

The MULLET RAPPER

What's Happening in the Everglades City Area

FRIDAY, JANUARY 9, 2009

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NEW DIRECTORIES

Reach Out has produced a new version of the *Everglades Area Directory*, the useful “little yellow book” with most of the “695” telephone numbers. This edition also has P.O. Boxes and cell phones for people who filled in the listing forms. At the back, there is a roster of sponsors handy index to the many local businesses who have advertised.

The book is available for \$5.00 at the Thrift Shop, City Hall, and Right Choice Supermarket. You can download a mail-order form at www.evergladesreachout.org.

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ARTS & CRAFTS SALE... and more



If you're want to practice for Seafood Festival or see vendors that might not be at the big event, come to Art-in-the-Glades on **Saturday, January 17**. There will be live music, thanks to Joe Stem & his friends, and delicious food will be available from the Sons of Confederate Veterans. For more info, phone Marya at 695-2905.

SHERIFF'S REPORT

Lt. Mark Milligan told the *Rapper* that several incidents had occurred in the area over the past month. On December 12, there was an armed burglary at a residence near Ochopee which he described as an “isolated case”. A vacant house in Chokoloskee was disturbed at the end of December.

On December 24, the locked van of a hunter parked on Turner River Road was broken into and a rifle was stolen. Similarly, on January 3, a camera was taken from a locked vehicle near Big Cypress Bend Boardwalk. In both cases, the items were obvious temptations to the thieves – a warning not to leave valuables visible in your vehicle.

Sheriff Rambosk, who has visited Everglades City several times, was sworn in as the new County Sheriff on January 6.

Lt. Milligan mentioned that Bill McCrea, 81, an officer from 1955 to 1982 and member of the local Masonic lodge since 1955, passed away on January 3.



MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Sammy Hamilton visited the Little Gator Clinic to welcome Dr. G.B. and Kathy Barnard and thanked them for the service they are generously providing (*see page 3*).

The Mayor also met with Don York, president of the Shamrock Bank of Naples, who was here to get ready to open a new branch bank in City Hall. He said that he looks forward to doing business in the community.

There was no City Council meeting on January 6 because there was not a quorum.

BIG REWARD FOR INFO

You may be eligible for a reward up to \$1000 if you can help solve this crime.

On Saturday, December 27, a victim parked his gray Toyota Tundra pickup truck along Chokoloskee Causeway to spend the afternoon fishing. When he later returned, he discovered all 4 tires and wheels missing along with the back tailgate to the truck.

If you have info, you can phone without giving your name to Crime Stoppers at 1-800-780-TIPS (8477).

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

JANUARY 2009

<u>SUN</u>	<u>MON</u>	<u>TUES</u>	<u>WED</u>	<u>THURS</u>	<u>FRI</u>	<u>SAT</u>
4	5 Hour of Prayer Chokoloskee Church of God 7 pm	6 Museum Talk 2 pm Barton Visit 3 pm Coletta Visit 3 pm Kids' Clinic 5-8 pm City Council City Hall, 5:30 pm	7 Ladies Coffee Pat Rinkevich's Home 8 am	8 Great Gators School, 9:30 am	9	10 Mobile Pet Vet see p.3 Garage Sale see p.3 Sons of Confederate Veterans Seafood Depot 6 pm
full moon ● 11 Mobile Pet Vet see p.3	12 Hour of Prayer Holy Family Catholic Church 7 pm OFCD Bd Fire Sta, 6 pm	13	14 Ladies Coffee Linda Williams' Home, DuPont 8 am	15	16 Lasagna Dinner Comm. Church 5-7 pm, see p.3 Birding Festival see p.3	17 Art-in-the-Glades see p.1 Birding Festival see p.3
18 Birding Festival see p.3	19 <u>Martin Luther King Day</u> Hour of Prayer Everglades First Baptist Church 7 pm	20 Reach Out Comm Church 8:30 am Big Cypress ORV Meeting see p.3	21 Ladies Coffee Backcountry Cafe 8 am	22 Butcher Gallery Talk 1 pm, see p.8 SAC School Media Center, 3 pm	23 Famous Flyer Museum Naples see p.11	24 Pancake Fly-In Airport, see p.9 Big Cypress Comments see p.11
25	new moon ○ 26 Hour of Prayer Everglades Community Church 7 pm	27	28 Ladies Coffee Havana Cafe 8 am	29	30 Homecoming School see p.5	31 Kids' Clinic 9 am - noon see p.3
FEB 1	2 Kids' Clinic 9 am - noon see p.3 Hour of Prayer Copeland Baptist Church, 7 pm	3 Barton Visit City Hall, 3 pm Coletta Visit City Hall, 3 pm City Council City Hall, 5:30 pm	4 Ladies Coffee Rena & Adela 15 Spoonbill 8 am	5	6 Seafood Festival	7 Seafood Festival

