

OBL Speaker Second Amendment Sunday



Elizabeth Sukys

Camelot Assisted Living
by Tom Loury

Guest speaker Elizabeth Sukys spoke at a recent OBL meeting. She talked about Camelot offering state-of-the-art living quarters. The one thing that impressed me was the
(Continued on Page 3)



By Staff Writer

Second Amendment Sunday was a fundraiser sponsored by friends of Chris Blair for Sheriff. Over 60 people took the concealed weapons permit course. All the proceeds are going to the Chris Blair campaign elect fund. There were 8 Firearms instructors available. Volunteers were cooking hotdogs and hamburgers so that after the written indoor instruction and verbal instruction they could eat at the indoor shooting range. Here are some facts about the indoor range.

R/D Tactical Solutions (indoor gun range, firearms sales and vast assortment of merchandise). They have an HOURLY RATE: \$14 per lane

Hours of Operation

Monday- Friday: 9 am-7 pm

Saturday: 8 am- 4 pm

Sunday: Closed

They provide private training classes per request, as well as frequent concealed weapons classes. Yearly Memberships is

(Continued on Page 2)

Ocala Fire Rescue Thanks Local Business



In the inserted photo, Laura Bradford (owner of Body & Soul) receives a framed certificate from Battalion Chief Brian Stoothoff.

This month members of Ocala Fire Rescue will be delivering certificates of appreciation to local businesses. Body & Soul, located at 1107 East Silver Springs Boulevard, is just one of dozens of businesses that have contributed money to help support fire education programs in Ocala.

“This partnership with friends in our business community allow us to distribute fire safety pamphlets to thousands of our citizens each year” states Fire Chief James Ganter. All donations are tax deductible, and 100% of the funds received go directly towards purchasing materials to promote fire safety. Businesses that are interested in contributing may contact fire administration at 629-8306.



Kelli Hart

Lilli's Flowers & Gifts, named after my daughter, was founded in 2008. My desire to find a career that gave me the opportunity
(Continued on Page 2)

School Board

THE 4-DAY SCHOOL WEEK JUST DOES NOT ADD UP

By Jackie Porter

For the record, I voted NO on this recommendation.

The Superintendent of schools, Jim Yancey and several members of his staff recommended to the school board on June 28th, 2011 to approve a 4-day school week for students.

There was no backup documentation in
(Continued on Page 3)

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**GOD BLESS OUR TROOPS
IN GOD WE TRUST**



From left to right: Ron Malone, Chris Blair and Dennis Miller. The picture was taken at Tactical Solutions during Chris Blair's candidate for Sheriff fundraiser.

Second Amendment Sunday

(Continued from Page 1)

\$179.00.
 (352) 622-SHOT (7468)
 1031 NE 16th Street www.rdtacticalsolutions.com
 Ocala, FL 34470 www.ocalagunrange.com

The atmosphere was relaxed but business-like. I listened to the instructor and he sounded so familiar because I took a concealed weapons course. I will sleep better tonight knowing 60 more people in Marion County will have a license to carry. Thank you friends of Chris Blair for holding this class.



Kelli Hart

(Continued from Page 1)

provide a creative service to Marion County was the foundation for Lilli's. But, I wanted to provide something totally fresh, completely unique and different from the other florists and gift shops in town. And that is exactly what we have done! Lilli's design team is a highly creative, funky group of artists with amazing talents & techniques.

We combine traditional floral with edgy trends that result in Ocala's most unique designs. Lilli's specializes in weddings and funeral designs, custom building each arrangement to glorify our brides, as well as honoring those who have passed. We pride ourselves on quality service and professionalism, while keeping our work space fun!

We are honored to have been voted "Ocala's Best Florist" in both 2010 and 2011! Our customers appreciate the attention we pay to their visions and details and our ability to turn an idea in to a reality. There is no event too big or too small. And the more whimsi-

cal and funky and unique the requests, the better!

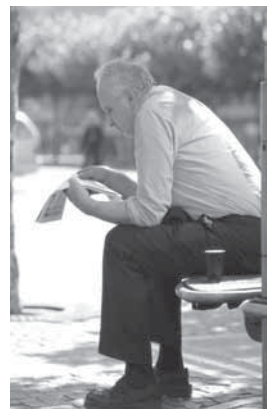
Stop in and check out room after room of eclectic, affordable gifts for all occasions. We do custom gift baskets for all occasions that can be filled with everything from gourmet and chocolates to sports themes and Girl's Night Out. Each basket is custom made to order so let your imagination run wild!

If you haven't used Lilli's Flowers & Gifts, you haven't experience true floral art. Stop by and meet Kelli & Co. at 23 NE 12th Terrace, Ocala 34470 or give them a call at 352.732.0500 and their artistic staff will be happy to help you. You can keep up with Lilli's Flowers on Facebook at facebook.com/LillisFlowers or facebook.com/LillisFlowersAndGifts and on the web at www.LillisFlowersAndGifts.com <<http://www.LillisFlowersAndGifts.com>> .

And don't forget, we deliver - Valentine's Day Roses from Lilli's would be great!

Your opinion matters to us!

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Spa IV 489-3383

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www.tooyourhealthspa.org

OBL Speaker

(Continued from Page 1)

people I have seen were all smiling. Some of you may know TomL Publishing LLC and Ocala Parks and Recreation sponsor a senior fishing derby. Almost always Camelot shows up. The staff is friendly and helpful.

Over 85,000 Marion County residents are over the age of 65. That number is expected to top 101,000 by 2013. Healthcare is a big thing in Marion County and will be getting bigger.

