family but he couldn't. His brother-in-law asked him not to.

After many months of sickness, Rayappa passed away. Now more than ever Dr. Kumar wanted to leave school and get a job, but his family would not let him. His family members sacrificed and worked to help him buy books, clothes and anything he needed for school.

"They were all sacrificing for me, and I couldn't let them down," said Dr. Kumar.

Dr. Kumar's dream was to become a doctor. He studied all the time non-stop to achieve that dream.

"Whatever your dream is, you have 24 hours a day to make it a reality, so use them all. Time is one of the basic necessities to achieve dreams, so if you're wasting time,

you're wasting your dream," said Dr. Kumar.

After graduating medical school Dr. Kumar got a job in a clinic. Soon after, he found a wife and married. In 1987, he made his way to the United States. Many told him it was hard to get residency training in this country, that several people immigrated and were unable to get into training and ended up working at gas stations or janitors.

"This encouraged me to try even harder to achieve my dreams," said Dr. Kumar.

Dr. Kumar passed his entrance exams with flying colors and got accepted into the Internal Medicine Program at Wayne State University in Michigan. Dr. Kumar had decided to become a cardiologist, but when he was finishing up his internship, something about the radiation department of the university was calling to him, pulling him in.

"I was tormented by the idea of reliving those days in India when I had to take my brother-in-law for his radiation treatments. To train in radiation would mean emotionally going through all of that again," said Dr. Kumar.

Soon after turning in his resume to the Radiation Oncology Department he was accepted. So, he began to study to be a radiation oncologist. It was difficult, but Dr. Kumar wanted to be a different kind of cancer doctor — he wanted to give more than just treatments, he wanted to give hope.

"I want to build a bridge between traditional medicine, such as chemotherapy and radiation and complementary medicine, such as yoga and meditation," said Dr. Kumar.

Dr. Kumar came to Okeechobee in 1994. He saw that there was a need for cancer care here. He wants people to know that you don't have to travel to the coast for cancer care, that you can get it right here in Okeechobee.

Dr. Kumar has helped many patients and

many patients have inspired him as well. One of those patients is Thomas Barber.

In 2012, Mr. Barber was diagnosed with prostate cancer that became stage 4 bone cancer. He came to Dr. Kumar after his previous doctors gave him no hope. After his visit, Kumar got Mr. Barber into an experimental program, giving him hope and a new life of fighting to live.

"Dr. Kumar taught me that as long as you have breath you have hope," said Mr. Barber.

In the spring of 2013, Mr. Barber and Dr. Kumar started Heroes for Hope, which is a 501 (c)(3) organization that has a support group for cancer patients or just people who are going through a medical struggle. They are here to help, along with great support from the community.

Dr. Kumar believes that medicine is ever changing and everyday there are new ways to help with certain cancers that weren't there yesterday or even 10 years ago. He believes there is new hope everyday and no one should give up.

"I predict in 10 to 15 years that there will be a cure for cancer," said Dr. Kumar.

Dr. Kumar's office is located at the Big Lake Cancer Center, 115 N. Parrott Ave. and is open Tuesdays from 9 a.m. till noon and Thursdays from 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. For more information, call 1-800-227-2345.



Dr. Ramesh Kumar

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Announcements

Important Information: Please read your ad carefully the first day it appears. In case of an inadvertent error, please notify us prior to the deadline listed. We will not be responsible for more than 1 incorrect insertion, or for more than the extent of the ad rendered valueless by such errors. Advertiser assumes responsibility for all statements, names and content of an ad, and assumes responsibility for any claims against the INI USA. All advertising is subject to publisher's approval. The publisher reserves the right to accept or reject any or all copy, and to insert above the copy the word "advertisement". All ads accepted are subject to credit approval. All ads must conform to INI USA style and are restricted to their proper classifications. Some classified categories require advance payment. These classifications are denoted with an asterisk *.

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YARD SALE AUGUST 2ND 520 SW 21ST STREET, 7AM - 3PM BRAND NAME MEN AND WOMEN CLOTHING, SHOES AND HAND-BAGS.

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Employment Full Time

Staff Accountant Position

Requires experience with QuickBooks, Excel and Word. Pay commensurate with experience. **Send resume to okeeresume2014@hotmail.com**

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with three (plus) years produce experience. Must be bi-lingual and be willing to work long hours during the season.

