

The MULLET RAPPER

What's Happening in the Everglades City Area

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2008

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P O Box 617, Everglades City, FL, 34139

Volume II • Issue #49

BOATING UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Yes, you can be apprehended for boating under the influence of alcohol or other debilitating substances. Regulations differ depending on the area and the authority in that jurisdiction.

The Collier County Sheriff's Office has a Marine Bureau to patrol County waters but Federal or State agencies can also stop you.

We will try to sort out all the regulations and report in a future issue of the *Rapper*.

BUSY SATURDAY

March kicks off with a full program of events on **Saturday, March 1**. It is the last day of the **Marjory Stoneman Douglas Festival** (see page 9 for full program). Besides **Art-in-the-Glades** during the **"Swamp Country Fair"**, the day starts with a sale at the **VR Corp**. See page 3 for more details about both events.

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FEATURE: "POEM", page 8

CITY COUNCIL REPORT

by Marya Repko

Mayor Sammy Hamilton said at the meeting on Tuesday, February 12, that it was time to do something about the "Lovers' Lane" property, the abandoned Gawn Fishing development near the airport. On the advice of Building Inspector Ken Badke, the Council moved to send a notice by certified mail informing the owners that they are in violation of local building and development permits. If they do not respond within 10 day, the City can tear down the buildings and clean up the grounds and levy a fine of \$250/day for each code violation.



On a more cheerful note, the Mayor said that the problem of repairing the City docks might be solved because documentation from the early 1960s had been found from the Collier Corporation signing over the streets and rights of way to the City which should include the submerged land under the docks. He hopes that he can prove to the DEP that the docks belong to the City because the river has eroded its banks.

During Public Comment, John Monroe Wilson asked that the City get a guarantee from developers before clearing all the trees from a tract (and then replacing them with non-native species or going bankrupt and leaving a barren landscape). Councilor Tammy Smallwood said that some trees we consider "native", like the Poinciana, are actually exotic although they grow well here. The Mayor replied that he would look into the issue. The Mayor also said, in response to another question from John M. Wilson, that there was no progress on the handover of the airport. Finally, John M. Wilson said that websites still advertised weekly rentals on Pleasure Island and the Mayor said he would ask the Building Inspector to write another letter.

The next council meeting will be on Tuesday, March 4, at 5:30 p.m.

See page 11 for the Sheriff's Report.



Vivian Brown, who has worked for almost 20 years at City Hall, will be leaving us and moving to the Ocala area to stay with her brother and sister-in-law who is not well. She says she'll miss all her friends here but hopes to keep up with news of the area and its wonderful people.

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

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2008

<u>SUN</u>	<u>MON</u>	<u>TUES</u>	<u>WED</u>	<u>THURS</u>	<u>FRI</u>	<u>SAT</u>
	18 <u>Presidents' Day</u> Hour of Prayer Copeland Baptist Mission, 7 pm	19 Reach Out Comm. Church 8:30 a.m. OFCD Board Fire Sta, 6 pm	20 Ladies Coffee Sue Evans' Home 8 am Lenten Bible Study , see p.3	full moon ● 21 Lions Club Bd Mtg, 5:30 pm Copeland Civic 7 pm	22	23 Pancake Fly-In Airport, 10-12 am Paddle-In phone 695-9107
24 Copeland Rockpit Service 6 pm, see p.3	25 Hour of Prayer Chokoloskee Church of God 7 pm	26 MSD Festival see p.9 SAC meeting Media Center School, 3 pm	27 MSD Festival see p.9 Ladies Coffee Triad Seafood 8 am Lenten Bible Study , see p.3	28 MSD Festival see p.9	29 MSD Festival see p.9	MAR 1 Rummage Sale VR Corp, see p.3 MSD Festival see p.9 Art-in-the-Glades see p.3
2 Old Florida Festival see p.9	3 Hour of Prayer Holy Family Catholic Church 7 pm FME mtg Museum, 9 am Trail80th mtg Museum, 11 am	4 City Council City Hall, 5:30 pm	5 Ladies Coffee Havana Cafe 8 am Lenten Bible Study , see p.3	6 Great Gators School , 9:30 ESHP mtg City Hall, 10 am Lions Club Depot, 7 pm School early release	new moon ○ 7 No School Teacher Planning Day	8 Pet Vet see p.3
9 <u>Clocks Change</u> Museum Reception 1 -3 pm	10 Hour of Prayer Everglades First Baptist Church 7 pm	11	12 Ladies Coffee ORA Recreation Center, 8 am Lenten Bible Study , see p.3	13	14	15 Wild Hog Roast Loop Road 695-0008
16	17 Hour of Prayer Everglades Community Church 7 pm OFCD Board Fire Sta, 6 pm	18 Reach Out Comm. Church 8:30 a.m.	19 Ladies Coffee Jan Brock's at the Estuary, 8 am Lenten Bible Study , see p.3	20 ESHP talk Museum, 2 pm Lions Club Depot, 7 pm Maunday Thursday Service ECC, 7 pm	full moon ● 21 <u>Good Friday</u> Good Friday Service ECC, 7 pm	22