Camelot houses everything a small town offers; Physicians visits, a Beauty Parlor, planned activities, Transportation, three well

prepared meals a day, Cable TV, etc and are more reasonably priced than most.

There are many stories about residents becoming artists, falling in love, they have a brochure called "Tales from Camelot". It will become a book some day.

Visit Camelot today and see if the residents are smiling, they are! Assisted living means they will help get your basic needs and transportation for your field trips and wild shopping sprees. Just kidding!!!

BUY LOCAL

School Board

(Continued from Page 1)

the public documents for the meeting showing the savings of \$4 million dollars as he stated that night. No analysis, no departmental savings, nothing. Without the factual data I was not convinced of the savings to close schools 36 more days per year.

The school calendar beginning in August 2012 shows that students attend school 144 days vs. 180 day currently. The teachers attend their schools 168 days. On this calendar there are 10 Mondays noted as Teacher Professional Learning Days numbered #1 - #10. I questioned where 2800 teachers would be reporting to, because part of the

savings was to have electric shut down at all locations on Mondays. Marion County Public Schools does not have a facility that 2800 teachers can report to.

What effects will a 4-day school week have on businesses and families in this county?

How will the 4-day week affect children's learning by adding 75 minutes to the school day? Fatigue? Irritability? Not just on students but also teachers.

With more teenage students roaming unattended, possibly more mischief, could there be a possible increase in juvenile crime in the community?

By cutting one day per week, most of the hourly lower tier employees will have their pay reduced by 20% (off work 1 day). This is not really fair when upper management on salaries, keep their full pay.

Five months after the vote was taken, the Superintendent announced at the November 22nd board meeting that HE has decided to take a trip, with his Public Relations officer, to a small school district in Kentucky (at the taxpayers expense). The Kentucky school district has 2100 students and Marion County has 42,000. Our county is the size of the State of Rhode Island. So, where is the comparison?

The next day, I e-mailed Superintendent Yancey with more questions that I felt, needed to be addressed. I am still waiting on answers to my e-mailed questions.

Instead we were told, after the Winter break, this board would receive a full report on the trip to Kentucky, including, watching a video that Mr. Christian would be recording, interviewing the Kentucky school administrators.

At our first workshop back after Winter break, we were told by the Superintendent, he did not want to get into a discussion, about the Kentucky trip. Nor did we see any video interviews.

Also at our January 5th workshop, the Superintendent informed the Board, that Florida pays its school districts for school busing on a daily rate. So by eliminating one day a week Marion County Schools will lose \$1.8 million dollars in transportation money. WOW, another red flag went up. Back at the June 28th, 2011 board meeting, the Superintendent stated he was sure of the \$4 million dollars savings. Now the savings is reduced to \$2.4 million. How do these recommendations get past the board without backup documentation with an administrators signature? Why was this not brought up 6 months ago, by our deputy superintendent of operations, Wally Wagoner? It is his job to oversee transportation and finance and be accountable for the information presented.

All this puts teachers, employees and the community in panic mode. They don't know if they need to arrange work schedules for 4 days or 5 days. Parents don't know if they need babysitters or need to plan for daycare. Not that they can afford it.

Let me mention....

The day before the board vote in June, a press release from the Superintendent's office went out to the media including TV stations stating the 4-day "was not happening for now", thereby, discouraging them to come for a live report.

The following night at the Board Meet-
(Continued on Page 6)

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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Tom Loury

PUBLISHER'S NOTES

The School System...

A short statement about the Marion County School Board and the four day school week. Jackie Porter voted no to this when it came up and is still fighting to stop it. Actually Porter had suggested other area to cut expenses with less impact to the taxpayers and no impact to the students. This four day week will put undue financial burden on the parents who are working jobs. Now they have to pay for a daycare because they are working five days a week which is the largest sector of Marion County. The students will be spending more time at school per day. What are they thinking? It seems like without thought they said let's pass this and see what kind of feedback we get. Jackie was on several radio stations, WOCA with Lacey and Kelly. My newspaper has had stories mainly because a lot of the general public really doesn't understand the impact. I have heard comments like, Oh the four day school week did not pass or yes they have already reconsidered it and canceled it. None of that is true but as I understand it will be going on the agenda again. Read Jackie Porter's story

front page.

Education and the Government

Our Government has totally messed up the school system. You hear all about no child left behind. We have a larger percentage of students getting left behind than ever before.

We have taught the students how to pass the SAE test which is supposed to tell us if the teachers are worthy of their pay. So the teachers, in self-defense, teach the SAE test information first and teach the most important things you need to learn about business life or just life in general last.

The education system is one size fits all. That won't work! We stopped physical education and we complain the students are getting too fat. We probably lose more students to algebra but it is the least used subject in life. Nurses, Doctors, Airplane Pilots, and Engineers need it. If you think about how much algebra the average person uses it in their life, you will find that very few use it in their daily life, at work or at home.

When I went to school you and your par-

ents were given a choice; college courses, business courses or basic education. Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and no common sense. If you graduated from high school and worked hard in any field using common sense and the basic education you could go as far as you wanted to. Today we are treating every high school student like they are going to college, they have no choice and

we lose a lot of them in high school.

Today students are not told it's OK to be a truck driver, it's OK to be a warehouse person, it's OK to be a police officer, Realtor, etc. So now we have graduates working at low paying jobs because we have produced too many of them. If we brought manufacturing back to our country they would have jobs.