Email your resume to **royboy01@bellsouth.net**

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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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Real Estate Wanted

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Peragon Aluminum Folding Bed Cover - Locking cover fits 2007-2014 Tundra. Cost \$699 new, sell for \$325. Call Bill (863)634-4194 or (863)467-0169

Public Notices

Public Notice

Public Notice

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED 2014TD063
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that BE A MAN BUY LAND LLC the holder of the following certificate has filed said certificates for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The certificate number and year of issuance, the description of the property, and the names in which it was assessed are as follows:

Certificate No: 2270 Year of Issuance: June-01-2012
Description of Property: ORANGE BLOSSOM RANCHES LOT 9 BLOCK 11
1-15-36-35-0040-00110-0090
Said property being in the County of Okeechobee, State of Florida

Name in which assessed: MARKLEY T SEAY
Unless said certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such certificate shall be sold to the highest bidder at the Okeechobee County Judicial Center, Jury Assembly Room, 312 NW 3rd Street, Okeechobee, Florida 10:00 A.M., on the 4th day of September, 2014. SUBJECT TO CURRENT TAXES

SHARON ROBERTSON, CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT
Okeechobee County, Florida
/s/ Robin R. Parrish
Deputy Clerk

NOTICE REGARDING THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990; In accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, persons needing a special accommodation to participate in this proceeding should contact Court Administration no later than seven days prior to the proceeding at 250 NW Country Club Drive, Port St. Lucie, Florida 34986, 1.772.807.4370 within two working days of your receipt of this notice. IF YOU ARE HEARING IMPAIRED CALL 1.800.955.8771; IF YOU ARE VOICE IMPAIRED CALL 1.800.955.8770. 465760 ON 7/25;8/1,8,15/2014

Public Notice

Public Notice

NOTICE OF OUA MEETING
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT the Okeechobee Utility Authority will meet in regular session on Tuesday, August 12, 2014 at 8:30 A.M., at the Okeechobee Utility Authority Offices, 100 SW 5th Avenue, Okeechobee, Florida.

The needs of hearing or visually impaired persons shall be met by contacting the Executive Director's Office at 863-763-9460 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting, by any person wishing assistance.

Pursuant to Section 286.0105, Florida Statutes, if a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Authority with respect to such meetings, he or she will need a record of proceedings and for such purpose 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 based. Such person may provide a court reporter, stenographer, or tape recorder for such verbatim record.

BY ORDER OF THE OKEECHOBEE UTILITY AUTHORITY
John F. Hayford
Executive Director
466544 ON 8/1/2014

Public Notice

Public Notice

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED 2014TD064
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that SABRINA BURAC the holder of the following certificate has filed said certificates for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The certificate number and year of issuance, the description of the property, and the names in which it was assessed are as follows:

Certificate No: 756 Year of Issuance: June-01-2012
Description of Property: LOT O OF TRACT 19 WEST 1/2 OF THE EAST 1/2 OF THE SOUTH 1/2 OF THE SOUTH 1/2 OF TRACT 19 SECTION 21 AS TO THE SOUTHERN COLONIZATION COMPANY PLAT OF TOWNSHIP 34 SOUTH RANGE 33 EAST ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 4 PAGES 3-3E INCLUSIVE PUBLIC RECORDS OF OKEECHOBEE COUNTY FLORIDA

1-21-34-33-0A00-00019-0000
Said property being in the County of Okeechobee, State of Florida
Name in which assessed: REINALDO G BURAC

Unless said certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such certificate shall be sold to the highest bidder at the Okeechobee County Judicial Center, Jury Assembly Room, 312 NW 3rd Street, Okeechobee, Florida 10:00 A.M., on the 4th day of September, 2014. SUBJECT TO CURRENT TAXES

SHARON ROBERTSON, CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT
Okeechobee County, Florida
/s/ Robin R. Parrish
Deputy Clerk

NOTICE REGARDING THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990; In accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, persons needing a special accommodation to participate in this proceeding should contact Court Administration no later than seven days prior to the proceeding at 250 NW Country Club Drive, Port St. Lucie, Florida 34986, 1.772.807.4370 within two working days of your receipt of this notice. IF YOU ARE HEARING IMPAIRED CALL 1.800.955.8771; IF YOU ARE VOICE IMPAIRED CALL 1.800.955.8770. 465759 ON 7/25;8/1,8,15/2014

