

IMMOKALEE BULLETIN

Serving Immokalee, Ave Maria and Eastern Collier County

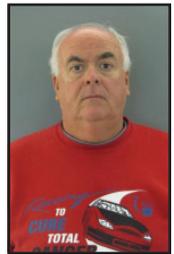
Vol. 44 No. 5

Thursday, February 3, 2011



Inside...

Man arrested - accused of child molesting ...Page 3



New business offers food and fun ...Page 8

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TMI buildings: More than just office space

Catalyst for change - measured in sq. ft.

By **Patty Brant**
Immokalee Bulletin

The past several years may have been some of the worst economic times since the Great Depression, but there are those in Immokalee who are steadily continuing to work toward a better future.

Businessmen and friends for over 30 years, Bob Juster and Walt Burdick have been proponents of Immokalee since 2005, when they partnered to build the Training and Manufacturing Institute (TMI) - 30,000 square feet of promise for the future. Construction was completed in 2007.

Located in Tradeport Tech Park, 2050 Commerce Ave., the facility is just a stone's throw from the Immokalee Regional Airport.

Bob and Wayne are quick to explain that it is intended to be a catalyst for change in the community. Its function is to attract a healthy mix of "good quality" tenants including both businesses and non-profit organizations. Tenants can receive tax incentives from the state, county and as part of the Enterprise Zone.

It is the newest commercial building in Immokalee in 20 years, Bob and Wayne point out, and an example of how private enterprise and non-profits can work together to benefit each other and the community.

TMI's mission statement is to attract employers who provide high level jobs and the pair have been quite successful in meeting that goal.

All the businesses and organizations there pay higher wages

See TMI — Page 2



Immokalee Bulletin/Patty Brant
Longtime friends and partners Wayne Burdick and Bob Juster the driving force behind TMI's successful business model.



Courtesy photo/Worldvision
Hundreds turned out last year to build thousands of "Meals of Hope" to benefit hungry families and children. This year's conference and highly coordinated volunteer efforts will bring together help and hope to continue the annual Targeting Hope outreach program.

Volunteers to 'build' 60,000 meals in two just hours!

The Worldvision organization will sponsor "Targeting Hope," a one day conference centered around rural community development. The event will take place on Friday, Feb. 4, at the Bethel Assembly of God, 1225 W. Main Street, Immokalee.

Workshops will be offered on a variety of topics to build capacity among leadership serving south Florida communities. Targeting Hope is a great place for community based organizations and churches to connect with one another and share best practices, needs and opportunities that are important to the future development of the region. The conference which be-

gins with registration at 8 a.m., will continue through the afternoon until 4 p.m., with workshops that include the topics of Civil engagement, community youth development, Youth mentoring, Community transformation, understanding child well-being, Youth as agents of change and from Community Redevelopment Agency Executive Director, Penny Phillippe, a session on "What's going on in Immokalee." The final workshop session given by Sherry Hubbard will be on the topic of utilizing technology for your organization.

Following the conference vol-

See HOPE — Page 2

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TMI

Continued From Page 1

than can be earned in picking or packing. Their philosophy is to "Try to do well by doing good," Walt explains.

Of course, there have been some rough spots throughout the process. Dealing with building regulations that are identical to those governing high end businesses in Naples has been one of Immokalee's biggest challenges in moving forward. Bob and Walt say these building codes are unrealistic and add unnecessary expenses for anyone wanting to help build up Immokalee's economy.

The partners are clearly proud of how they interface with the community. Example: they successfully lobbied for a CAT bus stop at the facility. Transportation is key in allowing access to all and non-profits like Early Learning, Salvation Army and I HOPE - all located at TMI - are important for many Immokalee residents.

At TMI, tenants receive value added with an excellent property management program and a handyman who keeps the building up.

Just two offices remain open at the facility. Current tenants include: The Florida National Guard 856th Quartermaster Support Company Emergency Response; The Salvation Army Eastern Collier County Local Office; Collier County School District Headstart Early Learning; Collier Child Care Resources, Inc. Child Care Training and Certification; Gulfcoast Linen, a Div. of SodexHo USA, Inc. Linen Storage for SW FL Hospital; IHOPE, Inc. (Immokalee Helping Our People in Emergency).

Florida National Guard

The 856th Quartermaster Support Com-

pany has been at TMI for five years. The readiness center includes a Day Room, training space, offices and conference room.

Bob and Walt say the National Guard's arrival in March 2008 was a "saving grace" for TMI. The Guardsmen have been very helpful in supporting the other tenants get established - like helping IHope move into a warehouse there.

The federally-recognized, fully accredited unit has some 120-150 Guardsmen assigned to it. Members are from all over Florida. Eventually the unit will move completely over to the Immokalee Airport.