Four Day School Week

by Tom Loury

Most people I talk to say I hope the four day school week won't pass. Folks, it has passed! The Marion County School Board voted four to one to pass it! Jackie Porter being the one apposed. Since then I have been talking to parents with multiple children in school. The Day Care cost will eat them alive and so I ask who is the victim and who is the hero?

The Victims are the children that will have fried brains after 6 hours, so will they learn anything in the seventh or eighth hour? I doubt it seriously. Many will be standing in the dark at the bus stop in the morning and others will be in the dark after school. School Board, you are putting those children at risk!

The School Board will be saving money on the backs of the school bus drivers, also one less day to serve lunch and some office help. The teachers will have to stay and work several more hours every day so they won't lose.

Administrators of the schools won't lose any money, so again who is the victim? Above I explained that the students will be the main victim but the parents who pay school taxes are being victimized.

A single mother with three or four children will pay dearly and I can show you many in that category will lose big time. A couple with three or four children will have to pay for daycare and make arrangements

to take them to daycare and arrange to pick them up. The employer of these parents will pay because of the disruption in work, to get them to daycare and back. The taxpayers will lose, do you think their intent is to lower your taxes? NOOOOooo!

Parents are just waking up and realizing that the School Board has seriously passed this into law.

What can you do as a parent???? Go to the School Board Meeting, ask to be on the agenda, bring your friends, neighbors and family. Fill up the board meeting with parents who stand to lose the most. Voice your opinion on talk radio shows. Send me a letter to the editor. If you want it stopped you better get busy. Write letters to the School Board Members. Remember Jackie Porter tried to stop this and was voted down. Write letters of thanks to Jackie and letters of disappointment to the other four. Tell them how this will affect your family's life and how much extra it will cost you as a working mom or dad for daycare.

I really think this is one of the stupid projects decisions so far. Maybe not, I guess it's a toss up there has been so many challenging things. I guess what I'm trying to say is the School Board does not weigh the impact to the taxpayers or the students because they are in their own little world.

There are many ways to save money other than disrupting the education of the

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Newspaper Deadlines
Editorial & Ad Copy for March
Seniors Voice & Ocala DownTown
 12am, February 15th
Lady Lake Magazine & Village Spectator
 12am, February 22nd

Four Day School Week

(Continued from Page 4)

students.
WAKE UP TAXPAYERS!
 TomL said that!

More More More
 The victims are:
 The Students
 The Parents
 The Bus Drivers
 The cafeteria help
 The office help
 How much money does the School Board save?
 How much money will it cost the working tax payers with child daycare?

Each child that can't be left home alone will have to pay \$25 each day school is closed. If those that are old enough are left home alone, will they be safe?

The contract the School Board has with Marion County Taxpayers is to educate the children in a five day week and keep them safe while they are doing that. Instead they keep trying to break the contract they have with the taxpayers. School Board get back to work and do your job.

As I see it Jackie Porter is trhe only one doing her job.
 TomL

Friends of the Ocala Library

By Ken Tipper

In these days of budget-cutting in Tallahassee it pays to have friends who do all they can to alleviate the pain of reducing or eliminating services to the public such as in the case of the library system. In Ocala, the main library on Silver Springs Boulevard has such a friend in the persons of the Friends of the Ocala Library, an organization formed in 1980 to support the library with funding for programs that for the most part would not be funded in the library budget.

For many years the Friends' main source of income was a quarterly book sale that was conducted from various locations around the area. When the main library moved from

downtown to its present location, previously the site of a supermarket, the remodeling plans included an area that became the Book Market located in the foyer of the library. There, Friends volunteers sell donated books six days a week at very affordable prices. This supplanted the quarterly book sale as the prime source of income, but the quarterly sale continues, when Rooms B and C at the library are filled with surplus books from the generous donors of the many thousands of tenderly-treated books that flow into the Book Market daily.

Probably the most ambitious of the projects implemented by the Friends is the collection of mosaics that adorn the front of the library, tiled depictions of the various subjects on which books can be found in the library's extensive collections, and including a picture of the old Carnegie library that once existed on Silver Springs Boulevard. Various community and civic leaders sponsored the mosaics, as well as various businesses round the area. Another project of which the Friends are proud of sponsoring is CREATE, an annual festival that allows teens to display their talents in the areas of arts and music. Add to that the fact that the Friends grant two scholarships each year, this year being the third since the program's inception. And then there's Teen Tech Week, a chance for the young scientists in the area to display their technical talents.

A big beneficiary of the Friends' largesse has been the library children's department, summer programs having been funded for the last several years. Programs there include the Fairy Tale Festival. And last but not least is the "Words" magazine, a quarterly newsletter that includes a calendar of all the events planned throughout the library system, articles by local authors, and other items of interest to library users.

Membership in the Friends costs just \$5 for a single membership, and \$10 for a family. For more information go to friendsofheocalalibrary.org.



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School Board

(Continued from Page 3)

ing, there was a notice taped to the front doors of this building, telling everyone who showed up to speak, that the 4-day school week had been removed from the agenda, however, the vote was taken to implement the 4-day school week for August 2012. Again, I voted No to this plan.

(These photos can be seen on my website: www.jackieporter.com)

This whole dog and pony show does not add up. To scare the public that there won't be enough money for teachers, just does not sit well with me. This resembles the scare tactics two years ago when 522 1st and 2nd year teachers were laid off, then rehired. It seems layoffs of teachers, shutting down programs and closing schools are all used by administrations to rally for tax increases.