Public Notices

Public Notice

Request for Proposal

Solicitation No. OAC2014-OUA-7142014

The Okeechobee Utility Authority is requesting proposals for MISC. BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS to their main administration office located in the City of Okeechobee, to include: Replacement of all interior lighting fixtures, Replacement of entry storefront assembly, Complete Exterior and Interior painting, Interior flooring throughout. Respondents must be licensed and insured general contractors. The RFP package will be available electronically in PDF format on Mon. August 4th 2014. All interested parties will be required to contact OAC Enterprises Inc. with a letter of interest on or before August 8th. To the attention of: OAC Enterprises Inc. Architects through mark@oacenterprises.com to receive the package. All proposals are to be prepared in accordance with the instructions described in the RFP. All proposals must be received on or before August 25th, 2014 by: Okeechobee Utility Authority, Attention: Basil J. Coule CPA, Finance Director, 100 SW 5th Ave. Okeechobee, Florida, 34974. The OUA will enter into an agreement with the firm whose proposal is most advantageous to OUA. The OUA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any term or condition in this solicitation. No proposal submitted may be withdrawn for a period of 90 days, subsequent to the deadline for receiving proposals. All communications and questions regarding this RFP must be directed in writing to mark@oacenterprises.com . 466552 ON 8/1/2014

BUDGET WORKSHOP AND CITY COUNCIL MEETING NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the August 5, 2014, City of Okeechobee City Council Meeting has been cancelled. The City Council of the City of Okeechobee will conduct a Regular Meeting and a Budget Workshop at 5:00 p.m., on Tuesday, August 19, 2014, at City Hall, 55 SE 3rd Ave, Rm 200, Okeechobee, Florida. The purpose of the workshop is to discuss and review the proposed 2014-2015 Fiscal Year Annual Budget. The public is invited and encouraged to attend. Contact City Administration at 863-763-3372, or website, cityofokeechobee.com, to obtain a copy of the agenda.

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.

By: James E. Kirk, Mayor
Lane Gamiotea, CMC, City Clerk
466162 ON 8/1/2014

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED 2014TD093

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that ROBERT M MATTHEWS JR TRUST the holder of the following certificate has filed said certificates for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The certificate number and year of issuance, the description of the property, and the names in which it was assessed are as follows:

Certificate No: 2797 Year of Issuance: June-01-2009
Description of Property: SUNDANCE TRAILS RANCH LOT 9
1-03-36-36-0010-00000-0090
Said property being in the County of Okeechobee, State of Florida

Name in which assessed: BLT NOW LLC
Unless said certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such certificate shall be sold to the highest bidder at the Okeechobee County Judicial Center, Jury Assembly Room, 312 NW 3rd Street, Okeechobee, Florida 10:00 A.M., on the 4th day of September, 2014. SUBJECT TO CURRENT TAXES

SHARON ROBERTSON, CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT
Okeechobee County, Florida
/s/ Robin R. Parrish
Deputy Clerk

NOTICE REGARDING THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990; In accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, persons needing a special accommodation to participate in this proceeding should contact Court Administration no later than seven days prior to the proceeding at 250 NW Country Club Drive, Port St. Lucie, Florida 34986, 1.772.807.4370 within two working days of your receipt of this notice. IF YOU ARE HEARING IMPAIRED CALL 1.800.955.8771; IF YOU ARE VOICE IMPAIRED CALL 1.800.955.8770. 465786 ON 7/25;8/1,8,15/2014

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED 2014TD085

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that BE A MAN BUY LAND LLC the holder of the following certificate has filed said certificates for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The certificate number and year of issuance, the description of the property, and the names in which it was assessed are as follows:

Certificate No: 2031 Year of Issuance: June-01-2012
Description of Property: TOWNSITE OF OSOWAW LOT 15 BLOCK 93
1-22-33-35-0010-00930-0150
Said property being in the County of Okeechobee, State of Florida

Name in which assessed: ALLEN FUGERE KENNETH R CHILDS

Unless said certificate shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such certificate shall be sold to the highest bidder at the Okeechobee County Judicial Center, Jury Assembly Room, 312 NW 3rd Street, Okeechobee, Florida 10:00 A.M., on the 14th day of August, 2014. SUBJECT TO CURRENT TAXES

SHARON ROBERTSON, CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT
Okeechobee County, Florida
/s/ Robin R. Parrish
Deputy Clerk

NOTICE REGARDING THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990; In accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, persons needing a special accommodation to participate in this proceeding should contact Court Administration no later than seven days prior to the proceeding at 250 NW Country Club Drive, Port St. Lucie, Florida 34986, 1.772.807.4370 within two working days of your receipt of this notice. IF YOU ARE HEARING IMPAIRED CALL 1.800.955.8771; IF YOU ARE VOICE IMPAIRED CALL 1.800.955.8770. 465751 ON 7/4,11,18,25;8/1/2014

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4	6	3	2	7	8	9	1	5
6	7	9	3	2	5	1	8	4
5	1	4	7	8	6	2	9	3
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4	1	2	8	6	7	3	5	6
6	3	5	4	9	2	8	7	1
7	8	6	9	3	1	4	2	9

ANSWER:

