

The MULLET RAPPER

What's Happening in the Everglades City Area

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2007

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P O Box 617, Everglades City, FL, 34139

Volume II • Issue #44

SHERIFF'S WARNING

Lt. Mark Milligan told the *Rapper* that since his report to the Council (see story right), several ATVs were stolen from a locked trailer in the South Blocks. He advises that you write down the serial numbers for any small motorized vehicles or expensive equipment you own to make them easier to identify if found.

Chamber Event

The Everglades Area Chamber of Commerce will hold a members' meeting and elections on **Wednesday, December 19**, at 5:30 p.m. in the Seafood Depot. If you are interested in becoming a member, phone Winnie at 695-3172 or stop in to see her at the Tower Building, next to the Oyster House.



Kids and adults all had a good time on Friday, December 7, decorating the tree in front of City Hall before the lights were turned on. There was also hot cider & chocolate and singing led by Parker Oglesby during the event.

Santa will visit ECity on FRIDAY, December 14, at 3:00 p.m. to deliver the "Wish List" gifts.



Reach Out, our neighborhood charity, is collecting gifts for children. You can take unwrapped presents to Everglades Island Properties, next to Right Choice Supermarket, or to the Post Offices. The distribution will be on Saturday, December 22. For info, phone Carol Foss at 695-2277.

Everglades Community Church is having a Lasagna Supper on SATURDAY, December 15, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children under 10. The meal includes salad, drink, and desert. For more info, phone Virginia at 695-2223.

NOTE: THIS IS A NEW DATE!!!

CITY COUNCIL

by Marya Repko

At the brief meeting on Tuesday, December 4, Mayor Sammy Hamilton thanked everyone for voting in the recent election. He said that we had broken all records for turnout in the City and that he will try to work even harder during the next 4 years. He reported that he has finally signed off the accounts with FEMA and has received a further funding from them. He also said that he intends to improve McLeod Park and to equip the Skating Rink with amusements. He also hopes to get grants for the installation of sewer hook-up on Plantation Island.

Lt Mark Milligan reported on behalf of the Collier County Sheriff's Office that there were no incidents since the last meeting except for one theft that occurred the previous night when there was a forced entry into a house in Everglades City from which firearms were stolen. The CCSO has suspects.

He said that he was consulting with the Mayor about the 700 visitors expected next week (see page 3) and that extra deputies and Fire Department staff would be on hand for the two days.

Councillors Tammy Smallwood and Parker Oglesby both thanked the public for the great turnout at the election. Councillor Johnny Potter said he was proud of our Skating Rink. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, January 8.

MERRY

CHRISTMAS

to all our readers!

The next issue of the *Rapper* will be on December 28.



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FEATURE: "HOLIDAY NEWS" page 7

If you have news, photos, announcements, or articles ... email snookcity@hotmail.com or phone 695-2397.

DECEMBER 2007 ❖ JANUARY 2008

<u>SUN</u>	<u>MON</u>	<u>TUES</u>	<u>WED</u>	<u>THURS</u>	<u>FRI</u>	<u>SAT</u>
new moon ☉ 9	10 Hour of Prayer Holy Family Catholic Church 7 pm OFCD Board Fire Station, 6 pm	11	12 Ladies Coffee Jan Brock's Home in Ochopee, 8 am Book Signing Seafood Depot 5:30 pm	13	14 Santa Visit  City Hall, 3 pm see p.1	15 Lasagna Supper Community Church, 5-7 pm see p.1
16	17 Hour of Prayer Everglades First Baptist Church 7 pm	18 Reach Out Comm. Church 8:30 a.m. SAC meeting School, 3 pm	19 Ladies Coffee Everglades Scoop 8 am Chamber of Commerce Seafood Depot 5:30 pm, see p.1	20 Lions Club Bd Mtg, 5:30 pm Christmas Musical School, 7 pm	21	22
23	full moon ● 24 Candlelight Service Everglades Community Church 7 pm, see p.7 City Hall Closed	25 Christmas 	26 Ladies Coffee Roadkill Cafe 8 am	27	28	29 Pancake Fly-In Airport, 10-12 am
30	31 Hour of Prayer no service 7 pm	JAN 1 New Year's Day	2 Ladies Coffee Triad Seafood 8 am	3 Lions Club Depot, 7 pm	4	5
6	7 Hour of Prayer Everglades Community Church 7 pm Trail Cmtee ECC, 9 am	new moon ☉ 8 FME mtg Comm. Church 9 am City Council City Hall, 5:30 pm	9 ESHP mtg City Hall, 10 am Ladies Coffee Havana Cafe 8 am	10 Great Gators School, 9:30	11	12 Pet Vet McLeod Park 9 am - 1 pm Copeland 2 - 4 pm