Tax increases should be on a referendum for the voters in Marion County to decide. If a tax increase is passed by the voters, they too, should be assured by a document signed by the Superintendent and the Board, that the money will be used in the classrooms for education.

Mr. Yancey, I am a voice for the citizens in this county who believe government needs to spend within the revenues they receive.

My \$37 million dollar expense cutting proposal was submitted to the superintendent in a formal e-mail last July 2011. It is his fiduciary duty to prepare and implement the budget. The board makes suggestions to the superintendent and then votes on his final budget recommendation.

January 5th, 2012, the TOP News Story on MCPS website read superintendent hits the road this month and next to share information about a four day school week and will provide those attending, the opportunity to offer budget-cutting suggestions:

Mr. Yancey, if you would implement just a few of my proposals to cut spending, you would have the money that was projected to be saved with your 4-day school week.

At the January 10th, 2012 school board meeting, I was asked by many concerned parents and community leaders to voice their opposition to the 4-day school/work week. I presented the community's concerns to the other board members. That week I also went on three local radio talk shows expressing the hundreds of people opposing this radical move. As of this date, I believe our message has been heard. A re-vote will appear on the school board agenda in February 2012. The date will be posted on my website: www.jackieporter.com

Workforce Connection Coming to Dunnellon Area

(OCALA, Fla.) – Workforce Connection of Citrus, Levy and Marion counties will bring job-seeker services to the Annie Johnson Senior and Family Service Center in Dunnellon beginning Wednesday, Feb. 1.

Workforce Connection's Mobile Resource Unit will be on hand the first Wednesday of each month from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The center is located at 1991 W. Test Court, just south of the Withlacoochee River.

On every second and third Wednesday, Workforce will partner with the Florida Department of Children and Families at the center by providing work registration services for those accessing public assistance programs.

Rusty Skinner, Workforce's chief executive officer, said the effort is designed to make it easier for job seekers to access services without having to travel to a resource center in Ocala, Inverness or Chiefland. All Workforce Connection services, regardless of location, are provided at no charge.

"We recognize that it's not always pos-

sible to get to one of our centers, and the Annie Johnson Center is ideally located to serve residents in the northeast corner of Citrus County, southeast area of Levy and southwest portion of Marion," Skinner said. "The idea is to provide seamless services throughout our region."

Workforce Connection's mobile resource unit is staff-supported and equipped with satellite Internet, four computer workstations and office equipment to assist job seekers register with the Employ Florida Marketplace, conduct job searches, work on their resumes, fill out online employment applications, research career information and resources, get information about upcoming hiring events and apply for Unemployment Compensation benefits and file claims.

For more information about the Annie Johnson Center, call 352-489-8021. For information about Workforce Connection services at the Annie Johnson Center, call 800-434-JOBS (5627).



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Meet Lacey Colletti



Meet Lacey Colletti, she is a marketing and promotional person. She is a person of many talents and full of energy. She co-hosts a radio show called The Lacy and Kelly Show on WOCA.

Lacey said she was having a hard time finding a club with all the things she was looking for so finding others with the same vision was not hard. A new referral club was

born. The goal is to mold it into the vision her and the 8 person Core Group has. The name of the group is Marion County Referral Network. The announcement was put on Facebook and in one week requests for applications were in the 20's. The middle of the second week it was in the 30's and the Facebook was shut down with requests to apply for membership were topped in the 40's. This is a "By invitation Only" group and they are striving to reach the highest standards possible.

The first meeting was held with 25 attending applicants. One person per category, catered lunch and they are just now deciding on the structure of the club. Miss Colletti will be the acting President this year.

The Mission statement is:

A premier group of business professionals with the sole purpose of referring businesses by building strong relationships and trust amongst its members in order for each member to continue to run a profitable, professional business.

The Facebook will only be open to members. A website is to be coming soon. Lacey says she is looking for good professional business people to apply. Look for a directory of some of the club members in this newspaper.



Cracker Days and Native Plant Sale

Rainbow Springs State Park

Date: Saturday and Sunday, February 25 and 26, 2012. From 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. come to Rainbow Springs State Park to experience a whip cracking good time! See first hand Florida's Pioneer history with the original Florida Cracker lifestyle. Come see an expansive group of Cracker time period exhibitors. Be amazed at some of the arts like spinning yam, making clothes, grinding corn, making butter, chopping wood, making usable home items and many more unique arts. Visit a Cracker Cow Camp and a Trapper Camp. Learn how to make fire from flint. See exhibitors in period costumes. Come browse booths and purchase unique gifts. While you are enjoying the beautiful headsprings of the Rainbow River take time

to listen to the music or some very interesting talks about the Cracker period of Florida History.

Visit Cracker Weekend to celebrate Florida history and culture with the sponsors Friends of Rainbow Springs. Rainbow Springs State Park.

Fees: \$2.00 regular park admission.

Contact: For more information' call 352-465-8S55.

Rainbow Springs State Park day use area is located three miles north of Dunnellon on the east side of U.S. 41 From I-75, exit at the second Ocala exit onto State Road 40. Take State Road 40, west. Drive until it dead-ends at U.S. 41. Turn left; the park entrance is on the left-hand side of the road.

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Election Day

By Charlotte Poss

The primary elections will be over when you read this but I still must say, it is hard to believe that it is time again for the Presidential Primaries to begin. All the bickering between candidates and listening to those mud slinging ads. The first liar does not have a chance. Everyone has the secret on how to make more jobs, better health care programs and most important getting the nation out of debt.

