

Henning, airport business negotiate

(Naples, FL) – The Board of Collier County Commissioners on Tuesday, April 23, requested Commissioner Tom Henning, District 3, participate in lease negotiations with long-time business Fletcher Flying Service, Inc. currently leasing a facility at the Immokalee Airport.

For 34 years, Fletcher Flying Service, Inc. has been providing local crop dusting and fire services for agriculture related businesses in Collier County. The company provides exclusive and critical services and has been at the Immokalee Airport since 1992.

“Our goal is to be business friendly which is critical in today’s economy and to assist Fletcher Flying Service by negotiating a reasonable fee and usage for the lease adhering to FAA,” said Commissioner Tom Henning, District 3.

Currently, the Board of County Commissioners (BCC), as the authority overseeing the Collier County Airport Authority, is seeking to

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See Page 2 for information about how to contact the newspaper.

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Submitted photo
The Manuel and Maria Sanchez family marked the dedication of their new Habitat home.



Submitted photo
The Cardenas family celebrated the mortgage burning of their Habitat home.

Habitat builds family friendly neighborhoods

by **Patty Brant**
Immokalee Bulletin

Owning your own home. It’s a dream, it can be a headache, it’s a way of life rooted in freedom, pride and individuality.

This is the 35th year Habitat for Humanity has provided a path to home ownership to many who would never be able to achieve it. Habitat makes home ownership more than a dream.

At this time, Collier County has funds to build 100 Habitat homes. Being the second Habitat program in the country, Collier County has a history of success.

Immokalee’s demographics make Habitat a very important resource for locals interested in home ownership. However, at this point, there is a lull in local appli-

cations. Now is a perfect time for anyone with the dream to take that first step toward realizing it.

Several unique aspects contribute to the success of Habitat for Humanity. For one thing, families are required to have a stake in the process. Habitat doesn’t just build a home and turn over the key, families must invest 500 hours in “sweat equity” when they are approved for a home. That is, they must put 500 hours of work into the building of their home. That can mean hammering nails, building walls, cleaning up the construction site or even working in the Habitat office - it all depends on what the skills of the family members.

Experienced construction workers volunteer to work with the families and Habitat subcon-

tracts jobs like concrete, plumbing, electrical and A/C work.

Training is part of the equity a family invests in its home. Because these are first-time homeowners, it’s important that they’re able to budget their finances, understand the rules and regulations that apply to all homeowners such as taxes and codes and that they have a working knowledge of how to make basic repairs. To ensure that the new homeowners understand the venture they’re starting out on, they are required to attend homebuyer workshops and receive some maintenance education.

There are some 600 Habitat homes in Immokalee. Of these, 100 are not affiliated with homeowners associations. The rest are located in Habitat “neighborhoods” including Carson Lake

Subdivision, Independence Estates. Faith Landing is new with 350 lots being dedicated in February. Twenty-four homes have been completed there on Custer Ave. Liberty Landing will not be built out for 2-3 years yet and 14 families are currently in the process of becoming homeowners there. Kacasa, near Farm Worker Village, will be the next area after that.

At this time, Habitat is building more townhouses rather than single homes in order to conserve space.

There are some 1,575 Habitat homes in Collier County.

To get things started, the program needs donated land and qualified applicants. The minimum annual wage to qualify is

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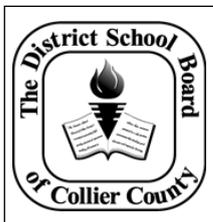
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Students First

by Maribel De Armas

You may recall my column from a couple of months ago where I shared the traditional good news coming out of the Immokalee High School (IHS) BETA Club (Better Education Through Achievement). As they have now done for more than 40 years, the BETAs took top wins at the annual State BETA Convention in January, ensuring them spots at the National BETA Convention to be held June 19-22 in Mobile, Alabama. This year's convention theme continues to be "The Heart of BETA." With State Championships in the categories of



Sketching, Character Skit, Campaign Skit, and Group Talent, the Immokalee Indians are gearing up to take their show on the road with their sights (and hearts) set on National Championship wins. And when I say "taking the show on the road," I really mean it. You see, their Group Talent performance is based on a circus theme – a spin-off of Barnum & Bailey's Greatest Show on Earth. They call their show "The Greatest Club on Earth," complete with clown costumes, red noses, and rosy cheeks. And it's with this circus performance that they feel confident in their hope of bringing home a national win.

