

Commissioner Coletta to visit Immokalee

Commissioner Jim Coletta's Aide, Paula Springs, will be in Immokalee on Wednesday, Feb. 1.

Commissioner Coletta will be attending the Florida Association of Counties Legislative Day in Leon County. On his behalf, his Aide, Paula Springs, will be available for office hours in Immokalee.

Ms. Springs will be attending the Immokalee Chamber of Commerce breakfast networking meeting, which is held the first Wednesday of each month from 8 to 9 a.m. Meeting location is the Roma in Havana Ristorante, 1025 N. Main Street, Immokalee.

Ms. Springs will also be available by appointment to meet with constituents at the Immokalee office, 310 Alachua Street from 9:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. Anyone who would like an appointment to meet with her, please call 239-252-8097 or email her at: PaulaSprings@colliergov.net.

Commissioner Coletta remains available by telephone at 239-252-8391 or e-mail at: jimcoletta@colliergov.net

Inside...

Lunch with 'Soul'



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Habitat for Humanity celebrates 20 new county homeowners

By Rick Heers

Special to the Immokalee Bulletin

Crowds of people joined together last Saturday for a wonderful celebration of Habitat for Humanity as twenty new homeowners received the keys to their new homes. Located directly behind Lake Trafford Elementary School at Liberty Landing scores of people were on hand for this

joyous occasion.

While Habitat for Humanity World-wide has reached the threshold of 500,000 homes built since their humble beginnings in Americus, Georgia in 1976 by Millard and Linda Fuller, Collier County can boast the most number of homes in any county in America-1,400 homes, with over

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Special to the Immokalee Bulletin/Rick Heers
Members of IHS Key Club volunteer to fill baskets-from left to right-Juanita Perez, Gricelda Montes, Nancy Flores and Ivan Gijohn.

Public dedication of new education building planned

An event full of historical sentiment is on the schedule for next month, as the School District of Collier County is ready to dedicate the brand new Bethune Education Center (BEC). The dedication ceremony will take place on

Thursday, Feb. 9, at 5 p.m., in the cafeteria of the new facility (614 South 5th Street, in Immokalee).

The new BEC campus includes two state-of-the-art build-

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Immokalee Bulletin/Patty Brant
Immokalee Community Redevelopment Agency Director Penny Phillippi and SBA District Director Francisco Marrero shake hands after signing the document creating a partnership between the two agencies.

SBA agreement sets Immokalee up for more development

By Patty Brant
Immokalee Bulletin

Immokalee is growing a reputation as a community on the move. Last week that energy got another boost thanks to a new partnership between the Immokalee Development Center (IMMBIZ) and the US Small Business Administration (SBA). It will mean Immokalee entrepreneurs will have direct access to more federal resources such as training and outreach, as well as access to more opportunities to land federal contracts. The partnership with the SBA will provide "the three c's" to local business people: "capital, contracts and counseling."

"This is a great opportunity for

our growing entrepreneurial section in Immokalee and across the region," said Marie Capita, director of IMMBIZ. "With the SBA's presence in Immokalee we can provide even greater resources to people who want to start or expand their businesses."

SBA Regional Director Francisco Marrero came from Miami to sign the partnership agreement. Immokalee CRA Director Penny Phillippi provided the local signature.

Mr. Marrero commended members of the business community present, saying, "You are making things happen here." He pointed out that SBA can help expedite mi-

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Letters to the Editor

Town Hall meeting

I was taken aback by the letter from John Lundin's letter in the Jan. 19, issue of the Immokalee Bulletin.

The Immokalee Master Plan is not about Republicans or Democrats, or who called for a meeting. It's about The citizens of Immokalee having a voice in how they want future growth to occur. With that in mind let us make one thing very clear. We either put ourselves in a position to determine our own future or we will continue to live by Col-

lier County's rules. It makes no difference if you're Hispanic, Haitian, Native American, or any other ethnic makeup. We either will decide for ourselves what we want or we will live by the rules of others! Any other talk is nothing but Hogwash, and Mr. Lundin's letter did more to divide than it did to overcome!