School Board

Offices at TMI provide the base for Collier County School Board's technology, Bob said during a tour of the facility.

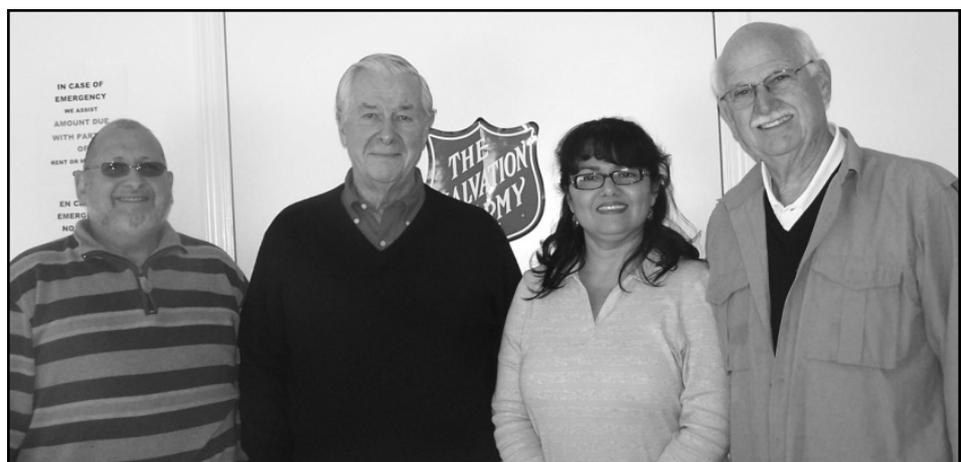
The nucleus of the Early Learning administration and warehouse are on site. The office administers programs for PreK to second grade. One such program is providing a book a month for each child in those grades in Collier County. They also handle the Summer Migrant program at the high school.

Salvation Army

The Salvation Army's contribution to the community has long been felt. For instance, when the January 2010 freeze hit Immokalee's agricultural base so hard, a crowd of 20,000 wound around the building, in need of services.

The Salvation Army's Rosa Ogando provides social services from the office at TMI. She has been here since Dec. 13, with the Salvation Army for six years and before that with Collier County. Her office helps people pay bills, rent and utilities. By talking to clients, she said, they can usually find someone who can help.

The Salvation Army is a faith based organization. Rosa said she is pleased to be in this community.



Immokalee Bulletin/Patty Brant

TMI is built on the concept of good business practices and community service. Pictured from left: IHope's Rick Heers, Wayne Burdick, Rosa Ogando of the Salvation Army and Bob Juster.

I HOPE

Bob and Walt's business philosophy has helped IHope (Immokalee Helping Our People in Emergency) become part of the TMI family. A sub-market rent helps businesses and groups set up, but it could not be done without financially healthy tenants.

Rick Heers, I HOPE's leader, proudly shows off a warehouse at the TMI building. Donations of new and used furniture from places like Haverly's and Rooms to Go as well as numerous other stores and groups, line shelves and crowd the floor space. Items from water pumps to cabinets are stored there till they can be put to good use by someone in need.

Rick said recently eight Illinois Amish visitors refurbished homes, and helped set the warehouse in order. He said he is very pleased to have such great access to the warehouse and is working on a business

model that will also allow him to set up office space there.

"Without this we'd be stumbling along," he said.

Bob is helping him set up the business model. They collaborate, connect to make things happen. Everything works together.

Child Care programs

National Center for Children and Families driven, this program provides learning materials and training for adults working with children.

Bob and Walt have guided TMI through 2008-10, the worst years of the current recession, and feel they have even improved their mission. They are pleased to have managed so well.

"Walt and I kept our promises," Bob said adding, "Immokalee is filled with unkept promises."

Immokalee Fire Dept. recognizes Burn Awareness Week

Burn awareness is a kick off during the week of Feb. 6-12, to a yearlong education campaign from Shriners Hospitals for Children®. The 2011 Campaign is Safety Begins at Home.

. U.S. hospitals treat an estimated 16,000 children under 5 for scalds every year. In addition, more than 60 percent of residential fires that cause the death of a child occur in homes without smoke detectors.

Here are just a few tips to keep your children and you, Safe at Home; use electrical outlet covers, install appropriate number of smoke detectors, teach children that matches are a tool, and not a toy.

Always supervise children in the kitchen, keep children away from everything that is hot. Keep hot pot handles turned inward. Always supervise children in the bath; if the water feels hot, it is too hot for a child.

For more safety information visit www.burnawareness.org or the Immokalee Fire

station at 502 E. New Market Rd. 239-657-2111.