The 50 Immokalee BETAs traveling to the national convention first have to get some logistics squared away and here's where they need a little help from the generous

hearts we know reside in our community. To make this trip to Mobile, club members need to raise at least \$19,000 within the next couple of months. The students are working hard to raise funds through all sorts of activities such as bake sales and dinners – just about any fundraising efforts you can think of, the BETAs are doing. "The Heart of BETA" is definitely shining through as these dedicated students reach out for support. If you can help in any way, or know of someone who can, please contact Linda Ayer via e-mail at ayerli@collierschools.com or call Immokalee High School at 377-1800. These outstanding students will certainly appreciate it.

Business

Continued From Page 1

negotiate a new lease between the Immokalee Airport and Fletcher Flying Service. The BCC has directed the lease to address repairs for the building and to identify a reasonable rental fee for the facility.

Commissioner Henning will work directly with the county attorney to identify business-friendly practices that fall within Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to reach a lease agreement with Fletcher Flying to also establish future direction for business growth at the Immokalee Airport.

Home

Continued From Page 1

\$18,000 but the amount is determined by the number of people in the family. Participants make low monthly, interest-free mortgage payments (30 percent of income is your mortgage).

Everyone must make a \$1,000 downpayment, which includes the first month payment, plus all escrow for taxes and insurance.

Who lives in Habitat homes?

Habitat homeowners are as varied as residents in any neighborhood. To qualify, you must be a US citizen or legal resident, must have lived or worked in Collier County for one year and be a first time homebuyer.

Dolly McSwain came to Immokalee in 2002 and lived in the Oakhaven Apartments. She said it was okay but there was no place for her four healthy grandsons, ages 5-12, to play. When she came to Immokalee, she worked for RCMA at Carson Lake. Someone there referred her to Habitat. At the time Dolly was not driving due to health reasons and was unable to do a lot of the required work on her new home. But the community helped her and she managed to paint, lay sod and hammer nails.

Moving into a 3BR/1BA Habitat home meant happy days for her boys. There were lots of other kids to play with; they could fish and ride bikes - normal activities they did not have access to at their other neighborhood. For Dolly, having an actual laundry was a godsend.

"It was a great experience for me and my grandsons," she recalls. The boys grew up happy and safe and successful: including one who earned a BA from FGCU and one headed to college next year. Dolly has since retired now as a medical records tech.

She believes that, if they had not gotten the Habitat home, her boys would not be as "well rounded" as they are - there were too many restraints at the old apartments. This way they learned to have pride in their home and to take care of it. Dolly said she was also impressed with other kids in the neighborhood.

Jerry Sliger and his wife Deyanira have been married 19 years. They have four children ages 18, 13, 12 and 10. Their daughter is at IHS and wants to become a professional sign language translator - a skill she learned from her deaf mother as a child. She has grown up to be her mother's main communication support and wants to be able to do the same for others.

The Sligers have been in their Habitat home for 1.5 years. Jerry said they previously lived in a crowded drug-infested apartment house. Now the family is safe and comfortable in a 3BR/1BA duplex. Jerry drives a truck and grader for a private company.

The best part, Jerry said, is that they can call it their own. "It's a real good neighborhood with nice neighbors who watch out for each other. The kids love it! It's a better environment," he said, "and their grades have improved."

Even so, the family is struggling. Jerry's own dad couldn't hold a job so Jerry had to start working at age 11 on a farm in his native Kentucky. He never got to finish high school.

Jerry and Deyanira are strong on education and want to send their kids to college, but her SSI check has recently decreased because of the overtime Jerry's been working to make ends meet.

Sometimes work is hard to come by in Jerry's job; sometimes there's an abundance of work and you have to take advantage of it when he can.

He said they try to pay their bills weekly to keep a handle on their finances, "but sometimes it's not enough."

In addition to Deyanira's hearing problem, Jerry has survived a rare intestinal cancer, but said there's a strong possibility of recurrence. Surgery removed the cancer before, but he said he has no time to go to cancer doctor like he should to keep an eye on it.

When he was diagnosed with cancer he couldn't work for six months. If it recurs he cannot take time off and still make their bills, which now include a reliable vehicle to replace their old junker.

Deyanira feels comfortable and safe in their home now. In their cramped old apartment, Jerry would voluntarily do night security in their drug-infested area, in near constant communication with the cops. It wasn't a good place for the children to play outside.

The Sligers say the process was easy but you have to make an "intellectual jump" to do it. They thought they couldn't manage it because of their credit scores.

"The people here did a tremendous," Jerry said, and proudly added the sweat equity the family contributed, including painting, installing insulation. Their daughter even helped out in the office.