**Respectfully,
Richard Rice
Immokalee**

HOMES

Continued From Page 1

600 of those being in Immokalee. Each homeowner must make a down payment and put in 500 equity hours of sweat labor before they can take ownership.

You could see the pride in each family as they stepped forward to receive their keys and a house-warming basket that included flowers, salt, sugar, a candle, bread, a Holy Bible, a framed photograph by a published artist, and a book for each child in the family. It was announced that four families present who had previously received homes had this month completed all their payments on their homes and now owned them free and clear. This is further evidence that Habitat for Humanity truly helps their chosen families to be prepared fully for ownership.

County Commissioner Jim Coletta was on hand to offer his sincere congratulations to the families and the many, many volun-

teers for Habitat for Humanity that were on hand for the festivities. A special recognition was given to Paul Johnson, who at 90 years of age has been a volunteer coming out to Immokalee for 26 years as a crew leader year round. Paul is really retiring and moving with his wife to St. Louis. He was presented with a special plaque and token gift for his many years of service to Habitat and the Immokalee community.

Not willing to rest on their accomplishments, Habitat has planned developments for many more homes to be built in Immokalee. Executive Director, Sam Durso, and Executive Vice President of Development, Lisa Lefko, directed the fine celebration complete with delicious food prepared by the Habitat families. New homeowner Joseph Pierre spoke eloquently of his family's appreciation for this new start in life that they have been given. Pastor Rick Heers asked for God's blessings on each of the new homeowners, and the fine work of Habitat for Humanity.

BEC

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ings – one for Alternative School Programs such as Phoenix and New Beginnings, and the other for Federal Program offices. The original facility, located on the site for almost 60 years, was at a point where renovation and repair to maintain it to the high educational, health, and safety standards in place for all Collier County Public Schools was not economically efficient. But, preserving the

treasured heritage and historic nature of the building and site was a top priority. The first floor of the new school building features a tribute to Mary Bethune, with a gallery in the foyer including mementos illustrating the 60 year history of the Bethune Education Center.

The public, especially former BEC students and staff, are invited to attend the dedication and take a tour of the new facilities. To learn more, please contact the School District's Communications and Community Engagement Department at 239-377-0180.

CRA

Continued From Page 1

cro loans along with SCORE training and the possibility of competing for federal contracts - even in these difficult economic times.

The Immokalee CRA's success - like developing one local business to the point that it could win \$700,000 worth of work - has attracted dividends for the community like this new partnership.

Mr. Marrero promised the partnership will connect the community with the programs it needs as it seeks to restore itself. The next step will be to help local contractors get bonded so they can go after large contracts on their own, not just as subcontractors.

Developing business start ups, he said, will resolve the recession in Southwest Florida. He also put the credit where it belongs, saying, "You are the guys doing all the work."

He added that what is happening in Immokalee is exciting and "exactly what we need to be doing. Penny Phillippi is doing a fantastic job."

Ms. Phillippi noted that the Immokalee CRA has managed to get six new businesses off the ground in just the past six months and helped four existing businesses expand.

She deflected the praise to Marie Capita, Director of IMMBIZ. "Marie is modest and strong." She noted that Marie not only helped get these new businesses off the ground, she made sure each was set up properly, with everything they need including customers. "I'm really proud of this program," Ms. Phillippi said.

For her part, Ms. Capita is looking forward to the increased technical support Immokalee residents will have available to them.

"This is a great opportunity for our growing entrepreneurial sector in Immokalee and across the region," said Ms. Capita. "With the

SBA's presence in Immokalee we can provide even greater resources to people who want to start or expand their businesses."

District 5 County Commissioner Jim Coletta was on hand to recognize the importance of the event. "Immokalee has stood out by itself for what it's been doing," he explained, calling it a very "positive community." He said he's worked with this community for 25 years through Immokalee Development Services, Habitat for Humanity, Guadalupe Services, Catholic Charities, the chamber of commerce and other entities. "This is the place to be," he added.