HOPE

Continued From Page 1

unteers will pack 60,000 meals in just two hours with Meals of Hope and the day's events will be capped off with pizza and cel-

ebration from 6 until 7 p.m.

For more information, please contact Frank Rincon, youth pastor, Bethel Assembly of God at 239-503-8136; Rick Heers, director I HOPE at 239-657-4524 or John Lawson, director One by One Leadership at 239-248-5857.

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IMMOKALEE BULLETIN

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To Submit News

The Immokalee Bulletin welcomes submissions from its readers. Opinions, calendar items, story ideas and photographs are welcome. Call (239) 657-6000 to reach our newsroom. The deadline for all news items is 11 a.m. on Monday prior to the following Thursday's publication.
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Our Purpose...

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

We Pledge...

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

Letters to the Editor

From Collier County District Schools: School volunteer policies explained

Questions raised in light of recent arrest of suspect charged with molesting a child at two Collier County District Schools include:

1. *How long has Mr. Alter been a volunteer?*

Since October 2008

2. *What is the process for becoming a volunteer?*

An application is completed with the applicant being asked to self-disclose any criminal history. Following a volunteer orientation, the applicant's driver license is swiped through the "FastPass" system to be cleared through the Florida Department of Law Enforcement Sexual Offenders and Predators Registry. The volunteer is then cleared as a Level I volunteer. They would be issued a volunteer badge at that time. The volunteer's work at the school with students

is then supervised by a school employee.

If the school expresses a need for a Level II volunteer, someone who may have unsupervised direct one-on-one contact with students (volunteer coaches, overnight chaperones, or clinic volunteers), fingerprinting – which includes a criminal background report from both Florida Department of Law Enforcement and FBI – is done.

3. *What type of volunteer work did Mr. Alter do?*

He assisted students with reading.

Mr. Alter was a Level 1 volunteer

Collier County District Schools

Black History Month Events

The Black Heritage Scholarship Committee would like to invite the Immokalee community including churches, schools, organizations and the public to all of their upcoming Black History Month of Events:

Feb. 18

Fashion/Talent Show at the Immokalee Aquatic Center(Sport Complex)-505 Escambia Street, Immokalee, from 7-9 p.m. The cost is \$5 Donation

Feb. 19

Community March/Taste of Soul at the Immokalee Airport Park-1140 SR#29, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Cost is \$10 per plate

Feb. 20

Community Service in Immokalee at First Baptist Missionary Baptist Church--715-Third Street, Immokalee at 3 p.m.

All proceeds will benefit the Black Heritage Scholarship Funds in Immokalee.

Come one come all and join in on our celebration. For concerns or questions, please call Brother Tony Allen at: 239-297-1390, Bishop Scott at 305-915-5109, Sister Sharon Tims at 239-657-3583, Sister Gloria Everett at 239-324-1354 or Sister Elaine Lane at 239-657-6403.

**Thank You,
Cherryle Thomas**

Obituaries

Paul Raul Becerra Jr., 39

IMMOKALEE — Paul Raul Becerra Jr., 39, of Immokalee, who passed away unexpectedly at his home Jan. 17, 2011.

We, the family, would like to thank everyone for the kind words, gestures, emotional and financial support during our time of grief. We are so grateful to have such wonderful family and friends.

Paul was a long time truck driver for agriculture which allowed him to travel many states. He was born on April 27, 1971, and survived by his parents, Maria Flores Rivera and Paul Raul Becerra Sr. He is also survived by his children, Paul Raul Becerra III, Robert A. Becerra and Miguel Mendiola, Ashley M. Becerra, Amber M. Becerra and Carolee Conde; brothers, Ramiro, Richard, and Roger lee Becerra; sisters, Melinda and Melissa Becerra; and fiancé, Anita Partida.

Paul, you will live in our hearts and never be forgotten but missed greatly.



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Waterways man charged with child molestation

Robert G. Alter was arrested Friday and charged with sexually abusing six more children.

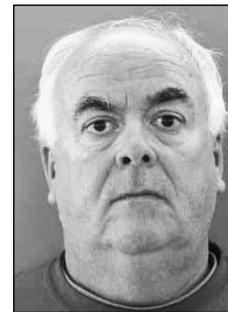
The new charges are felonies and range from lewd and lascivious molestation on a victim under the age of 12 to sexual battery.

The incidents occurred from May 2010 to January 2011, according to detectives.

The victims are girls ages 7 to 11, detectives said.

Four of the victims were students at Pinecrest Elementary School and one of the victims attended Highlands Elementary School, both in Immokalee. The abuse occurred while Alter was working as a volunteer at the schools.