THRIFT SHOP: Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri, Sat, 11:00 am - 3:00 pm

SKATING RINK: Friday/Saturday, 7:00 - 10:00 pm

MUSEUM: Tues-Fri, 9 am to 5 pm; Sat, 9 am to 4 pm

SMALLWOOD STORE: daily 11 am to 5 pm

FOOD PANTRY: Sat, 8:30 to 10:30 am, Community Church

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: Wed, 5 pm, Community Church

CHRIST-CENTERED 12-STEP PROGRAM: Tuesday, 6:30 pm, Chokoloskee Church of God Annex Building

NATIONAL PARK GULF COAST VISITORS' CENTER: daily 9 am to 4 pm (boats 8:30 am to 4:00 pm)

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE INFORMATION CENTER (Carnestown): daily, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

SHERIFF AT CITY HALL: 12/14 (9-11 am) 12/18 (10 am - noon) 12/19 (9-11 am) 12/21 (9-11 am) 12/28 (noon - 2 pm)



700 Visitors Here Next Week!

by Patricia Huff

On Monday and Tuesday, December 17 and 18, residents will notice a large crowd of visitors behind the Catholic Church which will be the hub for a corporate group from Sweden.

Tetra Pak is an international company founded in 1951 by Dr. Ruben Rausing an innovator in developing and creating a milk

package that required a minimum of material and maximum hygiene. Dr. Rausing's idea, which dates from 1943, revolutionized the way food was processed and packaged. Today, the company operates in more than 165 markets around the world with over 20,000 employees.

Seven hundred of Tetra Pak's top managers will be visiting our area, camping just outside of town and taking advantage of all the opportunities to enjoy our unique environment. On both days there will be six different adventures from which they may choose: fishing, airboat rides, kayak/canoe trips, swamp walks, bicycle tours and a 10,000 Islands excursion. On Monday, they will enjoy entertainment at their campsites.

According to Ivey House owner, David Harraden, the main local organizer for Tetra Pak, this event is expected to be an economic boom to Everglades City with over 200 hotel beds being occupied and the hiring of our fishing guides and tour boat operators. Mayor Sammy Hamilton has agreed with Tetra Pak that after the event they will donate 150 bicycles to the city for the families in our area, 700 tents to the County boy scouts, 700 sleeping bags to Charities for the homeless, and picnic tables to the Betterment Association.

OCHOPEE FIRE CONTROL DISTRICT

- 11-28-07 Lacerated Finger, Everglades Fire Station
- 11/29/07: Difficulty Breathing, 80m I-75
- 11/29/07: Down Power Lines, Ochopee
- 12/01/07: Possible Assault Victim, SR-29 & US-41
- 12/01/07: Vehicle Accident, 54m I-75
- 12/02/07: Vehicle Fire, 73m I-75
- 12/03/07: Brush Fire, SR-29 1m North of the Everglades City Bridge
- 12/03/07: Stomach Pain, Everglades City
- 12/04/07: Fuel Leak, 52m I-75
- 12/04/07: Vehicle Accident, 63m I-75
- 12/04/07: Facial Injury, 63m I-75
- 12/07/07: Person Dizzy & Nauseous, Monroe Station
- 12/08/07: Unknown Medical Problem, US-41 & SR-29
- 12/08/07: Swamp Buggy Accident, Burns Road
- 12/09/07: Vehicle Accident, 68m I-75
- 12/09/07: Vehicle Accident, SR-29 & I-75
- 12/10/07: Traumatic Injuries, 64m I-75
- 12/10/07: High Blood Pressure, Lee Cypress\
- 12/11/07: Chest Pains, Chokoloskee Island
- 12/11/07: Vehicle Accident, 57m I-75
- 12/11/07: Vehicle Accident, 54m I-75
- 12/12/07: Unknown Problem, Ochopee