He pointed out that this traditionally agricultural community needs business stimulation to expand its economy. This partnership will be a great way to start "adding to the mix" to grow the middle class and balance Immokalee's economy, he explained.

As an advisor to SCORE, an SBA program that provides experienced business people to mentor new entrepreneurs, Commissioner Coletta said he knows how important the tools SBA supplies can be.

"It's a tremendous step forward," he said, and gave Ms. Phillippi tremendous credit, calling her organizational skills "second to none."

He has served as District 5 commissioner for 12 years and is a candidate for reelection.

Julio Estremera, a Certified Business Analyst with the Small Business Development Center at Florida Gulf Coast University and CRA board member, said, "This is good for local business. They can go directly through the Small Business Administration.

Fifth Third Bank Vice President and Community Affairs Manager Jadira Hoptry attended the small ceremony and expressed a desire for the bank to be a partner in Immokalee's small business development by expanding its loan services to the Immokalee market.

Free movie showing this Friday evening

Friendship Baptist Church of Immokalee will be showing the movie "Courageous" FREE of charge on Jan. 29, from 4 to 7:30 p.m., If you missed the movie in the theatre, now is your chance to experience this incredible movie. This movie has been such a blessing to families around the country and we would just like to extend this blessing to others in our church

and around the community. There will be refreshments available. Please contact the church for additional information. Friendship Baptist Church, 708 N 11th St., Immokalee. 239-657-3430 office hours 12:30-2:30 p.m. email:friendshipbaptist.immokalee@gmail.com

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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
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- To use our opinion pages to facilitate community debate, not to dominate it with our own opinions.
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- To correct our errors and to give each correction the prominence it deserves.
- To provide a right to reply to those we write about.
- To treat people with courtesy, respect and compassion.

Elementary school students read millions of minutes

What better way to recognize 'Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida!' than by reading, reading, reading! And that's what all Collier County Public Schools elementary school students will be doing as they take part in this week long, statewide literacy celebration that began Monday, Jan. 23, through Friday, Jan. 27. 'Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida!' is a celebration put on by the Florida Department of Education's 'Just Read, Florida!' – a comprehensive and coordinated reading initiative.

Among other activities, all elementary schools will participate in the Million Minute Marathon, which will feature the reading of *How Much is a Million?* by David Schwartz. The marathon helps promote literacy and raise awareness that cumulative readings add up to big successes. Collier County elementary school students will be among the

many from school districts in Florida participating and reading toward the State's goal of 20 million minutes.

Several schools have also scheduled numerous activities in addition to the Million Minute Marathon. At Estates Elementary, Clifford the Big Red Dog will make a special visit to all kindergarten and first grade classes; Golden Gate Elementary teachers will be reading their favorite childhood books to their classes; Lake Park Elementary will hold a fun Dr. Suess Day; and Manatee Elementary will invite parents for a special Family Book Making Night.

To learn more, and to see a full list of activities, please visit the district Web site at www.collierschools.com and click on 'Celebrate Literacy Week Events' under "Highlights." If your child's school is not listed, please contact the school directly.

Kids Against Hunger to provide meals of hope this Saturday

One by One Leadership Foundation in cooperation with the Collier County Parks and Recreation and Ave Maria University have targeted a solution to feed some of the many, many families who are suffering from a lack of good food.

On Jan. 28, scores of youth, children and adults will descend on the Immokalee Sports Complex at 505 Escambia Street in Immokalee from 9 a.m.-noon and will put

together between 40,000 and 50,000 packaged meals to distribute to hungry children and their families. This is the fourth year running that this exciting, energetic gathering has taken place in Immokalee.

Everyone is welcome to join for this morning of service, excitement and fun. For more information you may call Sinclair Williams at 239-249-9970, or email him at: swill35173@aol.com.

County School district conducts annual Title I parent survey

Collier County Public Schools (CCPS) is working to strengthen partnerships between schools and families in order to help children perform better in school. All parents with children in Title I funded schools are invited to participate in the 2011-2012 Title I Parent Survey (Grades K-12). Parents may complete one survey for each child and each survey should only take a few minutes to complete. Individual responses will then be summarized and used to make improvements.

