

2021 Community Guide

OKEECHOBEE

ENTERTAINMENT | EVENTS | DINING | VISITOR INFORMATION





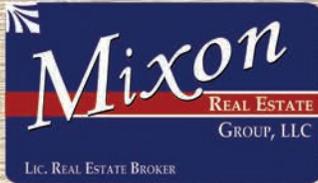
When Results Matter...

Mixon Delivers!

Read our Google Reviews

Mixon

Real Estate Group, LLC



*Our Priorities Are Simple...
They're Yours!*



Jimmy & Lauren De La Luz, Cindy Brandel, Amy Moyer, Erica Harvey, Lori Mixon, Melody Hodges, Natalie Hubbard, Jacalyn Sutton, Wayne Williams, Patrick Malone

Premier Residential Specialists

 **Matterport™ 3D- Virtual Tours**

Also Agriculture | Commercial | Vacant Land

Lori Mixon

Owner/ Lic. Real Estate Broker

(863)634-1457

LMixon@MixonGroup.com



(863) 763-6000

1306 SW 2nd Ave, Okeechobee, FL 34974

SE HABLA ESPAÑOL

www.MixonGroup.com



"Making healthcare more affordable and serving the community since 2010"



HEARTLAND DISCOUNT PHARMACY

Call or stop in for hassle-free, easy transfer of prescriptions!

WE PROMISE TO PROVIDE QUALITY SERVICE AT LOWEST PRICES

Your Neighborhood Pharmacy Where Customer Service & Personal Attention are Our #1 Priorities



It's time to change your pharmacy

PHARMACY THE WAY IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE

- ◆ Best cash prices in town!
- ◆ FREE same day home delivery
- ◆ Personalized compounding
- ◆ Pet meds available
- ◆ We match & beat all Competitors' Price & Service
- ◆ Prescriptions ready in minutes!
- ◆ Flu, Pneumonia, Shingles & other vaccinations available - no appointment needed
- ◆ We accept all insurances including: Blue Cross, Tricare, Health First, Medicaid and all HMOs including Staywell, Molina and United Health.
- ◆ Now providing non-sterile RX Compounding
- ◆ Wide range of OTC, Medical Supplies & More!

The core values of Heartland Discount Pharmacy are Caring, Compassion and Empathy for our patient!

OUR GOAL IS TO MAKE HEALTHCARE MORE AFFORDABLE

Here is how we are different...

- Does Your Pharmacy accommodate your special needs?
- Does Your Pharmacy keep your prescriptions up to date with refills and stock status etc?
- Does your Pharmacist have spare time to discuss your health?
- Does Your Pharmacy have time to find ways to save you money on your prescriptions?
- Does Your Pharmacy handle SPECIALITY PRESCRIPTIONS and On Demand COMPOUNDING?

We have ways to help Medicare patients not fall into coverage gap or donut holes

EXTENDED HOURS:

Mon - Fri 8am - 8pm | Sat. 9am - 5pm

863.763.7633

**407 S. Parrott Ave •
Okeechobee
Next to Arby's on 441**



Tired of Waiting?

Other Pharmacies **The Fastest, Most Convenient & Friendliest Service in the Area!** **Us!**

Table of CONTENT

Okeechobee County: A Great Place to Live 4
 Festivals celebrate local traditions. 6-8
 View art and history in murals 9
 Historic buildings offer a link to the past. 10
 Premier shooting sport opportunities. 10
 Festivals celebrate local traditions. 6-8
 Okeechobee County is cattle country 11-12
 1917-1927: The Boom Years 14-16
 Mayor's Letter: Explore the 'Real' Florida 17
 Okeechobee Main Street enriches. 18
 Chamber strives to improve local economy 18
 Economic Development Corp. collaborates 18
 County makes progress despite challenges. 19
 Okeechobee County Census Data 20
 Veterans Office offers advice and more. 21
 Your new chapter starts at IRSC 22
 Youth athletics opportunities 24
 Schools excel by putting students first 25
 Hiking and biking around the lake. 26
 Recreational options. 32
 2021 promises great fishing. 33-34
 Find the wild side of Okeechobee County 35-36
 Raulerson Hospital takes care of community 38
 Open Hands provides health care to uninsured 38
 Health Department offers variety of services 39
 Pregnancy Center serves the community 39
 City police put safety first. 40
 Sheriff Stephen and staff have many duties 40
 City fire department formed in 1916 42
 County Fire Rescue offers many services. 42
 Dining Guide. 43-46
 School Board members 47
 Clubs and Organizations 48-49
 Church Directory 50-52
 City Council Members and Employees 54
 Board of County Commissioners. 55
 Constitutional Officers 56
 Important Numbers & County Stats. 58

Okeechobee County: A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

Okeechobee County has a lot to offer. To the fisherman, Okeechobee County is the home of the "Big O" – one of the top lakes in the country for catching bass and speckled perch. Professional bass anglers fish Lake Okeechobee for thousands of dollars in tournament prizes.

For young families, Okeechobee is a place where kids can be active in school, church and club activities. And, it's a place where the community supports its youth with thousands of dollars donated each year to give local scholarships to high school graduates headed for college.

For those who want to start a business, it's a place welcoming to those who want to grow with the community.

For those who love the outdoors, Okeechobee County has plenty to see and do: Boating on Lake Okeechobee or the Kissimmee River, hiking the Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail, enjoying the beauty all around in Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park, horseback riding and more. Shooting enthusiasts can choose from world-class outdoor shooting facilities. The area also has plenty of hunting opportunities.

To the farmers and ranchers, Okeechobee is wide open spaces. According to the United States Department of Agriculture Census, Okeechobee County is home to 599 farms and ranches for a total of 297,439 acres in agriculture. Okeechobee has earned the nickname "Florida's Cowtown," as the county is No. 1 in the state in the most beef cattle and the most milk produced. According to the most recent USDA Census of Agriculture, Okeechobee County ranches and dairies are home to a total of 184,462 head of cattle, including calves. Okeechobee County dairies account for about 20 percent of the milk produced in Florida. The county has also 3,268 acres in citrus trees.

The people of Okeechobee love to show their community spirit, with festivals, parades and special community events throughout the year. Service clubs welcome new members.

Even longtime residents can be surprised at the opportunities all around them.

On the cover ...

Top left: Okeechobee is a top bass fishing lake, attracting major tournaments. (Photo by Brenden Kaines)

Top middle: A Native American dancer performs at a local event. (Photo by Richard Marion.)

Top right: The Okeechobee Cattlemen's Association cattle drive follows the 2020 Speckled Perch Festival Parade on State Road 70 in downtown Okeechobee. (Photo by Katrina Elsen)

Middle left: Okeechobee High School's athletic program includes an impressive basketball team. (Photo by Richard Marion)

Middle center: Sunrise over Lake Okeechobee illustrates the area's natural beauty. (Photo by Richard Marion)

Middle right: A limpkin enjoys an apple snail in a Florida marsh. (Photo courtesy Natural Resource Conservation Service)

Bottom left: Lake Okeechobee is famous for bass fishing. (Photo courtesy Tight Splice Charters)

Bottom middle: The Battle of Okeechobee Re-enactment is usually held in February. (Photo by Richard Marion)

Bottom right: The Historic Okeechobee County Courthouse was built in 1926. (Courtesy photo)

Okeechobee County Community Guide

A Special Publication of Lake Okeechobee News, published annually

To Reach Us

Address: Lake Okeechobee News/
Independent Newsmedia, Inc
107 S.W. 17th Street, Suite D
Okeechobee, FL 34974

Website: southcentralfloridalife.com

Phone: (863) 763-3134

To Submit Events

Okeechobee County Community Guide welcomes submissions from its readers. Calendar items, story ideas, and photographs are welcome. Call (863) 763-3134 to reach our newsroom. Items may be mailed or emailed.

Email: okeeneews@newszap.com

To Place a Display Ad

Phone: (863) 763-3134

Email: okeeadsales@newszap.com

Billing Department

Email: billteam@newszap.com

Staff

Publisher/Editor: Katrina Elsen
Circulation Manager: Jerry Hayden
Advertising Manager: Jaime Limoges
Design Manager: Kris Schwartz
Advertising Staff: Jennifer Klerk de Reus, Stephanie Larson, Kay Sheedy
Editorial Staff: Debbie Akins, Richard Marion, Annie Wills, Cathy Womble

Big Lake Eye Care



Board Certified Optometrist ■ Call Now for Appointment ■ Walk-ins Welcome



Dr. Charles W. Bartels

Board Certified Optometric Physician

(863) 763-3937

We Accept and Bill Most Major Insurance,
Medicaid, Medicare &
BlueCross Blue Shield Healthy Kids

We Offer the Following Services:

- Comprehensive Eye Exams
- Contact Lens Fitting
- Variety of Colored Contacts
- State of the Art Optical Service
- Glaucoma Exams & Treatment
- Diabetic Eye Exams
- Cataract Evaluations
- Foreign Body Removal
- Tests & Treatments for Dry Eye

606 North Parrott Ave • Okeechobee • 863-763-3937 • Visit : www.biglakeeyecare.com

Festivals celebrate local traditions AND PIONEER HERITAGE

Okeechobee County festivals celebrate the community's pioneer heritage and embrace new traditions.

Due to concerns about the COVID-19 virus, this year some annual events have been canceled or postponed. Participants who attend the outdoor festivals are encouraged to be aware of the safety precautions recommended by the Centers for Disease Control such as frequent hand washing, maintaining 6 feet of social distance from those not in your household, and wearing a mask if you cannot maintain social distance.

March is the busiest festival month in Okeechobee, bringing the Speckled Perch Festival, the Okeechobee County Fair and Florida's Cowtown Rodeo.

Festivals are a great chance to gather with friends, enjoy performances by local entertainers, and try samples of local delicacies such as Seminole pumpkin fry bread. Bring your own folding chair — it comes in handy while you're waiting for a parade, or if you just want to sit back and enjoy the show.

SPECKLED PERCH FESTIVAL

Most central Florida towns have a festival connected with something important to the area's history. For Okeechobee, it's the Speckled Perch Festival, which honors the great fishing on Lake Okeechobee, and Okeechobee's title as Speckled Perch Capital of the World. When the festival first started more than 50 years ago, it featured a fish fry that served up plenty of the tasty local favorite "Specks," also known as black crappie. However, in the 1980s, changes in health department rules banned the public sale of any fish not commercially harvested. So, instead of speckled perch, festival goers enjoy a variety of other great food choices.

The 2021 Speckled Perch Festival, sponsored by Okeechobee Main Street, will be held in Flagler Park in downtown Okeechobee on March 13 and 14. The festival starts around 9 a.m. with arts and crafts, food booths and entertainment in Flagler Park. The Speckled Perch Festival Parade will be on Saturday at 10 a.m. For additional info, go online to okeechobeemainstreet.org.



Okeechobee County Community Guide
Rodeo queens are always a part of the Okeechobee Speckled Perch Festival Parade. The parade is the same weekend as the Cowtown Rodeo.



Okeechobee County Community Guide
The Okeechobee County Fair includes the 4-H and FFA Youth Livestock Show. In 2020, Rebecka Mims showed her pig, Yoo Hoo.

OKEECHOBEE VALUE SPECS

— South Parrott Eye Care Services —



Later Hours 5 Days A Week!
Monday - Friday
9am - 6pm

Schedule An Appointment
Online At
okeechobeevaluespecs.com

2 Pairs Of Glasses for \$79

RESTRICTIONS APPLY

- Comprehensive Eye Exams -
- Contact Lens Fitting -
- Glaucoma Exams & Treatment -
- Diabetic Eye Exams -

Most Insurances Accepted

1611 South Parrott Ave - Okeechobee, Florida - 863.357.2250



FESTIVALS

Continued From Page 6



Okeechobee County Community Guide
Fireworks light up the sky on the Fourth of July.

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY FAIR

The Okeechobee County Fair will be held March 16-21, at the Agri-Civic Center Fairgrounds, with entry at State Road 710.

The Okeechobee 4-H and FFA Livestock Show will be the week of March 13-20. Poultry show is March 13 at 9 a.m. Rabbit show is March 14 at 2 p.m. Dairy show is March 15 at 5 p.m. Swine showmanship is March 16 at 5 p.m. Swine show is March 17 at 5 p.m. Beef breeding show is March 18 at 5 p.m. Lamb show is March 19 at 2 p.m. Goat show is March 19 after the lamb show. Steer show is March 19, at 5 p.m.

March 16 is Dollar Night with \$1 entry. March 17 is canned food drive night; bring three cans of food and your fair entry is \$3.

Entertainment will include the Pork Chop Review, Extreme Illusions and Escapes, Pirates of the Colombian Caribbean and Eudora Farms Petting Zoo.

The Demolition Derby will be on Sunday, March 21.

For more information online, go to okeechobeeountyfair.com.

4TH OF JULY

Celebrate our country's independence with your friends and neighbors at the annual Independence Day Celebration at the Okeechobee Agri-Civic. For more information, as it becomes available, see southcentralfloridalife.com.

LABOR DAY FESTIVAL

Labor Day Weekend, Sept. 4 - Sept. 6, brings Okeechobee's Annual Labor Day Festival, with an arts and crafts festival in downtown Okeechobee, games for the whole family and a parade. This weekend also brings a rodeo at the Okeechobee Cattlemen's Rodeo Arena on U.S. 441 N. For more information on the parade and festival, go to okeechobeemainstreet.org.

CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

Okeechobee's annual Top of the Lake Christmas Festival and Lighted Parade is usually held on the second Saturday of December in Flagler Park downtown Okeechobee.

The highlight of the festival is the lighted Christmas parade, which is held on Saturday evening at dark (around 6 p.m.) Festival rules require all entries be lighted — included the horses, which are festooned with colorful holiday lights and decorations. For additional information, go online to okeechobeemainstreet.org.

AMERICAN LEGION FREE FAIR

The Okeechobee American Legion hosts a fair in January with carnival rides for the kids.

YEEHAW MUSTIC FESTIVAL

The YeeHaw Music Festival is held in January in Okeechobee County. This unique bluegrass festival is held at the Agri-Civic Center in Okeechobee. Bluegrass music is held under the big top tent and goes on rain or shine. Spectator entrance is 4601 State Road 710 in Okeechobee County. For more information, go to okeechobee-tdc.com/okeechobee-agri-civic-center.

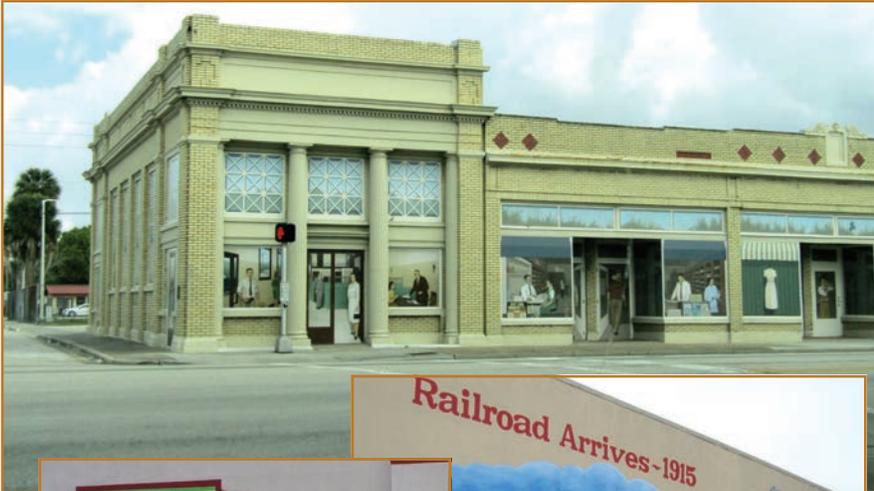
SOUR ORANGE FESTIVAL

The Lakeport Sour Orange Festival is held each year in January at the Lakeport Community Center, 1239 Red Barn Road, State Road 78 between Moore Haven and Okeechobee. The festival features the traditional sour orange bake off and a rib cook off. The festival also features entertainment, a quilt show, a historical display, children's games, a small carnival for the kids, a display by the Lakeport Fire Department and sour orange pies. The highlight of the event is the chance to sample sour orange pie.



Okeechobee County Community Guide
Festivals in Flagler Park always include plenty of family fun.

View art and history **IN MURALS**



Check out Okeechobee murals to see some of the local history.

A mural on the Okeechobee Freshman Campus Gymnasium depicts settlers Peter and Louisanna Raulerson arriving in Okeechobee, the Raulerson log cabin and a Seminole village.

Okeechobee Main Street has sponsored a series of murals including:

- **WILLIAMS FAMILY CATTLE DRIVE 1937**, 206 North Parrott Avenue;
- **RAILROAD ARRIVING 1915**, 100 Block of North Parrott Avenue;
- **OKEECHOBEE TELEPHONE COMA-NY**, Century Link Building, North Parrott Avenue;
- **LOOKING BACK THROUGH THE WINDOWS OF TIME**, Osceola Avenue and State Road 70;
- **OKEECHOBEE HARDWARE STORE**, 300 NW Park Street;
- **HONORING SEMINOLE CHIEF OSCEOLA** and the Battle of Okeechobee, 114 SW 5th Avenue;
- **MARKHAM CANNING CO. MURAL**, 601 S.W. Park Street.



**Hello,
neighbor!**

I'm looking forward to serving your needs for insurance and financial services.

**Like a good neighbor,
State Farm is there.®**

CALL ME TODAY.