Feb 14/15/16: Butcher "Muck-About" Feb 14/15: Jammin' in the Hammock Feb 23-26: MSD Festival
Mar 24: BigC ORV April 12: Easter

THRIFT SHOP: Daily except Sunday, 11:00 am to 3:00 pm

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

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

SHERIFF AT CITY HALL: Fri, 1/9 (1-2 pm)

Mon, 1/12 (9-10 am)

Wed, 1/14 (10-11 am) Thurs, 1/15 (noon -1 pm)

Tues, 1/20 (10-11 am) Fri, 1/23 (9-10 am)

SKATING RINK: Fri & Sat, 7:00 to 10:00 p.m.

SMALLWOOD STORE: Daily, 10 am to 5 pm

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: Wed, 5 pm, Community Church

BIG GARAGE SALE

The will be a multi-family Garage & Plant Sales on **Saturday, January 10**, from 9:00 a.m. (no early arrivals, please!) at 405 North Copeland Avenue (the white house with teal awnings). The sale includes household items, clothing, plants (including orchids), and much more.

LASAGNA DINNER

Everglades Community Church, on the Circle, will hold a Lasagna Dinner on **Friday, January 16**, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. The menu includes lasagna, salad, dessert, and drink for \$10 (adults) and \$5 (kids). For tickets, see Lisa at City Hall, Chris at Chokoloskee Post Office, or Myrna at River Wilderness.

The Fifth Annual Birding & Wildlife Festival will be held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, **January 16-18**, at Rookery Bay. There are walks, talks, and a Native Plant Sale. For more info, see www.rookerybay.org or phone (239) 417-6310.

Big Cypress ORV Meeting

The ORV Advisory Committee will hold their next meeting on **Tuesday, January 20**, from 3:30 to 8:00 p.m. at Big Cypress Headquarters in Ochopee. For info, phone 695-1103.



Kenna Brilynn Morris, born Dec 5, 2008, 6 lbs, 6 oz, 19 in. Parents: Brittney Morris and Eleazar Rangel.



Baby Teegan D'sau Osceola Bartlett, born Sept 13, 2008, 6 lbs, 14 oz. Parents Sally and Aaron Bartlett.

Little Gator Clinic



The free walk-in medical clinic for youngsters 18 and under is located next to the Thrift Shop (behind the fire station). It will be open on **Saturday, January 31**, from 9:00 a.m. to noon and on **Monday, February 2**, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. There are no drugs at the clinic but Dr. Barnard can prescribe if necessary.