Janie Castro and her husband of 30 years used to live in two rooms with their two school age girls in school. Now one daughter is at iTECH, studying to become a nurse; the other is 13 years old. The family lives comfortably in a duplex. Janie said she has learned a lot, living in their Habitat home. She grew up in Immokalee and said their payments are better. "Go see if they can help you," she advises others who have their heart set on a better home and way of life.

Habitat in Immokalee's Director of Family Services Wilna Cariany has been with Habitat for two years and came to Immokalee last November. The entire process begins and ends with Wilna - from the initial interviews, through the pre-screening to the signing the closing documents

She said the first thing she does is get to know applicants' needs - understand what will make them comfortable.

"Habitat is really just a different way to buy a home," she said.

It's Wilna's job, along with her staff, to resolve all issues impeding a family from becoming homeowners, educating them as they go through the process. Each family must understand what they're getting into and "do the work." That way, they know they've accomplished something at the end.

The Family Services Center is located at 640 N. 9th Street, Call 239-657-4466.



Bulletin

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I.H.S. Drumbeat

Immokalee High School would like to announce its first ever golf scramble to be held in beautiful Ave Maria. The date of this event is May 25, 2013. All proceeds from the tournament go to help the students of Immokalee High School in their activities beyond the classroom.

Hole sponsorships will be available. If you have any other questions, please contact the Immokalee High school activities office. Thank you

Other important dates:

- April 26 - Meet and Greet with Coach Dombroski at Lozano Restaurant from 3:00-6:00
- April 25 - 8th Grade orientation 6:00 Immokalee High School



- May 1 – Spring Football practice starts
- May 4 – Grad Bash in Orlando

Sponsor I.H.S. golf tournament

Immokalee High School will be hosting its first annual golf scramble at the beautiful Panther Run Golf and Country Club in Ave Maria Florida.

The purpose of this golf tournament is to help benefit the students at Immokalee High School. Here at Immokalee we take great pride in our extra- curricular activities. These activities provide an avenue for our students to display their talents beyond the boundaries of the classroom.

Over the years we have experienced great success that has brought both state and national recognition to many of our clubs and sports teams.

The primary mechanism for raising funds is through school based fund raisers.

As noble and genuine as our efforts may be, we cannot provide the needed resources for our students without the timely support of organizations such as yours.

We understand the stark realities of the current economy but sincerely wish that you choose to support the Immokalee Activities Golf Scramble, again to be held on May 25, 2013 at the Panther Run Golf Club in Ave Maria Florida.

Our organization solicits your financial

support for the 2013 Immokalee Activities Golf Scramble at one of the following donation levels:

Platinum Donor \$500.00, 4 tickets & tee box signage; Gold Donor \$300.00. 3 tickets & shared (2) tee box signage; Silver Donor \$200.00, 2 tickets & shared (3) tee box signage; Player Fee \$75.00.

Each organization will receive appropriate recognition on the course. Immokalee High School is a non-profit 501 c (3) organization.

Our Certification of Exemption # is 85-8012621827C-2 which can be used for your tax purposes.

Please send your check, payable to Immokalee High School. For information contact Tony Allen, 701 Immokalee Drive, Immokalee Florida, 34142.

Organizers look forward to your support and thank you in advance for your assistance in this critical endeavor which provides lasting benefits to our community.

CRA has advisory vacancies

The Immokalee Community Redevelopment agency has a couple of vacancies on our Advisory Board.

The Immokalee Enterprise Zone Development Agency, also serving as the Immokalee Community Redevelopment Agency, has two vacancies for terms expiring on April 4, 2014 and three vacancies for terms expiring on April 4, 2017.

Each vacancy represents business, non-profits, financial entities and residents within

the nominated area.

This 13 member committee was created to induce private investment into distressed areas to create economic opportunities and sustainable economic development for designated areas.

Terms are four years.

If you are interested please follow link below and apply for a board vacancy. <http://www.colliergov.net/index.aspx?page=1629>.

For information about the Immokalee CRA please go to www.ImmokaleeToday.com or call 239-867-4121 ext. 5.

Thank You

Harvest Festival

Immokalee's 2013' Annual Harvest Festival Event was Exciting, Hot and lots of Fun. The Immokalee Chamber of Commerce would like to thank all the Sponsors, Volunteers, IHS and IMS Marching Band, Parks & Recreation, Chamber Staff and the Community of Immokalee for participating in our Event.