Detectives said the abuse occurred in the hallway at Highlands Elementary and



Robert G. Alter

Alter was arrested late last Friday afternoon, Jan. 28, at the Collier County jail, where he has been held since his Jan. 20, arrest on separate molestation charges involving a student at Highlands Elementary.

in the library media center at Pinecrest Elementary.

Detectives said the other victim was a child Alter knew and that the abuse occurred at his residence in the Waterways community in Golden Gate Estates.

Alter was arrested late last Friday

Legal Aid to host free Family Law Seminar

Legal Aid Service of Collier County is offering a free Family Law Seminar for individuals seeking to file for a divorce pro-se (Simple divorce) on Feb. 24, from 4 until 6 p.m. You must meet the following criteria: No children born during the marriage and No real property purchased during the marriage. Please call our office to register at 239-775-4555. Legal Aid Service of Collier County, 4125 E Tamiami Trail, Naples. Call for more information at 239-775-4555. No walk ins will be accepted. Go to: www.LegalAid.org/collier for more information. Upcoming Events: Custody/ Visitation seminar in March. Register Now!

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IHS reading program recognizes mentors

The Immokalee High School (IHS) Teen Trendsetters Reading Mentors program continues to be a success in its third year. As a way to recognize all that the students have done, and as a highlight of National Mentoring Month, "Thank Your Mentor Day" was celebrated recently. Volunteer USA, who manages the Teen Trendsetters program, had teens and elementary students finding creative and easy ways to thank their mentors.

The program started three years ago with 30 IHS teens mentoring 3rd grade students at Highlands Elementary School.

This school year, 24 IHS teens (some new, some returnees) provided service to Immokalee Community School 2nd grade students. The program has garnered national recognition, including a prestigious leadership award from Youth Service America.

The program places Lead Teen Trendsetters and an advisor from an area high school working together with a neighboring elementary school. Approximately 24 teens are paired with 24 younger students. The teens

arrive at the elementary school once a week for one-hour mentoring sessions. Together, the students get to know one another and spend valuable time reading and enjoying other educational activities. There is an open enrollment for the Mentor Teen Trendsetters volunteer program due to students taking part in extracurricular activities throughout the school year.

Teen Trendsetters was first launched in Florida in 2002. Accomplishments include: a 90 percent acceptance rate into college for Teen Trendsetters who are high school seniors with most planning to continue volunteering, up to 25 take-home books provided to struggling 2nd and 3rd grade readers to keep and read at home with their parents, and Volunteer USA has been awarded a Youth Thrive Award and a 2004 National Harris Wofford Award for the Teen Trendsetters youth program.

To learn more, please contact Teen Trendsetters sponsor Ada Campos at 239-377-1800.

Early dismissal set for next week

The fourth of seven School District of Collier County early dismissal days is set for Wednesday, Feb. 9. The early dismissal time for elementary, middle, and high school students is three hours earlier than the dismissal time on other days.

The early release day is for the purpose of school improvement inservice for all staff, especially as they work in designing challenging and engaging lessons for our students. The district hopes that this

advance notice will allow for after-school child care arrangements to be made.

The three remaining scheduled early dismissal days for the 2010-2011 school year are March 8, May 19, and June 9 – the very last day of the school year. To view the entire 2010-2011 school calendar, go to the home page of the district Web site (www.collierschools.com) and look under "Calendars" on the "Quick Links" menu on the far left side of the page.

LWTHS to sponsor benefit garage sale and fun run

Lorenzo Walker Technical High School (LWTHS) will hold its 2nd Annual "Junk in the Trunk Garage Sale and 5K Family Fun Run" beginning at 7:30 a.m., on Saturday, Feb. 12. Both events will take place on the campus of LWTHS located at 3702 Estey Avenue. This year, the event is being co-sponsored by the school's National Honor Society (Junk in the Trunk) and Sports Club (5K Fun Run).

The Junk in the Trunk garage sale is open to anyone, and for a \$15 donation you can sell anything. National Honor Society sponsor Joann Cassio explains how easy it is. "Back up your car, open the trunk, and have an instant garage sale." Two parking spaces are allowed per \$15 donation, which will go toward providing scholarships to National Honor Society students.

The 5K Family Fun Run is free, though donations are accepted. Sports Club sponsor Richard Ponton noted the many benefits of the run. "We want people to see our new campus, in its first fully completed year. We chose the date for our northern snowbirds. We decided on the run for people to lose those unwanted holiday pounds." The Run (or walk) is not timed, but a little competition among the leaders of the pack is bound to arise.

To register for either the garage sale or the run, please contact Joann Cassio at: cassiojo@collier.k12.fl.us or Richard Ponton at pontonri@collier.k12.fl.us.