March 23: Easter Sunday
May 10: Firefighters' BBQ

April 19-20: Pet Vet
May 23: School Graduation

April 26-27: Tamiami Trail 80th Anniversary Celebration
May 24-25: Pet Vet

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 10 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

WEIGHT LOSS GROUP: Fri, 5:30 pm weigh-in, 6 pm meeting, Community Church **NEW GROUP!**

SHERIFF AT CITY HALL: 2/21 (9-11 am) 2/22 (9-11 am) 2/26 (noon-2 pm) 2/27 (9-11 am) dates in March will be posted

Copeland Baptist Church will hold an outdoor evening service at the Rock Pit, **Sunday, February 24**, 6:00 p.m. Refreshments will be served. Come and join in the fellowship of Jesus Christ. For info, phone Jenny at 298-6536 or Bill at 287-0457

Everglades Community Church holds Lenten Bible Study every **Wednesday** at noon from now until March 12. You are welcome to bring your lunch.

The VR Corp at the north end of town is holding a rummage, book, and bake sale in the Recreation Hall on **Saturday, March 1**, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Art-in-the-Glades will be held on **Saturday, March 1**, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in McLeod Park. Vendors are welcome to bring their arts & crafts items for sale but should provide their own tables/chairs. For more info, phone Marya at 695-2905.

MOBILE PET VET

Dr Baker will be here on **Saturday, March 8** in McLeod Park from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm and in Copeland from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. She will also visit on **Sunday, March 9** from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. for surgery by appointment only. Phone 777-PETS.



TWISTER! A tornado (or something very like it) struck Everglades City on the night of February 12. Most of the damage was along the river with the Airport, Rod & Gun Lodge, School, and Camellia Street Grill being hardest hit. Fortunately, no one was hurt. See Savannah's story on page 5.

RESTAURANT NEWS



JT's Island Grill & Gallery in Chokoloskee is open Thursday through Monday from 8 am to 4 pm.

The Seafood Depot now has a Seafood Buffet on Thursday evening from 4 pm to closing at around 9 pm.

The Collier County Public Library Advisory Board will meet on **Wednesday, February 27**, at 9:30 am in their headquarters on the corner of Airport-Pulling Road and Orange Blossom Drive in Naples. The public are invited to attend. If you want to speak, phone 593-3511.

OCHOPEE FIRE CONTROL DISTRICT

- 02/07/08: Vehicle Accident, HP Williams Park & US-41
- 02/08/08: Unknown Medical, 63m I-75
- 02/09/08: Vehicle Accident, 79m I-75
- 02/09/08: Vehicle Accident, Ochopee
- 02/09/08: Chest Pains, Everglades City
- 02/10/08: Vehicle Accident, 60m I-75
- 02/10/08: Vehicle Accident, 76m I-75
- 02/10/08: Unknown Medical Problem, Everglades City
- 02/10/08: Vehicle Accident, Ochopee
- 02/10/08: Vehicle Accident, 65m I-75
- 02/10/08: Snake Bite, CCSO Substation
- 02/10/08: Chest Pains, Everglades Fire Station
- 02/11/08: Vehicle Fire, SR-29 North of I-75
- 02/11/08: Possible Deceased Person, Everglades City
- 02/12/08: Vehicle Accident, Monroe Station
- 02/12/08: Tornado Touch Down, Everglades City
- 02/13/08: Vehicle Fire, SR-29 & I-75
- 02/13/08: Vehicle Accident, 63m I-75
- 02/13/08: Fire Alarm, Ochopee
- 02/13/08: Smoke in the Area, Everglades City
- 02/13/08: Chest Pains, 52m I-75
- 02/13/08: Head Injury, Chokoloskee Island
- 02/13/08: Assault Victim, Chokoloskee Island
- 02/14/08: Bicycle Accident, Chokoloskee Island Causeway
- 02/14/08: Possible Heart Attack, Everglades City
- 02/16/08: Sick Person, CCSO Substation
- 02/16/08: Vehicle Accident, 75m I-75
- 02/18/08: Chest Pains, Port of the Islands
- 02/19/08: Person Fell, Chokoloskee Island
- 02/19/08: Back Pain, 67m I-75
- 02/19/08: Power Line Down, Everglades City
- 02/20/08: Vehicle Accident, US-41 East of Port of the Islands
- 02/20/08: Vehicle Accident, 68m I-75