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Pack 65 takes Pinewood Derby by storm

Boys from the Immokalee LDS Cub Scout Pack 65 participated in a Pinewood Derby competition this past month of March.

The Pinewood Derby is a racing event for Cub Scouts in the Boy Scouts of America. Cub Scouts, with the help of parents, to build their own handmade cars from wood, usually from kits containing a block of pine, plastic wheels and metal axles.

The event was held in Bonita Springs where Cub Scout Pack 65 competed against cars made by other Cub Scouts from as far away as Cape Coral, Naples, Lehigh, Marco Island, Ft Myers and the Bonita Springs area.

The idea behind the Pinewood Derby is for the parent, usually the father, but occasionally the mother or grandparent, to spend time helping the child design, carve, paint, add weights and tune the final car. The cars had to meet very specific weight limits and size requirements.

The track usually has two to six lanes and slopes down to the ground, since the cars are powered by gravity. Tracks may be owned by the pack or rented. The race is run in heats, giving every car the chance to run on each lane.

The racers can be grouped with others from the same rank (Tiger Cubs, Wolf Cubs, Bear Cubs, etc.), or can compete against the

pack as a whole.

Awards were given for the best designed cars. Trophies were presented to those whose cars placed in the top three fastest, as the cars were raced in several heats which were scored by a computer system.

Pack 65 Cub Scout participants Rolando Hernandez garnered the medal for the "Best Car Design" with his vintage Red Hot Rod style that he and his dad built.

Cub Scout Adrian Reyes Formula race car design won the medal for "Best Car" voted by all the boys. Christian Hernandez won the award for "Most Patriotic" for his car that he carved and painted like a Bald Eagle.

Webelos Scout Kinsley Baptiste was awarded the judges' medal for Most Creative Design - his car was carved and painted as a basketball court on wheels, complete with netted baskets at each end and an orange marble mounted on the rim of one basket.

In the car races, Blazer Scouts from Immokalee Pack 65 won trophies, Wilkerson Julian taking the first place trophy, Jean St. Facile taking the second place award, and Manual Xantus earning third place.

So all in all Immokalee boys had a blast at their first time entering in a Pinewood Derby and "can't wait for next year," says Sebastian Navarrete.



Submitted photo
Cub Scout Pack 65 of Immokalee proudly display their Pinewood Derby awards. These boys competed against Scouts from around the area and did themselves proud. The boys brought back awards by the bucketful and learned many valuable lessons through their experience. Watch out for these boys next year - they're already rarin' to go!

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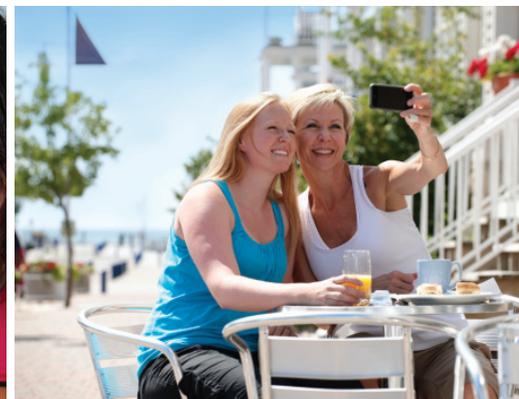
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Come to the Collier County Department of Health Room 133 every Tuesday from 10-11:30 a.m. For additional information call 239-252-7347 or 239-252-7312.

Sun Life accepting applications for grants

Sun Life Financial is accepting Sun Life Rising Star Award grant applications from nonprofit organizations in the South Florida area that advocate for youth from underserved communities.

Sun Life will award four winning organizations with a \$50,000 grant, who will each nominate an exemplary student to receive a \$5,000 Sun Life Rising Star scholarship towards financing a college education.

The Sun Life Rising Star Awards program, now in its fourth year, provides financial resources to students and nonprofit organizations in large urban school districts that are committed to encouraging under-served youth to continue their education as a means to achieve life-long financial wellness. The Sun Life Rising Star Awards program is the educational cornerstone program of the Miami Dolphins Foundation. Organizations which have 501(c) (3) tax-exempt status, promote skills that directly translate to educational success in high school to students under the age of 21 and are aligned with a secondary or post-secondary educational institution.

Applications are due by June 7, and are available now at sunliferisingstar.com

Keith Gainsboro, elevate, 617-895-7905, kgainsboro@elevatecom.com.