OCHOPEE FIRE CONTROL DISTRICT

- 12/24/08: Vehicle Accident, 71m I-75
- 12/24/08: Medical Call Box, 70m I-75
- 12/25/08: Chest Pains, Plantation Island
- 12/26/08: Vehicle Accident, 62m I-75
- 12/26/08: Head Injury, Chokoloskee Island
- 12/26/08: Emergency Medical, Everglades City
- 12/27/08: Vehicle Accident, US-41 1 mile West of Port of the Islands
- 12/27/08: Laceration, Monument Lake
- 12/27/08: Vehicle Accident, 65m I-75
- 12/28/08: Overturned Boat, 1/2 Mile out in Gulf
- 12/28/08: Vehicle Accident, 68m I-75
- 12/08/08: Vehicle Accident, 11 Mile Rd & US-41
- 12/29/08: Call Box Activation, 58m I-75
- 12/31/08: Laceration, Everglades City
- 01/01/09: Emergency Medical, US-41 & Turner River Rd.
- 01/02/09: Vehicle Fire, 56m I-75
- 01/02/09: Stand By, Plantation Island
- 01/03/09: Brush Fire, SR-29 & I-75
- 01/03/09: Vehicle Fire, 72m I-75
- 01/04/09: Emergency Medical, Everglades City
- 01/05/09: Vehicle Accident, 80m I-75
- 01/05/09: Medical Call, 80m I-75
- 01/05/09: Vehicle Fire, Ochopee

MOBILE PET VET



Dr Baker will be here on **Saturday, January 10**, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in McLeod Park, Everglades City, and from 2 to 4 p.m. in Copeland. She will also be here for surgery on **Sunday, January 11**, by previous appointment only. Phone her at 777-PETS (7387).

Sons of Confederate Veterans

The Everglades Chapter of the SCV meets every second Saturday at the Seafood Depot at 6:00 p.m. For info, phone Steve Markley at 695-2186.

TIDES FOR BARRON RIVER

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

01/09/2009	Fri	08:11AM	-0.6	L	02:20PM	2.2	H	07:59PM	0.7	L
01/10/2009	Sat	12:35AM	3.2	H	09:00AM	-0.7	L	02:58PM	2.3	H
01/11/2009	Sun	01:27AM	3.3	H	09:47AM	-0.7	L	03:33PM	2.3	H
01/12/2009	Mon	02:18AM	3.3	H	10:32AM	-0.6	L	04:09PM	2.4	H
01/13/2009	Tue	03:12AM	3.1	H	11:15AM	-0.5	L	04:44PM	2.4	H
01/14/2009	Wed	04:08AM	2.8	H	11:57AM	-0.3	L	05:20PM	2.5	H
01/15/2009	Thu	12:15AM	0.2	L	05:09AM	2.5	H	12:38PM	0.0	L
01/16/2009	Fri	01:13AM	0.2	L	06:15AM	2.2	H	01:19PM	0.3	L
01/17/2009	Sat	02:18AM	0.2	L	07:26AM	1.8	H	02:05PM	0.5	L
01/18/2009	Sun	03:30AM	0.1	L	08:53AM	1.6	H	03:01PM	0.7	L
01/19/2009	Mon	04:41AM	0.1	L	12:54PM	1.6	H	04:13PM	0.8	L
01/20/2009	Tue	05:44AM	-0.1	L	01:51PM	1.8	H	05:25PM	0.8	L
01/21/2009	Wed	06:39AM	-0.1	L	02:26PM	1.9	H	06:28PM	0.8	L
01/22/2009	Thu	07:27AM	-0.2	L	02:45PM	1.9	H	07:19PM	0.8	L
01/23/2009	Fri	08:09AM	-0.3	L	02:32PM	1.9	H	08:02PM	0.7	L

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SCHOOL NEWS

Everglades City School

phone: 377-9800 or 695-2561

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

IMPORTANT DATES

Fri, Jan 9:	Report Cards (K-12)
Thurs, Jan 15:	Basketball, 4:00 p.m.
Mon, Jan 19:	Martin Luther King Day
Thurs, Jan 22:	SAC, Media Center, 3:00 p.m.
Mon, Jan 26:	Basketball, 4:30 p.m.
Tues, Jan 27:	Basketball, 4:00 p.m.
Fri, Jan 30:	Homecoming
Wed, Feb 4:	Early Release Day



From Savannah's Eyes

I can't believe that it is already back to school! Christmas break passed by really fast! I had a lot of fun during that break. New Year's was really fun! I spent it with my sister LaShaun, my mom, dad, and friends. We celebrated with a nice steak dinner that my dad had cooked for us (he's a great cook). We also stayed up till 12:00 to welcome the New Year and, of course, we made our resolutions and wishes. We watched the ball drop from New York on our TV. It was so much fun to welcome the New Year and see the ball drop! The next day we were all very tired from staying up that late and, of course, that night we all went to bed early. I miss 2008 but I am glad a new year is here!