Students First

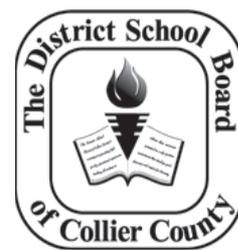
Child's bus late?

Check online

By Joe Landon

Collier County District Schools

If your child is one of the nearly 20,000 School District of Collier County students who ride a school bus everyday, I want to remind you of an easy today-kind-of-way way, using today's technology, to learn if your child's bus is delayed a bit on the trip home. All you have to do is go online to find out. Late bus notices are posted, as needed, on the home page of the district Web site at: www.collierschools.com. Just look for the cute little yellow school bus icon and the "Late Bus" notice link on the home page in the "What's New" area. It should pop up on any afternoon that a school bus may be running more than a half hour behind schedule. Just click on the Late Bus Notice sign to find out if, by chance, it's your child's bus that's running late. If more than one bus is late, a listing of the bus numbers that are delayed will be posted. If an entire school dismisses students later than usual on a given afternoon we'll post a similar "Late Dismissal" notice there. Parents have told me that they routinely check the Web site a time or two each afternoon to see if there's a delay. Not a bad idea. To learn more about the late bus notice call us at 377-0180, or simply send an e-mail to us at info@collier.k12.fl.us address. Now, when you have specific questions



about school bus service, call the school district's Transportation department' folks directly. There's a special phone number for you to call as an Immokalee resident. It is

239-377-1027. It's not every day that a bus runs late, and your child's bus may never be late, but I thought that knowing where you can check to find out if it's late might be helpful – just in case.

"Here's the latest news!" While we've heard that line on radio or TV over the years, today we're more likely to go online to find out what's happening than to turn to the broadcast media. It's part of that instant gratification thing where we don't want to wait for the next scheduled television news show. And today you'll even find TV news anchors directing you to their station's Web site for the latest info. In the school district's case, when you want or need to learn what's going on in our schools, or at the district office, best thing to do is go to the home page of our Web site – www.collierschools.com. There you'll find the Latest School News, and the Latest District News, updated as often as new information comes our way, normally several times during a given day. In that sense, it truly is the "latest" news that we post there.

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Adult Ed 'Winter 2' class session to begin soon

The second half of the winter season in Southwest Florida is here. With that in mind, the School District of Collier County's Adult and Community Education (ACE) program is ready for the second half of its Winter Session. Classes for ACE's "Winter 2" Session begin the week of Feb. 14, and will run through the end of March, accommodating seasonal residents. A variety of art, computer, dance, foreign language and other courses are offered. Schedules are available at all public libraries, tax and driver license offices, Publix and Sweetbay

stores and on the web at www.collieradult-ed.com.

So if you want to learn how to invest your money wisely, carry on a conversation in a foreign language, or reel in a big fish the next time you're out fishing in the Gulf, then be sure to enroll in the new session of the ACE program, as these topics are just a few examples of classes offered, as well as many new classes and over 400 teacher-facilitated online courses.

To learn more, please contact the ACE office at 239-377-1234.

Pinecrest kids to enjoy Annual 'Buddy Day' event

Hideaway Beach to host 19th Annual 'Buddy Day'

On Feb. 9, over 140 second graders from Pinecrest and Highland elementary schools will be treated to a day of fun, environmentally-based educational activities at Hideaway Beach on Marco Island.

The event is a special reward for students who have made exceptional improvements in reading and math skills over the last three years. Buddy Day is from 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Over 100 volunteers from Hideaway Beach, Marco Island, Fiddlers Creek, Verona Walk and several other Naples communities will spend one-on-one time with their second grade "buddies."

Rookery Bay and Big Cypress will provide learning activities on the beach. Many of these children have never traveled outside Immokalee or visited the Gulf of Mexico. For

them, it is a day filled with adventure, laughter and learning. At the end of the day, Kids2 Camp provides each child a stuffed animal as a memory for the day.

For more information on "Buddy Day" or the Guadalupe Center, please contact Lisa Morse, Director of Development, 239-657-7711 or visit www.guadalupecenter.net

The entire event is put on by the Club, Staff and residents of Hideaway Beach.

The Guadalupe Center of Immokalee has been serving the children and families of Immokalee for more than 25 years. Our mission is to break the cycle of poverty by providing educational, social and other support programs and resources. From the very young in Early Childhood Education, to After-School tutoring, to the Soup Kitchen and Clothing Room programs, this privately-funded organization makes a real difference in every aspect of their lives.

iTECH Fair provides local community with information

The Immokalee Technical Center (iTECH) will host its inaugural Community Education and Resource Fair from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 12, at the school located at 508 North Ninth Street, in Immokalee. The fair will bring governmental, non-profit, and private organizations all together with the purpose of educating and informing the local community of services, benefits, and resources that are available to help improve the lives of residents and promote economic development. Tables and booths will be set up with agency representatives. Additionally, speakers are

scheduled to share information with the public about important issues affecting the community such as education, housing, immigration, and more.