MOBILE PET VET

Dr Baker will be here on **Saturday, January 12** in McLeod Park from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm and in Copeland from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. She will also be here on **Sunday, January 13** from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. for surgery by appointment only. Phone 777-PETS.



POST OFFICE DEADLINES:

- 12/11 First Class International
- 12/15 Parcel Post to USA
- 12/20 First Class to USA

THANKS FROM LIONS CLUB FOR GREAT SHOOT

The Lions Club is pleased with the success of the Turkey Shoot at Port of the Islands on December 1 & 2 and would like to thank all the merchants for their donations of raffle prizes. The list is too long to mention here but included restaurants, boat tours, gift shops, hardware stores, among others, and private contributions. The grand prizes, bought by the Club itself, were: a shot gun, a BBQ grill, and a rod & reel. Thanks to all who helped and who took part.

TIDES FOR BARRON RIVER

INFORMATION FROM <http://TIDESANDCURRENTS.NOAA.GOV>

12/14/2007	Fri	03:43AM	2.7	H	12:42PM	-0.1	L	06:46PM	2.4	H
12/15/2007	Sat	12:41AM	0.8	L	04:42AM	2.5	H	01:27PM	0.0	L
12/16/2007	Sun	01:54AM	0.7	L	06:06AM	2.3	H	02:18PM	0.2	L
12/17/2007	Mon	03:12AM	0.5	L	07:51AM	2.1	H	03:14PM	0.4	L
12/18/2007	Tue	04:23AM	0.3	L	09:31AM	2.1	H	04:13PM	0.5	L
12/19/2007	Wed	05:25AM	0.1	L	11:02AM	2.1	H	05:11PM	0.7	L
12/20/2007	Thu	06:21AM	-0.2	L	12:20PM	2.2	H	06:08PM	0.8	L
12/21/2007	Fri	07:15AM	-0.4	L	01:24PM	2.3	H	07:03PM	0.8	L
12/22/2007	Sat	08:08AM	-0.6	L	02:18PM	2.4	H	07:56PM	0.8	L
12/23/2007	Sun	12:24AM	3.3	H	08:59AM	-0.7	L	03:05PM	2.4	H
12/24/2007	Mon	01:12AM	3.4	H	09:47AM	-0.7	L	03:49PM	2.3	H
12/25/2007	Tue	02:01AM	3.4	H	10:34AM	-0.6	L	04:30PM	2.3	H
12/26/2007	Wed	02:51AM	3.2	H	11:19AM	-0.5	L	05:09PM	2.3	H
12/27/2007	Thu	03:46AM	3.0	H	12:03PM	-0.3	L	05:46PM	2.3	H
12/28/2007	Fri	12:05AM	0.6	L	04:46AM	2.7	H	12:47PM	-0.1	L

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SCHOOL NEWS

phone: 377-9800 or 695-2561

website: www.collier.k12.fl.us/evg

IMPORTANT DATES

Thurs, Dec 13: Boys' Basketball, 5:00 pm

Tues, Dec 18: SAC meeting, 3:00 pm

Thurs, Dec 20: Christmas Musical, 7:00 pm

Mon, Dec 24: Christmas recess

Mon, Jan 7: School starts again



From Savannah's Eyes

Wow!! I am so excited because it is December. The first thing I like about December is that it is the month of my aunt's (GeeGee) birthday. The second thing I like about December is that it is the month of Christmas, the best holiday of the year to me. This past Friday we all hung ornaments on the tree at City Hall, sang carols around the Christmas tree with my Dad; he was playing the guitar while my friends and I were singing. We had a blast singing, eating and hanging ornaments, playing and being with friends. And, we are also having a Christmas Play at my school. It is called "Forty Winks." It is December 20 in the Cafetorium. We hope that everyone will come to see the play. Boy, all of those things are a lot of things to do in December. Remember, nobody knows if Santa is real or not! So be good for goodness sake!!