Did you know ... that the house number on your dwelling should be 4-inches high and have good contrast so it can be seen from the street by emergency services.

TIDES FOR BARRON RIVER

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

02/22/2008	Fri	02:48AM	2.7	H	10:25AM	-0.2	L	03:23PM	2.4	H	10:38PM	0.1	L
02/23/2008	Sat	03:28AM	2.5	H	10:57AM	0.0	L	03:47PM	2.5	H	11:18PM	0.0	L
02/24/2008	Sun	04:11AM	2.4	H	11:26AM	0.2	L	04:14PM	2.5	H	11:59PM	0.0	L
02/25/2008	Mon	04:57AM	2.1	H	11:50AM	0.4	L	04:41PM	2.5	H			
02/26/2008	Tue	12:44AM	0.0	L	05:51AM	1.9	H	12:02PM	0.5	L	05:09PM	2.5	H
02/27/2008	Wed	01:37AM	0.1	L	06:57AM	1.6	H	11:50AM	0.6	L	05:40PM	2.4	H
02/28/2008	Thu	02:45AM	0.1	L	08:20AM	1.5	H	11:42AM	0.7	L	06:25PM	2.3	H
02/29/2008	Fri	04:02AM	0.1	L	08:00PM	2.2	H						
03/01/2008	Sat	05:12AM	0.0	L	09:43PM	2.3	H						
03/02/2008	Sun	06:10AM	-0.1	L	01:47PM	1.8	H	06:08PM	0.8	L	10:53PM	2.4	H
03/03/2008	Mon	06:58AM	-0.2	L	01:13PM	2.0	H	06:57PM	0.7	L	11:47PM	2.5	H
03/04/2008	Tue	07:39AM	-0.2	L	01:26PM	2.1	H	07:39PM	0.6	L			
03/05/2008	Wed	12:31AM	2.6	H	08:17AM	-0.3	L	01:47PM	2.3	H	08:18PM	0.4	L
03/06/2008	Thu	01:12AM	2.8	H	08:52AM	-0.3	L	02:10PM	2.4	H	08:58PM	0.2	L
03/07/2008	Fri	01:51AM	2.8	H	09:27AM	-0.2	L	02:33PM	2.5	H	09:38PM	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, 2/21: Baseball, 5:00 p.m.**Mon, 2/25:** Baseball, 4:00 p.m.**Thurs, 3/6:** Early release**Fri, 3/7:** Teacher Planning Day**Tues, 3/11:** Baseball, 4:00 p.m.**3/12-3/25:** FCAT (Reading, Science, Maths)

From Savannah's Eyes

Oh, what a big storm (tornado) we had last week. The damage it did in Everglades was terrible. It flipped over some airplanes at Everglades City Airport and tore down trees by the river. At the house that my dad was working on, it took the roof off half of it. I had just gone to bed on Tuesday night and the wind was terrible. It was raining so hard on the roof of our house. When I awoke the next morning, the yard was flooded and tree limbs were everywhere. So my dad told me there had been a tornado last night. I was really afraid because I don't like bad weather. Then when he said "there is no school today" I knew it had to have hit the school. So, we went riding on the golf card my mum got for Valentine's Day from my dad. I couldn't believe it. People were everywhere on the streets looking around at the damage that the storm had done and, boy, it had done a lot. Tree limbs were in the streets and blown on people's houses, especially by the river. Then we rode by our school and it had done a lot of damage to our lunchroom and playground and the roof of the high school. There were branches everywhere; it looked like a hurricane had hit but I guess a tornado is just as bad. My mom said it was fast coming and it was gone quickly. My dad told us he had heard the tornado at 9:45 when it hit. My mom and dad heard it coming it was so loud outside. The wind was roaring like a train coming down the tracks. He watched it tear down trees and things flying around in the air. But, the school opened the next day and we went to school like normal. Thank God it didn't tear up our City really badly because I love our City. It is one of a kind. We are lucky to live in paradise. That's how I describe it, paradise. So, enjoy the nice weather and I hope we never have such horrible weather again. Until next time, take care, be happy.