Gretchen Robertson Ins Agy Inc

Gretchen Robertson, Agent

309 NE 2ND ST

Okeechobee, FL 34972

Bus: 863-763-5561



Historic buildings OFFER A LINK TO THE PAST

For those interested in local history, Okeechobee's historic buildings offer a link to the past.

- **The Okeechobee County Courthouse**, 304 Northwest Second St., Okeechobee, was constructed in 1926. This Mediterranean-Revival style Courthouse now holds county offices. It was designed by architect George Gaynor Hyde of Miami. Due to the collapse of the Florida Land Boom during its construction, a central dome that was originally planned was never built. After the 1928 Okeechobee hurricane, its hallways were used as a temporary morgue. The courthouse originally had an open breezeway through the center front of the first floor. It was later enclosed to add a county commission meeting room. After the new Okeechobee County Judicial Center was built in 2005, the old courthouse was renovated. County commission now meets in the upstairs room that was originally the courtroom.

The downstairs breezeway area was cleared of the old commission meeting room, but glassed in for security and weather protection. In 1989, the Okeechobee County Courthouse was listed in "A Guide to Florida's Historic Architecture," published by the University of Florida Press.

- **The Freedman-Raulerson House**, 600 South Parrott Avenue, a two-story, eight room house was built in 1923 as a home by Abraham and Maud Freedman. It was later owned by the Raulerson family. This mission/Spanish revival building was added to the National Historic Register in 1985.

- **Okeechobee City Hall**, 55 S.E. Third Street, was built in 1922. The Spanish-style building was designed by architect William Hatcher.

- **The Okeechobee Historic Schoolhouse Museum**, 1850 U.S. 98 N., was built in 1909. It was used as a school until 1916 when a new two-story red brick school was built. The original school was used as a private home off and on until the 1970s. In 1976, it was moved to its current location to be used as a museum.

- **The Battle of Okeechobee Battlefield site**, four miles southwest of Okeechobee on U.S. 441 is being developed as part of the Florida Parks System.

The battlefield was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1966.

- **Okeechobee Livestock Market**, 1055 U.S. 98 N., was built in 1937. As Florida's largest livestock market, it reflects the importance of the cattle industry to the region.

- **The First Methodist Episcopal Church**, 200 N.W. Second St., a red brick Gothic Revival structure, was built in 1924.

- **The Okeechobee Historical Society** is restoring the interior of original cabin built by Peter Raulerson. Over the years, the cabin, on the corner of Southwest Ninth Street and Southwest Second Avenue, was completely enclosed by new construction which was built around the original log walls.

- **The Bank of Okeechobee**, on State Road 70 and Osceola Avenue, was built in 1926, but was only a bank for a short time. In 2012, Okeechobee Main Street sponsored the mural project "Looking Back Through The Windows Of Time" which illustrates some of the building's uses over the years.

- **The Raulerson Log Cabin**, 811 S.W. Second Avenue, is the homesite of the first Euro-American settlers to the area, Peter and Louisiana Raulerson. The couple moved southeast from Basinger to "The Bend," a region along Onoshohatchee River (Taylor Creek) and a few miles north of Lake Okeechobee, in October 1896. They first constructed a barn to house both their family and livestock. In 1899, a group of friends arrived and, in three days, helped the couple construct a two-room log cabin. Elements of the original log cabin are preserved within the structure of a new home, built for the family in the 1920s. In 2016, the Okeechobee Historical Society purchased the building to preserve this historical site. Inside the house, the newer walls have been removed to expose the original logs.

Okeechobee features premier SHOOTING SPORT OPTIONS

Okeechobee County is home to some of the best shooting sports facilities around the lake. Shooting sports enthusiasts have a wide variety of options to choose from, including clay shoots, target competitions, cowboy action and hunting.

Center Mass Gun Range, 1934 Center St., is Okeechobee's only indoor gun range and features many climate-controlled shooting lanes. The range also features seven simulation rooms where shooters can take turns playing through several computer-generated scenarios such as a zombie apocalypse and an Old West shoot-out.

Quail Creek Plantation, 12399 N.E. 224th Street, is a pristine wilderness where sportsmen revel at the sight of pointing dogs racing back and forth across expansive fields, and the suspense of walking into the feathered whirlwind of a rising covey. The plantation also offers sport shooting on two scenic, 14-station fully automatic clay shooting courses.

O.K. Corral Gun Club, 9449 N.E. 48th St., has 29 shooting stations with sporting clay courses, covered 5-stand, wobble deck, covered pistol/rifle ranges, competition shooting park and even an old west street with Cowboy Action shooting. The club also hosts dinners every Friday and Saturday from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. which features live music.

Throughout the year O.K. Corral will host multiple



Okeechobee County Community Guide/**Richard Marion Range guides are on-site at O.K. Corral to ensure safety measure are followed and answer any questions.**

National Sporting Clays Association registered shoots, including the Florida Sporting Clays State Championship.

Okeechobee Shooting Sports, 7055 N.E. 48th St., has rifle and pistol ranges, with five 5-stand sporting clays fields, trap and skeet fields and shooting galleries.

Duck hunting, hog hunting and alligator hunting are also popular in Okeechobee, with some hunting allowed on public land as well as hunting with permission on private property. For more on Florida hunting seasons, licenses and permits, go online to myfwc.com.

Okeechobee County IS CATTLE COUNTRY

Cattle have been an important part of Okeechobee's economy since the first settlers arrived in the Big Lake area more than 100 years ago. Modern Okeechobee County is still cattle country. It is listed as one of the top three counties in Florida with the most cattle, and among the Top 10 in the country!

While today's cowboys take advantage of modern agri-business technology, it's not unusual to see a cowboy on horseback separating cattle from the herd, much as the pioneers did in the days of the Florida Cracker Trail cattle drives.



Okeechobee County Community Guide

Beef cattle graze on thousands of acres of ranchland in Okeechobee County. The average ratio is one cow/calf pair to about 6 acres of pasture.

The Florida Cracker Trail is a 120-mile long cattle path that passes through Okeechobee County. The trail is now designated by brown state signs, to remind locals and visitors alike that historical state-wide cattle drives once took place along the route. These days, the Florida Cracker Trail Association hosts an annual cross-state ride along the "Cracker Trail" to showcase, educate, and help preserve the importance of Florida's role cattle and agriculture. For information on how to join the ride, go online to www.crackertrail.org.

The Florida Cracker Trail Association is a non-profit organization of volunteers dedicated to the mission of "Keeping History Alive," by educating through demonstration, the Old Florida Cracker Pioneer ways of agriculture, animal husbandry, and respect for the land as well as the hardships and joys of life on the original frontier.

Cowboy heritage is also evidenced in the popular local rodeos, which are ample in Okeechobee.



Photo courtesy Milking R Dairy
Okeechobee County is home to both dairies and ranches. Okeechobee County's dairies provide about 20% of the milk produced in Florida.

Residential Homes
Commercial
Vacant Land/
Lots

Lake O Real Estate

Office: (863) 763-5253 • Address: 110 NE 3rd. Ave, Okeechobee, FL 34972

Jody Carter
863-634-285
Lic. R.E. Agent
JodyCarter.Okeechobee@gmail.com

Rick Gonzalez
863-801-7674
Lic. R.E. Agent
Rg.FloridaRealtor@gmail.com

Sonya Baxely
863-623-8068
Lic. R.E. Agent
SBaxley@gmail.com

Rhonda Patrick
304-787-4429
Lic. R.E. Agent
Rhonda92970@icloud.com

Jim Jones
863-634-9706
Owner/ Lic. R.E. Broker
Jrj1009@aol.com

WE ARE HERE TO HELP... *From your first Home, to your Dream Home!*

RANCH RODEO

The Pete Clemons Memorial Ranch Rodeo is held in July at the Okeechobee Cattlemen's Arena in celebration of the "National Day of the American Cowboy."

Ranch rodeos attract working cowboys who currently work on South Florida ranches. The events in a ranch rodeo are based on actual skills the cowboy uses to work the herd, such as: calf roping, team "doctoring," team sorting, wild cow milking, relay race, double mugging and bronc riding. In these events, the team works together to perform a task similar to those done on the ranch, just like cowboys work together on ranches.

Those competing in ranch rodeos use the same equipment and tack that cowboys use in everyday work.

If these rules seem confusing, not to worry, for those at a ranch rodeo who are new to the sport, the announcer explains the rules as the rodeo unfolds.

Okeechobee County ranches compete at area rodeos to earn points to qualify for the state competition in Kissimmee and ultimately the national competition.



Okeechobee County Community Guide
The annual Cowntown Rodeo is usually a PRCA rodeo with top rodeo cowboys competing for points toward national titles.

OKEECHOBEE COWTOWN RODEO

According to the Professional Rodeo Cowboy's Association (PRCA), legend has it that American rodeo was born on July 4, 1869 when two groups of cowboys from neighboring ranches met in Deer Trail, Colo., to settle an argument over who was the best at performing everyday ranching tasks. That competition is considered to be the first rodeo, which evolved into rodeo as we know it today.

PRCA cowboys compete in rodeos all over the country, earning points and money that qualifies them for the national championship event in Las Vegas, NV.

The Okeechobee Cattlemen's Association produces the Okeechobee Cowntown Rodeo every March as their annual fundraiser. Professional cowboys and cowgirls from all corners of the nation make Okeechobee their home for the weekend and compete for prizes and money. This year's Cowntown Rodeo will be March 13 and 14 at the Okeechobee Cattlemen's open-aired, historical grand stand arena on U.S. 441 North.

On Saturday and Sunday, gates open at 1 p.m. and the rodeo starts at 2:30 p.m. . Rodeo contestants will show-off their athleticism, bravery and skill at an annual event that provides wholesome fun and entertainment for the entire family. The best-of-the best on the PRCA (Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association) circuit will be in Okeechobee, for one weekend only, scoring points and money in hopes of advancing their careers on to the year-end National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas, Nevada. For more information online, go to TheOkeechobeeRodeo.com.

FLORIDA HIGH SCHOOL RODEO & JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL RODEO

Okeechobee County also has active youth in high school rodeo and junior rodeo events. The Florida High School Rodeo Association hosts competitions for rodeo teams from Florida High Schools. Rodeo con-

testants travel around the state competing in a series at high schools to earn points toward their state rankings. The top 15 contestants in each event will compete in the state finals, and the top four to finish in each event at the state level go on to compete in the National High School Rodeo Finals.

The Florida Junior High School Rodeo Association is a division of the National High School Rodeo Association (NHSRA) for sixth, seventh and eighth graders. The top 20 kids in each event at the end of the season move on to compete at the Florida State Finals.

The top four in each event after state finals then have the option of moving on to compete at the national finals. June 4-7 are the dates for the Florida High School Rodeo finals, which will be held at the Okeechobee Agri-Civic Center, 4200 SR 70 East. Spectators are admitted free. Spector entrance is off SR 710. For more information on high school rodeo, go online to flsra.homestead.com.



Okeechobee County Community Guide

EXTREME BULL RIDING

Another type of rodeo found in Okeechobee County is known as X-treme bull riding.

The rules are simple: Place a wiry cowboy on the back of a hulking, snorting temperamental 2,000-pound bull and see if he can stay on for an eternal eight seconds ... with only one hand strapped to the bull.

The Okeechobee Labor Day Bull Bash is held at the open-aired, historical grand-stand Cattlemen's Arena over Labor Day weekend. The event is a sanctioned Southern State Bull Riding event, where contestants aim to win points and money to advance them along in the SSBR circuit.

For more on events produced by the Okeechobee County Cattlemen's Association, go online to OkeechobeeRodeo.com and OkeechobeeCattlemen.com.



Okeechobee County Community Guide
Okeechobee rodeos sometimes include a calf scramble. Children from the audience are invited into the arena where a few calves are released. The kids try to grab a ribbon tied to a calf's tail to win a prize.

ELI'S WESTERN WEAR



OFFERING BRANDS LIKE :



AND SO MUCH MORE!

ARCADIA
1011 EAST OAK ST

OKEECHOBEE
907 NW PARK ST

DUNDEE
27995 HWY 27

WWW.ELISWESTERNWEAR.COM

ELI'S TRAILER SALES



908 NW PARK STREET 863-467-4620
WWW.ELISTRAILERSALES.NET

1917-1927: THE BOOM YEARS

By Magi Cable, Okeechobee Historical Society

OKEECHOBEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In previous editions of the annual Okeechobee County Community Guide published by the Lake Okeechobee News, the history of Okeechobee focused on the first and second decades. In short, they covered the original settlement and then the establishment of the City of Okeechobee. This article will feature the time period of 1917-1927.



To set the stage, the following was excerpted from a full-page advertisement by The Okeechobee Company that appeared in the Okeechobee News in March of 1918: "Okeechobee, located as it is at the head of Lake Okeechobee, the second largest body of water wholly within the United States and the terminals of the Kissimmee River Valley branch of the Florida East Coast Railroad, and surrounded by some of the best muck, citrus,



pine and prairie lands in the state is bound to become a center of commerce, a place of wealth and power in pol-

itics; a metropolis of the prairie and everglades region."

Pretty heady stuff!

It goes on to say "The city is but three years old and already has a population of 1,200; a \$40,000 school building; 3 miles of concrete sidewalks; miles of graded streets; electric lights; good artesian water; ice plant; weekly paper..." and the concluding paragraph "There is no more comfortable all year climate nor healthier spot in the United States than this part of Florida,

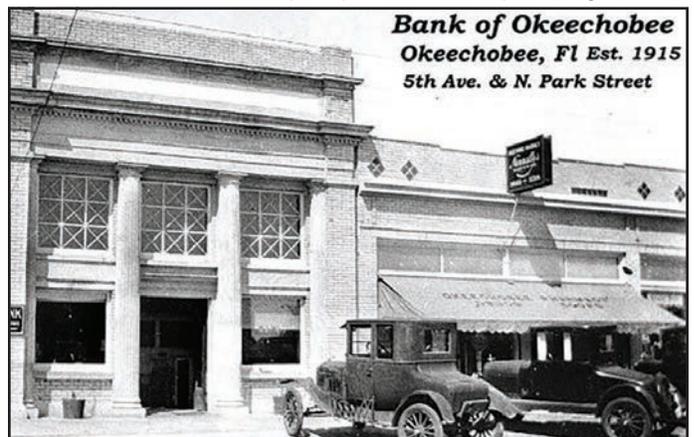
where man and beast can enjoy outdoor life the year round. MR. READER, YOU WHO ARE GOING



TO MOVE, COME TO OKEECHOBEE. OUR SLOGAN IS 'WE WILL' AND WHERE THERE IS A WILL AND A WAY, THERE IS GOING TO BE SOMETHING DOING!"

1917 was a very eventful year. The most significant event would be the formation of Okeechobee County. The people living in this area were portioned off into three existing counties. In the northern regions of the county, people had to go to Kissimmee, Osceola's county seat. People in the center area belonged to St. Lucie County and those to the south were living in Palm Beach County. This was problematic due to the traveling conditions required to go to the County Government offices to conduct business. At this time, travel to the county seat was at least a two-day trip. A committee made up of Dr. C.R. Darrow, S.J. Drawdy and Charles Hatch did the preliminary lobbying. William Lee Coats "Okeechobee Bill" did the persuading of State Legislators to establish Okeechobee County from parts of Osceola, St. Lucie and Palm Beach counties. The legislation was enacted on August 7, 1917.

To start a new county required a lot of planning and

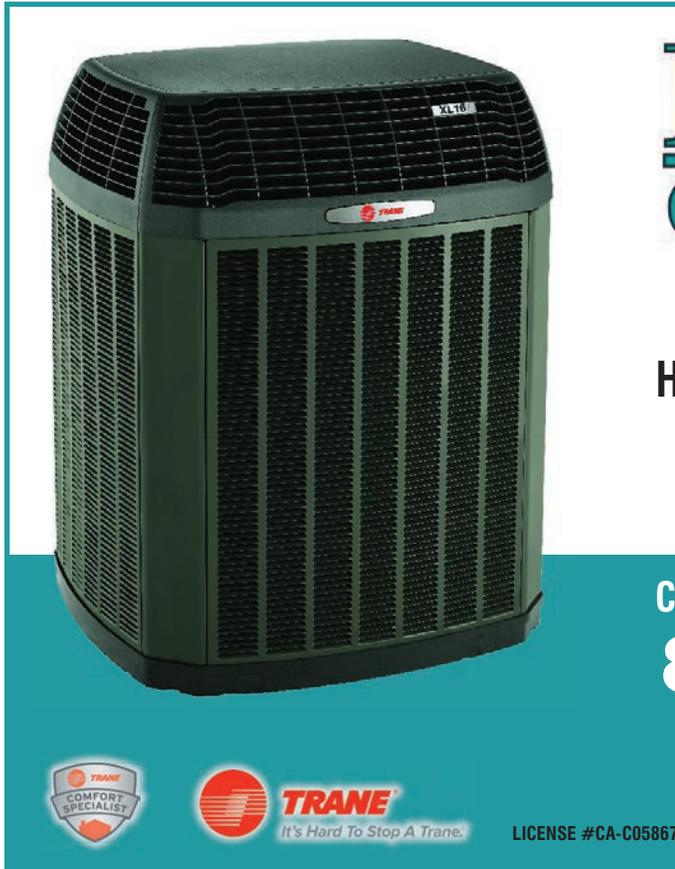


establishment of governmental offices. The first officers of Okeechobee County were: Smith J. Drawdy, Sheriff; Henry H. Hancock, County Judge; David R. McNeill, Tax Assessor; Ewell R. Wright, Tax Collector; Rufus P. Fletcher, Clerk of the Circuit Court; W. F. Walker, Supervisor of Registration; Richard E. Hamrick, Superintendent of Public Instruction; Samuel L. Gray, J. M. Lee, and Willis W. Chandler, members of the school board; D. E. Austin, W. W. Potter, Alex Thompson, Robert Upthegrove, and R. E. McLaughlin, County Commissioners. The first meeting of the County Commission took place September 4, 1917. At that meeting, George F. Parker, a lawyer who had moved to Okeechobee the previous April, was chosen County Attorney. County offices were set up on the second floor of the O. O. "Buckshot" Davis Building which was rented for \$50 a month. This building is where Zippy's is now located. Okeechobee County's first State Representative was William Lee Coats.