Happy New Year!
Savannah

Savannah Oglesby is in the 6th grade at Everglades City School and is a regular contributor to this paper.

Basketball SCHEDULE



Mon, 1/12	Evangelical Christian (JV)	Away	4:00
Tues, 1/13	Ave Maria	Away	4:30
Thurs, 1/15	Cape Coral Christian	HOME	4:00
Tues, 1/20	First Baptist Academy	Away	4:00
Thurs, 1/22	Cape Coral Christian	Away	4:00
Mon, 1/26	Ave Maria	HOME	4:30
Tues, 1/27	More Haven (JV)	HOME	4:00
Thurs 1/29	S.W.Fla Christian	Away	5:00
Fri, 1/30	Homecoming (Alumni)	HOME	tba

NEW PLAYGROUND



Thanks to Trina Mitchell for these photos of the new playground equipment and surface. She said in an email: No more sand! Kids have 2 slides, lots of swings, a rock-climbing wall, and a cover to help provide some shade ... everyone loves it!

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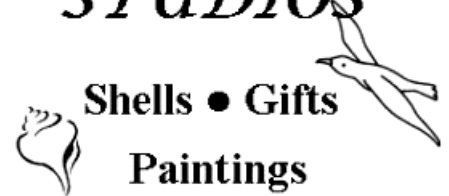
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This closeup of an alligator's head was sent in by intrepid Friends of Fakahatchee member Jim Woodard.

The Friends have been busy clearing up Janes Scenic Drive (fortunately, not where this big guy was) and the Boardwalk on US-41 during their Volunteer Workdays. If you want to help them, phone 695-1023.

Recipe for Good Eating

Happy New Year!

by Vicky Nagle



It is traditional for many a Southerner to whip up a batch of hoppin' John, country ham, and cornbread on New Year's Eve. That's what my confederate, John Wilson, has every year. I, on the other hand, being a yankee of primarily German extraction from Cincinnati, have what else, but kraut, sauerkraut to be exact. The recipe includes opening cans of Silver Floss brand kraut (better than jars or bags), enveloping slabs of pork spareribs and extra water in a dutch oven, covering, then slow roasting at 325° for 3 or more hours. I am a purist, but some folks add caraway seeds or chopped apple, pork chops or German sausages. And you MUST have mashed potatoes on the side. Know why? This is easy, pure and simple, no matter what condition you're in.

Angel of the Swamp

by Patty Huff



This month's Angel is well known to the community and the school children. He has been the dependable bus driver for many years, always with a cheerful smile. He so enjoys his job that he volunteered his services for several years when the "perfect attendance" students would travel throughout South Florida on their special "rewards" school trips. He is professional in every way and thoroughly enjoyed helping the children. Yes, we're talking about Jimmy Brewer; you'll see him driving all over town with his little dog in his golf cart or VW bug. Jimmy is a long-time resident of Everglades City and has been a participant in many of the "old timers" storytelling programs at the Museum of the Everglades during their Birthday celebrations. He has many memories from growing up here, especially meeting President Harry S Truman when he came to town to dedicate the Everglades National Park. Jimmy has a love of music and plays the organ at First Baptist Church. He also participates in Christmas events and grew his beard longer to be Santa this year at the City gift giving (see photos in the *Rapper*, 12/26/08). His generosity, cheerfulness, and love of this community shines through with his smile and easy going personality. Thank you, Jimmy, for giving so much of yourself to help others. An Angel for all seasons!