The way all of the above should be looked at is why did all these people wait until they are a candidate to say they can save us? What have they been doing for the last three years? The best way to look at some of this double talk is to put it on another level. What would this nation do if they heard that a scientist or doctor had a cure for cancer but would not share this information until he was guaranteed presidency or royal status. This is the same thing, if our elected officials would start to think of this country in place of their positions or their desire to be number one, we would not be in this position.

When we elect a person to any office it is for them to do the best job that they can for all the people not just for those that belong to that persons political party. Call me naïve, but these people were elected to do a job for us. They should be working together just like you and I have to, even working with people we may not like but to make sure we get the job done.

When working in Washington for the good of the nation, our elected officials owe it to all of us to work together regardless of what party they belong to. This should also be for county and town officials. I once asked a senator about a bill that would be coming to his committee. He told me that he is sorry that he cannot help me as I was not one of his constituents and was out of his district. Now, I ask you, when the official in your district is not on a committee that you need information on, you have to talk to whomever is on that committee. To say sorry, you did not vote for me makes no sense, when this committee will make decisions that will effect many people including me, I get offended. This is what is happening in Washington now. If these candidates knew how to get the nation out of debt and create jobs and I hate to say this "lower taxes" for the rich. Why did it take this long for them to get off their duffs and do something sooner about these great plans for our nation. Why did they not share them before they ran for the presidency? How can we believe them when they sat on their hands for so many years. False promises is all the voters get. Things were much easier back when one did not have to be a multi millionaire to run for office. For our elected officials to pay \$10,000., plus a night for a hotel room is like rubbing the average working class noses in crap. These elected officials can afford these prices because you the working class are paying for it. Many beneficial

programs are being cut, it takes almost more to feed your car gas then what it cost to feed yourself, and the politicians brag about how much they spend on a hotel room per night. It just goes to show that these people are over paid and have too many benefits. We need elected officials who will work for the people not just up to election day. It seems

like the day after the election the voters are forgotten and it is back to sticking it to us in the form of cuts to public programs and the closing schools. The only winner is the politician. You John Q. Public will not be needed. That is until the next election for your vote, money

Marion County

Marion County Fire Rescue Spruce Creek Station

Then 7-year-old Stephen Flanner's actions, combined with the skill of medical professionals, helped save his mother's life. On Sept. 17, 2011, Kristin Metcalf was having trouble breathing and asked her son, Stephen, to call her mother. When he couldn't get a hold of his grandmother, and his mom became unconscious, he dialed 911. He provided dispatchers with the necessary information and then watched after his 2-year-old sister until rescuers arrived seven minutes later.

Firefighter/Paramedic Brent Murray and Firefighter/EMT Scott Chamberlin of Spruce Creek Station 30 were assisted by firefighters from MCFR's South Forest Station 6. Upon arrival rescuers found Kristin Metcalf in severe respiratory distress, and she became unresponsive during transport to The Villages Hospital where she was treated and released.

MARION COUNTY, Fla. (Jan. 9, 2012) – Boaters using county boat ramp facilities may experience limited access due to low water conditions. Marion County Parks and Recreation advises those visiting the following recreational areas to be mindful of ramp drop-offs and to check ramp conditions and water depth before launching:

For more information, please contact Marion County Parks and Recreation at 352-671-8560 or visit the office at 111 SE 25th Ave., Ocala.

MARION COUNTY, Fla. (Jan. 13, 2012) – The Marion County Growth Management Department is accepting applications for small-scale land use changes, or amendments, to the county's Comprehensive Plan.

Residents who own 10 acres or less of land and are interested in changing its designated use, such as going from rural to commercial use, are eligible for the small-scale amendment application.

Per Florida Statute, the department may only accept up to a total of 120 acres of small-scale amendment applications in one year. Applications will be accepted until 4 p.m. on Feb. 3, 2012, or until the 120-acre maximum is reached, whichever comes first. Application forms may be picked up at Marion County Growth Management or downloaded from http://www.marioncountyfl.org/Planning/land_use.aspx.

Growth Management hosts small-scale amendment application cycles periodically as part of its activities to keep the county's Comprehensive Plan up to date. The plan is Marion County's key guide for growth management and provides the framework for how the county will continue to develop. For more information about small-scale amendments, contact Michael Kokosky at 352-438-2600 or visit www.marioncountyfl.org/growthmanagement.htm <<http://www.marioncountyfl.org/growthmanagement.htm>> .

With the 2012 wildfire season on the horizon and dry conditions increasing, members of the Marion County Multi-Agency Wildland Task Force will meet to discuss and plan organizational structures and communication procedures. This unique task force was formed following the 1998 wildfire season and meets regularly during peak wildfire dangers to ensure agencies stay informed of the local capabilities, minimizing the negative effects wildfires have on our community.

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Regional Jobless Rate Continues to Fall

(OCALA, Fla.) – The jobless rate for Workforce Connection’s Citrus, Levy and Marion counties region followed state and national trends by dropping from 11.5 to 11.3 percent in December, down 2.1 percentage points over the year.

Out of a regional labor force of 205,919, there were 23,237 unemployed, 670 fewer jobless than in November 2011. At the same time, however, the size of the regional labor force shrank by 1,884 over the month and the number of those employed dropped by 1,214.

Florida’s unemployment rate in December fell to 9.9 percent and the national rate dropped to 8.5 percent.

December’s unemployment rate for each

county in the Workforce Connection region were 11.6 percent in Marion County, down from 11.8 percent in November; 10.9 percent in Citrus County, down from 11.1 percent; and 10.2 percent in Levy County, down 0.2 percent.