Home Buyer Workshop

The Empowerment Alliance of Southwest Florida is holding a Home Buyers Workshop Saturday, April 27, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at 750 South Fifth Street, Immokalee. (Light lunch included.) Topics include: Determining the price you can afford; managing your money; understanding credit, getting a mortgage loan, shopping for a home, insuring your property and keeping your home and managing your finances. Registration required. Call now: Angela Johnson 239-658-3325 or Lillie Flores 239-658-3318. Classes are free. You must attend the entire class to receive a certificate. No children preferred.

Taller de comprador de casa

The Empowerment Alliance of Southwest Florida presentaria un taller de comprador de casa 27 abril 9 a.m.-5 p.m., 750 South Fifth Street, Immokalee (almuerzo incluido). Los temas incluyen: Determinar que precio puede comprar; administrando su dinero; comprender el credito; obtener un prestamo hipotecario; comprar una casa; asegurar su propiedad; y mantener tu casa y administrando sus finanzas. Registrar a Angela Johnson 239-658-3325 o Lillie Flores 239-658-3318. Clase gratuita.

AMU plans conference

All are invited to the 2nd Annual Marian Eucharistic Conference at Ave Maria University "Do Whatever He Tells You" May 10-12, 2013. Speakers include; Fr. Michael Gaitley, Fr. Larry Richards, Jesse Romero, Vinny Flynn, Annie Karto and Dr. Mary Healy with a special concert by Croation singer Tacji. The cost per person is \$150 basic dorm or \$180 premium room and includes conference fee and meals. Call (239) 348-4724, email: conferences@avemaria.edu or visit www.avemaria.edu and look under news and events for more conference information.

Summer Programs planned

Providers of Immokalee youth programs are planning an expanded summer program through GPS, a youth initiative of the Naples Children & Education Foundation. GPS is looking for highly qualified teachers, artists

and coaches who enjoy working with students and would like to share their special talents and skills during the summer. If you are interested in applying, resumes should be sent to Jamie Scott by email at jscott@sfwdb.org or mail to 750 South 5th Street, Immokalee, Florida 34142. Resumes should include areas of expertise and fees, if applicable. Note that all applicants are required to complete a background screening prior to beginning work.

GPS programs offer a diversity of opportunities for Immokalee youth in out-of-school-time settings. The new collaboration seeks to improve educational outcomes and provide students tools for life-long success. GPS Summer 2013 is the result of planning by Miracle/Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board, RCMA, Parks and Recreation, Guadalupe Center, Immokalee Foundation, Boys and Girls Club of Collier County, RCMA and Immokalee Housing and Family Services. Enrollment information will be available in May.

Childhood Conference

6th Annual Early Childhood Conference Discovering the Value of Inclusion in Young Children's Lives "Lives" Saturday, April 27, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Edison State College, Collier Campus, 7007 Lely Cultural Parkway, Bldg. J, Naples.

Registration & Continental Breakfast 7:30-8:30 a.m. \$ 60 Early Bird Registration, if received by April 22nd \$75 if received after April 22 or at the door. CEU's available:

\$27.50 (5.5 hours). In Person Bring cash, check or money order to CCCR. Limited scholarships available for parents and teachers.

For information contact Collier Child Care Resources, Inc. 239.643.3908, Email: niccoleh@collierchildcare.org

Nance office in Immokalee

Collier Commissioner Tim Nance opened his new office in the Immokalee Government Center, 106 South First Street. Regular office hours for Nance at the government center will be established soon.

Prevent foreclosure

The Foreclosure Prevention and Advocacy Project will provide to income-eligible clients free legal advice and counsel or representation as deemed appropriate, in the areas of: bank, homeowner and condo association foreclosure defense; deficiency judgments; pre-foreclosure issues; and tax liens.

Staff is available Monday-Friday 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Appointments are also available by calling 239-775-4024 or visiting the office at 4124 Tamiami Trail East, Naples 34112.

Eligible clients will be accepted on a first come, first served basis and will be seen according to the urgency of their legal needs.

Eligibility criteria; Collier County resident; home is the applicant's homestead residence (investment properties are ineligible); low to moderate income individuals or families.

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TIF serving and helping kids

The Immokalee Foundation, with a mission to inspire the underserved youth of Immokalee through education, recently hosted a tennis clinic featuring the Gwynedd-Mercy College women's tennis head coach and players at Immokalee High School.

Assisting Coach Jim Holt Jr. and his players were the Center Court Athletics, members of the Pelican Marsh Tennis Club including member Jim Holt Sr., who is also assistant coach of the Gwynedd-Mercy College women's tennis team in Gwynedd Valley, Penn. Along with providing lessons to The Immokalee Foundation youth, the Center Court tennis players secured donations of rackets, balls and miscellaneous equipment with the hope that the students will continue to play with family members or friends.