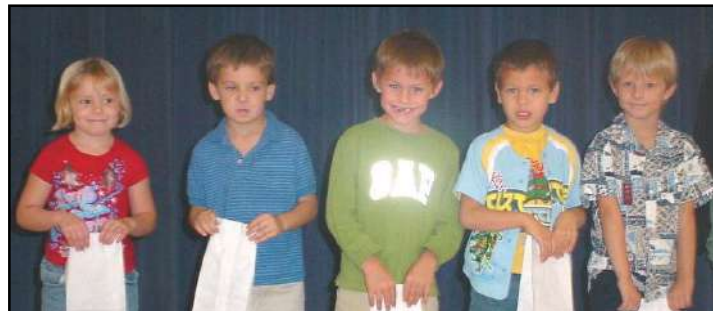
Grade 5 & 6: Christen Steffen, Tyler Pasiuk, Stephanie Barker, Jordyn Demere, Garret Howard.



"Buster the Bus" visited Everglades City School on Thursday, December 6, to teach the younger children about safety. Jimmy Brewer interviewed the talking, eye-flashing vehicle.

Great Gators for November 2007

Thanks to Trina Mitchell for the photos.



K & Pre-K: Alexis Rain, Gage Shyroock, Evan Richards, Daniel Gibson, Kyle McMillin.



Grade 1: Tyus Fails, Claybrook Story, Cameron Foss, Alanna Humphreys, Cameron Jones.



Grade 2: Adrianna Ringer, Rachel McMillin, Bryce Kish, Davonte Detweiler, Scout Morris.



Grade 3 & 4: Brandon Steffen, Braxton Kidder, Rebecca Simmons, Lindsay Thomas, Tawny Wood.

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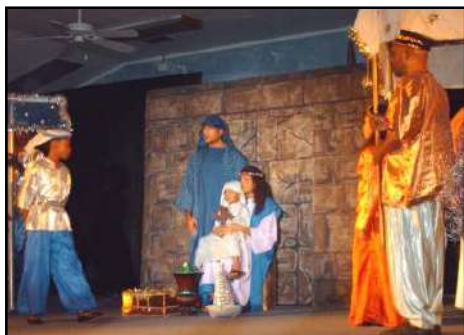
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HOLIDAY NEWS



Christmas Drama

by Helen Bryan

The Rev. Morris Dantin welcomed a drama cast of more than 80 members from the Cooper City Church of God in Miramar, Fl. who presented "The Birth of the King" at the Chokoloskee Church of God on Saturday, December 1. The two-hour drama packed the church with seats added for late comers. The exciting Bible story of Christ was presented from Genesis with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to the birth of Jesus and his early childhood. The actor playing the Christ child was three-month-old Marcus Antonio Flores of Miramar, FL., doing a great job as did all the performers.

The actors were very excited to be back in Chokoloskee, as was the local congregation welcoming them for the third year. The cast and directors looked forward to their treat of a wonderful grouper seafood meal catered by the Seafood Depot with salads and desserts provided by Ladies of the Church. This Biblical performance indeed brought us great excitement for this season when we again celebrate the birth of our Lord!



The church was packed for "Hanging the Green" at Everglades First Baptist on Sunday, December 2. The family service included many carols and a reading of the Christmas Story for the kiddies.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Christmas Eve, Monday the 24th

Everglades Community Church

6 pm: Live Nativity with Carols

7 pm: Candlelight Service

Everglades First Baptist

Church will be open during the evening and candles will be lit

Christmas Day, Tuesday the 25th

Holy Family Catholic Church

10:30 am: Christmas Mass



Just some of the many decorations still for sale at the Thrift Shop, behind the Fire Station. They also have charity Christmas cards designed by local school students and order forms for the "Evergladesopoly" board game. Stop in on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, from 11 am to 3 pm.