LEGAL NOTICE PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE 2014 PRIMARY ELECTION OKEECHOBEE COUNTY CANVASSING BOARD EVENTS

Notice is hereby given that meetings of the Okeechobee County Canvassing Board will be held on the following dates:

- August 7, 2014 1:00 p.m. Logic and Accuracy Test
- August 22, 2014 8:30-9:00 a.m. Public Inspection of Mail (Absentee) Ballots received
- 9:00 a.m. Opening of Mail Ballots
- Process and duplication of Mail Ballots received
- August 25, 2014 8:00 a.m. Upload Mail Ballots and Early Vote Results
- August 26, 2014 8:30-9:00 a.m. Public Inspection of Mail Ballots received (if necessary)
- 9:00 a.m. Opening of Mail Ballots (if necessary)
- Process and duplication of Mail Ballots received (if necessary)
- 5:30-6:00 p.m. Public Inspection of Mail Ballots received
- 6:00 p.m. Opening of Mail Ballots
- Process and duplication of Mail Ballots received
- Canvass of Election Returns
- 7:00 p.m. Canvass of Provisional Ballots, Unofficial/ Official Certification, Conduct of Election, (if no recount), Selection of precinct and race for Audit of Election
- August 29 and / or 30, 2014 9:00 a.m. Recount (if necessary)
- September 2, 2014 12 Noon Official Certification, Conduct of Election (Audit selection, if no manual recount)
- September 3, 2014 9:00 a.m. Audit of Election

In accordance with the Sunshine Law of Florida, all meetings are open to the public.

Note: Section 286.01105, Florida Statutes, state that if a person decides to appeal any decision by the board, agency, or commission with respect to any matter considered at a meeting or hearing, he or she will need a record of the proceeding, and that, for such purposes, he or she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

Diane Hagan
Supervisor of Elections
Okeechobee County
466508 ON 8/1/2014

SUDOKU

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Betty Hazellief, 863-610-0144
Sharon Prevatt, 863-634-7069
Dee Reeder, 863-610-2485



7008-C: Location, Location, Location! Large Commercial building located in the center of Okeechobee with 4,000 total sq ft. The building is currently operating at full rental capacity. **\$225,000** MLS # 208255



LAKE ACCESS

7009-C: Large Commercial Lot (.91 ac) on the Rim Canal with two mobile homes in good condition. Dock and great access to Lake Okeechobee! Call for further information. **\$175,000** MLS #207818



5079-H: West Sherman. Great location for East Coast Commuters! Modular 3BR/2BA home with potentials. 1380 Total Sq Ft/1200 under air all on a large lot. Needs some TLC. **Owner Financing Available.** Make Offer **\$55,000**



5007-H: Connors Gables Modern Style 3 br, 2 ba with 1,980 Total Sq Ft/1,319 under air, energy efficient, built 2009. Split bdrm plan, Master bdrm, spacious living room, and much more! **\$145,000** MLS # 208204



8006-A: 200+/- acres on Dark Hammock Rd. Mostly improved pasture, large hammock. Fenced & crossed fenced, water supply for livestock. Call for more info. **\$740,000** MLS # 208257



8007-A: 55.40+/- acres improved pasture. Fronts SR 710 and SE 64th St. **\$260,000** MLS #205510

• Pine Ridge Park buildable lot partial fenced. **\$5,900** MLS # 207132 • 319+/- acres on Hwy 441 N **\$4,000,000** • Connors Gables buildable Lot (SE 39th Terr) **\$6,000** MLS #208198 • 14+/- acres of commercial property on the Rim Canal with lake access. **\$1,500,000** MLS #207408 • Blue Heron Nice lot on the cul-de-sac. MLS # 207053 • Palm Village Ranch clean Lot-Close to the Clubhouse. 55+community. **\$15,000** MLS# 207998 • Ok Acres 10+/- acres Fenced, pond and house pad ready for a new home! **\$79,000** MLS # 207817 • Viking 2.5+/- acres for **\$11,000** MLS # 207811

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OKEECHOBEE NEWS

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Training offered for beginning farmers

Special to the Okeechobee News

The University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) Extension Treasure Coast Small Farms Working Group wants to help you become a successful producer. Join them for the Beginning Farmers: Planning for your Successful Farm Summer Series, and learn the tools you need to succeed.