Rusty Skinner, Workforce’s chief executive officer, cautioned that the monthly numbers are not seasonally adjusted and often fluctuate sharply due to seasonal events such as ramping up and down of temporary and part-time holiday hires.

Skinner said a clearer picture of long-term stability can be seen when comparing December’s employment to December 2010.

“When compared to the long haul and

not just a short blip, we’re moving forward, just as the state is and the nation is,” Skinner said. “We see improved employment and reduced unemployment across the board.”

Last year during the same period, the regional unemployment rate was 13.4 percent, with Marion County at 13.9 percent, 12.9 percent in Citrus County and 12.0 percent in Levy County.

Marion County unemployment dropped from 18,540 in December 2010 to 15,227 last month, the number of those with jobs increased by 857 to 116,023 over the year while the labor force shrank by 2,456.

Citrus County’s jobless dropped from 7,468 to 6,258 over the year, the number of employed increased by 566 to 51,191 and the labor force also expanded by 644 to 57,449.

Levy’s County had 324 fewer unem-

ployed when compared to the same period last year, 242 more with jobs, up from 15,226, and minor shrinkage of the labor force, down by 82 to 17, 2220.

Becky Rust, Florida’s chief economist and director of the state’s Labor Market Statistics Center, said Friday that the unemployment rate dropped in 55 of 67 counties, remained the same in two counties and increased in 10.

“It’s still a slow economic recovery in terms of jobs,” she said.

The Ocala Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which covers all of Marion County, has the second highest unemployment rate among Florida’s 23 MSAs, behind Palm Coast with 13.9 percent and just ahead of Sebastian-Vero Beach. In November 2011, the Ocala MSA inched up to third highest after seven months with the fourth highest ranking.

Rust noted that “long-term weakness in construction and losses in government contributed to the high unemployment rates in these areas.”

In the Ocala MSA, mining, logging and construction lost 100 jobs over the month and 300 since December 2010; government jobs remained flat month-to-month and also 300 lost over the year.

Among Florida’s 67 counties, Marion County’s unemployment rate remained in eighth place, Citrus County moved up four notches to 13th while Levy County ranks 22nd highest.

Workforce Connection serves job seekers and employers cost-effective, high-quality employment, training and education. Last year, more than 36,000 career seekers and 1,600 businesses received services.

In releasing the state unemployment rate Friday, Gov. Rick Scott said he was “very encouraged by the success of our 24 regional workforce boards in providing skills and training of Floridians” in helping them obtain jobs.

Workforce Connection is the local, business-led organization that strives to connect qualified workers with local employers in Citrus, Levy and Marion counties through cost-effective, high quality employment, training and education services in partnership with businesses, community-based organizations, educational institutions and governmental agencies.

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Brody, a pre-kindergartener, left his Christmas tree decorating friends to catch up on the local news.

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SENIOR SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

MOVIES: FEBRUARY 2012

TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7TH AND 8TH AT 1:30 PM

“SEVEN DAYS IN UTOPIA” STARRING: ROBERT DUVAL, LUCAS BLACK, MELISSA LEO, DEBORAH ANN WOLL, BRIAN GERAGHTY AND OTHERS. Luke Chisolm (Black) has the drive to become a professional golfer. Just when he’s on the verge of going pro, however, he buckles under the pressure. In the aftermath of that crushing disappointment, Luke vanishes from the spotlight, uncertain if he’ll ever return to the game again. Luke is driving through Texas when he crashes his

car in the town of Utopia, and strikes up a friendship with Johnny Crawford (Duvall), a rancher who knows more about the game of golf than the troubled young visitor realizes. Now, the more time Luke spends with Johnny, the more he begins to see life from a new perspective -- a perspective that will not only help Luke make sense of where he’s been in life, but where he’s headed as well. RATED G

TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST AND 22ND AT 1:30 PM

“ZOOKEEPER” STARRING: KEVIN JAMES, ROSARIO DAWSON AND OTHERS. Beloved zookeeper Griffin Keyes (

James) decides to quit his job to dive into the dating pool. Griffin is a single guy who loves his job at the Franklin Park Zoo. He has a special bond with the animals, yet he can’t help but feel lonely each night when he returns to an empty house. Eventually deciding that a more prestigious job may be the key to finding a new girlfriend, Griffin prepares to turn in his walking papers and reinvent himself. When word gets out to the animals that Griffin will soon be leaving, they realize the only way to keep him around is to reveal they have the gift to gab. Perhaps with a little dating advice from his friends in the animal kingdom, this lonely zookeeper will manage to meet the girl of his dreams without losing the job he loves. RATED PG

COMING IN MARCH: “DOLPHIN TALE” “LARRY CROWNE”

The latest videos are shown two times per month. Reservations must be made at the 8th Ave. Senior Center. Seating is limited to eight persons per video. Please call 629-8545 to reserve your seat.

EVENTS: FEBRUARY 2012 INCOME TAX HELP

When: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays starting February 1st, thru April 16th, 2012

Time: 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM

Cost: Free

Where: 8th Avenue Adult Recreation Center, 830 NE 8th Avenue, Ocala

What: AARP Tax help is available on

these days. Please bring all your necessary documents including SS Card, W-2 Forms, 1099 Forms, last year’s taxes, driver’s license and some other form of ID.