It is also during this time period that momentous events were happening worldwide. World War I and the Spanish Flu pandemic were demanding the attention of the populace. According to the Florida Memory Project, Okeechobee had 65 citizens who served in WWI. Of those serving, five perished. When researching this aspect of Okeechobee's history, it was discovered that all five of these soldiers died not in combat but of the Spanish Flu. They were Ralph Hart, James Morgan, Clarence Alderman, Claud Leitner and Frank Henderson. Another victim of the Spanish Flu was Smith J. Drawdy who served as our first sheriff and owned the Okeechobee Coca Cola Bottling plant. He, his wife and child all were struck down.

1918 seemed to be rather uneventful with the biggest news being that Will Collins, "Pogy Bill" became the sheriff and Leroy Davis was appointed by the Okeechobee



MILLER'S CENTRAL AIR, INC.

SERVICES

Heating • Cooling • Commercial HVAC
Indoor Air Quality • Ductless AC
Duct Cleaning • Dryer Vent Cleaning

CALL TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT TODAY!

863-467-1545

109 NW 7th Ave.

Okeechobee, FL 34972

MillersCentralAir.com

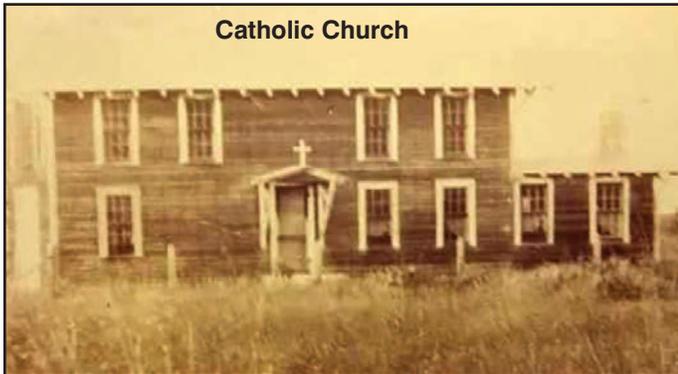


LICENSE #CA-C058675

County Board of County Commissioners to be the first Farm Demonstration Agent.

1919's highlight reel would include the establishment of the Primitive Baptist Church and the construction of the Okeechobee County Jail. Prior to the building of the jail, prisoners were kept in a boxcar on a side rail of the FEC railroad that went through town.

The "Roaring Twenties" did unleash a great period of growth and development in Okeechobee. The 1920 US Census listed 2,132 citizens and by the end of the decade, that population number had doubled. Okeechobee had its first graduating class in 1920. Even though the Okeechobee School built in 1916 had expanded to include



Catholic Church

high school, it took four years for those 8th graders to progress to being seniors. The four graduates were Dorothy Darrow, Alma Camp, Willie DuBose and Beryl Lovvorn.

The People's Bank, Okeechobee's second bank, opened. This bank is where the Okeechobee Utility Authority's offices are located and whose façade was revealed during a storm several years ago.

With an increase in population, there came an influx of churches. During the '20s, Reverend Dunklin preached the gospel; the Catholic Prairie Church was constructed; St. Stephen's AME began having services at McNeill's Turpentine Still; First United Methodist built their red brick church, where they are currently located; Mount Olive began meeting in the Cypress Quarters; Church of God; God in Christ and the Seventh Day Adventists all became organized and providing services.

This was also a time when many influential citizens began their careers. David McNeill was a force for civic improvement; D.E. Austin who served as mayor, county commissioner, president of the Board of Trade, president of the Bank of Okeechobee, agent for the Okeechobee Company, partner in McNeill and Austin real estate, Okeechobee Food Commissioner, and president of the Okeechobee Citrus and Vegetable Exchange. William Jennings Hendry ran the Osceola Fish Company where he became a fish and frog leg distributor. Thomas Conely, Jr. was elected mayor in 1923 and served two terms. He represented Okeechobee County in the

State Legislature in 1927. Hugh Gilbert, Sr. arrived in Okeechobee and his first job was hauling rock for

the construction of State Road 8 (Conner's Highway) then in July of 1925 he entered into a partnership with Walter Watford in a service station followed by the opening of an all-night filling station on West Park Street. Victor Domer opened Domer's Machine Shop in 1926 near its current location; and lumber executive Walter C. Sherman, who headed the St. Andrew's Bay Lumber Company, established a community called Sherman, southeast of Okeechobee. A mill was set up which converted the stands of longleaf pine in the area to timber until 1937 when the supply was exhausted. Those families continue to influence Okeechobee to this day.

A building boom also shaped the 20's in Okeechobee. Connor's Highway, a toll road, opened in 1924 and extended from Okeechobee City to Twenty Mile Bend in Palm Beach County. The toll was \$1.50. New additions included the Seaboard Airline Railroad station; Southland Hotel; Okeechobee City Hall; Okeechobee County Courthouse; Okeechobee High School (currently Freshman Campus); Bank of Okeechobee and the first Taylor Creek Bridge, which was in the vicinity of the Sun Bank on 441.



County jail

This was an interesting time in Okeechobee. It appeared to be fulfilling the prophesy of the FEC Railroad officials in "becoming the Chicago of the South," but there were storms on the horizon—literal and figuratively. That will be addressed in the next installment.



Primitive Baptist Church

Welcome to Okeechobee

EXPLORE THE 'REAL' FLORIDA

By Dowling Watford
Mayor of Okeechobee

Welcome to Okeechobee where there is much to explore in what we feel is the "real" Florida. From natural resources to unique boutiques and restaurants, you will find something that will surprise and delight you.

Lake Okeechobee provides many recreational opportunities with some of the best large mouth bass and speckled perch fishing in the nation. In addition, wildlife viewing is varied from alligators to many species of birds. As part of the Florida Trail encircles the Lake, hiking is easily accessible. The Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park features the largest dry grass prairie still surviving, as well as being designated a "Bright Sky Park" with sensational views of the night sky and stars. Okeechobee has a second State Park, the Okeechobee Battlefield Historic State Park. The Battlefield Park is a portion of the original battlefield of the Battle of Okeechobee during the Second Seminole War.

Our downtown consists of a blend of antique shops, clothing boutiques, and restaurants and coffee shops. Several murals throughout the City highlight different periods of our local his-



Mayor Dowling Watford

tory from the first train arriving in 1915, the Battle of Okeechobee, and many of the local businesses.

We have a very active Chamber of Commerce and Main Street. The chamber assists our business community, and can assist in helping locate any service or product you may need. The Chamber is located in the center of town at the intersection of Highways 441 and 70. Main Street is focused on preserving and promoting our downtown area, and hosts several festivals in beautiful Flagler Park: Labor Day Festival; Christmas Festival; and Speckled Perch Festival. Each of these include a parade through downtown with the Christmas Parade a lighted parade at night.

Okeechobee hosts several major professional fishing tournaments every year and the County maintains a first class weigh-in facility at the mouth of the Kissimmee River. To celebrate our ranching heritage, the Okeechobee Cattlemen's Association has rodeos during the Labor Day and Speckled Perch Festivals and a Ranch Rodeo (working cowboys) in July to celebrate the National Day of the Cowboy.

As you can see, there is never a dull moment in Okeechobee! Please contact City Hall if we can provide you with any information.



Opening Doors is What We Do

Hazellief & Prevatt Realty

Experience, Integrity and Hard Work

Residential ♦ Acreage ♦ Commercial



David Hazellief, Broker - (863) 610-1553

Sharon Prevatt, Realtor - (863) 634-7069

Lucy Olivarez, Office Manager

Carmen Guerrero, Customer Service/Accts P/R

1200 South Parrott Ave.
Okeechobee, FL 34974

www.century21okeechobee.com
admin@c21okee.com



(863) 763-2104 ♦ SE HABLA ESPAÑOL



Okeechobee Main Street ENRICHES

The Okeechobee Main Street program is designed to improve all aspects of the Okeechobee downtown district, producing both tangible and intangible benefits. Improving economic management, strengthening public participation and making downtown a vibrant destination to visit are critical to Okeechobee's future. Building on downtown's inherent assets - rich architecture, personal service and traditional values and most of all, a sense of place.

Okeechobee Main Street, Inc. is a 501(C) 3 non-profit member-based organization with roots dating back to 1980 when the National Trust for Historic Preservation formed the Main Street program. The Okeechobee Main Street approach rekindles entrepreneurship, downtown cooperation and civic concern. Because it is a locally driven program, all initiatives stem from local issues and concerns. The Okeechobee Main Street program's success is based on a comprehensive strategy of work, tai-

lored to local needs in four distinctive areas, often referred to as the Four-Point Approach.

Okeechobee Main Street has been the driving force behind the Arts & Culture programs in Okeechobee for 15 years. In 2018, OKMS became a Local Arts Agency for Okeechobee County and opened their art and education center in 2021. The Arts & Culture Alliance mission is to connect people to the arts and to each other, working to facilitate and nurture the creation, development, promotion and education of arts and culture in Okeechobee County.

An award-winning organization, Okeechobee Main Street's vision is to help create a successful downtown and enrich our community through celebrating the arts, supporting local businesses, embracing our heritage, preserving our natural environment and promoting quality events which make Okeechobee an inviting hometown destination.

Chamber STRIVES TO IMPROVE LOCAL ECONOMY

The Chamber of Commerce of Okeechobee County Inc. is a not-for-profit 501(c)(6), voluntary organization of business professionals joined together for the purpose of promoting the civic and economic progress of our community. Its primary function is to act as a spokesperson and translate into action the group thinking of its members, by connecting business and community for success and prosperity

The Chamber of Commerce of Okeechobee County strives to make businesses stronger, as well as to make a stronger economic climate for those businesses to thrive. Classes, business networking programs and a website that allows each member

to have its own marketing space are all part of that focus.

Educational programs provided by the Chamber allow for businesses to explore new ways to market, sell and engage with clients. In the last year, the Chamber has become a Grow With Google Partner and has assisted more than 250 individual clients both in person and via digital conference with marketing, digital and cloud-based business software, client relations and a host of COVID-related business topics.

Economic Development Corporation COLLABORATES

The Okeechobee County Economic Development Corporation works collaboratively with public and private partners to promote and nurture existing businesses, create an environment for new business development and recruitment, and increase job opportunities in Okeechobee County.

Okeechobee County Economic Development Corporation is used to strengthen our community's economic base and increase the standard of living for all of its residents through the retention, expansion, attraction, and development of primary jobs and capital investments

County makes progress **DESPITE CHALLENGES**

By Terry Burroughs

Chair, Okeechobee County BOCC

As the Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners, I am requested each year to provide an insight to our community. I will bet some of you feel 2020 seems like one of the worst years in your life. Covid-19 certainly disrupted our lives forever, however when I talk with our businesses they are surviving and, in some cases, prospering. The county was fortunate to provide CARES Act monies to over 200 of our small business in the amount of \$1.3 million.

Even though 2020 came with its challenges, our community is still experiencing significant progress. We are not regressing by any means. The past is always worse than the present, and the future looks promising. We know what is working very well and what needs to be improved. The people who make up our community fabric are passionate, resilient, and friendly to their fellow man.

The events in 2020 have significantly modified our economic environment. Our future community profile will be different nurtured through changing demographics as well as geographical and industrial developments which will assist



in changing the landscape of the county. To communicate this futuristic picture simply and clearly to you requires our current and future leaders to create an understandable and transparent method when planning.

Everyday we have new opportunities knocking at our door. The Bass Pro project continues to move along, even though at a slow pace primarily due to the US Army Corp. Our airport industrial park has welcomed Bautech USA bringing over 20 jobs to our community and the expansion of NextAir. In just a few days, the County will

resume the operations of the fixed base operations at our airport. This is an important milestone in the economic growth of our community.

I will end with the following commentary. Our commission is charged with the health and safety of our community and each Commissioner takes this responsibility personally. We, as one political body have expressed our concern to our constituents to take COVID-19 seriously and wear a mask without a mandate we cannot enforce. For the sake of your family and friends, please take the time to understand the importance of taking self-responsibility.

Ag 98 is a full service equipment, livestock and enclosed cargo trailer dealer



**ALL TRAILER REPAIR
AND MAINTENANCE**

Parts, Accessories & Service: 863.763.3555

Trailer Sales: 863.763.3033

455 US HWY 98 North, Okeechobee

Hours: Monday thru Friday 8:00-5:00PM • Ag98TrailerSales.com



Okeechobee County CENSUS DATA

	County	City
Population	41,605	5,621
Population age:		
Persons under 5 years	5.9 %	7 %
Persons under 18 years	21.2 %	27.9%
Persons age 65 and older...	20.5 %	16.7 %
Female	46.2 %	49.8%

Okeechobee County population by race:

White, non-Hispanic	62.1%	54%
Hispanic	25.3%	25.2%
Black	8.9%	8.8%
Native American	1.5%	2.0%
Asian	1.0 %	1.1 %
Two or more races.....	1.2 %	2.3%

Households

13,333	1,953
Average persons	
prt household:.....	2.79
	2.65
Housing, owner-occupied:.....	
72.2%	61.3%
Median value owner-occupied	
housing units:	\$89,900.....
	\$121,962
Median household	
income:	\$39,059
	\$39,587

More Okeechobee County Census Facts:

Veterans.....

3,040
Foreign born persons... 12.5%
Language other than English
spoken at home: 23.5 %
Median gross rent: \$726
Households with a computer: 77.1%
Households with broadband internet: 58.1%

Education:

Persons age 25 up who are
high school graduates: 73.9 %
Persons age 25 up who have
bachelor's degree or higher: 11 %
Total employment
7,042
Population per square mile
52

NOTE: This data is the most current available from the U.S. Census Bureau. Information from the 2020 Census is not yet available.

Okeechobee County Supervisor of Elections has a wide range of duties

The Supervisor of Elections, a constitutional officer, has a wide range of duties involving voter registration, maintaining voter registration records and administering all elections as mandated by Florida statute and federal law.

In addition to actual Election Day logistics and management, there are many other functions of the office including records management, voter education, candidate assistance, campaign report management and review, providing current and historical voter registration statistics, maintaining an archive of election results going back to 1954 and election security procedures.

The supervisor of elections is also responsible for the layout and programming of paper and electronic ballots, securing and maintaining voting equipment, recruiting and training poll workers for early vote and Election Day, securing and equipping polling places, providing information and statistics on voting and elections, and maintaining precinct and district boundaries, including a precinct-specific street index.

Melissa Arnold, elected in 2020, is currently

the Supervisor of Elections. The office also has two full-time employees. Temporary workers are employed during election time.

Voter registration is a continual process that is always taking place. Florida Statute requires that a citizen register at least 29 days before an election in order to be eligible to vote in that election. However, a citizen can always register so he/she may vote in subsequent elections. Registering to vote can be done in person, by mail and at the drivers' license office. Voters are asked to update their voter registration information to save them time when going to vote. A political party or name change must be done in writing. An address change or to request an information card may be done by phone.

The Supervisor of Elections office is located on the first floor in the Historic Courthouse at 304 N.W. Second St, Suite144; 863-763-4014; Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.

As of Feb. 3, 2021, there were 22,688 registered voters in Okeechobee County including 6,867 Democrats, 11,080 Republicans and 4,749 other party voters.

Local Veterans Service Office OFFERS ADVICE, COUNSEL AND MORE

The mission of the Okeechobee County Veteran Service Officer (CVSO), is to advise, counsel and assist veterans, spouses and their dependents in matters pertaining to their rights and benefits for claim submission to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. This include securing any other benefits veterans and their family members may be entitled to under county, state or federal laws/statutes. There is never a charge for this service.

Available services include claim filing for: compensation, veteran/spouse pension, aid and attendance, education (Post 9/11 GI Bill), burials, healthcare and military retiree services. Additional services include claims for VA life insurance, VA vocational rehabilitation, employment benefits, VA home loan guarantee, Income verification letters, discharge paperwork and TRICARE/CHAMPVA insurances.