Savannah Oglesby is a 5th grade student at Everglades City School and a regular contributor to this paper.

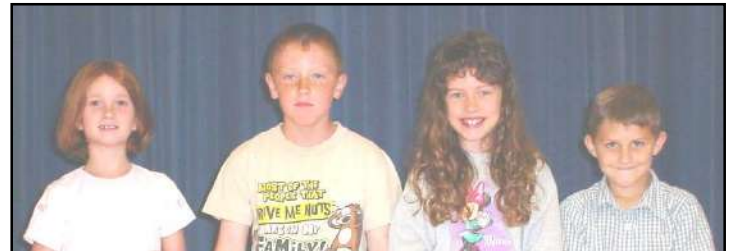
GREAT GATORS, January



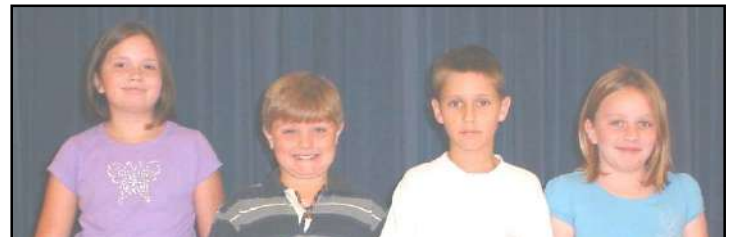
Pre-K and K: Alexis Rain, Caroline Teague, Evan Richards, Destany VanLeeuwen



1st Grade: Brandon Beaty, Natalie Thompson, Samantha Bruscini, Edin Lopez (not pictured)



2nd Grade: Hailey Mitchell, Bryan Sanders, Victoria (Tori) Wells, Bailey Richards



3-4 Grade: Madelyn Mitchell, Dalton Stokes, Alex Thompson, Haylee Ellison



5-6 Grade: Henry Hiemstra, Houston Brown, Jessica Thomas, Shaina Norris (not pictured)

THANKS to Trina Mitchell for Gator photos!

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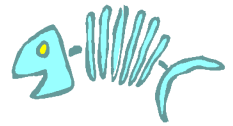
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Recipe for Good Eating

PANKO CRUSTED FISH

(from Tsunami Restaurant, Memphis, TN)
 provided by Denise Rousseau



- 2 to 4 fillets of any white fish (snook, snapper, grouper or halibut)
- Peanut or olive oil for searing fillets
- 1 c. Panko (Japanese bread crumbs)
- ½ c. canola oil
- 1 tsp lemon zest
- 1 c. fresh cilantro, finely chopped
- salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 400°. Rinse and pat dry the fillets, then salt and pepper each side. Mix Panko and next three ingredients together until Panko mixture is moist enough to form into a ball. Heat oil in oven-proof frying pan on medium-high heat; add fillets. Cook for 3-4 minutes. Flip each fillet over and spread ¼ cup of the Panko mixture on top of each fillet to cover. Place pan into oven to finish, about 4 to 6 minutes depending on thickness of fish. Flesh should be flaky and opaque. Serve immediately.



This recipe can be found in the Reach Out Everglades & COPS Association Cookbook *"What's Cookin' in the Everglades"* and serves well with a Sweet Potato Hash, also found in the cookbook which can be purchased at various places in the Everglades City. Call Elaine Middelstaedt at 695-2695 for more information.