A passionate and dedicated instructor, Holt Jr., was the recipient of the U.S. Tennis Association's 2011 Adaptive Tennis Community Service Award. He, along with his players and Center Court athletes, spent an afternoon teaching tennis fundamentals and running drills with students from Immokalee Middle School, RCMA Charter School and Immokalee High School.

The TIF tennis program offers opportunities for kids to get exercise by utilizing resources that are readily available and affordable in Immokalee. "It is important to look at the complete student," said Holt Jr. "Exercise is known to help socialize kids and keep them focused."

The Immokalee Foundation is devoted to enhancing the lives of Immokalee's next generation by emphasizing education, career development and life skills through programs



Submitted photos/Bridgette Fahl

Naidelyn Maldonado, TIF student, with GMAC Coach Jim Holt, Jr.

that provide students with opportunities to grow, learn and advance to educational and professional heights that they never dreamed possible.

"One way we are preparing our children for the game of life is through tennis," said Executive Director Liz Allbritten. "This unique sports-based program provides physical, social and personal well-being necessary to succeed in life."

The Immokalee Foundation has a range of programs that focus on building pathways to success through college and vocational school, mentoring and tutoring, and opportunities for broadening experiences and life skills development. To learn more about TIF, volunteering as a mentor or for additional information, call 239-430-9122 or visit www.immokaleefoundation.org.

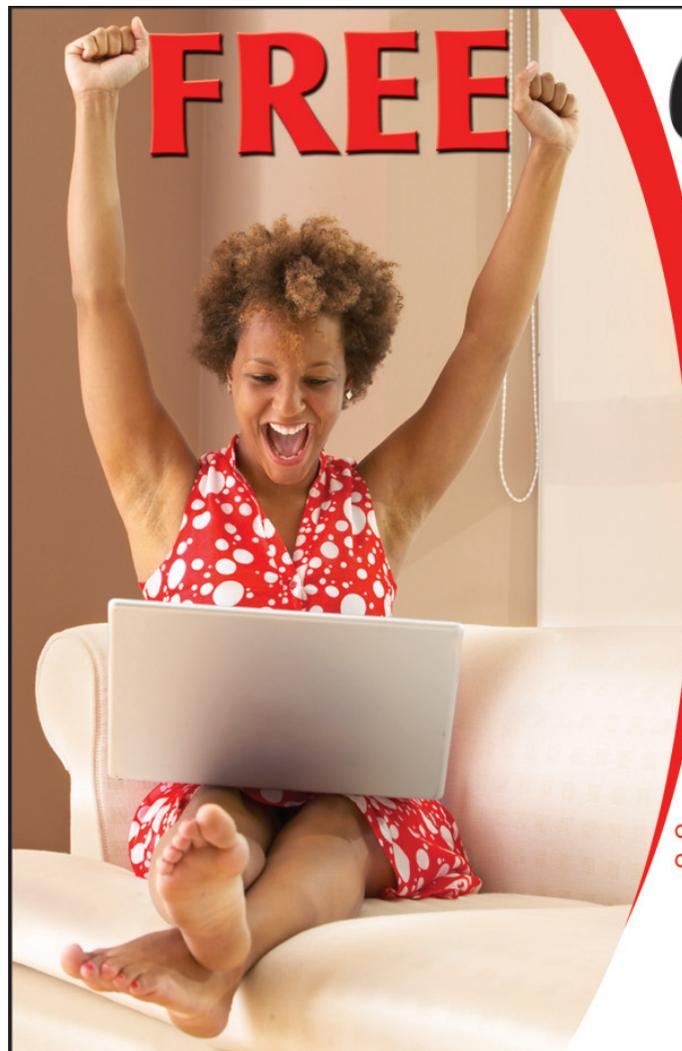


Submitted photos

Baseball, run and business

The Immokalee Foundation made it possible for nine Immokalee High School students and two Florida Gulf Coast University students to job-shadow Red Sox staff and participate in game day activities at the Red Sox training home recently. The experience allowed them to see for themselves what is involved in making a professional baseball game happen. The folks in last week's photo were incorrectly identified, so we are reprinting the two photos. Top Left: Katy Haas, Regine Francois, Lee County Commissioner Cecil Pendergrass.

Bottom Left: Salvador Preciado, Joe and Dee Zednik.



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