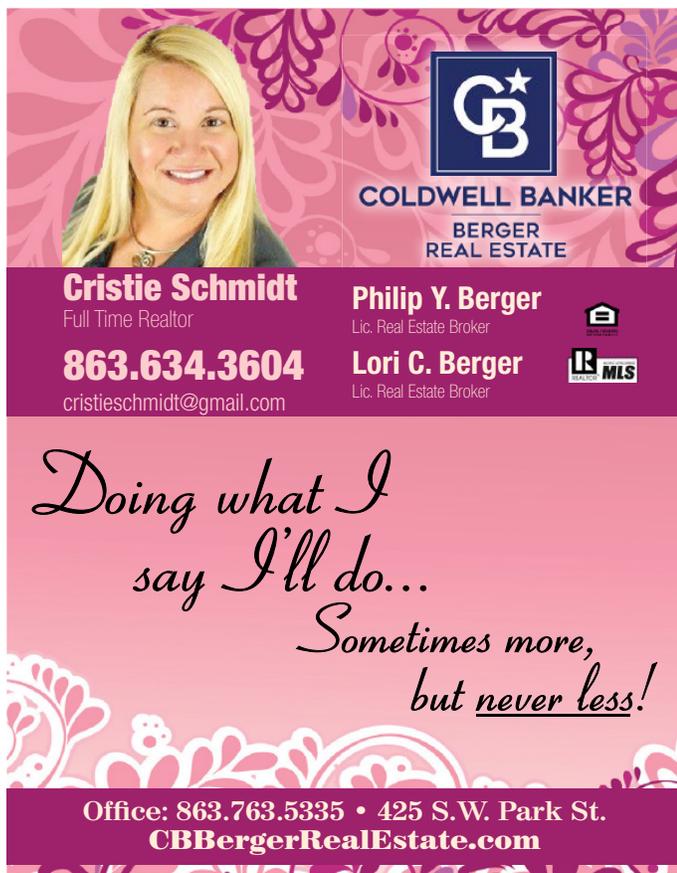
Okeechobee County, in coordination with VAMC West Palm Beach and Disabled American Veterans, provides a FREE van service for eligible veterans and/or an

aid to VAMC West Palm Beach. The van departs from Pop-eye's parking lot on S.R. 70 East at 6:30 a.m. To reserve a seat, call the Veteran Service Office with the date/time of your appointment. All appointments must be before noon. Seating is limited due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Did you know that any honorably discharged veteran and their spouse is entitled to be buried or placed in a National Cemetery? Additionally, the Department of Veteran Affairs will provide a free headstone, foot marker or medallion to a Veteran's grave site that is in a private cemetery. There is no time limit to apply and there are a few documents needed. Ensure your beloved veteran is recognized on special days around the year such as Memorial Day, Veterans Day and when Wreaths Across America lays wreaths at all veteran grave sites nationally in December!

The CVSO is available by appointment only. For more information or to make an appointment, call or email your county veteran service officer, Sarah Carter at 863-763-6441 Ext 5, or veteran@co.okeechobee.fl.us.

The Veterans Service Office is in the Historic Okeechobee Courthouse, 304 N.W. 2nd Street, Room 106, Okeechobee, Fla. 34972.



Cristie Schmidt
Full Time Realtor
863.634.3604
cristieschmidt@gmail.com

Philip Y. Berger
Lic. Real Estate Broker

Lori C. Berger
Lic. Real Estate Broker

**Doing what I say I'll do...
Sometimes more,
but never less!**

Office: 863.763.5335 • 425 S.W. Park St.
CBBergerRealEstate.com



Los Cocos
Mexican Restaurant

[facebook.com/EatLosCocos](https://www.facebook.com/EatLosCocos)

Celebrating 39 years!! Thanks Okeechobee!!

Tacos - Tostadas - Enchiladas
Burritos - Quesadillas - Nachos
Fajitas Steak Chicken & Shrimp

Dine In or To Go:
(863)467-0922
107 NW 6th Ave
Okeechobee, FL 34972

Your new chapter starts now at

INDIAN RIVER STATE COLLEGE

For more than 60 years, Indian River State College has provided residents of Okeechobee, Indian River, Martin and St. Lucie County with low-cost, high-quality educational opportunities and resources that build a pathway to great jobs and higher education.

In a typical semester, some 900 Okeechobee residents take advantage of IRSC programs and services at the Dixon Hendry Campus of Indian River State College in Okeechobee.

"IRSC has helped thousands of Okeechobee residents continue their education to increase their earning power and reach their full potential," says Campus President Russ Brown. "We invite anyone interested in starting a new chapter for themselves to continue their education by enrolling in programs at our campus."

The 40-acre Dixon Hendry Campus, located at 2229 N.W. Ninth Ave. in Okeechobee, is a hub of activity. Students can complete all of their first two years of college at the campus to earn an Associate in Arts Degree. Graduates are well prepared to continue their education toward a Bachelor's Degree at IRSC or another college or university, with seamless transfer

of credits.

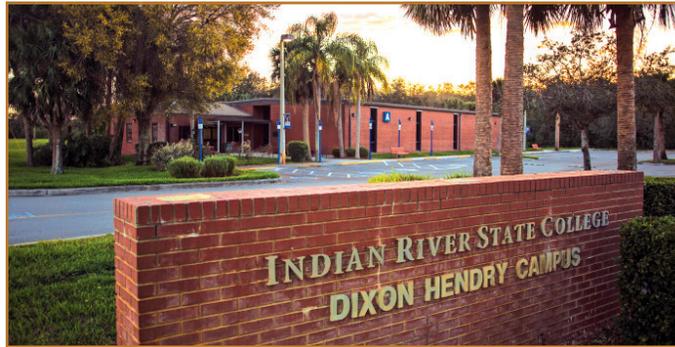
Many Okeechobee residents come to IRSC to gain hands-on skills through job training programs. These include programs in automotive, diesel mechanics and welding, offered in labs during the evening at Okeechobee High School. Courses in air conditioning are held in the state-of-the-art, multi-purpose laboratory at the Dixon Hendry Campus.

All these programs provide the opportunity to earn skill-based licenses as well as an Associate in Science degree.

Additionally, the College offers in-demand career training programs such as office skills, early childhood education and nursing. The office skills program is one of the most popular, enabling students to develop the expertise they need for the modern computer-based office.

Participants can proceed at their own pace and attend in the daytime or evening. Students interested in early childhood education can earn an Associate Degree and related certificates, with many local job opportunities.

Nursing is one of the most rapidly growing



and well-paying careers. Okeechobee residents can train at IRSC for any of three levels of nursing instruction—Certified Nursing Assistant (C.N.A.), Licensed Practical Nurse (L.P.N.) and Registered Nurse (R.N.). All IRSC nursing students gain experience through clinical internships at health care facilities throughout the community.

Many students who are concerned about the cost of a college education, are happy to discover that 91% of IRSC students graduate without debt (2019, U.S. News and World Report) and that IRSC is the third most affordable college in the country (U.S. Department of

Education). Advisors work closely with prospective students to help them obtain financial aid they don't have to pay back. Advisors also help students decide which career paths are best for them, and collaborate with students to pick majors and set up guided pathways that outline the courses they should take each semester.

"Don't let financial concerns or worry stop you from pursuing your dreams," adds Campus President Brown. "We are eager to help you apply for financial aid and will help you stay on track."

For those who have not yet earned their high school diploma, GED preparation is available at the campus. English as a Second Language instruction is also offered. Interested people can enroll for a \$30 fee each semester.

The Dixon Hendry Campus continues to expand its student activities to provide an enriched and fun learning experience. At the start of each semester, a Week of Welcome engages students in club rush, opportunities to meet college and community representatives, as well as cook-outs and games.

In November, International Education Week is commemorated with a Parade of Nations and delicious food from different countries. Another special event is the First Responders Celebration, honoring the first responders in the community.

Business and community groups benefit from the Williamson Center, a state-of-the-art conference center on the campus available for meetings, workshops, and events. More than 160 events were held during 2019 at the center, named after Sonny and Betty Williamson.

For more information, visit www.irsc.edu or call the Dixon Hendry Campus at 863-824-6000.

Hospice Care Comes to You in Okeechobee County

VITAS® Healthcare cares for patients at home, wherever they call home.

For over 40 years, VITAS has helped Floridians with advanced illness achieve greater comfort, dignity, and quality of life by bringing hospice care wherever our patients need it.

Hospice doesn't mean giving up or compromising on quality of care. Get everything you need—supplies, medications and a team of experts—at home with VITAS.

VITAS®
Healthcare
SINCE 1980

800.723.3233

VITAS.com    



Okeechobee offers **YOUTH ATHLETICS OPPORTUNITIES**

There are a wide multitude of youth athletic opportunities in Okeechobee, no matter what sport your child is interested in.

The Okeechobee County School District offers a number of opportunities to participate in team and individual sports. In addition to school sports, there are community and travel teams.

Volleyball enthusiasts can join the Chobee Volleyball Academy. The group is a nonprofit organization designed to expose young girls to the game of volleyball. The league serves a variety of ages. They compete in tournaments around the state, and in 2018, the group competed in the AAU Girls Junior National Volleyball Championship. More information can be obtained on Facebook. @chobeevolleyballacademy.

The Okeechobee Youth Football League (OFYL) provides a flag football team and tackle football for a variety of ages for boys and girls. They are a travel league and a member of the Mid Florida Youth Football Conference. They play games from August through October. Home games are held at the Okeechobee Sports Complex. Flag team members begin at 4 years old. Tackle is available for ages 7 and up. Girls can also join cheerleading squads for each team. The OFYL can be contacted on their

official Facebook account at [facebook.com/OYFL-Football-and-Cheerleading-470207729804263/](https://www.facebook.com/OYFL-Football-and-Cheerleading-470207729804263/).

Okeechobee County Parks and Recreation provides leagues for youth soccer and basketball. Youth basketball for ages 9-14 takes place from January through March. Youth soccer for ages 5-14 lasts for up to 12 weeks between October and December.

Okeechobee County also provides a summer play camp and a summer swim league from June to August. Adults can also join softball leagues that run twice per year, between April and June, and again between October and December. Adults also can join a flag football league that plays games in January and February. The Okeechobee Citizens Recreational Association (OCRA) provides softball and baseball youth leagues with games from March to May. The costs this year are \$65 for T-ball and \$90 for baseball and softball. There is a \$5 sibling discount for each sibling after the first child at full price. For more information, OCRA has a Facebook page @OCRA-Okeechobee-Citizens-Recreation-Association, or call 863-801-7505.

Chobee Nation basketball provides travel ball experience for aspiring basketball players. There are teams for boys in the fifth grade to eighth grade and girls 12 and under. There are other teams for high school age children. The Chobee Nation high school boys' basketball team won back-to-back United States Specialty Sports Association national championships in 2016 and 2017. More information can be found on Facebook at [facebook.com/chobenationbasketball/](https://www.facebook.com/chobenationbasketball/).

The Shockwaves Summer Swim Team program is for swimmers ages 5-18 and is held at the Okeechobee County Sports Complex Swimming Pool. For more information on this program along with start times, please contact the swimming pool at 863-467-7667.

The Treasure Coast offers numerous travel ball opportunities in sports that include softball, soccer, baseball and volleyball that many of our local athletes take part in. There is normally a league charge. These teams travel across the state, which challenges the athlete with more practice time, more instruction and better competition.



Lake Okeechobee News/Richard Marion

OCRA t-ball usually begins around March and ends in June.

Schools achieve excellence BY PUTTING STUDENTS FIRST

By Ken Kenworthy
Superintendent of Schools,
Okeechobee

Welcome to Okeechobee County Schools where together we are achieving excellence by putting students first.

Our district is driven by a robust strategic plan focused on Engaging Instruction, Educational Equity, Talent Management, Effective Communication and Strategic Investment. The basis of our plan is simple. By investing in human capital and opening doors for ALL students, achievement will follow.

Okeechobee County Schools is comprised of 6,500 students in five elementary schools, two middle schools, one high school including a separate freshman campus, an alternative school plus a newly added virtual program added to provide an on-line option.

Our steady progress of increasing student achievement across all grades, attending to each student's social and emotional learning, and providing a variety of choice options has led to an increase in our graduation rate plus the number of associate's degrees through Indian River State



Okeechobee County Community Guide
Okeechobee Freshman campus

College.

Even though our normal way of work has been interrupted by the pandemic, we have endeavored to get students back to school, used progress monitoring assessments to guide instruction, and offered after school tutorials with transportation. Using these strategic initiatives, we will continue to close achievement gaps and get our students back on track.

Our district is known across the state for doing great things. Our very own Krista Stanley was named the State Teacher of the Year, the National FFA Southern Region Vice President Artha Jonassaint graduated from Okeechobee High, our fine arts departments have shined and our CTE programs have yielded hundreds of industry certifications.

None of this work would be possible without the hard work of our teachers and staff as well as the partnerships we have with our parents and community partners. This shared dedication to our students has made enduring this pandemic possible and will help us remain steadfast in preparing our students for their futures.



COLDWELL BANKER
BERGER
REAL ESTATE

www.CBBergerRealEstate.com
863.763.5335
Toll Free: 866.381.5335

Philip Y. Berger <small>Lic. Real Estate Broker</small> 863.634.8439 <small>pberger@bergerrealestate.com</small>	Lori C. Berger <small>Lic. Real Estate Broker</small> 863.634.8437 <small>lori@bergerrealestate.com</small>
Cristie Schmidt 863-634-3604	Elvie Posey 863-634-4399
Kari Berger 863-227-0339	Jeff Anderson 863-697-2424
Kathy Williams 863-634-1574	



425 SW Park St. • Okeechobee, FL 34973

Quick-Change

Oil & Lube Service Center

DRIVE IN • NO APPOINTMENT NEEDED

We Service Motor Homes

**Transmission Flushes &
Differential changes available**

**Most Major Brands Of Oil Available
Diesel air & Fuel Filters**

Family owned and operated since 1987



**Hours: Mon.-Fri. 8:00 - 5:30
Saturday 8:00 - 12 noon**

708 N. Parrott Avenue 863-467-5599

Hiking and biking around LAKE OKEECHOBEE

The Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail (LOST) continues to be an important resource when it comes to hiking and cycling in the Okeechobee area. Much of the trail is closed on the southern half of Lake Okeechobee. But most of the trail is open at the top of the lake, from Port Mayaca to Lakeport.

There is a map available from the Army Corps of Engineers that identifies where the closures are, and it can be found online at www.saj.usace.army.mil/LOST/.

Starting at the Kissimmee River, there is open trail to Taylor Creek, a distance of about 6 miles. This trail is in good condition and enjoys an improved parking lot with restrooms and drinking water available at about the midpoint where the path continues past the Lock Seven park. This is the most popular section of the path and nearest to Okeechobee.

Further to the east is Nubbin Slough, and the LOST here is one good continuous path all the way to the Port Mayaca bridge over the Okeechobee Waterway. This is a 17.3-mile-long section of the LOST that is not heavily used and includes some really excellent areas to view the lake and the associated wildlife that live along its shores.

In Glades County, there continues to be a very nice portion of path to ride near the town of Lakeport. Though not reflected accurately on the Corps of Engineers' map, there is a paved path that parallels State Road 78 for several miles, and then joins a newly paved section that follows the top of the dike along the lake side of the town of Lakeport and terminates at the park along the Harney Pond Canal. Not to be missed along this stretch of the LOST and adjacent to the Lakeport Navigational Lock is an area long referred to as the "Hiker Graveyard," a section of the dike with stone columns sticking up out of a graveled swale, that really resembles a rough cemetery.

There are several good sections of the Florida Scenic Trail in the area to sample as a section hiker on a cool winter morning, if you desire. The Florida Trail follows the dike around Lake Okeechobee both to the east and the west sides, and with the dike closures, the hikers will find themselves on the side of the highway most of the distance these days.

Good news here is that the trail has been expanded recently in northern Okeechobee County, to eliminate a 15-mile road walk up Micco Bluff Road.

The Florida Trail, in that part of the county, is in several defined sections. The section of the trail just south of the new expansion is named the Chandler Slough North section, and roughly parallels U.S. 98, with a fence crossing just a bit north of Northwest 144th Trail. This portion of trail is 3.56 miles long and ends when it reaches U.S. 98, just east of the river. Before the expansion, to stay on the trail, a 15-mile road walk, along U.S. 98 and Micco Bluff Road, all the way to the entrance to Starvation Slough was required.



Okeechobee County Community Guide/Richard Marion
The Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail offers a chance to witness those one-of-a-kind Florida sunsets as you hike.

In 2018, a new section called the Micco Trail Section was developed and allows the hiker to skip most of the road walk with a new 12.12-mile-long section. The Micco section begins right across U.S. 98 from the gate at the north end of the Chandler Slough North section, and passes an improved camping area near its beginning. The trail then stays in the forest and wildland for the entire distance. The Florida Trail Association and its volunteers are responsible for trail expansion through there and work with landowners and, in this case, South Florida Water Management District to establish the new trail section.



Photo courtesy U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Bicyclists enjoying the ride and not seeming to mind at all that they are lost.

Lawrence Insurance Agency



OVER 45 YEARS EXPERIENCE

"PRICES YOU CAN AFFORD... SERVICES YOU CAN TRUST"

We Specialize In:

- Farm & Ranch
- Workers' Comp
- Commercial Liability & Property
- Contractors Insurance & Bonds (Over 30 Years Contracting Experience)



(863) 467-0600

2020 S. Parrott Avenue • Across from Walmart
www.lawrenceinsuranceagency.com

863.467.4733

24 hour emergency service
 Residential www.crsokee.com Commercial

NHC HOME CARE



Home Health Agency



Now expanding into Okeechobee!

Care is Our Business!

NHC is your passport to Homecare.

Extending the continuum of care from hospital to home not only makes sense emotionally, but clinically and economically as well. The latest research clearly makes the case for home care as a safe, effective and preferred option for treating conditions ranging from chronic heart failure to acute care. It is convenient, cost effective and offers consistent, reliable care for the patient and peace of mind for family members. NHC HomeCare has been providing home care services since 1976. We believe that consistency in this business has proven us to be the best provider of quality home care services. Our wide range of quality home care services provided by professionals ensures that patients' home care needs are fully met and provides you with peace of mind.