Angels of the Swamp

by Patty Huff



Dedication, love and inspiration describe our Angels of the Swamp this month. They have as much influence on our children's lives as any one. They are here to motivate the next generation. Our Angels are the teachers at our Everglades City Schools. Many of them drive long distances from Golden Gate and Naples to teach our students. We are a rural community and it's not easy finding people who are willing to commute to Everglades City to work. We are fortunate that so many of these educators have chosen our school. As an example, Mr. Paul Tribble has been teaching art classes for 32 years, traveling every school day back and forth from Naples. That's dedication; and he says he would rather be here than anywhere else. We have several local teachers and staff who have worked at the school for many years. Glenna Potter, secretary to the Principal Bobby Jones, has been with the Collier County Schools for 21 years; Hazel Mitchell for 19 years; Betty Oglesby for 30 years; Mitchell Roberts for 7 years; Theresa Ryan for 19 years; Beth Johnson for 8 years; Stacia Ferguson for 4 years; Deborah Andler for 2 years; Diane Ridgway for 3 years; Lee Richardson for 2 years; Haava Tankersley for 2 years; Deanna Nicholson for 3 years; Denise Johnson for 1 year; Beth White for 2 years; Vicenta Ramirez for 3 years and Gina Gilmore for 3 years. We are grateful to all of our dedicated teachers and staff who give so much of themselves for the benefit of our children. Thank you. You are true Angels!

My Everglades

by Fran Blackwell

I've found a home in
 My Everglades
 Your Everglades
 OUR Everglades

Everywhere the eye touches with sight glorious visions of insight births Itself –
Seeing with my ears, *Hearing* with my eyes
Feeling with my Heart – The Everglades
 Blue canopied sky bows over the horizon, ever expanding, ever changing, evolving
 clouds painting masterpieces of Breathless beauty/
 Fulfilling , with clarity, what true creativity IS –

No Boundaries
 No Limitations
 My Everglades

A community of Souls

Who know beyond all knowing
 The Spiritual Blessings

Surrounding them, enfolded in Grace, Nurtured by Earth's rhythm's: sky, wind, water ...

A caring community of good neighbors, volunteering to help others

The Everglades

We who call this beautiful place home, are the caretakers

The Everglades

You just have to love it to Be Here, in this sacred place, unlike no other

The Everglades ---- My Home

Home

Is where I laugh and cry

Is where I meet my successes

Is where I meet my disasters

Is where I lose myself

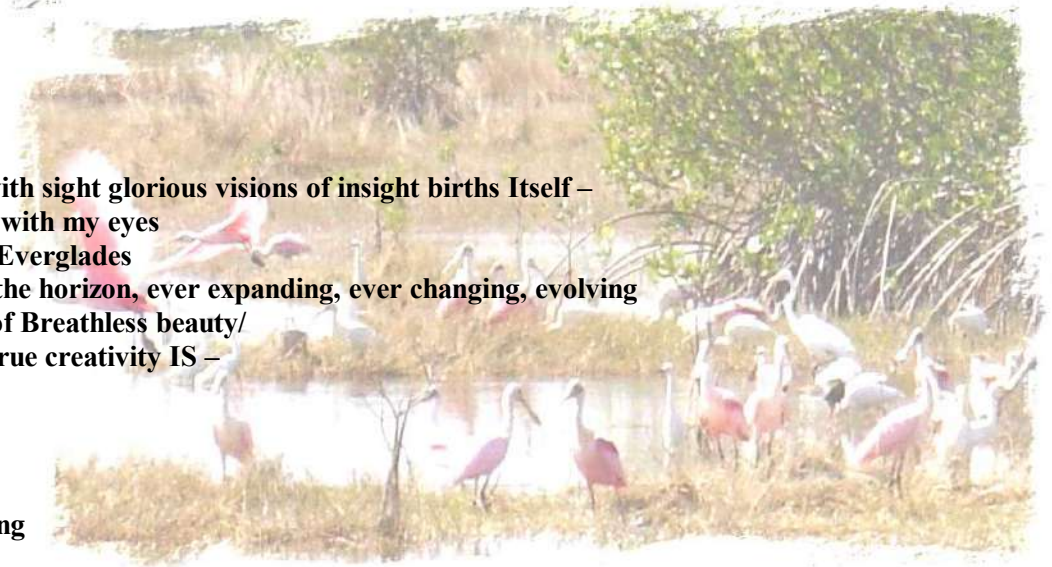
Is where I find myself

Yes, Home Is where the heart is, and no matter where life may take me, near or far –

Home is where the Heart Is, and my Heart will stay in Everglades.