The third workshop will be held on Aug. 9 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the St. Lucie County Extension, located at 8400 Picos Road in Ft. Pierce. The workshop will focus on Integrated Pest Management (IPM), which involves monitoring pest populations and managing pests through a combination of practices, with pesticide application as only one of many management tools. Other IPM tools

include conservation of beneficial organisms; maintaining crops in optimal health through proper spacing, timing of plantings, irrigation/fertilizer application, etc.; and selecting disease-resistant crop varieties and weed-free plant materials. Participants will learn how to use scouting techniques to determine pest prevalence in a farming system, and determine the appropriate time to apply a management strategy, based on threshold levels. By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to develop an IPM plan, using multiple methods to address pest problems on a farm. In the afternoon, the class will visit Gibbons Farms in Ft. Pierce, to see and hear more about the use of IPM practices in a successful, active farm.

Farmers who successfully complete the program will receive a certificate of completion. Each workshop will be held from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. Registration is \$30 per workshop and includes two sessions, lunch, course materials, and a field visit to a local farm. Register today at your local Extension office or online at: <http://www.eventbrite.com>.

For more information, visit <http://martin.ifas.ufl.edu> or call the UF/IFAS Extension Martin County Office in Stuart at 772-288-5654.

All programs and related activities sponsored, or assisted by, the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences are open to all persons without discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions, or affiliations. Florida Cooperative Extension Service/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences/University of Florida/Dr. Nick Place Dean and Director for Extension.

The fourth and last session in the 2014 summer series will be held on Sept. 13 at the UF/IFAS Extension Okeechobee County, where the topics covered will include product marketing and irrigation system design.

The program is designed for beginning farmers who have little to no farming experience.

Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

ACROSS

- 1 Wall calendar page
- 6 Gimlet garnish
- 10 Gangster weapons
- 14 Martini garnish
- 15 Everglades denizen, for short
- 16 Muffin spread
- 17 Rubbish
- 19 Rush-order letters
- 20 Words of commitment
- 21 Rubbish
- 23 Rubbish
- 28 Speed contests
- 29 Make, as a DVD copy
- 30 Expressive rock music subgenre
- 31 Speaker
- 32 Teen's skin concern
- 33 Lowest deck on a ship
- 35 Rubbish
- 41 ___ zone: restricted air space
- 42 Understands
- 44 Colorado skiing destination
- 47 Help on stage
- 49 Pesky insect
- 50 Psychologist Alfred
- 51 Rubbish
- 53 Rubbish
- 55 Musical sensitivity
- 56 Cantina hors d'oeuvre
- 57 Rubbish
- 63 Anemia treatment
- 64 Shipwreck survivor's refuge
- 65 "Don't worry!"
- 66 Penny
- 67 "The Wanderer" singer
- 68 Witherspoon of "Legally Blonde"

- 5 Listens to
- 6 Calculator readout, briefly
- 7 CPA's recommendation
- 8 Six-Day War statesman
- 9 Letter between Delta and Foxtrot
- 10 "Skedaddle!"
- 11 Former German territory ___ - Lorraine
- 12 "Next week, on ..." bit
- 13 Second-year students
- 18 Architect Mies van der ___
- 22 Sales meeting aid
- 23 CEO's degree
- 24 Pained cry
- 25 Yes-___ question
- 26 "See ya!"
- 27 Electric shaver brand
- 31 Boozehound
- 34 Short basketball shot
- 36 Wooden Mortimer
- 37 Ages and ages

- 38 Foam pad style resembling a dairy case container
- 39 City near Lake Tahoe
- 40 Legato's opp., in music
- 43 NASDAQ buy
- 44 Invasive apps
- 45 Apply liberally and carelessly
- 46 Grammar stickler, e.g.
- 48 Fencing weapon
- 50 Top room
- 51 Cola Wars cola
- 52 Arafat of the 58-Down
- 54 ___-back: relaxed
- 58 West Bank gp.
- 59 Thriller writer
- 60 Apply
- 61 NASDAQ listings
- 62 ___ out a living

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:

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xwordeditor@aol.com

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By Gareth Bain
(c)2014 Tribune Content Agency, LLC



Special to the Okeechobee News/Yvette Goodiel, UF/IFAS
The UF/IFAS Extension Treasure Coast Small Farms Working Group will be offering a Beginning Farmer Summer Series, to help new farmers learn the tools they need to succeed.