DISEASE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS:

- CHF Program • COPD • Diabetes • Alzheimer's • Incontinence
 • Wound Care • Stroke and Fall Reduction

THERAPY PROGRAMS:

- Physical Therapy • Occupational Therapy • Speech Therapy
 • Assisted Living Therapy

Sylvia Blevins

813.404.5855 | 772.564.0092 | sylvia.blevins@nhccare.com
mynhccare.com | License #HHA 21900096

 <p>1</p>	<p>Administrative Annex 450 US Hwy 98 N</p>	<p>Tax Collector & Property Appraiser 409 NW 2nd Ave</p>	 <p>2</p>
--	--	---	--

 <p>3</p>	<p>City Police Department 50 SE 2nd Avenue</p>	<p>City Hall 55 SE 3rd Avenue</p>	 <p>4</p>
--	--	---	--

 <p>5</p>	<p>Emergency Operations Center 707 NW 6th Street</p>	<p>County Courthouse 304 NW 2nd Street</p>	 <p>6</p>
--	--	--	--

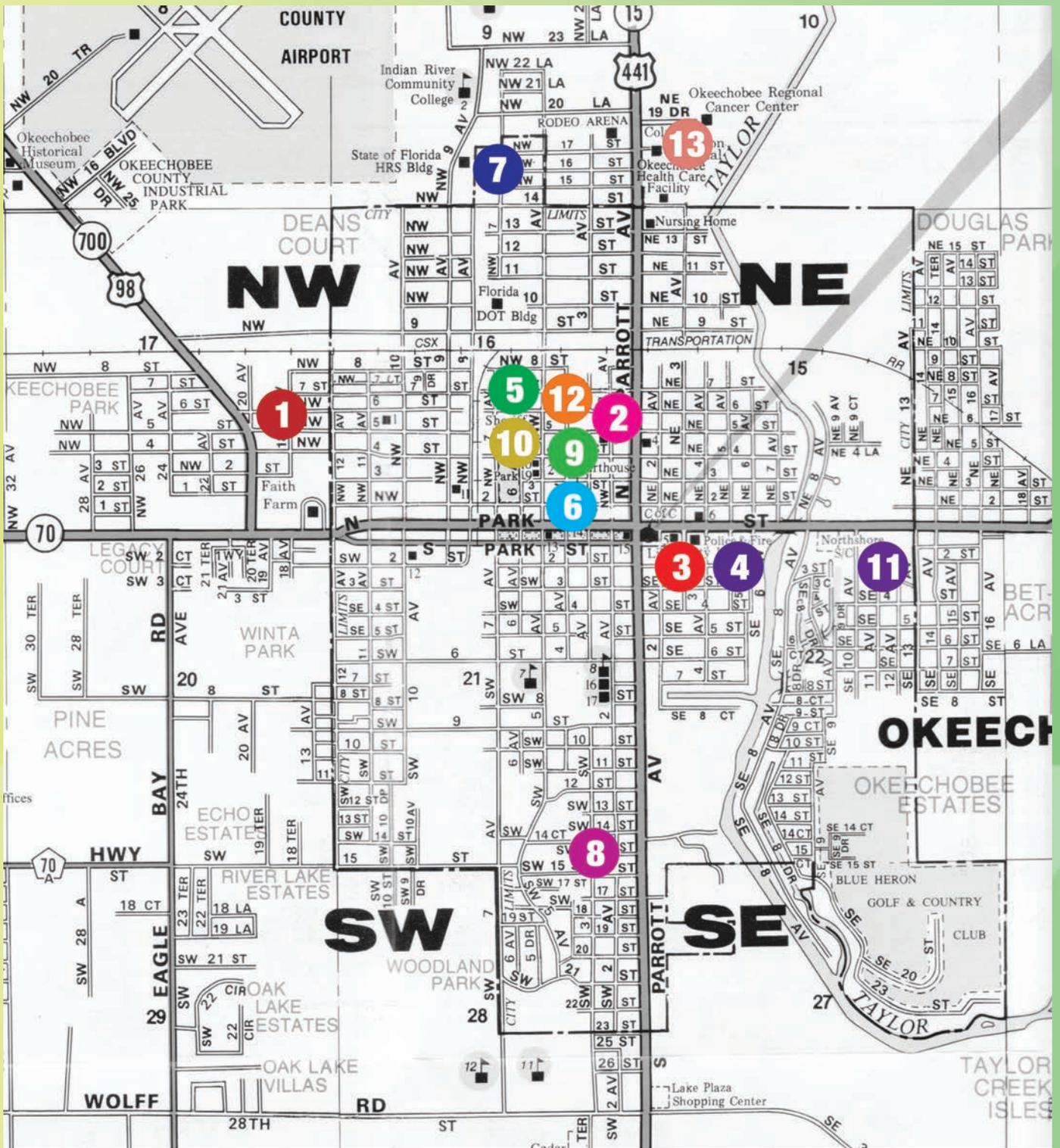
 <p>7</p>	<p>DCF & Health Department 1690 NW 9th Avenue</p>	<p>Public Library 206 SW 16th Street</p>	 <p>8</p>
---	---	--	---

 <p>9</p>	<p>Judicial Center 304 NW 2nd Street</p>	<p>Sheriff's Department 504 NW 4th Street</p>	 <p>10</p>
--	--	---	---

 <p>11</p>	<p>US Post Office 1000 SR 70 East</p>	<p>DMV (Driver's License Office) 210 NW 5th Ave.</p>	 <p>12</p>
---	--	--	---

 <p>13</p>	<p>HCA Raulerson Hospital 1796 Hwy 441 N</p>
---	---

County Map Legend



County Map

Amish
Poly

RUSTIC STORE

Most
Unique
Gifts

121 SW Park St., Okeechobee | rusticnow.com 
863.532.9096 | niki@rusticnow.com

Furniture • Home Decor

Wine & Accessories

Cornhole Games • Jewelry • Specialty Items



COMPLETE SERVICES

of South Florida, Inc

Aluminum Builders
Customer Additions
Screen Rooms • Car & Motor Ports

Nita Salmon-President
121 SW Park St., Okeechobee, FL 34972

863.532.9096

Dale Roop
Project Manager
- Estimator

863.
287.4285

State Certified - CBC 1256085



REMINGTON REAL ESTATE

Luxury Homes • RV Resale Lots
Residential & Commercial
Ranches • Farms

NIKI
SALMON

863.532.9096

niki@remingtonrealestate.com

BK3268539
CBC1256085



This is your home to sell or buy..

Do your homework — not all real estate companies are the same!

We're a strategic, full-service real estate company with regional coverage. By cultivating the process for the people we work with, we're able to collaborate with our partners and team to find the solutions and provide a seamless adventure for sellers and buyers from start to closing.

Our services are in-house. We are full service, licensed, insured, and experienced. We develop an innovated way to serve our customers. We think outside of the box. Not all properties are PERFECT. Sometimes just a little tweaking can make the difference. Our construction department can help you with low cost improvements to maximize your market value or be able to deliver a more valuable home for the buyers. With the unique structure we provide, YOU NEVER PAY NOW, WE COLLECT AT CLOSING.

We also have a great way of saying thank you to the buyers we represent: We say thanks by gifting you a GIFT CERTIFICATE to our sister company "The Rustic Store" in Okeechobee.

Swim, run, skateboard or fish,

OKEECHOBEE OFFERS RECREATION OPTIONS

Okeechobee is host to a number of recreational facilities that are suited for a wide variety of different interests.

- For families looking for a quiet place to relax and hold a family event or picnic, consider the Alton Chandler Civic Center at 20350 U.S. 98 N. in Basinger. They provide an enclosed building available for rent, a picnic area with pavilion and a playground.

- The Douglas Brown Community Center at 826 N.E. 16th Ave. includes an enclosed building, a picnic area with pavilion, a playground and multiple basketball courts.

- The Okeechobee Civic Center at 1750 U.S. 98 N. includes fields for sports activities and an enclosed building for weddings and other events.

- The Okeechobee Historical Park across the street provides a historical museum and the old school house.

- Team sports are played at the OK Softball Field complex at 950 N.W. 23rd Lane. This facility includes two lighted softball fields, a sand volleyball court, restrooms and a fenced playground.

- Various Okeechobee school facilities are also available for rent for recreational purposes. They include gymnasiums at Okeechobee High School, 2800 U.S. 441 N., Osceola Middle School at 825 S.W. 28th St., and Yearling Middle School at 925 N.W. 23rd Lane.

- The Okeechobee County Sports Complex is the centerpiece of Okeechobee's recreational facilities. The facility at 640 N.W. 27th Lane includes a swimming pool and bathhouse, four baseball and softball fields for youth, a football and soccer multi-purpose field, two basketball courts, eight tennis courts, a picnic pavilion and the Wooden Jungle playground.

- The Okeechobee Recreational Park and Skate Park at 350 N.W. Sixth Ave. is located in the City of Okeechobee. It includes a picnic pavilion, playground area, open space, a tennis court, skate park and a baseball field.

- The Practice Field complex is a large area of fields at 3001 N.W. 10th Terrace. It includes baseball, softball, football and soccer fields.

- Willie Alderman Field at 424 N.E. 15th Ave. provides a field for adult softball and youth baseball with fence and dugouts.

- Okeechobee's Agri-Civic Center at 4601 State Road 710 also includes fields for soccer and places to jog and walk.

- Boating, fishing and other activities are welcomed at several facilities in Okeechobee. The Clif Betts Jr. Lake-side Recreation Area (once called Lock 7) at 200 SR 78 W. includes boat ramps, a fishing pier, parking areas, access to the scenic trail and restrooms.

- The Okee-Tantie Campground and Marina at 10430 SR 78 W. includes a parking area, open fields, marina and boat ramps. It also has an amphitheater.

- The Scott Driver Recreation Area at 10101 S.R. 78 W. includes an enclosed area for meetings, parking area and boat ramps. It is the Okeechobee Fishing Tournament Headquarters.

- Other locations for boaters include the Kissimmee River C-38 complex at 8400 S.W. 99th Drive.

- Platts Bluff Park at 15925 N.W. 56th St. also includes a boat ramp.

- The Nubbin Slough, Rim Canal facility at 6206 U.S. 441 S.E. includes a parking area, boat ramp, fishing area and access to the Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail.

- Also available is the Henry Creek Boat Ramp at 10654 U.S. 98 S., which provides access to the rim canal and fishing opportunities.

- The Taylor Creek boat ramp at 700 S.E. Fourth St. is a popular area for boaters.

- The Taylor Creek Stormwater Treatment Area is a popular spot for hikers, walkers and bicyclists. It is located at 7201 U.S. 441 N. It has three miles of hiking and bicycling trails.

- The Kissimmee River public use area includes 30,000 acres of public recreation in Highlands, Okeechobee and Glades counties, with a trailhead on U.S. 98 in Basinger. Camping, hiking and hunting opportunities are available at various times of the year.



Okeechobee County Community Guide/Richard Marion
Okeechobee's skate park is located at 350 N.W. Sixth Ave.

2021 promises great fishing ON LAKE OKEECHOBEE



Okeechobee County Community Guide/Richard Marion
The pier at Lock 7 in Okeechobee is a popular fishing spot with easy access.

Lake Okeechobee, the second-largest freshwater lake within the continental United States, is a vast shallow lake with a surface area covering 730 square miles. "Okeechobee" comes from the Seminole words meaning "big and water."

Lake Okeechobee has been a premier fishing destination for decades, and multiple fishing tournaments are held on the lake every year.

In 2017, Hurricane Irma swept across South Florida and Lake Okeechobee, ripping out a lot of vegetation and raising the lake level to around 17 feet. After a much-needed dry spell in late 2018 and early 2019 the lake level dropped to around 12 feet by February 2019.

The lower water levels in the lake affected navigation throughout 2019, but could ultimately prove to be good for the lake overall. Florida Audubon Society's Okeechobee science coordinator, Dr. Paul Gray, explained that the lower water level could allow sunlight to reach the lake bed and help regrow vegetation. New vegetation would provide a spawning ground for fish species during the wet season and cover for those same fish as they grow and increase in size.

"I was in a meeting with scientists from the district and the Florida Wildlife Commission, and it was unanimous in the room that everybody wanted the lake to get to 11 feet because that's what it is going to take to get those plants back," said Dr. Gray. "I know lower levels make navigation inconvenient and that's unfortunate, but we gotta take our medicine to get well."

Derrick Moore, tournament director of the Lake Okeechobee Crappie Series, echoed those thoughts by Dr. Gray.

"I feel like the future of the fishing on our lake is depending upon the management and treating of the lake and vegetation," explained Mr. Moore. "A healthy balance of mechanical harvesting and spraying areas that

can't be reached by mechanical harvesting is essential to the overall future of fishing on the lake. The lake needs vegetation to act as natural filters for harmful substances that enters the lake from the Kissimmee



Legacy
Real Estate of Florida



Lasha Boree

Broker

Certified International

Property Specialist

863-697-1712

 LegacyRealEstateFL

View our listings online at
legacyrealtyfl.com

Office: 863-484-8588
101 SW 3rd Ave. • Okeechobee

River. Likewise these fish need vegetation for a number of reasons; shelter, food and more so for crappie-spawning areas."

Mr. Moore had a few tried and true tips for anglers looking to get in some fishing on the lake in 2021.

"Lake Okeechobee is one of the best fisheries in the world," said Mr. Moore. "Early in the year the crappie move into the shallow parts of the lake in vegetation, this hold true for the entire lake, whether you are fishing the south end near Pahokee, the west side near Lakeport, north side in Okeechobee, and the east side near Port Mayaca. You can find some nice quality and quantity when jigging in the vegetation and using minnows around the outside edges. A nice long light rod and small reel is ideal catching crappie on Okeechobee and some jigs that can be purchased from any bait and tackle store around the lake. These method is used by majority of the anglers who compete in our Lake Okeechobee Crappie Series."

General manager of Roland and Mary Ann Martin's Marina, Ramon Iglesias, says things have never been better on the lake.

"The slogan I've been hearing is that the fishing is on fire," said Iglesias. "The weights have been really good, the numbers have been great. The lake was able to get some of the grass back that it had lost over the years. The fishing has been great."

One of the things that makes fishing on Okeechobee so special is just its sheer size. With the lake being nearly half the size of the state of Rhode Island, the ecosystem of the lake can be wide-ranging.

"This lake has the most diverse ecosystem of any I have ever seen," said Okeechobee Fishing Headquarters owner Mike Krause. "And I've fished in Florida all my life. You have 730 square miles of water and you can go from one side of the lake where it's solid rock to another side where it's nothing but muck, then you will find another corner that's sand. So many species and different types of wildlife. It's special."



Courtesy photo

The Big O Open tournament competes regularly on Lake Okeechobee.



Courtesy photo

Kelly Owens shows off a catch on Lake Okeechobee.

GLADES
Electric Cooperative, Inc.
"Neighbors Working for Neighbors"

**NEIGHBORS
WORKING FOR
NEIGHBORS**



Stay plugged in. Connect with us online.



Get updates about programs, services, energy tips, outages and more

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GLADESELECTRICCOOPERATIVE

863.946.6200

GladesElectric.com

Office locations:
214 Hwy 70 West, Lake Placid
26733 Hwy 27, Moore Haven

Serving Florida's Heartland since 1945

Find the wild side OF OKEECHOBEE COUNTY

You won't have to spend much time in Okeechobee to understand just how wide the array of wildlife is in the county. It's a great place for bird watching and wildlife photography. In the rural areas of the county, it's not unusual to see wading birds, eagles, alligators, raccoons, foxes, opossums, armadillos and more.

Manatees visit Lake Okeechobee so frequently that the gates on the locks used by boats to enter and leave the lake are equipped with manatee protection devices to prevent a closing gate from injuring an underwater manatee.

The Taylor Creek Stormwater Treatment Area (STA), off U.S. 441 N., about 4.2 miles north of the intersection of State Road 70 and U.S. 441, is a great starting place for spotting wildlife. The 170-acre STA attracts a variety of migratory and resident birds. Commonly observed birds include sandhill cranes, crested caracara, wood storks, great blue herons, roseate spoonbills, black-necked stilts, white and glossy ibises, a variety of egrets, wild turkeys and many songbirds. Deer and alligators are also commonly seen in this area. Just don't get too close to the gators when getting that



Courtesy photo

Arnold's Wildlife Rehabilitation Center takes in injured and orphaned animals. If the animals are native to Florida, the goal is to rehabilitate them so they can be released back into the wild. If the animal is not native, or if the injuries mean it will not be able to survive in the wild, the animals find a home at Arnold's, 14895 NW 30th Terrace in Okeechobee. The center welcomes visitors seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and requests a \$10 donation per adult.

Seeking Volunteers

Age 50+ for clinical trials

Compensation for time and travel provided



In the following areas:

- Complimentary genetic testing to assess your risk of Alzheimer's disease
- Prevention of Alzheimer's disease
- Memory Loss
- Mild Cognitive Impairment
- Alzheimer's Disease
- Virtual Memory Screen



www.brainmattersresearch.com



Give us a call at
(772)-223-7880



900 SE Salerno Road
Stuart, FL 34997

perfect shot for Instagram. The STA is open to the public from sunrise to sunset.

The Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail, which has a trailhead at the Lock 7 recreation area off State



Photo courtesy U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

A wood stork carries nesting material.

Road 78, offers a chance to see local wildlife. On this trail you'll mainly see birds and perhaps a few alligators soaking in the sun on the banks of the canal.

Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park, 33104 NW 192nd Ave., a 54,000 acre preserve, protects the largest remaining stretch of Florida dry prairie, home to an assortment of endangered plants and animals. The preserve offers excellent seasonal birding opportunities and is home to the endangered Florida Grasshopper Sparrow, as well as the Crested Caracara and Burrowing Owl. More than 100 miles of dirt roads allow hikers, bicyclists and equestrians to explore prairies, wetlands and shady hammocks. November through March, ranger-led prairie buggy tours allow visitors to see remote areas of the preserve. For more information, call 863-462-5360.

Arnold's Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, Inc., 14895 N.W. 30th Terrace in Okeechobee, is a non-profit 501(c) educational-based wildlife care facility, dedicated to bringing people and wildlife together to develop a community awareness of the value of our Florida wildlife. Their ultimate goal is to rescue, rehabilitate, and return recovered animals to their natural habitat.



Okeechobee County Community Guide/Richard Marion

A limpkin scans the shallow banks of Lake Okeechobee for its next meal. The lanky brown and white bird specializes in eating apple snails and often leave telltale piles of snail shells at the edges of freshwater wetlands where hunting is good. This bird's haunting cries, heard mostly at night, are otherworldly and unforgettable.

Hospice

Of Okeechobee,
Inc.
a special kind of caring[®]



Since 1983, Hospice of Okeechobee, Inc. has been providing our community with comfort, guidance and support for any serious illness. We provide services in your home, assisted living facility, hospital room or in our residence/inpatient Hamrick Home.



To learn more, call us at **863-467-2321**
or visit **HOSPICEOFOKEECHOBEE.ORG**



Like Us on 

A Chapter's
Health Affiliate

Hospice of Okeechobee
411 SE 4th Street, Okeechobee, FL 34974

A Florida non-profit and 501c(3) tax exempt corporation

Raulerson Hospital

TAKES CARE OF COMMUNITY

Raulerson Hospital puts the care and improvement of human life above all else.

Raulerson Hospital accomplishes this mission through the enterprise's approximately 30 million patient encounters each year, and with continued investment in equipment and technology, like the new 64-slice CT Scanner and 3D Mammography technology, which includes 3D stereotactic breast biopsy and contrast capability.

Raulerson Hospital raises the bar in healthcare with:

- Accreditation by The Joint Commission
- Primary Stroke Center Licensure by the Agency for Health Care Administration
- Accredited by the American College of Radiology in MRI, CT, Mammography, Ultra Sound and Nuclear Medicine
- Accredited Laboratory by the College of American Pathologists
- 5-star Healthgrades Recipient for Treatment of Heart Attack 2019- 2020
- 5-star Healthgrades Recipient for Patient Safety 2018-2020
- 5-star Healthgrades Recipient for Treatment of Respiratory Failure 2016-2019
- 5-star Healthgrades Recipient for Hip-Fracture Treatment 2018-2019

Raulerson Hospital's Surgical Services Department is also raising the bar in healthcare by proactively earning the CNOR Strong status from the Competency & Credentialing Institute (CCI), the leader in perioperative certification. Hospitals and surgical centers can achieve the CNOR Strong status when more than half of the perioperative (or surgical) nursing staff have earned their individual CNOR certification. In fact, at Raulerson Hospital



Special to Okeechobee County Community Guide
Raulerson Hospital's new 52,000 square foot, four-story medical office building (MOB) is currently under construction.

more than seventy percent of the surgical nurses have achieved their CNOR certification. CNOR certification is a voluntary 200 question exam, which demonstrates knowledge and skills competency in nine areas of the specialized field of perioperative nursing. Additional education provides nurses advanced skills to ensure surgical patients receive high-quality care.

Raulerson Hospital's new 52,000 square foot, four-story medical office building (MOB) is currently under construction. The MOB will feature a new entrance to the hospital, patient registration, and administration offices on the first floor. The other floors will house multi-specialty physician offices. These enhancements will further provide the community with high quality, highly-reliable care every day close to home.

Open Hands provides HEALTH CARE TO UNINSURED

Open Hands Health Center is a nonprofit that has been serving Okeechobee since 2015. It was founded on the scripture verse Deuteronomy 15:11 "For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, 'You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.'" The mission of Open Hands Health Center, Inc. is to deliver free professional, Christ-centered healthcare to people, who for whatever reason, find themselves unemployed, as well as hard working families who just cannot afford the high cost of health care. Open Hands offers some of the same things you would get at a regular doctor's office but our main focus has been on wellness, that helps educate people on healthy living which includes good nutrition, increased physical activity, as

well as a healthy emotional thought life. As a result of this type of care, many of the patients have been able to get off or reduce their medications and are experiencing a better quality of life. Annually, we have been able to bring the Florida Baptist Association free dental van, which will return again this June. Local dentists volunteer their time to do both fillings and extractions. They also have been able to help facilitate free biblical counseling for those who are interested. If you would like to see if you are eligible for free health care, learn about upcoming wellness classes, be placed on the dental van waiting list or would like to volunteer your time or help support our cause, please call at 863-357-1257. Open Hands is located at 309 N.W. Fifth St. in Okeechobee.

Health Department offers VARIETY OF SERVICES

Florida Department of Health works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts. Florida Department of Health in Okeechobee County is located at 1728 N.W. Ninth Ave., Okeechobee, FL 34972.

Departments include Environmental Health, Vital Statistics, Public Health Preparedness, School Health, Dental Sealants, (WIC) Women Infants and Children, Health Education, Clinical Services of Public Health Significance, and Ep-

idemiology and Disease Control. Clinical Services of public health significance include: family planning, immunizations/vaccines, sexually transmitted infections testing and treatment, hepatitis program and HIV/Aids services. The Health Department accepts the following payment methods: cash and credit card. For clinical services only, Medicaid and self-pay sliding fee based on eligibility are accepted. For more information, call 863-462-5800 or go to okeechobee.floridahealth.gov.

Pregnancy Center SERVES THE COMMUNITY

The Pregnancy Center of Okeechobee was founded in 2008 and exists to serve anyone involved in a difficult pregnancy situation. The staff and volunteers at our center genuinely care about the women and men who walk through our doors and are eager to assist you with all of your concerns.

The Goal of the Pregnancy Center of Okeechobee is to: Provide education and support to people in our community as they make important decisions about pregnancy.

Create a safe, confidential and caring haven in which options can be provided for women experiencing an un-

pected pregnancy.

Provide practical services related to pregnancy, childrearing, and relationships.

All services provided at the Pregnancy Center of Okeechobee are confidential and FREE. The Pregnancy Center of Okeechobee desires to serve the whole community, regardless of race, creed, age, economic status, or marital status.

For more information, call 863-467-8748. The Center Director is Lisa Lumpkin.



"Bringing Home & Family Together Since 1978"

**Licensed
Real Estate Brokerage Company**

Specializing in:

Residential Homes

Farm & Ranch

Acreage

Commercial Properties

Buying or Selling a Home is Easier than you think!

Call us today, to find out more.

(863) 763-4010



Follow us on Facebook

Heartland Okeechobee Office
104 NW 7th Ave. Okeechobee, FL 34972



Visit our website for our newest
Real Estate listings

www.Tucker-Group.com



City police PUT SAFETY FIRST

By Chief Robert Peterson
Okeechobee Police Department

The Okeechobee Police Department was established in 1915 when Okeechobee was still an outlying part of St. Lucie County. Comprised of a single town marshal, it served as the only source of law enforcement for the entire area that would later become the City of Okeechobee and Okeechobee County.

The police department is currently staffed by approximately 35 members of various ranks and units, including command staff, uniformed road patrol, criminal investigations, school resource officers, a traffic unit, a K-9 officer, records, police services, dispatch/911 telecommunications, code enforcement and a special response unit.



Our most visible unit, uniformed road patrol, is responsible for responding to emergency and non-emergency calls for service, traffic enforcement and patrol.

The Okeechobee Police Department is also responsible for all code enforcement issues within the city limits.

We foster a commitment to not only serve the community but also to be an integral part of it. The residents of the City of Okeechobee enjoy a low crime rate and unmatched response times due to the hard work and dedication of its dedicated personnel.

Whether you're a new resident, have lived here all your life or are somewhere in between, We welcome you to stop by and introduce yourself. This is and always has been your police department.

Sheriff Stephen and his staff HAVE MANY DUTIES

By Michele Bell
PIO OCSO

Sheriff Noel E. Stephen is responsible for law enforcement on the county level. Sheriff's deputies carry out most of the law enforcement duties, while the sheriff, an elected official, manages their activities. Deputies serve under the sheriff. Duties of a deputy sheriff include: investigating complaints, emergency response, patrolling, resolving disputes, arresting suspects, criminal investigations and executing warrants.

The Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office is small, with 207 employees, Auxiliary, Search and Rescue and Citizens on Patrol. Sheriff Stephen's command staff consists of one colonel, three captains and eight lieutenants.

Specialized teams include K-9 Units, Hostage Negotiations, SWAT, Dive Team, Motorcycle Unit, Honor Guard and the Cell Extraction Team. The sheriff's office also performs other functions such as traffic control, animal enforcement, accident investigations, homicide investigations, narcotic investigations, transportation of prisoners, school resource officers



and courthouse security.

The sheriff's office has an annual budget for fiscal year 2021 of \$19,492,761. Of that budget, Sheriff Stephen is also responsible for the county jail with an average daily jail population of 285 inmates.

The deputies are responsible for patrolling over 773 square miles in Okeechobee County with an average population, as of 2020, of 42,682 residents.

Since taking the oath of sheriff in January 2017, Sheriff Stephen has brought new and innovative tools to the sheriff's office to better serve the community. He also acknowledges and treats each employee with respect, which is one of the most meaningful

things a leader can do to boost engagement within the sheriff's office.

In January 2021, Sheriff Stephen was sworn in for his second term as Okeechobee County Sheriff. Sheriff Stephen is the first ever, unopposed sheriff to win an election, since the inception of Okeechobee County in 1917.



"It's not where you are in life, it's who you have by your side that matters"



Welcome to the Family



Devoted to growing and developing every year through progressive innovation. We desire to create a ripple effect that inspires and empowers our patients, our team, their families, and our community.

DR. JENNIFER LASKEY, DMD

DR. JENNIFER SHIFLET, DDS

DR. ZACHARY VIENS, DMD

863.734.6964



OUR SERVICES:

- ORAL WELLNESS VISITS
- TEETH WHITENING
- PERIODONTAL THERAPY
- NITROUS OXIDE SEDATION
- TMD THERAPY
- IMPLANT PLACEMENT & RESTORATION
- ROOT CANALS
- VENEERS
- DENTURES
- CROWNS
- INVISALIGN & BRIDGES



CHECK OUT OUR RECOMMENDATION CONTEST!

City fire department **FORMED IN 1916**

By H. Smith
Fire chief/marshal

I take immense pride and honor in introducing you to the City of Okeechobee Fire Department. The Okeechobee Fire Department (OFD) is a combination department comprised of 12 career firefighters and 12 volunteer firefighters.

We no doubt have some of the most dedicated and talented firefighters in the region. The reason I believe this is that our financial resources are very limited, therefore we rely on the adage, "Our employees are the most important asset." The firefighters of our department accept additional responsibilities that their positions in larger departments would not.

Now, for a little history: The City Fire Department was formed in 1916 and its volunteers have been chartered since 1915. Some department members have been volunteers since they were 16 and still in high school, some 40 years ago. Until 1978, the city fire department was the sole fire protection agency for all of Okeechobee County.

The City of Okeechobee is the central hub of the entire county with two major roadways crossing in the center of the town and county. The department responds within a four and one-half mile area. The department's average response time is four minutes from the time of notification. Our department responded to 1,500+ incidents in 2019.

OFD renders structural, vehicle and wildland fire suppression, all forms of rescue coverage and gives mutual aid to our county fire department as well as the surrounding counties.

I have been privileged to serve as fire chief since 2005 and honored to serve with the dedicated men and women

that we have in Okeechobee. OFD members have numerous certifications, including Firefighter I & II, Instructors, EMT/Paramedic, Technical Rescue, Fire/Arson Investigation and Hazardous Materials Operations, to name a few.

We currently offer services such as educational classes, training for businesses and industries and tours of the fire station. Our department also manages all fire inspections and plan reviews within the city of Okeechobee. We participate in the Okeechobee County/City Technical Rescue Team (certified/authorized by the state). We have a city council with mayor that heads an administrator form of government.

The City of Okeechobee has the only ladder truck in the entire county or city. OFD responds to incidents with: a 2017 engine/pumper, 1997 engine for backup, 2010 brush/medical truck, and one reserve pumper. We also use one of the first engines utilized by the department as our parade vehicle for our council members.

One of the things I am most proud of is the rating issued to our department by the Insurance Service Organization (ISO) (used by insurance companies to issue rates to commercial and residential structures). We have improved our rating over the last 10 years through challenging work, dedication from employees and support from our council. The rating of "3" was issued several years ago which is near the top ten percentile for the nation for a department of our size.

Welcome to Okeechobee, and I hope you always feel welcome to come by and say hello or ask for assistance.

Editor's note: beginning in June 2021, Okeechobee County Fire Rescue will be handling all fire services for Okeechobee City and County.

Okeechobee County Fire Rescue **OFFERS MANY SERVICES**

By Ralph Franklin, EFO
Public safety director/fire chief

Okeechobee County Fire Rescue is a combination department that uses both career and volunteer members to serve the emergency service needs of the community. The department operates out of three stations that are strategically located throughout the county. Stations are staffed on a 24-hour, seven days a week, 365 days a year system.

The department is staffed with 52 career employees who are all trained as firefighters, with 40 of them certified as paramedics. The career employees are supplemented by approximately 10 volunteers.

Okeechobee County Fire Rescue provides Advanced Life Support (ALS) emergency medical service to all of Okeechobee County using four paramedic staffed ambulances. Additionally, the department operates three paramedic engines that provide fire suppression to the unincorporated areas of the county.

Various aid agreements are in place with the City of Okeechobee and the counties of Highlands, Glades, Indian River, Martin, Osceola, and St. Lucie.

The field staff is under the direct supervision of the deputy fire chief. The captain of training is responsible for coordination of all department fire and EMS training. The captain of risk reduction is responsible for overseeing fire inspections, department safety initiatives and public education events. The public safety director has direct supervision of the deputy fire chief and the captains, Fleet Services, E911, Emergency Management as well as the budgetary and administrative functions of the department, with indirect supervision of the field staff.

In 2020, Okeechobee County Fire Rescue responded to 7,205 calls for service. This represents an increase of 506 calls over the 6,699 that the agency responded to in 2019.

Okeechobee DINING GUIDE



Okeechobee is home to many unique restaurants! From an eatery where people fly in to dine, to a cattle market known for its burgers to a spot that will cook your catch fresh from Lake Okeechobee all the way to key lime pie known to be the best north of the Florida Keys, the sit-down dining options in and around Okeechobee, Florida will not disappoint! If you are looking for something quick to take home from a local grocery-store deli or a quick bite from a drive-thru, Okeechobee offers convenience as well as quality! At night, many food trucks and stands come alive. If a visit to Okeechobee is in your future, bring your appetite!

441 BBQ Grill

(mobile - locations vary)

Alice's Restaurant

17410 Reservation Rd. N.E.

Antojitos Mexicano's

3600 U.S. 441 S.

Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar

1210 State Road 70

Arby's

417 S. Parrott Ave.

Beef 'O' Brady's

608 S. Parrott Ave.

Big Tasty's

309 S.W. Park Street

Big O Flea Market

3600 U.S. 441 S.

Bill's Mini Mart

3007 SR-70E

Blitzkrieg BBQ & Grill

3101 U.S. 441 S.

Blue Moon BBQ

1600 State Rd. 70 E.

Bucio Chinese Restaurant

104 S.E. Sixth St.

Brahma Bull Restaurant & Lounge

2405 U.S. 441 S.E.

Bravo

802 N.E. Park St.

Brown Cow Sweetery

103 S.W. Park St.



Burger King
604 N.E. Park St.

**Cowboys BBQ &
Steak Company**
202 N.E. Seventh Ave.

Crossroads Restaurant
5050 N.E. 128th Ave.

Crum's Windmill Café
480 Windmill Road, Brighton
Reservation

**Dairy Queen Grill &
Chill**
1212 S. Parrott Ave.

Ding A Ling Deli
2107 U.S. 441 S.E.

Domino's
1700 S. Parrott Ave., Suite B

Duck Pub (Lakeport)
1031 Lakeport Plz,
Okeechobee

Dunkin' Donuts
205 N.E. Park St.
4993 U.S. 441 S.

El Rancho Market
3901 U.S. 441 N.

El Rico Tacos
3600 U.S. 441 S.



Gladys' Restaurant
511 S.W. Park St.

Golden Corral
700 S. Parrott Ave.

Good Spirits
245 U.S. 441

High Noon Café, OK Corral Gun Club
9449 N.E. 48th St.

Jersey Mike's Subs
611 S.W. Park St.

Joe's Pizza & more
3100 U.S. 441 S.

Joey's Supreme Pizza
107 S.W. Park St.

Kahootz Draft House
702 N.W. Park St.

KFC
3387 U.S. 441 S.

King House Chinese Restaurant
3399 U.S. 441 S.

La Mariposa Mexican Restaurant
202 NE 2nd St. Suite 10

La Queretana Supermarket
625 N.E. Park St.