TRIP—STATE FAIR, TAMPA

When: Thursday, February 16th, 2012

Where: Tampa, Florida

Time: Leave 8th Avenue Adult Recreation Center 8:30 AM. Return 7:00 PM

Cost: \$32.50 per person

What: The fair is a salute to the state’s best agriculture and equine industry. Excitement is in the air and all over the fairgrounds with plenty of free entertainment. Enjoy an abundance of shows, music, displays, rides, food and shopping. Registration is limited to 45 participants. For more information, contact Grace at 352-629-8357.

COMING IN MARCH!!!

PARADE OF SENIOR SERVICES

When: Friday, March 16, 2012

Where: CCF Ewers Century Center, State Road 200, Ocala

Time: 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Cost: Free

What: Over 60 government, non-profit and public service agencies will be represented to provide literature, answer questions and offer services to senior citizens of Marion County. Tax Aid, Health Care, Recreation, City, County, State and Federal Government Services, Social Services and much more! For more details about this event, please call Diane at 401-3916.



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Governor Rick Scott

FROM THE GOVERNOR'S DESK

Governor Rick Scott Appoints Three to Board of Governors of the State University System

Tallahassee, Fla. – Today, Governor Rick Scott announced the reappointment of Ava L. Parker and the appointments of Joseph L. Caruncho and Thomas G. Kuntz to the Board of Governors of the State University System.

Parker, 49, of Jacksonville, has been a partner at Lawrence and Parker P.A. since 2000 and president of Linking Solutions Inc. since 2003. Previously, she was an assistant public defender from 1988 to 1991

and assistant general counsel for the Florida Department of Transportation from 1991 to 1995. In 2002, she was an aide to a Commissioner on the Public Service Commission. She currently serves on the Jacksonville Transportation Authority. She has also served on the Jacksonville Housing Commission from 2002 to 2006, on the University of Central Florida Board of Trustees from 2001 to 2002, and as general counsel for Edward Waters College. Parker received a bachelor's degree from the University of Florida. She is reappointed for a term beginning January 19, 2012, and ending January

6, 2013.

Caruncho, 53, of Palmetto Bay, has been the co-founder and chief operating officer of Preferred Care Partners Inc. since 1996. Prior to founding the company, he was a corporate healthcare attorney representing clients in the healthcare industry for more than 13 years. He serves on the Florida International University (FIU) Center for Leadership Advisory Council and has been a member of the FIU Foundation Board of Directors since 2006, and most recently served as the board's chairperson. He has also served as a board member of the FIU Alumni Association, chairperson of the FIU College of Business Dean's Council, and is a founder of the FIU College of Medicine. Caruncho received an associate degree from Miami-Dade College, a bachelor's degree from Florida International University and a law degree from Nova Southeastern University. He succeeds Ann Duncan and is appointed for a term beginning January 19, 2012, and ending January 6, 2019.

Kuntz, 55, of Winter Park, has been president and chief executive officer of SunTrust Banks Inc. since 1999. Beginning his banking career with SunTrust in 1978 as a management associate, he later managed several different divisions of the bank's operations. His extensive community involvement includes serving on the Scripps Florida Funding Corporation Board of Directors since 2011 and the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center Council of Governors since 2006. In addition, he has served on the Rollins College Board of Trustees, has been a member of the Florida Council of 100 since 2005, and the Enterprise Florida Board of Directors since 2006, including serving as a past vice chair-

man. He served on the Florida Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors from 2004 to 2010 and the Florida International University Foundation Board of Directors from 2002 to 2004. Kuntz received a bachelor's degree from Rollins College. He succeeds J. Stanley Marshall and is appointed for a term beginning January 19, 2012, and ending January 6, 2019.

The appointments are subject to confirmation by the Florida Senate.

Governor Rick Scott Appoints Jeffrey R Jontz to Statewide Nominating Commission

Tallahassee, Fla. – Today, Governor Rick Scott announced the appointment of Jeffrey R. Jontz to the Statewide Nominating Commission. This Commission reviews the conduct of existing compensation claims judges and submits names to the Governor, from which he selects new appointments.

Jontz, 67, of Winter Park, has been an attorney with Swann, Hadley, Stump, Dietrich and Spears P.A. since 2005. Previously, he practiced with Carlton Fields from 1996 to 2005. He served as an assistant United States attorney for the Middle District of Florida from 1972 to 1974. In addition to his community service on the boards of directors of the Florida Symphony Orchestra and Junior Achievement of Central Florida, he has served as chair of the City of Maitland's Code Enforcement Board and the City of Winter Park's Board of Adjustments. Jontz received a bachelor's degree from Drake University and a law degree from the University of Iowa. He succeeds David Beyer and is appointed for a term beginning Janu-

(Continued on Page 12)

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Governor Rick Scott

FROM THE GOVERNOR'S DESK

(Continued from Page 11)

ary 20, 2012, and ending July 1, 2013.

Major League Baseball
Spring Training Returns
With 236-game Schedule

Tallahassee, Fla. – Today, Governor Rick Scott announced the return of Major League Baseball Spring Training to Florida. Over the course of 33 days in March and April a total of 236 Spring Training Baseball games will be played between Major League teams in 14 Florida locations, bringing fans from all over the United States to a tradition dating back to the late 1800s.

The 2012 Florida Spring Training season begins in mid-February with the arrival of pitchers and catchers from the 15 teams for pre-season workouts. Following two weeks of workouts, the first games will be played on Saturday, March 3.

In 10 of the last 12 seasons, the annual Major League Baseball Spring Training season has brought more than 1.5 million fans to Florida communities. A 2009 Economic Impact Survey of Spring Training Baseball, conducted by The Bonn Marketing Research Group Inc., showed a \$753 million annual economic impact to the State of Florida.