Being that the event is a fair, come out and enjoy fair favorites such as: food and drinks at a nominal cost made available by iTECH Café, festive music provided by DJ Juan Medina, and win prizes that will be given away.

Information will be presented in English, Creole, and Spanish. To learn more, please contact Brigita Gahr at 239-377-1862.

RCMA childcare worker recognized for dedication

30 years nurturing Immokalee's children

Juanita Garcia, who settled down from migrant farm work to take care of children in the 1970s, was honored Monday for her 30 years with Redlands Christian Migrant Association.

During those years, Garcia has run each of RCMA's five childcare centers in Immokalee. She currently is the center coordinator for Immokalee Community Migrant Head Start center, housed in Immokalee Community School. She has cared for thousands of Immokalee preschoolers.

"I see some of them, and they're married and have kids of their own," she says. "I say, 'My God, it doesn't seem that far away.'"

Garcia, 58, was born in Brownsville, Texas, to parents who worked in shrimp processing plants. In 1960, they began migrating among farms in Virginia, Ohio and Immokalee. Then, in 1975, Garcia began staying at home in Immokalee, caring for young nieces and nephews.

RCMA, meanwhile, was expanding out of its home turf in Miami Dade County. Newly arrived in Immokalee, RCMA hired Garcia to work at its center at Farmworker



Special to the Immokalee Bulletin/RCMA
Juanita Garcia, an RCMA childcare worker has dedicated 30 years of her life to taking care of local children.

Village A.

The nonprofit RCMA moved its headquarters to Immokalee. Garcia never left RCMA, and never wanted to.

"I like working with children," Garcia says. "I like taking care of them, seeing them grow. I like working with families."



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Employment Full Time



Grove Supervisor Clewiston, FL

Requirements

BS degree or 5 to 7 years experience in agricultural production and management; familiarity with fertilizer, irrigation, insecticide, and pest management programs a plus; computer skills; and must be willing to work grove schedule. Prefer bilingual.

Southern Gardens is a major supplier of 100% pure Florida not-from-concentrate orange juice to the private label industry and major brands. Position provides an excellent benefits package that includes health, dental, vision, life insurance, 401-K, and potential bonus. EOE

Send resumes to:
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Employment Full Time



Grove Supervisor Clewiston, FL

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LWTHS reaches goal to build school in Haiti

For the past three years, Lorenzo Walker Technical High School (LWTHS) has supported Free the Children – a registered charity in the United States and Canada. LWTHS students have worked hard through multiple fundraising activities such as numerous car washes, weekly bagel sales, and taking part in various community events to reach a goal of \$8,500 to sponsor the building of a new school in Haiti.

The idea to build a new school in Haiti came about when LWTHS and East Naples Middle School brought in a guest speaker who just returned from a trip that provided clean water

to a developing community in Kenya. The speaker shared her experiences, as well as information about the Free the Children organization. LWTHS students approached staff members to let them know that they wanted to work with Free the Children's "Adopt A Village" program, one which provides a school in an underdeveloped community.

After three years, the funds have been raised and are available for the construction of an elementary school. An elementary education has been shown to be one of the most important single factors in lifting impoverished people out of poverty. The school

will be either a single or double-room school house in a rural area of the community, or part of a greater block of school buildings in a central location. Specifically, two areas, are targeted for the school's location, Dos Palais and Terre Casse. Within the school's walls, students will be provided with the supplies necessary to attend such as textbooks, pencils, and more. This may include uniforms as well, if families can't afford them. LWTHS senior Beatriz Martinez summed up her feelings about what this all means to her, "It made me feel good to know that we are making a difference in the world. We are giving them (the children) the

experience of having the chance for an education."

Free the Children is the world's largest network of children helping children through education, with more than one million youth involved in its innovative education and development programs in 45 countries. The organization has built more than 500 schools around the world.

To learn more about the LWTHS project, please call 239-377-0900, and to learn more about Free the Children, please visit: www.freethechildren.com.

Event today spotlights Human Trafficking

The Collier County Coalition Against Human Trafficking was established in December 2004 following the discovery of human trafficking in Collier County. The Coalition is a volunteer organization which includes service providers, law enforcement, and community members who volunteer

their expertise and time to educate the community about human trafficking and provide services to victims once they are found.