La Taqueria Las Palmitas
Near Southwest 21st Avenue & State
Road 70

Los Cocos
Mexican Restaurant

Fajitas Steak Chicken & Shrimp
Tacos - Tostadas - Enchiladas
Burritos - Quesadillas - Nachos
FACEMASK REQUIRED FOR ENTRY.

**2 Pick-up Windows
Please Call Ahead!**



Dine In or To Go:
(863)467-0922
107 NW 6th Ave
Okeechobee, FL 34972

Lakeside Grill
1111 S. Parrott Ave.

Landing Strip Café
2800 N.W. 20th Trail

Lightsey's Seafood Restaurant
1506 S. Parrott Ave.

Little Caesars Pizza
2105 S. Parrott Ave.

Los Cocos Mexican Restaurant

107 N.W. Sixth Ave., Okeechobee
863-467-0922
facebook.com/eatloscocos/
Hours: Tues. - Thurs. 10:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m., Fri. 10:30 a.m. – 9 p.m., Sat. 10:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Delicious homemade cuisine in a family atmosphere! We offer a large variety of excellent Mexican entrees including tacos (crunchy or soft), tostadas, enchiladas, burritos (wet or dry), quesadillas, nachos, fajitas (steak, chicken, shrimp or mixed), taco salads & more! High quality ingredients and our authentic flour tortillas are a specialty you won't find anywhere else. Join us for lunch or dinner. Catering and party trays available.

Lunch Box, Okeechobee KOA
4276 U.S. 441 S.

Lunkers Sports Bar & Grill
4825 U.S. 441 S.

Mable's Place
204 N.E. Seventh Ave.

McDonald's
4151 U.S. 441 S.
401 E. North, S.W. Park St

Mi Familia
219 S.W. Park Street

Mom's Kitchen
909 S. Parrott Ave.

Nutmeg's Cafe
515 S.W. Park St.

Okeechobee Fish Company
7841 Hwy 78 West

**Okeechobee Livestock Market
Restaurant**
1055 U.S. 98 N.

Paco's Kitchen
3100 U.S. 441 S.

Papa John's Pizza
414 N.E. Park St.

Park 112
112 S.E. Park St.

Park-it Market
1600 State Road 70 E.

Parrott Island
1001 S. Parrott Ave.

Pizza Heaven
208 S. Parrott Ave.

Pizza Hut
2795 U.S. 441 S.

Pogey's Family Restaurant
1759 S. Parrott Ave.

Popeye's Louisiana Kitchen
822 N.W. Park St.

Publix
3551 U.S. 441 S.

Pueblo Viejo
3415 U.S. 441 S.

Qual Creek Plantation (Pavilion)
12399 NE 224th Street

Ricky D's Dogs
Corner of State Road 78 & U.S. 441 S.

Ricky D's Sweet Treats
Corner of State Road 78 & U.S. 441 S.



**Ridge
Market**
7 State Rd 78,
Buckhead Ridge

**Rio Bravo Mexican
Restaurant**
151 N.W. 36th St.

Sante Fe Mexican Restaurant
207 S.W. Fifth Ave.

**Seminole Casino Brighton
Josiah Restaurant**
17735 Reservation Road N.E.

Serenity Coffee Shop
601 S.W. Park St.

Shenanigans
2237 U.S. 98 N
Speckled Perch
105 U.S. 98 N.

Sublime
101 SW 2nd Ave.

Subway
2101 S. Parrott Ave | 2398 State Road
70 | 422 N.E. Park St. 1865 State Road
70 W. | 12800 State Road 70 E. | 8605
U.S. 441 S.E.

Sweet Peas Grocery
2558 NE 144th St.

Taco Bell
501 N.E. Park St.



Taqueria Serrano
5602 State Road 70

Taqueria y Fruteria
1002 N.W. Park St.

Taqueria Yanez
310 U.S. 98 N.

Tasty Cuban Café
3600 U.S. 441 S.

Tin Fish

301 N. Parrott Ave,
Okeechobee
863-357-0722
theadinfishrestaurants.com
facebook.com/
tinfishokeechobee/

Hours: Mon.-Sat. 11AM-Midnight,
Sun. 11AM-10PM

Tin Fish offers fresh seafood dishes to delight any appetite. Our 100% Angus Big Fat Burgers and our taco selection will knock your socks off. Happy hour is 4:30-6:30 daily. We have a full bar with Diamond pool tables. Parties can be booked on-site. Check out our Facebook page for upcoming events.

Trading Post Flea & Farmers Market
3100 U.S. 441 S.

Twisted Sisterz Mobile Kitchen & Bakery
(various locations)

Ursy's Corner Café
3100 U.S. 441

Wendy's
502 N.E. Park St.

Winn-Dixie
3246 U.S. 441 S

Yanely's Tacos
3100 U.S. 441 S.

Yeli's Sweets
3600 U.S. 441 S.

Zaxby's Chicken Fingers & Buffalo Wings
912 N.E. Park St.

Zippy's
301 S.W. Park St.

The Okeechobee area dining guide will publish inside of several annual Lake Okeechobee News publications. To submit additions, corrections or to upgrade your listing, please contact Jaime Limoges, advertising manager at Lake Okeechobee News, at 863-824-5934.

Lake Okeechobee News is part of Independent Newsmedia, Inc. and made up of people who share a set of deeply-set values. We care deeply about journalistic service and the community. Our company is owned by a unique non-profit trust that is designed to preserve INI's independence and journalist mission forever.

Taco Tuesday
\$2 Off
Double Taco Plate



Restaurant & Bar

Thirsty Thursday
2-4-1
House Wine
After 4pm



301 N. Parrott Ave.
863-357-0722
Mon - Sat: 11:00 am - Midnight
Sun: 11:00 am - 10:00 pm

Check our Facebook Page for Daily Specials! 

Okeechobee County

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS



Joe Arnold
 District 1
 Elected 2002
 Reelected 2006, 2014, 2018 Term
 expires November 2022.
 863-610-1639



Malissa Morgan
 District 2
 Elected 2012
 Reelected 2016, 2020
 Term expires November 2024
 863-634-5852



Melisa Jahner
 District 3
 School Board Vice Chairwoman
 Elected 2018
 Term expires November 2022
 863-634-8844



Amanda Riedel
 District 4
 School Board Chairwoman
 Elected 2016
 Reelected 2020
 Term expires 2024
 863-261-6764



Jill Holcomb
 District 5
 Elected 2014. Reelected 2018
 Term expires November 2022
 863-484-0908



Ken Kenworthy
 Superintendent of
 Schools
 863-462-5000

A little something for everyone

CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Okeechobee clubs and organizations welcome new members and visitors. Due to COVID-19 restrictions some meeting times and places are subject to change



Special to Okeechobee County Community Guide
The Chamber of Commerce of Okeechobee County's most recent fashion show had an Alice in Wonderland theme.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

772-873-9299. For meetings, please see aastlucieintergroup.com.

AMERICAN LEGION #64

863-763-2950. Meetings are the second Tuesday of every month at 6 p.m., located at the American Legion, 501 S.E. Second St., POST64@centurylink.net, visit Okeechobee

American Legion Post #64 on Facebook.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

863-763-2950. Meetings are held the second Tuesday of every month at 6 p.m., located at the American Legion.

AMERICAN RED CROSS

863-763-2488. Located at 208 N. Parrott Ave., Okeechobee, FL 34972, redcross-pbc.org.

BUSINESS WOMEN'S REFERRAL NETWORK

863-467-2557, rayedeusinger@gmail.com. Call for meetings and information.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (OKEECHOBEE)

55 S. Parrott Ave. Visit their website at okeechobeebusiness.com, email info@okeechobeebusiness.com, visit their Facebook page or call 863-467-6246.

EAST COAST MIGRANT HEAD START

863-467-6930. Located at 726 N.E. 16th Ave., Okeechobee, FL 34972; ecmhsp.org.

ELKS LODGE

Located at 131 N.W. 36th St., 863-623-5738. Meetings are the second and fourth Thursday of every month at 7 p.m.

FRATERNAL ORDER OF EAGLES #4137

863-763-2552. Meetings are held the first and third Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. All meetings are located at 9985 U.S. 441 N.

FRATERNAL ORDER OF EAGLES #4509

863-467-1154. Meetings are members only. Aeries meet the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 6:30 p.m. Ladies meet on the second and fourth

Wednesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. Eagle Riders meet on the second Thursday of every month at 7 p.m. of each month and trustees meet every Monday at 4:30 p.m. Meeting is at 4701 U.S. 441 S.E.

FRIENDS OF THE OKEECHOBEE LIBRARY

863-763-3536. Meetings are held the second Tuesday of every month at 4 p.m., at the Okeechobee Library, 206 S.W. 16th St.

GUARDIAN AD LITEM

Guardian ad Litem always needs more volunteers to advocate for Children in Foster Care. For more information on meetings and location, visit guardianadlitem.org or call 772-785-5804.

KIWANIS CLUB

Meetings are held every Thursday at Lakeside Restaurant, 1111 S. Parrott Ave. Meetings start at noon. For more information, visit facebook.com/OkeechobeeKiwaniis or email ken@gladesmedia.com.

LOYAL ORDER OF THE MOOSE #2417 (SOUTH)

863-763-2250. Meetings are held for ladies on the first and third Monday of every month and gentlemen are the first and third Tuesday of every month, located on 1016 Linda Road, Buckhead Ridge.

MASONIC LODGE

#237

863-763-1610.

Meeting are held for the ladies (The Order of the Eastern Star), the first and third Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. Meetings for the gentlemen are the second and fourth Monday of every month at 7:30 p.m. All meetings are held at 107 N.W. Fifth Ave.

MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION

Meetings are held the second Wednesday of the month at noon at Golden Corral, 700 S. Parrott Ave. For more information, call Pastor Jim Dawson of the First United Methodist Church at 863-763-4021.

MOOSE LODGE #1753 (NORTH)

863-763-4954. All meetings are held the

first and third Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. All meetings are held at 159 N.W. 36th Street.

OKEECHOBEE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

147.195 MHZ with 100 Hz tone. Anyone who is licensed is welcome to checkin for information. For more information, call Mark Brandel, KF4EA, at 863-634-7021.

OKEECHOBEE BATTLEFIELD FRIENDS

863-610-2333. Meetings are held as needed. okeechobeebattlefield.com, facebook.com/Battle-of-Okeechobee.

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY BOARD OF REALTORS

863-467-0004. Call for meetings and information.

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY 4-H

Numerous clubs including livestock, cooking, photography, small animals, equestrian and more. For info, call 863-763-6469.

OKEECHOBEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

863-763-4344. Due to COVID-19 the Historical Society has suspended meetings until September. The Okeechobee Historical Museum is located at 1850 U.S. 98. Participants are asked to bring a covered dish to pass for a pot luck lunch. Annual dues are \$10. The museum is open on Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. (except holidays.)

OKEECHOBEE MAIN STREET

okeechobeemainstreet.org, email info@okeechobeemainstreet.org, visit their Facebook page or call 863-357-MAIN (6246).

OKEECHOBEE CITIZENS RECREATIONAL ASSOC.

863-801-7505. Meetings are held the first Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at the OCRA office, 640 N.W. 27th Lane. facebook.com/pages/OCRA-Okeechobee-Citizens-Recreational-Association/358355094346714.

OKEECHOBEE EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

If you are interested in joining the Okeechobee Emergency Response Team, email okeechobeecert@gmail.com.

ROTARY CLUB

Meetings are held every Tuesday at noon at Golden Corral, 700 S. Parrott Ave.; rotary6930.org.

TANTIE QUILTERS

863-763-4344. Meetings are held at the Okeechobee Historical Society, 1850 U.S. 98, on Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. (except holidays). The club makes quilts which are often used to raise money for local charitable causes.

TREASURE COAST BUILDERS ASSOCIATION

Okeechobee branch, 863-467-2007; treasurecoastba.com.

VFW POST #4423

863-763-0818. House Committee meetings are held the first Thursday of every month. Auxiliary meetings are held the second Thursday of the month. Post meetings are held the third Thursday of the month. Meetings are located at the VFW Post, 300 N.W. 34th St. at 6:30 p.m.

VFW POST #10539

863-763-2308. Meetings are held the first Sunday of every month at noon. Meetings are held at the VFW Post, 3912 U.S. 441 S.E.

VFW POST #9528

863-467-2882. Meetings are held the second Saturday of every month at 10 a.m. at 29012 E. S.R. 78.

Daily Specials

including...

Taco Tuesday
\$2 Off
Double Taco Plate

Thirsty Thursday
2-4-1
House Wine
After 4pm

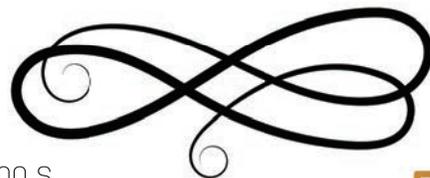


Check our
Facebook Page
for All Specials!



Restaurant & Bar
301 N. Parrott Ave. | 863-357-0722

Mon - Sat: 11:00 am - Midnight | Sun: 11:00 am - 10:00 pm



Church Directory

FIND YOUR INSPIRATION

Churches are located in Okeechobee unless otherwise noted

Abiding Hope Worship Center Assembly of God

4550 U.S. 441 N.
Phone: 863-763-3736
Pastor: Rafael Rodriguez

Alpha Ministries at Freedom Ranch

11655 U.S. Hwy. 441 S.E.
Phone: 863-763-9800
Pastor: John Glenn
alphaministries.org
churchinthewoodsokeechobee.org
office@alphaministries.org

Basinger Christian Brethren Church

16090 N.W. 176th Ave.
Phone: 863-763-7798
Pastor: Reverend Monroe Arnold

Believers Fellowship Church

300 S.W. Sixth Ave.

Bible Church of God

3666 E. Hwy. 70 (old Elks Lodge)
Pastor: Bishop Robert L. Banks, Jr.
facebook.com/pages/category/
Religious-Center/BCOG_IndOkee-1454811934780798

Big Lake Church of Christ

1115 S.W. Third Ave.
Phone: 863-467-6758

Big Lake Missions Outreach

P.O. Box 1663, Okeechobee, 34973
Phone: 863-763-5725
cell: 863-697-6433
Bruce and Mary Anne Swinford,
Directors
Feeding the needy behind the
Methodist Church four days a week
at noon. No meal on Wednesday.

Brighton Baptist Church

24050 Highway 70 West
facebook.com/BrightonBaptist
Okeechobee/?f=111560848883388

Buckhead Ridge Baptist Church

1731 Hunter Rd., Buckhead Ridge
Pastor: Arlen Cook
arlenandloretta@gmail.com

Calvary Chapel of Okeechobee

212 S. Parrott Ave.
Phone: 863 623-5283
Pastor: Carlos Amador
pastorcarlos_calvary@aol.com
calvaryokeechobee.org

Christ Fellowship Church

Non-denominational
701 S. Parrott Ave.
Phone: 561-799-7600 Office
Pastor: Matt Bowen
gochristfellowship.com/church_ locations/okeechobee/

Church of God of Okeechobee

301 N.E. 4th Ave.
Phone: 863-763-4127
Pastor: Chad Keathley
okeechobeecog.com
chadkeathley@att.net

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

310 S.W. Sixth St.
Phone: 863-467-2425
Branch President David Allen
(cell) 561-420-2053

Church of Our Saviour Episcopal

200 N.W. Third St.
Phone: 863-763-4843
Father Jim Shevlin
churchofoursaviourokeechobee.org
churchofoursaviour1@gmail.com

Community Church of Basinger

Non-denominational
19836 U.S. 98 N.
Phone: 863-467-2635
Pastor: Rev. Michael W. Peppers
facebook.com/Community-
Church-of-
Basinger-153185001390240/
ccobasinger@gmail.com



First Baptist Church

Embassy Church at Basinger

Corner of Hwy. 98 & 68
Phone: 863-467-2635

Everglades Baptist Church

3725 S.E. Eighth Street
Church meets outside on empty lot behind school
Phone: 863-261-2198
Pastor: Doug Nickalson, Jim Womble,
Eric Phillips
evergladesbaptist.com/main
ebcokeechobee@gmail.com

Faith Alive Family Church

Non-denominational
3075 S.W. Third Terrace
Phone: 863-623-4233
Pastors Paul & Jen Smith
Facebook.com: Faith Alive Family Church (live on Sunday mornings)
jenlsmith66@gmail.com

Faith Farm Ministries

7595 N.E. 128th Ave.
Phone: 863-763-4224
Pastor: Lee Joliceur
faithfarm.org/

First Baptist Church of Okeechobee (ROC)

401 S.W. Fourth St.
Phone: 863-763-2171
Senior pastor: Mark McCarter
fbcokee.org
mail@fbcokee.org

First Indian Baptist Church of Brighton

20060 Reservation Road
Rev. Matthew Johnson Tiger,
Pastor
Cell phone: 863-357-0013
firstindianbaptistchurchofbrighton.org

First United Methodist Church

200 N.W. Second St.
Phone: 863-763-4021
Sr. Pastor: Don Hanna
Associate Pastor: Jim Dawson
fumcokee.com

Fountain of Life Church

1302 S.W. 32nd St.
Phone: 863-763-8945; or, 863-801-1297
Pastor: Dave Robertson
folifechurch.net
fountainoflifechurchokeechobee@gmail.com