“Every March, Florida welcomes Major League Baseball for its Spring Training season, as well as the fans and economic development it brings,” said Governor Rick Scott.

“Currently, Florida hosts Major League Baseball teams from 11 different states and Canada, who come to enjoy Spring Training Baseball, our weather, our beaches and all of the other amenities our great state offers.”

Highlights of the 33 days of the 2012 Florida Spring Training Baseball season include:

The debut of the newest addition to the roster of spring training locations, JetBlue Park, the \$78 million Fenway South complex in Fort Myers. The new ballpark seats more than 10,000 with an additional 1,000 spaces designated for standing room. There were 7,576 fixed seats at the Red Sox former home, City of Palms Park. The JetBlue Park playing field dimensions are identical to those in Fenway Park and the Park features a replica Green Monster in left field and a manual scoreboard.

The St. Louis Cardinals return to the field for the first time since celebrating their 2011 World Series Championship when they take the field against the Miami Marlins on Saturday, March 5. The Cardinals will be facing a fresh-look Marlins team with an updated logo and uniforms. The changes in name and branding are taking place as the Marlins move into a new stadium in Miami, on the site of the former Orange Bowl stadium.

Two teams with the longest continuous histories in a Florida community meet on March 9 when the Detroit Tigers host

the Philadelphia Phillies at Joker Marchant Stadium in Lakeland. The Tigers have held their spring training in Lakeland for 76 years while the Phillies have been in Clearwater for spring training for 65 years.

For more information about the 2012 Florida Spring Training season, please visit the newly-redesigned www.floridagraperfruitleague.com <<http://www.floridagraperfruitleague.com>>. The site, maintained by Florida Sports, a division of Enterprise Florida Inc., has current information about

the 15 teams holding their spring training in the State of Florida. Each team page includes a 2012 schedule, ticket information, stadium information and directions, host community information and a history of the team's spring training sites over the years. Fans can also order a complimentary copy of the 2012 Florida Spring Training Guide at the site. The annual guide will be available in late-January and includes schedules for all 15 teams and ticket information.

Share Some Love with Cupcakes

(Family Features) There's no better way to say "Be Mine" than with a collection of Valentine's Day cupcakes - a great surprise for anyone you're sweet on this February 14.

Cupid's arrow hits the mark with moist and delicious Red Velvet with Love Cupcakes. The vibrant red goodies are fun for kids and adults alike to make, decorate and eat.

Creative cupcakes like these have endless possibilities with Valentine's tips and techniques from Wilton. Themed baking cups coordinate with colorful sprinkles, icing decorations and party picks to make it easy to decorate a gift from the heart.

Dress up cupcakes using a pink, red and white palette. Create cute and quick love monsters by piping icing to make the nose, mouth and fur, and then attach candy eyeballs, and heart-shaped picks for ears. Other decorating options include wrapping cup-

cakes in foil cups for an elegant effect, or finishing with colored sugars and sprinkles. You can even write special messages on them.

After decorating, package cupcakes in a festive box adorned with ribbon and bows for a treat that's sure to tie a heart in knots.

For more Valentine's Day celebration ideas, visit www.wilton.com.

Red Velvet with Love Cupcakes
Valentine Standard or Mini Baking Cups,
Heart Eyelet Baking Cups, Cupcake-N-Pix
Combo or Heart Silicone Baking Cups

2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons cocoa powder
1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup (1 stick) butter or margarine,
softened

1-1/2 cups granulated sugar
(Continued on Page 13)

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Share Some Love with Cupcakes

(Continued from Page 12)

2 eggs
1-1/2 teaspoons No-Taste Red Icing Col-
or

1 teaspoon Imitation Clear Van-
illa Extract
1 cup buttermilk
2 tablespoons water
1-1/2 teaspoons white vinegar
1teaspoon baking soda
Buttercream Icing
Red, Rose and Black Icing Color
Red Foil Swirls Cupcake Wraps
Valentine Sprinkles, Jumbo
Hearts Sprinkles, Heart Icing Deco-
rations, Rose Icing Decorations,
Candy Eyeballs

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line muf-
fin pan with baking cups or set sili-
cone cups on cookie sheet and spray
with vegetable pan spray.

In medium bowl, combine flour, cocoa,
baking powder and salt; set aside. In large
bowl, cream butter and sugar with electric
mixer until light and fluffy. Add eggs, red ic-
ing color and vanilla extract; mix well until
icing color is well incorporated. Alternately
add flour mixture and buttermilk; add wa-
ter and mix well. In a small bowl, combine
white vinegar and baking soda; gently stir
into cupcake mixture. Distribute cupcake
batter evenly in cups.

Bake 20-22 minutes for standard cup-
cakes, 10-12 minutes for mini cupcakes, or
until toothpick inserted in center comes out

clean. Cool cupcakes completely.
For Love Monster Cupcakes, use tip 18
and rose icing to pipe pull-out stars on cup-



cake tops. Add candy eyeballs with dots of
icing. Add tip 10 red icing dot nose. Use
tip 4 and black icing to pipe dot pupils and
outline mouth. Position heart picks.

For Other Cupcakes, spatula ice cupcake
smooth or top with tip 22 mini cupcake icing
swirl or tip 1M standard cupcake icing swirl.
If desired, place in cupcake wraps. Top with
desired sprinkles or icing decorations or add
tip 4 message.

Makes about 20 standard cupcakes; 4
dozen minis.

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Source: Wilton Enterprises



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