Cocoplum is raffling off this hand-knit purse to celebrate its first anniversary. Customers will receive a ticket for every \$20 spent. The drawing will be on December 20. The gift shop, opposite the Rod & Gun, is open next week every day, except Wednesday, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.



Shopping Guide

We forgot to mention that Captain Judy Caseley offers boat tours and photo excursions ... a great idea for visiting relatives or a treat for yourself. see www.focusontheeverglades.com or phone her at 695-2929.



There was a huge choice of items for sale at Art-in-the-Glades on Saturday, December 8, as well as a fish fry and live music thanks to Joe Stem and Jerry & Sauntra Loar and friends.



RESTAURANT NEWS



OPEN ON CHRISTMAS DAY:

Glades Haven Deli: 6 am to 2 pm
Subway at US-41: open until 6 pm
Seafood Depot: lunch

The Ivey House now has a breakfast buffet daily from 6:30 to 10:00 a.m.

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Gift Gallery

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Lifted Up

By Avery Sumner

I felt quiet this morning, a little lost and somewhat down. Some days are just like that for me. I become contemplative and troubled in my search for sustenance and meaning. As strange as it sounds, I like these days. I don't look forward to them, but when they come I embrace them. It's days like these that reaffirm my connection to the world. I can't continue on in my regular efficient manner, but must withdraw and slow down.

Like today, as I prepared to get on my bicycle I noticed vultures circling high riding thermals in the air. Among them, I saw a bright white head, not a hint of gray or beige. I straightened up my back and committed my gaze until the white tail confirmed the bald eagle's identity. I watched for a good long while as the wide wingspan of the eagle flapped, spread and soared way above my downtrodden day.

Eagles are stereotypically uplifting images, and rightly so. The charcoal black torso contrasting to the ultra white tail and head, in form so strong and large, with movements so wide and eloquent. I was uplifted.

But my response to the eagle's magnificence was only possible through my slightly off demeanor, which is what I like about these days. It's like my mood and the rhythms of everything else are working together and this makes me feel like I'm part of something much bigger.

I remember several years ago (when I still owned my recently sold café) walking the beach in Naples. It was a cold, gray late afternoon with no sunbathers at all. It was only me, the chilly salt air and my forlorn thoughts wondering how I would pull through the stress of my business. I was feeling up against the wall. My faith in so many things seemed to be rolling in and out with the waves, always out of grasp.

Another woman walked just ahead coming toward me and I hoped she wouldn't speak because I had nothing at all left in me to say. As if reading my thoughts, she walked straight to me, grabbed my arms and placed a handful of perfectly shaped olive shells into my palm. She didn't make eye contact or say one word, just passed on her gift and kept walking.

I paused, tearful. I don't know who she was, or why she gave me her shells, but the gesture changed me.

I remember another time when I struggled with the end of a failing relationship. When you're the owner and manager of a café you have to hold it all together no matter what. Others are looking to you for motivation and guidance. So I did my best to cover up my personal failures and focus on the needs of customers and the livelihoods of all those whom I employed.

One early morning I sat on the front porch swing at the café, paralyzed. I was struck by grief, unable to move from carrying it all by myself. No one knew my partner in both business and life was moving on without me.

A long time friend pulled into the parking lot. I gathered myself and greeted her as I thought I normally would.

Rebecca has been one of those friends hard to get to know. This is not a complaint at all. She is trustworthy and dependable, caring and honest, but somewhat reserved in ways.

With no words exchanged, she came to me that morning and gave me a deep, long hug. Something she'd never done before. And it felt so good, because though she was comforting me, I could tell she needed it too.

Rebecca and I have supported each other in many ways. And as good friends do we have also argued with each other and hurt each other's feelings. But I haven't ever forgotten that concealed tactile need she saw in me and responded to. I don't think I really knew her capacity as a friend before then.

And I never would have known it had I not been feeling heavy, forced to slow and hang my weight on a porch swing. I felt the nature of strong friendship that day.

For this alone I believe these kinds of days are necessary, like a drug that alters the mind, they change my view and connect me. So I welcome them.