Ft. Drum Community Church

32415 U.S. 441 N.
Phone: 863-467-1733
Pastor: Fred Hodges

Freedom Baptist Church

1902 S. Parrott Ave.
Phone: 863-447-1805
Pastor: Mike Worf

Haven of Rest Pentecostal Church

912 N.W. Second St.
Phone: 863-357-3053
Pastor: Tom Velie
havenofrestchurch.com

His Church – It's Jesus' Church

Non-denominational
1167 Linda Road, Buckhead Ridge
Phone: 863-357-6500
Pastor: Tim Welburn
office@hischurch-itsjesuschurch.org
hischurch-itsjesuschurch.org

Iglesia Jesus Es Mi Redentor

Christian Evangelical
1302 S.W. 32nd Street
Phone: 772-828-6226; 863-447-8571
Pastor: Ignacio Lorenzo
Facebook: JesusESMiRedentor-Okeechobee

Jesus Holy Ghost Crusade Church

1401 N.E. 14th Ave.
Contact: Crystal Harris
Food pantry: 863-634-9194

Lakeport Christian Church

10947 East S.R. 78 • Glades County
Phone: 863-946-1747
Pastor: Frank Moore
lakeportcc.com
mooreorless5@gmail.com

More 2 Life Ministries

All weekend services meet at Osceola Middle School Gym
605 S.W. Park Street
Phone: 863-467-0796
Pastor: Cary McKee
Wednesday meetings at Serenity Coffee Shop

New Testament Baptist Church

Independent Baptist
535 N.E. 28th Ave. (just west of the overpass, off of SR 70)
Phone: 863-763-6682
newtestamentokeechobee.com
ntbcokeechobee@gmail.com

North Okeechobee Church of God

15949 N.W. 30th Terrace
Phone: 863-467-1066
Pastor: Don Leon

Northside Baptist Church

51 N.W. 98 St.
Phone: 863-763-3584
Pastor: Rick Giles
nbc-okeechobee.org
Email: northsidebaptistchurch@live.com

Oakview Baptist Church

677 S.W. 32nd Street
Phone: 863-763-1699
Pastor: Rev. John T. Garner
oakviewbaptist.com
church@oakbc.org

Okeechobee Christian Church

3055 S.E. 18th Terr.
Phone: 863-467-7858
okeechobeechristianchurch.com

Okeechobee Church of Christ

1401 S. Parrott Ave.
Minister: Mike Hanlon
facebook.com/okeechobeecoc
okeecofc@gmail.com

Okeechobee Church of the Nazarene

425 S.W. 28th St. (Wolff Rd.)
Phone: 863-763-3519
Pastor: Joshua Petty
biglakenazarene.com
facebook.com/OkeeNaz
tech@biglakenazarene.com

Okeechobee Church of the Trinity

Interdenominational
2939 S.W. Third Terrace
Pastor: Reverend Kathy Everett

Okeechobee Missionary Baptist Church

4212 U.S. 441 N.
Phone: 863-763-3681
Pastor: Donny Raney
pastorraney@gmail.com

Okeechobee Presbyterian Church

312 N. Parrott Ave.
Phone: 863-824-0013
Pastor: Loy Mershimer
okeechobeepresby.com/wp_
blogspot
office@okeepresby.com

Okeechobee Seventh Day Adventist Church

412 N.W. 6th St.
Phone: 863-763-0655
School: 863-763-0763
Pastor: Rafael Fernandez

Peace Lutheran Church

750 N.W. 23rd Lane
Phone: 863-763-5042
Pastor: John C. Hirst
plcokee.com
pastorjohn@plcokee.com

Pentecostals of Okeechobee

405 S.W. 10th Ave.
Phone: 863-763-5300
Pastor: Mark Sanders

Point of Light Fellowship Church

15399 East S.R. 78, Lakeport,
Okeechobee mailing, 34974
Phone: 863-946-0228
Pastor: Eddie and Teresa
Woodham
teresawoodham@yahoo.com

Sacred Heart Catholic Church

901 S.W. Sixth St.
Phone: 863-763-3727
Pastor: Father Yves Francois
sacredheart901@outlook.com

Seventh Day Christian Church

912 N.W. Park St.
Phone: 863-763-2285
Pastor: Doyle McDuffie

St. Stephens AME Church

1050 N.E. 16th Ave.
Phone: 863-484-8449
Pastor: Rev. Jack Washington
facebook.com/NewStStephenAME/
newststephenamechurch@
gmail.com

St. Teresa of the Child Jesus Catholic Church

1027 Chobee Loop, BHR on
SR78
Phone: 863-946-0696
Pastor: Father Marcial I. Garcia
office@stjosephtheworkerfl.org

The Gathering

1735 S.W. 24th Avenue
Phone: 863-357-4418
Pastors: Mike & Theresa Brown

Treasure Island Baptist Church

4209 U.S. 441 S.E.
Phone: 561-541-7087
Pastor: Douglas T. Ryan
treasureislandbaptistchurch.
com

Trinity Free Will Baptist Church

1840 N.E. 39th Blvd. (Cemetery Rd.)
Phone: 863-763-4962
Pastor: Thomas Dees

Victory Baptist Church

Independent, King James Bible
500 S.W. Ninth St.
Phone: 863-763-0669
Pastor: Dr. Johnny Jarriel
facebook.com/victorybaptistokee
pastorjvbc@gmail.com

Westside Christian Church of Okeechobee

8082 SR 70 West
Phone: 863-467-2278 or
Minister: Richard Barker
facebook.com/Westside-Christian-Church-of-Okeechobee-111813058882730
willarddelaney@peoplepc.com



Sacred Heart Catholic Church

NEW CHAPTERS START EVERY DAY AT INDIAN RIVER STATE COLLEGE

- High-tech training for in-demand careers
- Associate degrees for university transfer
- Bachelor's degrees in high-growth fields
- Graduate debt-free—91% of IRSC students do!



START YOUR NEW CHAPTER AT THE IRSC DIXON HENDRY CAMPUS!



INDIAN RIVER STATE COLLEGE

Dixon Hendry Campus | 2229 NW 9th Avenue, Okeechobee | 863-824-6000

IRSC is an EA/EO institution.

City of Okeechobee

COUNCIL MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES



Dowling R. Watford, Jr.
Mayor of Okeechobee
Served on city council 1981-1984;
has been re-elected since 1987
Serving second term as mayor:
2019-2021
Serving 10th city council term
Up for re-election in 2022
dwatford@cityofokeechobee.com



Marcos Montes De Oca
City Administrator
863-763-3372 ext. 9812
mmontesdeoca
@cityofokeechobee.com



Lane Earnest-Gamiotea
City Clerk
Serving her fifth consecutive term as
City Clerk
Up for re-election in 2022
863-763-3372
lgamiotea@cityofokeechobee.com



Bobby Keefe
Council Member
Elected 2018, Up for re-election 2022
bkeefe@cityofokeechobee.com



Wes Abney
Council Member
Appointed Aug. 21, 2018 to Jan. 4, 2021
Filling seat until special election in May
2021



Monica Clark
Elected 2016, re-elected 2020
Up for re-election in 2024
mclark@cityofokeechobee.com
Council Member
Term of office: January 2017 to
January 2021

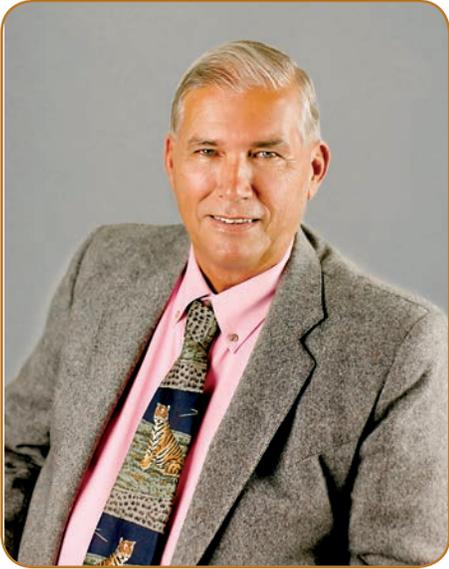


Bob Jarriel
Council Member
Elected 2018,
Up for re-election 2022

The City Council meets on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. in their chambers, located on the second floor of City Hall.

Okeechobee County

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



David Hazellieff
 District 1
 1st Vice Chairman. Elected 2016,
 re-elected 2020, up for re-election 2024.
 Previously served 1996-2004
 863-610-1553
dhazellief@co.okeechobee.fl.us



Bryant Culpepper
 District 2
 Elected 2010, re-elected 2014, 2018
 Up for re-election 2022
 863-801-4097
bculpepper@co.okeechobee.fl.us



Bradley G. Goodbread
 District 3
 Elected 2016, re-elected 2020
 Up for re-election 2024
 863-634-2121
bgoodbread@co.okeechobee.fl.us



Terry W. Burroughs
 District 4
 Commission Chairman
 Elected 2014, re-elected 2018
 Up for re-election 2022
 863-532-6036
tburroughs@co.okeechobee.fl.us



Kelly Owens
 District 5
 2nd Vice Chairman
 Elected 2016, re-elected 2020
 Up for re-election 2024
 863-532-9006
kowens@co.okeechobee.fl.us



Louis Johnson
 Deputy Administrator
 Appointed 2019
 863-763-6441

Okeechobee County CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS



Melissa Arnold

Supervisor of Elections

The Okeechobee County Supervisor of Elections will administer all federal, state and county elections in Okeechobee County. As a gatekeeper of the democratic process, and an elected Constitutional Officer, the Supervisor of Elections will uphold the election laws of the State of Florida and the Constitution of the United States. The mission of the supervisor of elections is to enhance public confidence; encourage citizen participation; and increase voter awareness and education for citizens of all ages.

Melissa Arnold was elected in 2020. She will be up for re-election in 2024.

863-763-4014 • 304 N.W. Second St., Suite 144

voteokeechobee.com

elections@voteokeechobee.com



Mickey Bandi

Property Appraiser

The Okeechobee County Property Appraiser is the Constitutional officer charged with making the annual determination of the just or fair market value of all property within the county for taxing purposes, and maintaining certain records connected therewith. These records include a comprehensive GIS (Geographic Information System).

Mickey Bandi was elected in 2016 and re-elected in 2020. He will be up for re-election in 2024.

863-763-4422

307 N.W. Fifth Ave., Suite A
okeechobeeapa.com



Jerald D. Bryant

Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller

The Okeechobee County Clerk of the Circuit Court, established by the Constitution of 1838, is the public trustee for the county. The clerk provides the checks and balances in county government by acting in their capacity as Clerk to the Board, Clerk to the Court, Keeper of the Public Records, Comptroller and Internal Auditor of county funds.

Jerald Bryant was elected to the position in 2020. He will be up for re-election in 2024.

863-763-2131 | 312 N.W. Third St.
clerk.co@okeechobee.fl.us

Celeste Watford

Tax Collector

The Tax Collector serves as an agent for various state and local government agencies and taxing authorities for collection of revenue, and is also responsible for distributing this revenue to these agencies. Although most of the revenue collected are taxes, the Tax Collector's office isn't funded with tax dollars but with fees collected for services provided. These fees are established by the Florida Legislature and outlined in the Florida Statutes. The amount of work done in the Tax Collector's office creates fee revenues in excess of the Tax Collector's budget. All excess fees are returned to the local government agencies at the end of each fiscal year. Celeste Watford was first elected in 2000. She will be up for re-election in 2024.

863-763-3421

307 N.W. Fifth Ave., Suite B
okeechobeeountytaxcollector.com



Noel Stephen

County Sheriff

The Sheriff of Okeechobee County has his duties and regulations established through Florida Statutes, just as other constitutional officers. At the present time, Noel Stephen is the sheriff and chief law enforcement officer of Okeechobee County, and is the Chief Corrections Officer of the county jail. The sheriff supervises over 200 full time employees, over 100 part time/volunteers and manages a current budget of over 20 million dollars.

Sheriff Stephen started in the Okeechobee County Jail as a Corrections Deputy in 1987 and was elected as sheriff in 2016 and re-elected in 2020. He will be up for re-election in 2024.

863-763-3117 | 504 N.W. Fourth St.
sheriff.co.okeechobee.fl.us



Treasure Coast Hospice

A TREASURE HEALTH SERVICE



We're Here When You Need Us

HOSPICE CARE

Providing exceptional care to patients in their homes, hospitals, assisted living residences, and in our Inpatient Units.



GRIEF SUPPORT

Grief counseling for our patients, their families, and anyone in our community who has experienced the loss of a loved one.



PEDIATRIC CARE

Our specialized pediatric team helps families overcome the challenges of caring for a child with a serious illness.



CARE COMPASSION COMMITMENT



TreasureHealth.org

Proudly Serving Okeechobee County

Hospice care has always been at the heart of all that we do. Since 1982, Treasure Coast Hospice has been providing compassionate end-of-life care to patients and families in our community.



772-403-4500

425 SW Park Street
Okeechobee, FL

Licensed since 1982. Treasure Coast Hospice complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 772-403-4500. (Spanish) ATANSYON: Si w pale Kreyòl Ayisyen, gen sévis ed pou lang ki disponib gratis pou ou. Rele 772-403-4500. (French Creole).



Okeechobee County
 (in red on the map of Florida)
 Okeechobee County
 768.91 square miles in area

Latitude: 27 N
 Longitude: 80 W

Lake Okeechobee
 (in blue on the map)
 Approximately 730
 square miles in area
 Average depth is about 9 feet

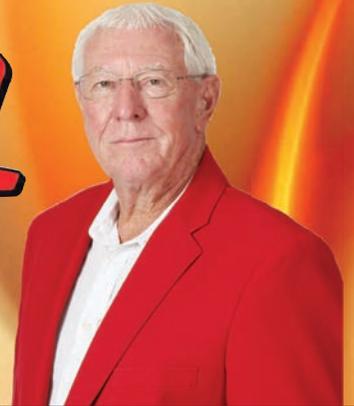
Important Numbers

IN AN EMERGENCY, CALL 9-1-1

- Animal Control 863-357-3225
- City Code Enforcement office 863-357-1971
- City Fire Department, non-emergency
 863-763-9796
- City Police, non-emergency
 863-763-5521
- County Code Enforcement office
 863-763-5548
- County Fire/Rescue, non-emergency
 863-763-5544
- Emergency Operations Center 863-763-3212
- Glades Electric Cooperative 863-946-6200
- FDACS Consumer Help Line
 1-800-HELP-FLA (1-800-435-7352)
- Florida Power and Light 1-800-226-3545
- FPL power outages 1-800-468-8243
- Lake Okeechobee News 862-763-3134
- Okeechobee Utility Authority 863-763-9460
- Poison Control Center 904-244-4465
- Raulerson Hospital 863-763-2151
- Red Cross 863-763-2488
- Sheriff's Office, non-emergency. . 863-763-3117
- School Board Office 863-462-5000

Advertising INDEX

Anderson Realty Co.	59
Big Lake Eye Care	5
Brain Matters Research.	35
Cristie Schmidt, Realtor	21
Cooling Refrigeration Services.	27
Dining Guide	43-46
Eli's Western Wear	13
Family Dentistry	41
Gilbert Family of Companies.	60
Glades Electric Cooperative	33
Hazellief & Prevatt Realty.	17
Heartland Discount Pharmacy	3
Hospice of Okeechobee.	37
Indian River State College.	53
Lake O Real Estate.	11
Lawrence Insurance.	27
Legacy Real Estate of Florida.	33
Lehman Auto Body.	19
Los Cocos Mexican Restaurant	21, 44
Miller's Central Air	15
Mixon Real Estate Group	2
NHC Homecare	27
Philip Berger	25
Quik Change Oil & Lube.	5
Rustic Style & Cabins	30-31
State Farm Insurance	9
Tin Fish Restaurant	46, 49
The Tucker Group.	39
Treasure Coast Hospice	57
Value Specs.	7
Vitas Healthcare.	23



*Vicki S. Anderson,
Licensed Real Estate Broker
President,
Okeechobee Board of Realtors*

Vicki Anderson 863.634.4106

863.634.4107 Eric Anderson

*Your Top Realty Company
In Okeechobee
That Your Family Can Trust
To Be There For You!*



*We Service ALL Your
Real Estate Needs*

Shelly Doyle
Personal Assistant
863.801.8463
shellydoyle@ymail.com

Vicki S. Anderson
Licensed Real Estate Broker
863.634.4106 | vic_anderson@earthlink.net

Eric W. Anderson
Licensed Real Estate Broker
863.634.4107

Shelly D. Doyle
Licensed Real Estate Agent
863.801.8463 | shellydoyle@ymail.com

30034 E. SR 78, Okeechobee, FL 34974

For all of our listings, please visit www.AndersonRealtyCo.com



Gilbert Culberth



CHEVROLET



Established 1933
863-763-3154

Established 2013
863-763-2121
Gilbreth, Age 14
Chevrolet Autom
Maurid, Alabama



OIL COMPANY

All-Night Service Station
West N
Okeechobee
Established 1924
863-763-0666

"password" is Chevrolet!

COLLISION CENTER
Established 1933
863-824-3553



OUTDOORS

Established 1950
863-763-6434



Established 2011
863-763-6434

Realty
Established 1971
863-763-1155

FLEET
& COMMERCIAL
Established 2017
863-824-3518

Experience
PRODUCTIONS
Established 2016
863-824-3636

The Gilbert name is consistent with value and community service. Our family roots are here in Okeechobee, and we take pride in offering services the community needs just as we have since 1924. We will continue to be here as a neighbor and friend for generations to come.

Visit one of our friendly Gilbert locations today and see why people say, "Gilbert Has It."

Proudly Serving the Lake Okeechobee Area Since 1924