This winter, Collier County Sheriff's Office Victim Advocate, Marisol Schloendorn, Collier County Sheriff's Office Detective Charlie Frost, and Ave Maria School of Law Professor Elizabeth Donovan, began efforts to increase the visibility and activity of the Coalition.

In November 2010, the Coalition hosted "A Day Without Slavery" in Immokalee Community Park. The community event included information tables staffed with volunteers from a range of government and non-government agencies, including, The Shelter for Abused Women and Children, Lutheran Social Services, The Coalition of Immokalee Workers, and the Collier County Health Department. Bike lights were installed by Collier County Sheriff's Office, ID cards for children were produced by the Center for Missing and Exploited Children, and everyone received lunch. New to the event this year was an area where Ave Maria School of Law students helped children create art, play soccer and jump rope, and have their faces painted. More than 500

Immokalee community members attended the event.

On Thursday, Feb. 3, the Coalition will host its first event for 2011. Community members are invited to a presentation entitled "Combating Human Trafficking" with panelists Laura Germino, co-founder of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW), Detective Charlie Frost, and Professor Donovan.

The panel presentation will be held at the Ave Maria School of Law Library, 1025 Commons Circle, Naples, on the west side of Vineyards Boulevard, from 12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. Attendees can park in any available spot in the parking lot that surrounds the Law Library building.

Ms. Schloendorn will give opening remarks and introduce the panel. Ms. Germino will address her work with CIW, a community-based group organized to bring fair wages and labor practices to the agricultural fields of Florida. Detective Frost will explain Collier County Sheriff's Office Anti-Trafficking Unit efforts to educate Collier County residents about human trafficking, coordinate with government and non-government agencies, and investigate the leads his Office receives. Professor Donovan will discuss her work in the Law School's Women's Immigrant Rights Law Clinic, and the role of task forces and coalitions

in coordinating efforts among law enforcement, government and non-government agencies, and community members.

Following the panel presentation, Collier County Coalition Against Human Trafficking members are invited to a light lunch reception at the Ave Maria School of Law Administration Building. The reception will provide an opportunity for members to meet informally. The Coalition will hold a meeting in Immokalee on Thursday, Feb. 17.

The panel presentation is the first in a series of events the Coalition is planning for 2011. The Coalition is elated about Ave Maria School of Law commitment to the Coalition. With this new alliance the Coalition is looking to invigorate its efforts to combat human trafficking in Collier County. To assist in this goal the Coalition is asking existing members to renew their commitment, and is actively seeking new volunteers and new members who are interested in joining the fight against human trafficking in Collier County.

Because food and beverages will be served, Coalition members who plan to attend the reception are asked to RSVP to the Ave Maria School of Law Clinic at: mruggeri@avemari-law.edu.

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News in Brief

**Minority Task Force
Meeting set for Feb. 10**

The next Minority Task Force meeting will be on Thursday, Feb. 10, at 10-11 a.m. The topic will be PRB. This is our Professional Responsibility Bureau. Bring any guests you would like. The meeting is always free and open to the public.

**Education and Resource
Fair set for Feb. 12**

The Immokalee Education and

Resource Fair will be held at the I-Tech Center this coming Feb. 12, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Over 35 local, State, and Federal agencies and organizations are scheduled to participate.

**Cowboy gospel meeting
in LaBelle Feb. 8**

Come to the Cowboy Gospel meeting Feb. 8 at 7 p.m. at the LaBelle Revival Center, 3025 W CR 78. Come and enjoy good gospel music and a message by Dave Randant.

**TRUST Quartet to
perform Feb. 13**

Trust Quartet will be singing Gaither-style four-part harmony in concert at First United Methodist Church in Immokalee on Feb. 13, at 10:45 a.m. The exciting Trust Quartet, a Florida based and Nashville recorded group will perform their enthusiastic approach to come of gospel's finest songs. Trust not only has a great harmony but also a unique ministering ability with song. You won't want to miss this opportunity to enjoy a great concert!

Immokalee Fire Dept. receives recognition

On Saturday, Jan. 22, the Golden Gate All Nations S.D.A Immokalee Branch Church presented Fire Chief Scott Birge with a plaque in recognition and appreciation for the Fire Department's loyal and dedicated service to the continued safety for the community of Immokalee. Our Mission statement states we are committed to protecting the people and property within our community, to be responsive to the needs of our citizens by providing rapid, professional, humanitarian services essential to the health, safety, and well-being of the community. We accomplish this through prevention, education, fire suppression, first responder medical and non-medical related emergency activities and most of all from the Generous Support we receive from the residents of Immokalee and Ave Maria.