And

For those of you who visit *OUR Everglades*, remember you leave your footprints in the sands of eternity



THANKS FROM THE SCHOOL ...

This year was a very good year for the Everglades City School Coke Booths. The crowd was large, the weather was great and the entertainment was superb. We would like to express a special **Thank You** to the Everglades City Seafood Festival Committee for their continued support of our program. The Seafood Festival proceeds provide the opportunity for the students to earn funds for needs such as yearbook, prom, and senior grad night as well as special projects throughout the year. This makes so many things possible for our students that would otherwise not be available.

We would also like to offer our heartfelt gratitude to the staff members from the Coca Cola Bottling Company that worked diligently and were instrumental in making the products readily available. They really went out of their way to be accommodating and are sincerely appreciated! THANKS COKE CREW!



LOCAL HISTORY

The Collier County Museum in Naples has free lectures every **Wednesday** at 2:00 p.m. The schedule is:

- 2/27: Famous Black Floridians
- 3/5: Florida's West Coast Railways
- 3/12: The New Appian Way (the Tamiami Trail)
- 3/19: Life & Times of Barron Collier
- 3/26: Hurricane History of Southwest Florida
- 4/2: Florida Shipwrecks
- 4/9: Florida Outlaws and Villains

For info, phone 774-8476.

The Old Florida Festival will be held at the Museum in Naples on **Saturday and Sunday, March 1-2** from 10 am to 5 pm. This family event features Indians, Soldiers, and Pioneers. For info, phone 774-8580.

The Marco Island Historical Society presents *Arts Interprets History; Visions of Marco Island's Past* on **Sunday, March 2**, starting at 3 p.m. at the Art League of Marco Island, 1010 Winterberry Drive. For info, phone Betsy at 394-6917.

Florida's Delicious History is the title of a talk on **Wednesday, March 5**, at 2:00 p.m. by food scholar Andrew Huse at the East Naples Branch Library. The program is presented by the Florida Humanities Council. See their website www.flahum.org for more events.

The Panther Refuge will be featured on WGCU TV on Friday, February 22, at 8:30 p.m. Repeats are on Saturday at 6:30 p.m. and Sunday at 11:00 p.m.

Marjory Stoneman Douglas FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

Tuesday, February 26 – *Getting to Know the Everglades*

- 8:45: National Park Boat Tour or Guided Fern Walk in the Fakahatchee
- 11:00: Discover Big Cypress
- 12:00: Walking Tour of Historic Buildings (\$10 per person)
- 1:00: Swamp Walk in the Fakahatchee or Talk about Mangroves

Wednesday, February 27 – *Luncheon with MSD*

- 10:00: Who is Marjory Stoneman Douglas?
- 12:00: Welcome, followed by lunch (\$20 per person)
- 1:00: MSD portrayed by Janina Bertolo
- 2:00: Remembering Marjory by Capt Franklin Adams and Sandy Dayhoff

Thursday, February 28 – *Exploring the River of Grass*

- 10:00: Introduction to the Everglades
- 11:00: Hidden Beauty, talk by photographer Rick Cruz
- 12:00: Buffet Luncheon (\$10 per person)
- 1:00: Film of Big Cypress
- 2:00: Orchids, talk by Fakahatchee biologist Mike Owen
- 3:00: Dessert

Friday, February 29 – *Walking on the Wild Side*

- 9:00: Big Cypress Boardwalk or Canoe Tour or Fakahatchee Swamp Walk or Royal Palm Hammock Nature Walk
- 10:00: Butterfly Garden Tour at Oasis Visitor Center
- 1:00: Collier Seminole Pine Flatwoods or Big Cypress Boardwalk

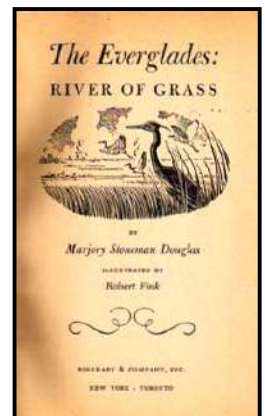
Saturday, March 1 – *Swamp Country Fair & Concert (McLeod Park)*

- 10:00: Art-in-the-Glades and Exhibition booths open
- 10:30: Otter John & the Wild Everglades Animal Show
- 12:00: Fish Fry and Bake Sale
- Music by the Raiford Starke Band

Full program is available at the Museum.
Some of the events require prior reservations. Phone 695-0008.