NO VACANCY!

by Marya Repko

Full-time residents forget how busy it can be here after the quiet summer. Friends drift back in November, there's a slight hiatus after Thanksgiving, and then – the day after Christmas, it's chaos!

All the hotels are booked. Kids on school vacation visit with their parents. Large RVs towing boats or cars drive carefully around the Circle. There are even traffic jams – imagine waiting for 6 vehicles before you can turn from SR-29 into ECity Post Office.

Of course, it's great to see people trooping into the Museum and crowding into our restaurants. The parking lot at the National Park is overflowing (*see VIP Report on page 8*) and there are long lines at the side of the Trail for the airboat tours. Let's hope the boost to our economy continues until well after Easter in April.

BOAT TOURS AT FLAMINGO

Everglades National Park Boat Tours, operated by Brenda & Sammy Hamilton, have been awarded a contract to provide services not only here in Everglades City but also in Flamingo on the eastern side of the park.

They are still provisioning the new location and fuel should be available shortly.

PRESERVE TALKS

Naples Preserve has announced the following series of Nature Talks on Tuesdays:

Jan 13: "Early Tamiami Trail through Naples" by Ron Echols

Jan 20: "Brown Pelicans; their Biology, Conservation, and Rescue" by Gary Pettit and Joanna Vaught

Jan 27: "Update on the Progress of the Restoration of Naples Bay" by Michael Bauer

The talks begin at 11:00 a.m. and are followed by a light lunch. There is no charge but donations are welcome. The Preserve is 1690 Tamiami Trail North near Coastland Mall. For info, phone 261-4290

BUTCHER GALLERY EVENTS

Big Cypress Gallery in Ochopee has a series of talks scheduled for the season:

Jan 22: Park Ranger Lisa Andrews, "Discover Big Cypress"

Feb 19: Clyde & Niki Butcher, "Photography, Philosophy and the Environment"

March 19: Park Biologist Mike Owen, "Fakahatchee; The Amazon of North America"

April 5: Elam Stoltzfus & Sammy Tedder, "Filmmaking of Big Cypress National Preserve"

May 9: Rick Cruz, "Florida's Extremely Rare and Endangered Plant Species"

The talks start at 1:00 p.m. and cost \$25, half of which will be donated to one of the parks.

There will also be another "Muck-About" with swamp walks and vendors over Presidents' Day Weekend in February.

To make reservations for these events, phone 695-2428 or see www.clydebutcher.com.

BIKE TOURS

Everglades National Park is offering bike tours of ECity every Thursday until April from 10:00 a.m. to noon. The tours are free if you have your own bike or you can rent one. For reservations and info, phone 695-3311.



FLORIDA FLORA

Our native wildflowers are beautiful and important hosts to butterflies. When creating a butterfly garden, one must plan for the four distinct stages of the butterfly's life: egg, caterpillar (or larva), pupa (or chrysalis), and adult. Milkweed, often called "butterfly weed", grows in open fields and sandy dry gardens. It is fairly salt and draught tolerant, a prolific propagator flowering in the white to yellow-red color spectrum, and a most favored food source for the migrating monarch and year-round queen butterflies.

Also found in our area are the colorful Common Butterfly and the Gossamer-winged Attala, the "Buckeye", which are attracted to Spanish Needle, often regarded as an ugly weed and pulled from the garden. If you allow this wildflower to grow alongside other flowering plants, your garden will be visually enhanced as well as attractive to other varieties of butterflies.

In order to create a garden that attracts butterflies, it is wise to know which plants to grow under the specific conditions of your plot, such as the time of year for migrating or year-round butterfly species, soil, water, climate, sun, and natural propagation. Some wild flowers can be used for zero-scaping, needing very little care. *Gardening for Florida's Butterflies* by Pamela F. Traas and *Native Florida Plants* by Robert G. Haehle and Joan Brookwell are two books worth owning for low-maintenance gardening.