Agri-Civic Center August events

- Tuesday, Aug. 1: Turnin' N Burnin' Summer Buckle Series Jackpot Barrel Race exhibition runs start at 5 p.m. Barrel races start at 7 p.m. A concession stand will be open. There is no charge for the public to attend.
- Saturday, Aug. 2: Turnin' N Burnin' Jackpot Barrel Race & Speed Show exhibition runs start at 3 p.m. Barrel races start at 5 p.m. A speed show will follow the barrel races. A concession stand will be open. There is no charge for the public to attend.
- Tuesday, Aug. 5: Recreational Riding from 6 to 9:30 p.m.; \$10 per rider, and you MUST show a current negative Coggins test for each horse.
- Saturday, Aug. 16 and Sunday, Aug. 17: The All Florida Junior Rodeo Association 2015 season kickoff. Youth from ages 5 to 14 from all over the State of Florida will com-

- pete in 11 rodeo events. There is no charge for the public to attend, and the concession stand will be open, with the proceeds going to 4-H. Rodeo starts at 9 a.m. Saturday. Cowboy Church will be at 8 a.m. Sunday morning.
- Thursday Aug. 21: Recreational riding/barrel practice night from 6 to 9:30 p.m.; \$10 per rider; and you MUST show a current negative Coggins test.
- Friday, Aug. 22: Turnin' N Burnin' Summer Buckle Series Jackpot Barrel Race exhibition runs start at 5 p.m. Barrel racing starts at 7 p.m. A concession stand will be open. There is no charge for the public to attend.
- Sunday, Aug. 31: Kaza Productions Mexican Rodeo; Mexican music and food, 1 to 8 p.m.

Local children enjoy summer skate board camp

By Charles M. Murphy
Okeechobee News

Communities in Schools (CIS), local volunteers and the Okeechobee Children Services Council teamed up this year to provide a skate camp for local kids for the 10th consecutive year.

Amanda Blewitt with CIS and the Police Athletic League, said the camp has averaged 25 kids throughout the week. The camp is for kids ages 6-18 and focuses on safety and improving their skate board skills.

The Okeechobee Children Services Council provided a \$3,000 grant to help the camp operate this year. They provide a full breakfast and lunch to the campers. The CIS girls provide Gatorade and other drinks to the campers.

Volunteer Heather Siler Dobbs has been at the camp for the past several years. She started to skateboard at age 8 and handed down her love for the hobby to her children. She asked if she could hang out when her children attended and now she works with

the younger skaters, helping them learn the basics.

"This year has been fantastic. The kids are so supportive of each other, they're all encouraging each other to try new things and to stay positive, it's OK, if one of them falls, there always two or three that run up to them and say it's OK, hang in there," she added.

Each age group works on different skills and the campers are divided into different ages and experience. Dobbs focuses on the basics with the younger children like how to stand on the board and then make moves and going down ramps.

"The Children Services Council is so wonderful. It's great to have this camp so kids can come out and learn something in a supportive atmosphere and kind of get the basics down before they venture out alone into the skate board park," she added.

Jill Rogers with CIS said the shade trees at the skate board park have really helped keep the campers cooler this year. She thanked the Okeechobee School Board Food Services for providing the meals and drinks. She also thanked the Renfranz family for a memorial grant they provide each year in memory of their son, Eli. The money goes to pay for two part-time employees who help operate the skate board park during the year. The hours are Monday through Friday from 3 until 6 p.m. and Saturday from 1 until 6 p.m.

Skaters interested in a \$20 annual pass can purchase them from the Okeechobee County Parks and Recreation Department at

the Okeechobee Sports Complex.

East Coast Signs provided T-shirts for all of the campers this year. The camp will end Friday with a trip to the Fort Pierce Parks and Recreation Department skate board park.



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy

Landen Doyle, 8, shows off some moves at the skate board camp.

County to host Outdoor Sports Expo

Local businesses invited to sign up first for spots

Special to the Okeechobee News

Get Ready Okeechobee County businesses! The Okeechobee County Outdoor Sports Expo Backwoods To Beaches – Freshwater & Saltwater is coming to the Okeechobee County Agri-Civic Center on Nov. 15 and 16.

This event will promote the diverse historical, agricultural and outdoor sporting activities, products, resorts and accommodations in Okeechobee County and throughout Florida, such as: hunting, fishing, camping, resorts, tours, outdoor equipment (including trucks, boats, RVs, hunting buggies, airboats) and family outdoor activities.

The expo will showcase all things outdoors in one location in your hometown.

Take advantage of the local business preference to secure undercover booths, outdoor display areas and sponsorship op-

portunities at the expo before out-of-area businesses are contacted. Don't miss this opportunity to promote your business to local and out of area visitors.

Okeechobee local business preference signups will be available Aug. 4–22. Contact the Okeechobee County Parks & Recreation Department at 863-763-6950, or e-mail: Tgould@Co.Okeechobee.FL.us; or call the Tourist Development Council at 863-763-3959, or e-mail: Tourism@Co.Okeechobee.FL.us.

This event is an officially recognized county event approved by the Okeechobee County Board Of County Commissioners and presented by the collective efforts of the Okeechobee County Departments of the Agri-Civic Center, Parks And Recreation and the Tourist Development Council.