Special to the Immokalee Bulletin/IFD
Special to the Immokalee Bulletin/Elisa Yanes
From left to right are Rhonda Birge, Chief Scott Birge and Dr. Walter Douglas (Pastor of the Golden Gate All Nations S.D.A Immokalee Branch Church).

Vision and perseverance pays off for business duo

Negative area sees positive changes with new business

By Rick Heers

Special to the Immokalee Bulletin

Drive through certain areas of Immokalee and you'll see signs saying "High Crime Area-Do Not Stop" and also see signs of a rough, tough neighborhood with bars on windows, and lots of litter around. In the midst of this 'wilderness' a transformation is beginning to take place thanks to the ingenuity, investment and perseverance of two young men who graduated from Immokalee High School in 1997 who wanted to make a positive impact on their home town.

Bernardo Barnhart, a vice president of Florida Community Bank, and Jacob Gallegos, a former teacher for the Collier County Public Schools purchased an old building on the Southside of Immokalee, and decided to invest in it to provide a good place for local individuals and families to find some good food and have a place where they could relax or hang out with their family or friends. The challenge was daunting! One of the biggest challenges was to overcome the negative reputation of the area and convince local authorities that they could make a positive change in the area.

After months and months of getting all the approvals that were needed, remodeling began, and the finished product named Chile Caliente is now providing an attractive, clean, positive environment where anyone can enjoy delicious food at a reasonable price.

The outside of the building is attractively decorated...with no bars on the expansive windows, and the interior is even more striking. Guests can either sit at the long bar, or at

any of the many tables and enjoy watching any of the 9 big screen televisions located around the room. If they prefer, they can call ahead and take out their choice food and beverage. The Chile Caliente is open from 11 a.m.-8 p.m., for dine-in, and is open until 2 a.m., for those who work late and would like some good food.

This good example of the "American Dream" coming to fulfillment not only gives the two owners a great sense of civic and personal accomplishment, but also provides steady employment for 6 additional staff members.

Some have labeled this A Mexican Hooters in downtown Immokalee. One of two things or maybe both may come from this exciting enterprise, first of all, those who stop by Chile Caliente will get a reasonably priced good food, and secondly, perhaps they too will be encouraged take similar steps to improve the environment of Immokalee.

Follow the Immokalee Bulletin on Facebook



Save the dates! - 51st Annual Immokalee Harvest is coming

The Eastern Collier Chamber of Commerce has partner with The Immokalee Seminole Casino to invite you to participate in the 51st Anniversary of the "Immokalee's Harvest Festival," April 15-17.

The community of Immokalee would like to revive our traditional Harvest Festival, just like the past and we would like for you to take part in the festivities.

This year's Festival and Parade Theme is, "Immokalee-The Heart of American Grown." The entire festival will take place on the Immokalee Seminole Casino parking grounds located at 506 1st Street South. Immokalee,

Our Harvest Festival will start with the following: April 15, at 6 p.m. - The Official Harvest Festival Queen Court Competition will take place. All Queens will be crowned. This competition will take place in the Seminole Casino Event's Tent. Admission is \$3 per person. Kids under 6 years of age is FREE!



Special to the Immokalee Bulletin/Rick Heers
New business owners, Bernardo Barnhart and Jacob Gallegos have recently opened the doors to the newest local "Hotspot" eatery in Immokalee - Chile Caliente! Hours are 11 a.m.-8 p.m. dine in and until 2 a.m. for take out.

April 16, at 10:30 a.m. "Welcoming Ceremony" at which time a "KEY" of Immokalee will be given to welcome the Texas Roadhouse Cafe' Corporation.

April 16, at 11 a.m. An AUTO Parade will high the various cars in the different periods. Classics prior to 1939, War Time between 1940 and 1970 and 2000. Modern, Low rider. Off road and etc. We will have beautiful agricultural floats and entries along with our famous IHS Marching Band. Trophies will be given for car and floats categories.

There will be exotic food vendors of all cultures, our famous "Wild Hog BBQ with the Immokalee Salad! An array of agricultural fruits and veggies that are grown in Immokalee will be available for all and a kids tent with their own ice cream wagon for refreshments!

Live entertainment ALL DAY! 4-H livestock demonstration with the winners from our local County Fair. Unique multicultural arts and craft items available. Also for the kids - A Petting Zoo, Latest Extreme Games, Bounce House and Rock Wall for climbing.

April 17, at 10 a.m. - A fantastic "Planned Poker Run" with a poker tournament by local motorcyclists. Admission to the Festival is FREE! You will need to buy tickets for food, beverages and extreme games.

We are looking forward to your participation. If additional information is needed, please call the Eastern Collier Chamber of Commerce-Myriam at 239-657-3237

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