Title I funded schools:

Avalon Elementary, Highlands Elementary, Manatee Elementary, Eden Park Elementary, Immokalee Community School, Manatee Middle School, Everglades City School, Immokalee High School, Mike Davis Elementary, Golden Gate Elementary, Immokalee Middle School, Shadowlawn Elementary, Golden Gate Middle School, Lake Trafford Elementary, Parkside Elementary, Golden Gate High School, Lely High School, Pinecrest Elementary, Golden Terrace Elementary, Lorenzo Walker Technical High

School, Village Oaks Elementary.

Parents will receive a paper copy of the 2011-2012 Title I Parent Survey (Grades K-12) via their student's backpack by this Friday (Jan. 27). Parents must return the completed survey to their child's school by Friday, Feb. 10. The survey may also be submitted by mail or delivered in person to the Office of Federal and State Grants (FSG), located at 5775 Osceola Trail, Naples, Florida 34109.

The survey is available in English, Spanish, and Creole. To access the survey online beginning on Saturday, Jan. 28, please visit the Parents page at www.collierschools.com/parents/ and click on the Title I Parent Survey yellow post-it on the bulletin board.

To learn more or for assistance, please contact Collier County Public Schools Grant Evaluator Dr. Courtney Zmach or Title I Manager Sylvia Matthews at 239-377-0560.

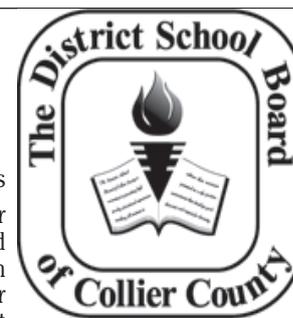
Students First

The game is only half over

By Joe Landon

Collier County District Schools

It's been quite the year so far at Immokalee High School and we're only half way through it with the second semester just getting under way. Last week alone, we learned that the renowned Immokalee High School BETA Club came away from the state BETA Club convention with some first place finishes, that the school's Special Olympics basketball team is advancing to the state championship tourney, and that the football team, one of the best in Southwest Florida, received a \$2,500 check to be used to buy uniforms and equipment. The BETA Club news was certainly no surprise since the Indians have won top awards at the state convention since the 1960's. They advance to compete at the national convention in North Carolina in June. They're raising money to help pay for the trip so expect to learn more about that over the coming weeks and months. The Special Olympics basketball squad is special. Coach Kelly Stevenson said, "In the 19 years I have been involved in Special Olympics, I have never coached a group of athletes so committed and dedicated as this group." The state tournament



will be held in Tampa next month. And then the football team... They won their prize as part of the "Friday Night Feats" contest, a national video competition for the top plays in high school football. The winning play – junior all-state wide receiver Jacky Marcellus hurdling over a defensive back while playing his heart out in a

big game against Cape Coral. In accepting the check, Coach Jerrod Ackley promised, "The money will be put to good use. We have lots of needs." The Indians can thank their beloved fans for the prize since the top videos were chosen by fan votes.

There are so many good things happening at Immokalee High School, and as we said, it's been quite the year. Principal, Dr. Mary Murray, is very proud. "Our students continue to exemplify the PRIDE (Perseverance, Respect, Involvement, Discipline, and Enthusiasm) that is IHS. As we affirm each and every day at IHS at the beginning of second period, 'We believe in ourselves, and we are success!' We couldn't be more proud!"

To prove that, Dr. Murray promises to share a Top 25 highlights list with us, recapping the glorious first semester, in next week's Students First column right here in the Immokalee Bulletin. Stay tuned!

Immokalee High Special Olympics basketball team heads to state

They jump – they shoot – they score! Immokalee High School's (IHS) Special Olympics basketball team is shooting hoops all the way to the top as they head to the Florida Special Olympics State Basketball Tournament at the University of South Florida in Tampa the weekend of Feb. 10-11.