Avery Sumner was the owner of Big House Coffee & Gumbo Limbo Gallery (also known as JT's Grill & Gallery) in Chokoloskee. Although she has moved from the area to concentrate on writing and sailing, she will continue to submit articles to the Rapper.



LOCAL HISTORY

Over 100 people turned up at City Hall on Thursday, December 6, for the 60th Anniversary celebration of the opening of Everglades National Park. After refreshments, a packed council chamber was welcomed by Mayor Sammy Hamilton and then heard from Superintendent Dan Kimball about Everglades Restoration.

The original moving invocation was read by "Deaconess Bedell", as portrayed by Patty Huff. George Barton, aide to our Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart, spoke humorously before reading President Truman's speech, accompanied by a short film.

An "I Was These Then ..." open-mike session followed with contributions of memories from Jimmy Brewer, Gene Davidson, and Bobby C. Billie. The evening ending with 3 episodes of the TV series "Everglades" from the 1960s.

Clyde Butcher brought along a number of his wonderful black & white photos which were displayed around City Hall on easels. A last-minute highlight was the metal sculpture of Ernest F. Coe by local artist Dick Jay.

The event was organized by the National Park Service with help from the Everglades Society for Historic Preservation.



August Burkhard on left
Ernest Coe on right

MUSEUM NEWS

Over twenty members enjoyed the array of salads catered by the Seafood Depot and desserts baked by Sunny Burke at the annual Friends of the Museum luncheon on Monday, December 3. The short business meeting elected directors for 2008: Carol Moseman (President), Sunny Burke (Vice-President), Patty Huff (Secretary), Virginia Kanning (Treasurer), Barbara Portz, Hannah Ineson, and Robin Barnes.



After the meal, featured guest artist Jerry Vallez was introduced by Patty Huff. The group was also honored by the presence of County Commissioner Donna Fiala. A reception for the public followed and Jerry Vallez signed prints of his paintings. The Vallez exhibit continues for the rest of December at the Museum where prints and cards are available for sale.

The Museum is open Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and on Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Volunteers are needed at the desk to welcome visitors. If you can spare a morning or afternoon, phone Martha at 695-0008.

Recipe for Good Eating

Turkey Stuffing by Marya Repko



I use a mixture of equal parts chopped dried bread and cooked rice as a basis for stuffing. Add some diced onions and celery. Then, depending on whether you want a meatless dish or not, put in some little chunks of sausage meat or ham. Spice it up with dried apricots, candied ginger, almonds, candied lemon peel, raisins ... whatever dried fruit is left from baking, all chopped up. Save a few cranberries and throw them in. Moisten with a dash of white wine or water.

By the way, if you cook your turkey upside down for the first half of the time, the juices will flow into the breast meat.



Off the Shelf - Book Review

by Patricia Huff

The Journals of Constant Waterman; Paddling, Poling and Sailing for the Love of It by Matthew Goldman

The title says it all in this interesting recently-published paperback. Simply put, the author loves the water, the wildlife, and exploring small rivers, bays and the ocean. No matter where he travels, he gets off the land in some type of boat whether it is a canoe, rowboat or sailboat. He wants to be there. Matthew Goldman's short articles (90 to be exact, some of which were published in boating magazines) take you along for a ride not just in the various watercrafts with him but through his personal life journeys. In the chapter "Falling in Love" he describes how his father's bedtime stories inspired him to seek out his own adventures at sea. You'll find yourself also wanting to get your feet wet. This book can be found in stores around town or contact Marya Repko at 695-2905.



A Linc Letter

I've been wantin' ta write ya for some time now, not procrastinatin', just puttin' off, 'cause I wuz doin' other things that I thought had ta be done

before I did anything else. Now then let me start off by givin' ya 'uh little perspective. – When ya get ta B 95 yrs. old or so, lookin' forward - ya don't see very far ahead 'cause there's not much further you're gonna go! You're really lookin' atta short time span. However, when ya feel tha vissitudes of old age, the creaky joints & squeaky muscels, tha 'end' seems 'uh long way off! Now don't take this ta B 'gloomy', it's just ta start your perspective – make 'uh mark & look ahead, just where ya think you're gonna B 5 -10 years from now? 'Uh lotta good's gonna happen & some not so good. So you'll look back & take 'uh good deal 'uv joy – pleasure at tha 'good' things, even humor maybe & tha bad stuff will be sorta like yesterday's pain – justa memory. So much for some perspective from an old man!