This is the fourth annual festival which is sponsored by Collier County Museums and the Collier County Public Library plus the Friends of the Museum of the Everglades and the Friends of the Library.

The Festival honors Marjory Stoneman Douglas whose 1947 book "Everglades; River of Grass" drew attention to the Glades. She became an active environmentalist, lobbying for the preservation of this unique area until her death in 1998 at the age of 107 years old. Marjory saw so much change during her years, having arrived in Miami in 1915 to join her father Frank Stoneman who was editor of the *Miami Herald*. She describes driving to the end of the Tamiami Trail at the Dade County border to have picnic breakfasts and watch flocks of birds at dawn. She spent much of her life writing; articles for the newspaper and short stories for magazines and, eventually, books including fiction for youngsters. Her autobiography "Voice of the River" is a history of Florida as well as of her life, written in her lyrical flowing style with wonderfully wise words on the human condition.





Fishing Report

by Capt Bill Lindsay

Snook season finally opens on March 1st. A lot of us can't wait for a good snook dinner. I hope the coldest weather is behind us. March can be windy and cold but it can also be warm. When that happens, tarpon will move up and down the coast. Trout fishing was good last month and should only get better. Spanish mackerel have been thick. March, as a general rule, is a transitional month. Sheepshead start to move back into deeper water. In some back bays, when the water levels get right, small bait fish are forced out of runoffs and snook fishing can be as good as it gets. Redfish should improve this month. When it does get cold, many fishermen tip jigs with shrimp and fish the deep holes and oyster bars. Cut ladyfish also works well.

Capt. Bill Lindsay lives in Chokoloskee and has been fishing in the Everglades National Park for 27 years. In 1992 he was Master Angler of the MET Tournament.

Tornado Bird

by Carol Moseman



After the tornado twisted our two car canopies and threw them over the fence into the VR Corp, many of our neighbors were wandering around with us looking at the aftermath. All of a sudden something landed on the front of my shirt. I looked down and there was a bird. 10:00 o'clock at night and there was a warbler using my shirt for a safe spot in the storm. The poor bird was wet, confused and very scared. I tried to tell everyone there was a bird on my shirt but they were more interested in cleaning up the damage before the rain started again. The bird stayed on my shirt for almost a minute while I walked. When I got near the garden fence he hopped off and went into the bushes. After those wonderful folks from the VR Corp helped pull the car canopies out of the sky and back into our yard in pieces, I went back to look for the warbler where I left him. With my flashlight in the dark I couldn't find him. I hope that my garden served as a refuge for that bird for the rest of the rainy, rainy night. I looked around the property in the daylight and found no bird carcasses I must think that he/she made it through the night.

By the way that yellow-rumped (myrtle) warbler became the 46th bird on my list of birds I have seen from my yard.



DAVID KEISER, 1950-2008

In a moving memorial service on Wednesday, February 20, friends from near and far celebrated the life of David Keiser who passed away unexpectedly at home in Everglades City on February 11. Neighbor Donny Barton described how Dave would spend up to 150 hours on his burnt wood engravings, earning "about 10 cents an hours" if he sold one. His neighbor on the other side, Parker Oglesby, said Dave was a good person, he had no enemies, was pals with the people at the Fire Station behind his house, and thought that Everglades was "paradise" with its water and quiet. Parker then sang a song in memory of his friend. Boyhood chums from the east coast all spoke of Dave's love of nature, his fishing and hunting, his go-cart which was a precursor to the swamp buggy that was always being worked on. At the end of the service, brother "Skip" handed out some of Dave's artworks to people who had been promised them and was sorry there were not enough for everyone in the large congregation.

David Keiser was born in Miami and raised in Coral Gables. He came to this area with his family as a youngster to go hunting and to fish from Chokoloskee. His brother said that dinner at the Rod & Gun was just one of the highlights of these trips. Dave finally settled here about five years ago. He will be remembered locally as the "hot dog man" who had a stall near Right Choice Supermarket, for his wood carvings which were shown in the Museum of the Everglades in spring of 2005, and for his love of the area and the friends he made here.