Take a ride along Janes Scenic Drive where you'll find the Swamp Lily, pickerelweed and other wildflowers that like the soil and water of the subtropical swamp, or Wagon Wheel Road which has a large variety of seasonal prairie and marsh wildflowers, many of which will grow in your garden.

The photo at the top of this column of Milkweed (Asclepias) was taken by Penny Crawford and first appeared in the Rapper on 11/17/06 with an article by her about the butterfly garden at the school.



MUSEUM NEWS

Over 30 people gathered on Tuesday, January 6, in the Carol Moseman Memorial Theater to hear a talk about “Plume Hunting” by David Southall, from Collier County Museums. He traced the development of this industry from small beginnings in the back woods to the huge devastating slaughter which denuded our rookeries until legislation tried to stop it and fashions in women’s hats reduced the demand. An avid birder, Southall said that the flamingo is no longer native (it comes here from the Caribbean) and that roseate spoonbills are rare (we are lucky to see them grazing in the flooded fields along Buckner Avenue).

Refreshments before the lecture were provided by the Friends of the Museum, thanks to Pat Rinkevich and Jean Schultz. After the presentation, there was a Walking Tour of Historic Buildings led by Patty Huff. The exhibit about Plume Hunting will be in the Pauline Reeves Gallery at the front of the Museum for the rest of January.

For more info, phone the Museum at 695-0008.



The Friends of the Museum met on Wednesday, January 7, and elected new officers:

- President: Patty Huff
- Vice-President: Renee Rau
- Secretary: Winnie Thomas
- Treasurer: Virginia Kanning

Other directors are: Myrna Baier, Jan Brock, and Helen Bryan.

If you are interested in helping out by joining a committee, the choice is: Events, Finance, Gift Shop, Membership, Newsletter, Publicity, Storter Collection, and Volunteer Coordinating. Phone 695-2397.

Short Field Landings

by Mike Klein



The PT-19 was a part of every WWII pilot's training.

Chuck Gretske, who organizes the monthly pancake breakfasts, arrived from Alaska a little late this year due to some northwest and Yukon-type weather. Chuck’s float plane was turned upside down last year in the tornado that visited Everglades City so now he has a new (to him) Cessna that he uses for his Wings Ten Thousand Islands tours and trips to Key West. As a result of all this, the first of the season pancake breakfast missed November but opened in December at the Everglades airport. About 22 airplanes of all ages and variety – including antiques, home-builts, and brand new Light Sport Aircraft – flew in for the event. In addition, about a dozen or so local citizens biked, drove, or hiked in for the free flapjacks and just ‘plane’ viewing.

These local airfields are where most commercial airline pilots first learn and develop their skills for eventually driving those 747’s across the skies. We are very fortunate here in Everglades City to have our own airport and to have the Collier County Airport Authority provide funding for maintenance and operating costs.

With the FAA designation of X01, Everglades airport has the distinction of being the very first one chartered and continues to enhance the ‘outpost’ character of Everglades City. Mayor Sammy is ever watchful of the County responsibility and has maintained interest in getting the hurricane-destroyed hangars replaced and keeping our little airpark functioning for generations to come.



Vans RV9 homebuilt

If you get a chance stop by for a visit and take a look at the arrivals log; especially the ‘remarks’ section. There you will find mostly rave comments about how pilots and passengers discovered Everglades City and how they spread the word to bring in more and more visitors. There were more than 75 airplane arrivals in just the month of December and our local economy most assuredly benefits in many ways. Fly-in visitors return with friends and family for extended stays, dine in our restaurants, take an airboat tour, book a fishing trip, and, of course, take home lots of stone crabs. This past holiday season we counted at least 30 or more coolers full of crab claws flying out for Christmas and New Year’s Eve celebrations.

The next flapjack flipflop will take place at the airport on **Saturday, January 24**, from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Come on down and see some beautiful little airplanes and get your flying buzz buzzing.