So we resist change – 'cause we'er used to tha status quo & good or bad - we've got comfortable with it or have 'accomodated it'. As we first looked at this brand new house in Vero we (I) thought "What tha hell" but after 'uh day or two figured out that it wasn't "good or bad" it wuz "different". Different to who? Well just different ta me!" So now as we go back & forth between Vero & Plantation Island we see them each in a much different light. Notice "different" not good or bad. Vero is Vero – Plantation Island is Plantation Island – what changed? We did! So in this small way ya hafta realize that ya can't change the world - but ya can change yourself, be it ever so little. We sometimes refer to this as attitude. For instance it may just be better for ya ta think 'uv how things CAN be done – than ta spend time thinkin' how they CAN'T be done. I've found that ya get further ahead solvin' problems findin' ways ta DO 'em than on ways how ya CAN'T do 'em!

'Uhnuther thing – Communications – I can remember way back when we lived inna country & tha mail man drove 'uhround his route inna horse & buggy! We could see him comin' & would often go out ta tha mail box & get tha mail (& local news - gossip) Tha mail wuz old – tha gossip new! Gettin' the Chicago Tribune, 2 days old - getting letters from friends & relatives – 'uh week or so old. Remember tha old 'crank-up hung onna wall oak telephones with hang-up receiver, battery powered – with 'uh Central & 6 or 8 onna 'party line'? Now for a few 'uv ya we can talk &/or see eachother every day – keep in touch – just a few minutes 'uh day 'ull do it! Echo Link, Google, Skype(audio-vidio) CQ100 – There are more – all free. So we keep in touch & as we get older there are fewer & fewer with whom ta keep in touch.

'Uhnuther thing – ya oughta have - 'uh few younger people with whom ya have good relations. They'll help keep ya, more or less, in tune with tha times – help ya learn - help ya change so's ya don't get 'left behind'. I've been 'pickin' uppa little bit 'uv computerin' so's I can communicated with several people (real friends) so they can help me when Bea & me can't "fix it" or "navigate it". A couple of 'em are close by enough so we even can get "house calls"! Anyway as ya get older, you'll need help and friends should be at tha top 'uv your list. So as ya find ya just hafta give up some 'uv your physical persuits, replace 'em with mental ones. So soften up 'uh little, start changing, be it ever so little. Years ago, after bein' outta college awhile, I went back & visited my old Chemistry Proffessor, W.S. Haldeman, who remarked during the visit, "We knew that if we could get you headed in the right direction, you'd make it." He was one of several who changed the lives of many for the better.

Find fun each new day & enjoy it, Linc & Bea

Lincoln and Bea Frost have a home on Plantation Island and are well-known for their involvement in the community.

A Christmas Message by Lincoln Frost

Let's don't forget the meaning of Christmas – let's don't forget. Turn back the clock and read the several accounts – recorded by eye witnesses to the Event. It is well documented by real people and recorded for us in history. Now think why it all happened. Who promised that it would happen? What was the promise? Let's not forget. This is not only a solemn event, an event of very great magnitude, but a joyous one. It is the culmination of God's promise to us - about us – our transgressions – our sins – our shortcomings – the admission that we are mortal – that through the birth of Christ the Saviour and our belief in Him - these transgressions – these sins and shortcomings would be forgiven and we could enter the Kingdom of Heaven! So, through the birth of Jesus Christ there is a way for our salvation - forgiveness.

REJOICE REJOICE REJOICE

Big Cypress at White House

A Big Cypress National Preserve ornament is prominently displayed on this year's official White House Christmas Tree. The tree is the centerpiece of elaborate decorations celebrating the theme of "Holiday in the National Parks." "It is an amazing honor for the National Park Service to be selected as the theme for the White House holiday decorations by the President and Mrs. Bush," said National Park Service Director Mary A. Bomar. "Mrs. Bush is the best champion for our national parks, and the beautiful decorations in each state room showcase the natural and historical treasures found in parks throughout the country." Unfortunately, the ornament is not for sale to the general public.