Note: All booths and display areas are on a first-come, first-served basis. All products and services are subject to the approval by Okeechobee County.



Okeechobee News/Charles Murphy
Heather Siler Dobbs assists Alex Ngov, 6, at the skate camp this week.

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TrophyCatch launches enhanced website for conservation-minded anglers

Special to the Okeechobee News

In preparation for season three of TrophyCatch, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) launched a new and highly improved website to facilitate gathering data on Florida's famed trophy largemouth bass and to reward anglers for releasing them alive.

TrophyCatch is an incentive-based conservation program designed for anglers who catch-and-release largemouth bass heavier than 8 pounds in Florida. There are three different tiers and two bonus categories offering the opportunity to win prizes:

- The Lunker Club (8-9.9 pounds) \$100 in gift cards, a short-sleeve T-shirt, certificate and decal.

- The Trophy Club (10-12.9 pounds) \$150 in gift cards, a short-sleeve T-shirt, certificate and decal.

- The Hall of Fame Club (greater than 13 pounds) a \$500 fiberglass mount, \$200 in gift cards, a duffel bag, hoodie and other apparel, Glen Lau DVD, certificate and decal, worth approximately \$1,000.

- The biggest bass of the season wins a \$3,000 championship ring from the American Outdoors Fund, and if it happens to come from a major water body in Osceola County, Experience Kissimmee chips in \$10,000 in cash. The current leader is J. Morrell, with a 14-pound, 9-ounce bass caught and released on Lake Kingsley, last March.

- One lucky registered angler will win a \$40,000 Phoenix bass boat, powered by Mercury Marine and equipped with a Power-Pole. Besides getting a chance at the boat just for registering, every verified catch provides 10 extra chances for the drawing, which is conducted at the end of the sea-

son. TrophyCatch seasons run from Oct. 1 to Sept. 30 each year.

"Anglers should carefully follow catch-and-release guidelines for these big bass and document the catch through a photograph of the entire bass on a scale with the weight clearly legible," said Tom Champeau, director of the Division of Freshwater Fisheries Management. The new TrophyCatchFlorida.com website makes it easy to register and review the rules and prizing details. Anglers should remember to take a camera and scale, and perhaps a tape measure to document the catch quickly and safely before releasing it.

People then simply upload catch photos (up to five) or even an MP4 video clip up to 50 MB in size, complete a simple form and submit. Since this is a citizen-science program, properly verified data helps FWC biologists enhance, conserve and promote trophy bass fishing. This will ultimately benefit anglers, fishing-related businesses and local communities. Corporate partners, including Bass Pro Shops, Dick's Sporting Goods, Rapala and Bass King Clothing, provide the rewards, in return for carefully documenting these catches and live-releasing them in the same water system where they were caught.

This program provides extremely valuable data and encourages live-release of these older, female bass, so they can continue to challenge other anglers and spawn in their home waters.

The program began in October 2012, and the World Fishing Network was gracious and conservation-minded enough to create the first website free-of-charge. TrophyCatch continues to expand, going from a total of

1,941 registrants and 185 verified club winners in season 1 to 7,903 registrants and 798 winners through the first three-quarters of season 2. Similar growth is anticipated for season 3.

"With additional demands on the website and reward processing, and evolution of the Internet, the enhancements that our new partnership with Brandt Information Services brings are sure to be appreciated by TrophyCatch participants," said KP Clements, the TrophyCatch director. Clements also encourages anglers to subscribe to YouTube.com/TrophyCatchFlorida and to "like" Facebook.com/TrophyCatchFlorida to keep up with developments. The new website integrates these social media resources so that

anglers can brag about their catches with their social networks.

The FWC encourages all anglers to check out the site, register to be automatically entered in the boat drawing and be prepared to catch and release largemouth bass. One never knows when or where a trophy bass will appear, but checking the gallery and catch records at TrophyCatchFlorida.com may enhance one's opportunities. From Okeechobee, through the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes to Lake Talquin, trophies are being caught year-round, but trophy bass are also being caught on small local lakes and even golf course ponds. These places are accessible and good bets for opportunities to land a lunker.

Blood Centers announce intent to merge

Special to the Okeechobee News

OneBlood, Inc., the not-for-profit blood center serving most of Florida and parts of South Georgia and Alabama, and The Institute for Transfusion Medicine, Inc. (ITxM) the not-for-profit blood center and transfusion services management organization operating in Pittsburgh, Chicago, Virginia and parts of Ohio and West Virginia, announced that they have entered into an agreement to pursue a merger of the two organizations.