SHERIFF'S REPORT

Lt Mark Milligan stated at the Council meeting on February 12 that two burglaries were due to unlocked cars (one at the Ivey House and the other at Camilla Street Grill after closing hours). There was also a theft on Plantation Island for which the Sheriff's Office has suspects. He reiterated "Don't be an easy target" and said "Look out for your neighbors", referring to the unoccupied home on Plantation Island.

Mayor Sammy Hamilton thanked the Sheriff's Office for their generosity and Lt Milligan responded by thanking the City and its residents for their cooperation.

Earlier in the day, Sue Gentry of the CCSO Crime Prevention Office, had bestowed gifts on the City. She presented the Mayor with over 20 footballs, soccer balls, and basket balls from the CCSO Police Activity League (whose slogan is "filling playgrounds, not jails"). A further donation will be a bicycle rack and helmets which can be used for skating or bike riders. She also told the *Rapper* that she had dropped off items for the Food Pantry at the Community Church, clothes and kitchen items for the Thrift Shop, and a check for \$600 to the school. She told the *Rapper*, "I hope to bring a lot more programs down there in the coming months."

Lt Milligan told the *Rapper* that Seafood Festival was calm with no rowdy behavior and that he estimated there were about 45,000 attendees (from the automatic counter on SR-29 coming into town).

Since the meeting, he reported that a prop was stolen from a boat on the river and generators were taken from an electrical company work trailer on SR-29 north of US-41.

VIP Report

by Shirley Leonard

First Lady Announces Essay Contest



First Lady Laura Bush paid a surprise visit to Everglades National Park on Wednesday, February 6, to help put a spotlight on the National Park Foundation's 2008 Junior Ranger essay contest.

Open to students across the country ages 9-12, the essay's theme is:

WHAT CAN YOU DO NOW TO TURN OVER A NEW LEAF TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT AND PRESERVE OUR NATIONAL PARKS?

Mrs. Bush spoke at the Royal Palm/Anhinga Trail before a fifth-grade class of Florida City Elementary School and approximately 100 park visitors and National Park Service personnel. She encouraged all students to enter the contest.

"I'm so happy to be with you here today in your neighborhood national park, which also happens to be one of the most fabulous national parks in the world," Mrs. Bush said.

Essays must be no more than 500 words (about 2 typed, double-spaced pages). They will be judged on how well the essay shows: understanding of the issue; originality; clarity and effectiveness of style and organization; and adherence to format and length rules.

The deadline for contest entries is March 14. They can be submitted online or by mail. Essays sent by mail must be received by the National Park Foundation by midnight on March 14, 2008, and must include a parent's or legal guardian's signature and phone number. Address: Junior Ranger Essay Contest, National Park Foundation, 1201 Eye St., NW, Suite 550-B, Washington, DC 20005.

Submission guidelines for the 2008 Junior Ranger Essay, can be found on the National Park Foundation website at:

<http://www.nationalparks.org/get-involved/essay-contest/>

Teachers here will probably also encourage their students to participate in the contest, but one drawback is the timing, according to Everglades City School Principal Bobby Jones. Teachers are currently concentrating on preparing their students for the FCAT, Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test, he said this week.

The writing portion of the FCAT, for students from third through twelfth grade, is this month. Next month will be the reading, mathematics and science parts of the test.

The National Parks Foundation started the Junior Ranger program about 100 years ago to encourage young people to learn about the national parks. The foundation is the national charitable partner of the National Park Service.

Prizes include:

Grand Prize: A trip for four to Everglades National Park from April 20 to April 23. The winner will star in an electronic field trip from the Everglades on April 22. The package includes air fare for four, car rental, hotel and all meals. Winner also wins a \$1,000 shopping spree at Macy's.

Second Place: A \$500 Macy's shopping spree.

Third Place: A \$250 Macy's shopping spree.

All winners will receive a National Park Camping Kit and an America the Beautiful – National Parks and Federal Recreation Federal Lands Pass.

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The MULLET RAPPER

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We strive to present the facts accurately without political bias or personal opinion.

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Mike the Tax Guy
Everglades City, 695-0595

COMMUNITY NOTICES

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED in Museum to greet visitors. Phone Martha 695-0008.

HELP NEEDED for Tamiami Trail 80th celebration on April 26/27. Old photos, uniforms, vintage vehicles, ideas! Phone Carol at 695-2159 for info.

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