The Immokalee team recently played in the Sarasota area tournament where they qualified for the state tournament by competing against a team from Hillsborough County. Not only did they qualify, but they were chosen and received the honor to represent Division 4 at the state level.

Immokalee High School's Special Olympics basketball team has a number of state championships under their belt, but this is the first year they will have a traditional five on five Division 4 team. "In the 19 years that I have been involved in Special Olympics, I have never coached a group of athletes



Special to the Immokalee Bulletin/CCDS
Immokalee High School's Special Olympics basketball team advances to the state tournament at the University of South Florida. In the front row, from left to right are: Sodi Louis, Johnny Garza, Julio Loya, Daniel Jose. In the middle row from left to right are: Wilder Vasquez, Latasha Gardner, Angel Palacios. In the back row from left to right are: Juan Canuto, Mary Garza, Isidro Soto.

so committed and dedicated as this group. Their enthusiasm is contagious!" says the team's coach, Immokalee High School teacher Kelly Stevenson. Best of luck to the IHS Indians as they play at the state tournament! To learn more, call 239-377-1800.

Immokalee High School BETA Club brings home state wins

The Immokalee High School (IHS) BETA Club shines again! Over 60 club members are back home after winning first place honors at the 70th Annual State of Florida BETA Club Convention held recently in Orlando. The Immokalee Indians placed first in the state in the Group Talent, Campaign Skit, Scrapbook, and Philanthropy competitions. The IHS group also placed third in the Banner competition.

Three of the Immokalee students were part of the program during the opening session of the convention – senior Joseph Flores, the current State BETA President, was the Keynote Speaker; senior Aaron Daniels

presented the inspiration; and senior Eliza Diejuste sang the National Anthem. Other notable individual honors include: · Junior Kerby Henry was elected State of Florida BETA Club Vice President;

· Senior Adriana Villanueva was awarded the Harris Service Award – one of only 25 in the nation who received the award;

· Junior Annie Morgan won first place in the Oratory competition;

· Senior Amelea Rodriguez won first place in the Photography competition and third place in the Computer Graphic competition;

· Sophomore Efren Varela won second

place in the Ceramics competition and third place in the on-site Colored Pencil Drawing competition;

· Senior Dulce Morales won second place in the Spelling competition;

· Senior Efren Moreno won third place in the Spanish competition; and

· Sophomore Maria Soto won third place in the Service Project Essay competition.

Based on their performance, the Immokalee BETA Club will represent Florida in various categories at the National BETA Convention to be held June 27-30 in Greensboro, N.C. Club members will be working hard in the next few months to raise funds for their

journey. They thank the Immokalee Foundation and the community for their continued support.

BETA stands for Better Education Through Achievement. The club motto is “Let us lead by serving others.” To be eligible to take part in convention activities, BETA members must maintain a 3.0 grade point average.

To learn more or if you would like to help in any way, please contact IHS Counselor and BETA Club sponsor Audrey Moss at 239-377-1800.

iTECH Culinary students prepare lunch with ‘Soul’

Soul Food Fridays are back!

iTown Café’s Culinary Arts students will be honing their cooking skills as they prepare Southern Style Soul Food dishes beginning this Friday, Jan. 27, and continuing throughout the month of February. “Our Soul Food Friday focus has been entirely student-driven,” said Assistant Principal Troyanne Kirkland. “Larry Butler and his colleagues developed the menus and presented their proposal to Chef Abdo and to our iTECH administration as a way to recognize Black History Month. They are getting a head start on Jan. 27 with Beef Stew, Rice, Potato Salad and Cornbread.”