"The landscape of the blood industry is shifting and it demands a progressive and forward-thinking approach to ensure safe, available and affordable blood for our hospital partners and their patients," said Don Doddridge, Chief Executive Officer of OneBlood. "By combining the resources of two industry leading blood centers we can further strengthen the blood supply, especially in times of natural disasters such as hurricanes in the south and winter storms in the north, while at the same time create operational efficiencies that bring additional value to our healthcare partners and our blood donors." said Doddridge.

"We have entered a new era of blood banking. Hospital consolidation continues to occur and medical facilities need larger scale blood centers to serve multiple locations in broader service regions. As their partner, we must do our part to help ensure

the blood is available when and where it is needed while assisting the industry in its efforts to control healthcare costs," said Jim Covert, Chief Executive Officer of ITxM. "Keeping pace with the changing times is not enough. As stewards of the blood supply and trusted community assets we must take proactive and innovative measures now so we are able to meet the blood needs of the future," said Mr. Covert.

The merger would create the largest independent not-for-profit blood center in the United States distributing nearly 2 million units of blood annually, with combined revenues of \$480 million and employing more than 3,500 people. The due diligence period is expected to last for the next several months. In the meantime, the centers will continue operations without any changes in service or leadership.

OneBlood and ITxM are no strangers to mergers. OneBlood was formed in 2012 when three of Florida's independent not-for-profit blood centers merged. ITxM was created in 1987 and is the parent company of the Central Blood Bank, created in 1951 and located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and subsequently acquired blood centers in Chicago, Illinois and Richmond, Virginia.



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in English
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in Spanish

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Holy Eucharist Service

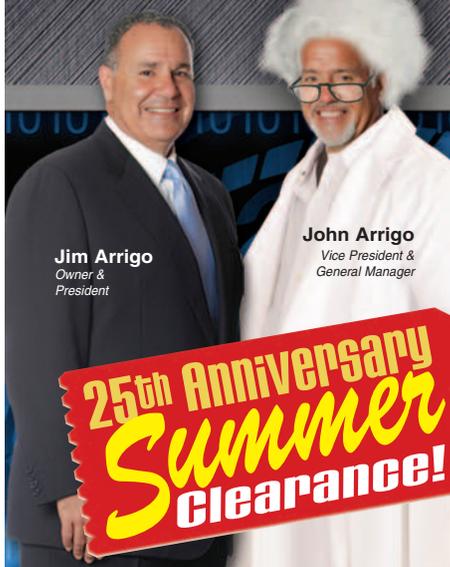
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86 AVAILABLE AT SIMILAR SAVINGS



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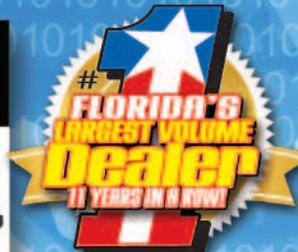
ORIGINAL MSRP ...28,780
DISCOUNTS & REBATES-2,948

YOU PAY AS LOW AS

\$25,832*

Prices plus tax, tags, title & \$599.95 dealer fees & lease conquest rebate.

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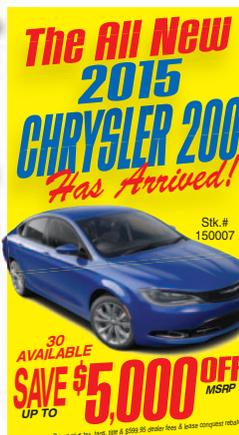


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DISCOUNTS & REBATES-7,000

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DISCOUNTS & REBATES-6,715

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Stk. # 142495

2014

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ORIGINAL MSRP ...18,385
DISCOUNTS & REBATES-3,060

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113 AVAILABLE AT SIMILAR SAVINGS



Stk. # 141780

2014

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ORIGINAL MSRP ...20,990
DISCOUNTS & REBATES-4,275

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2014

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ORIGINAL MSRP ...29,950
DISCOUNTS & REBATES-6,322

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128 AVAILABLE AT SIMILAR SAVINGS



2014

Promaster 1500 Cargo Van

ORIGINAL MSRP ...30,634

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\$1000 REBATE

Prices plus tax, tags, title & \$599.95 dealer fees & lease conquest rebate.

30 AVAILABLE AT SIMILAR SAVINGS



Stk. # 514185

2014

3500 Crew Cab 4x4**

ORIGINAL MSRP ...62,535
DISCOUNTS & REBATES ...-13,000

YOU PAY AS LOW AS

\$49,535*

Prices plus tax, tags, title & \$599.95 dealer fees & lease conquest rebate.

78 AVAILABLE AT SIMILAR SAVINGS



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Sat: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM • Sun: Closed



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