Big Cypress has extended the Comment Period on the Commercial Services Plan Through December 19. See the *Rapper* dated November 9 for more details.

The Cypress Camp Trail near Bear Lake Camp Ground is closed to ORVs while it is being stabilized.

NEW OSPREY NESTS PLATFORMS

Big Cypress and LCEC are constructing two nest sites for osprey near the Preserve's headquarters in Ochopee. The platforms were built by Big Cypress staff from materials donated by Home Depot. Linesmen from LCEC will do the actual installation on poles that the utility company has donated.



Man-made platforms provide safe places for the birds to build their nests, away from electricity lines, during their December to May nesting season. For more info and for specs to build a platform, phone LCEC at (239) 656-2202.

OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

Big Cypress is starting its planned activities on December 22. There are two websites of interest:

<http://www.nps.gov/bicy/planyourvisit/ranger-led-activities.htm> and <http://www.nps.gov/bicy/planyourvisit/events.htm> for an interactive calendar that shows what is happening on specific days. They offer guided canoe trips, walks, and interpretative talks. Phone 695-1201.

Collier Seminole also have canoe trips every Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday at 9:30 a.m. with special Guided Moonlight Canoe Adventures on December 22 and 23, starting at 7:00 p.m. Phone 394-3397.

The Friends of Fakahatchee conduct guided swamp walks on the first, second, and third Saturday in each month. To book, phone 695-2860. And, do stop at the Boardwalk on Big Cypress Bend (about 7 miles west of Carnestown) where you can walk off the holiday flab as you admire our native flora & fauna, including the gator family in the pond at the end, and volunteers can answer your questions.

Swamp Tales

by Bob N. Wallace



Where in the world can you see a turtle?

When I was a small boy, my parents gave me a little painted turtle in a glass bowl for my birthday and had my name painted on its tiny shell - "Bobby". I fed that little guy turtle food and changed his water every week. It was quite an education and responsibility for six years of age; but, I don't remember whatever became of Bobby.

My next turtle encounter was years ago in Key West during the Cuban Missile Crisis. I was a Navy Chaplain and my ships were in and out of that port for replenishment and R&R. At that time, the government still allowed the harvesting of green sea turtles. The restaurant I visited in Old Town was, and still is, Turtle Kraals, which served as a place for raising turtles for food, for the shell, and later became a turtle soup cannery as well as a tourist attraction. You can still catch the very popular turtle races held twice a week at the Turtle Kraals in Key West.

On the other hand, maybe you are keen on the teenage mutant ninja turtles so popular with the younger generation.

Or, if you take a cruise down in the Caribbean you can see large sea turtles still being "farmed" at Boatswain's Turtle Farm in Georgetown, Grand Cayman.

Closer to home you possibly can see sixteen species of turtles in the Everglades such as the Loggerhead sea turtle, Green sea turtle, Leatherback sea turtle, and Kemp's riley sea turtle. You can often see turtles sunning themselves on the banks of canals throughout the Everglades.

Be on the lookout for a turtle. Some species can live for one-hundred fifty years without exhibiting any sign of old age. When we consider arthritis, loss of memory and loss of hair, turtles really have it made!

Florida Fish & Wildlife say this about turtles:

Florida is an important place for the endangered and threatened sea turtles of the world. Sea turtles nest on our beaches, forage for food in our estuaries, and all too often wash-up dead on our shoreline. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission staff are dedicated to protecting sea turtles in Florida and learning as much as possible about the biology and life history of these elusive animals.

All sea turtles found in Florida are protected under state statutes. Illegal harvesting, habitat encroachment, and pollution are only some of the things sea turtles must fight against to stay alive. Researchers at FWRI are studying these threats and finding ways to help the population survive.

For more info, see www.myfwc.org and search for "turtles".

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