Students working with Butler on the menu and food preparation include Christopher Ozuna, Mavis Plamondon, Jose Hernandez, Edward Aguilar, Aldrice Cummings, Pablo Hernandez, Alexander Mancha, Jerry Sainz and Daniel Castro. I-Town Café is reaching out to everyone



Special to the Immokalee Bulletin/iTECH
iTECH Culinary students at your service from left to right are: Christopher Ozuna, Mavis Plamondon, Edward Aguilar, Alex Mancha, Jose Hernandez, Gamaliel Gutierrez, Larry Butler, Jerry Sainz.

in the community to come out and support these students as they create made-from-scratch meals for iTECH students and for the general public. If you would like to order one or more of these delicious home-cooked meals in advance, you can call I-Town Café at 239-377-9909 between 7 a.m. and 2 p.m., or email Larry Butler at larry.butler45@yahoo.com. And remember... We're teachin' what yer' eatin'!

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Business Opportunities

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

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

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Community News in Brief

League of Women Voters to host guest speaker

Collier Circuit Judge Hugh D. Hayes and Collier Attorney Sharon Hanlon will speak at the League of Women Voters of Collier County meeting on Feb. 7, at noon at the Country Club of Naples. They will address How Florida Citizens Can Maintain an Independent Judiciary. The speakers will explain:

- how the Florida Judiciary works;
- how our courts are funded;
- the qualifications required to be a judge;
- how judges are appointed, elected and retained;
- the authority and responsibility of the Florida Bar Association; and,
- the Judges' and Bar Associations' priorities for the 2012 Legislative Session.

The cost of the optional luncheon for LWVCC members is \$20; non-members-\$25. Reservations can be made at www.lwv-colliercounty.org or by calling 239-263-4656 before 4 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 4.

Searching public records workshop offered

The popular "Searching Public Records Using Collier Clerk.com" will be held Tuesday, Feb. 21, from 2-4 p.m. at the South Regional Library on Lely Cultural Blvd. You can register by phone by calling 239-252-7542.

Free landlord/tenant workshop offered

The Immokalee Business Development Center (IMMBIZ) will host a free workshop for Landlord/Tenant rights concerning commercial properties on Saturday, Feb. 4, from 10 a.m. until noon at the Immokalee CRA/IBDC office, 1320 North 15th Street, Ste 2, Immokalee.

The workshop will be presented by Sam J. Saad, III, Attorney at Law. Pre-registration is necessary.

For information, please call Rosemary Dillon at 239-867-4121 ext. 206.

Entrepreneur School to begin in February

So you think you want to start a business? Sign up now for the IBDC Entrepreneur School. The six week course is designed to provide and approach for thinking through the development of a new business idea or the growth of an existing small business.

The next class starts on Feb. 7 and continues through March 13.

Each class is held on Tuesday from 6 until 7:30 p.m. at 1320 N. 15th Street, Suite 2, Immokalee.

To register or for more information, please contact Rosemary Dillon at 239-867-4121 ext 206.

Pet vaccine clinic to be held this weekend

Low cost veterinary shot clinic will be held this Saturday, Jan. 28 offering vaccines for dogs and cats at Immokalee Community Park from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. A licensed veterinarian will administer rabies and distemper vaccines. The vaccines will cost \$10 each, cash only. The annual clinic is offered by volunteer services for animals, Inc. (VSA), a non-profit group which has been assisting animals for 30 years in Collier County. Collier County Domestic Animal Services will be present to sell county licenses and provide information concerning low cost spay and neuter options.

Additional information about the shot clinic is available at vsaesue@aol.com or by calling 239-261-4768.

Lions Club to host Eyecare clinic

Free eye tests, Free glasses and readers, for adults and children Sunday, Jan. 29, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. NOTE: Registration closes at 1:30 p.m. iTECH Center, 508 No. 9TH St. Immokalee. Eye screening for glaucoma, Cataracts – macular degeneration, Tests for diabetes & blood pressure, free eye glasses.

In partnership with: Collier County Health Department, Friendship Health Clinic, Congressional Glaucoma Caucus Bonita Springs Lions Eye Clinic, Edison College School Of Nursing.

BUSINESS & SERVICE DIRECTORY
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Generic KEPPRA (most strengths) – 90 TABLETS	\$40
Generic LAMICTAL (all strengths) – 180 TABLETS	\$50
Generic DEPAKOTE – 180 TABLETS – 250MG	\$30
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