MOTEL UPGRADED

The owners of Everglades City Motel, located on Collier Avenue next to the Backcountry Cafe, have just remodeled all of their 19 rooms. Although more than half of them have a seating area and kitchenette, every room has a refrigerator, a microwave, and a coffeemaker, in addition to a hair dryer, iron and ironing board. The bath facilities have all been upgraded and enlarged by eliminating the closet.

The rates are comparable to other rooms in town; January rates \$89.99; February and March \$109 for the standard room and \$119 room with kitchenette. During Seafood Festival weekend, the rooms will be a little higher at \$139. There is a No-Smoking & No-Pets policy. Other upgrades include cable TV and a wireless internet connection in each room.

The Everglades City Motel was built in the 1950s and was variously known as the Sportsman's Motel and the Illinois Motel (the owners were from that state). It is mentioned in a 1953 Chamber of Commerce brochure and in 1956 the room rate was \$6/night.

For many years it has catered to visiting fishermen and the new management says that, with the recent remodeling, the fishermen are very pleased with the upgrades and have commented positively on all the improvements.



VIP Report

by Shirley Leonard



Gulf Coast Visitor Numbers

How does the number of visitors to Everglades National Park, Everglades City during the last two weeks of December 2008 compare to those of 2007?

Before reading any further, guess. What would you expect? A busier tourist season or a disappointing one? Fewer Americans vacationing? More?

The economy has changed a lot since a year ago. The country, the world, is going through one of the worst recessions in history. Some economists are comparing it to the Great Depression of the 1930s. Unemployment rates are high.

If people lose their jobs, they don't buy. Christmas sales were five percent less than last year. If people don't buy, companies falter. Layoffs, bankruptcies, closings are regularly in the news. The housing market has been a disaster. People are walking away from their houses and letting banks foreclose. Why? They owe more on the mortgages than they can afford. Home prices have been steadily falling. Many people owe more on their mortgages than they could sell their homes for.

The cost of living has increased, and the value of the American dollar has decreased. Anywhere in the world we go, whatever we buy, on the average, costs more than a year ago.

Large banks and brokerages houses have failed. Many Americans have watched their retirement funds evaporate.

One positive glimmer: gasoline prices nationally dropped dramatically to half as high as they were a year ago, \$1.70 vs. \$3.40 per gallon.

Given all the grim economic news for 2008, I expected a decrease in tourists here and possibly a steep drop. I am so pleased to report I was wrong. The numbers of visitors through the visitor center door speak for themselves:

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>increase</u>	
12/18-12/25	1,955	1,969	14	1%
12/25-12/31	3,998	4,965	967	24%

From December 18 through December 25, the number increased from 1,955 to 1,969, an increase of only 14 visitors, less than 1%, but *still* an increase.

After Christmas the number of vacationers usually dramatically increases. From December 26 through December 31 it jumped from 3,998 in 2007 to 4,965 in 2008, a difference of nearly a thousand people (967), a 24% increase.

The number of people camping in the back country of the Gulf Coast has also increased. In December 2007, 189 drew permits. In 2008 it jumped to 233, almost a 25% increase.

This good news is *such* a breath of fresh air.

Ah-h-h-h!

Shirley Leonard is a member of the "Volunteer in Parks" program during the winter season. She was a journalist in Quincy, Massachusetts, on The Patriot Ledger for over 20 years and is a regular contributor to the Rapper.

RESTAURANT NEWS



- Backcountry Cafe:**
6:00 am - 9:00 pm.; Mon - Sat
6:00 am - 3:00 pm.; Sun
- Camellia Street Grill:**
Noon - 8:00 pm; Mon - Thurs
Noon - 10:00 pm; Fri, Sat
Noon - 6:00 pm; Sunday
- City Seafood:**
11:00 am - 6:00 pm; daily
4:00 - 9:00 pm; Thurs - Sun
- Everglades Scoop:**
11:00 am - 5:00 pm; Mon- Sat
- Glades Haven Deli:**
6:00 am - 6:00 pm; Sun - Thurs
6:00 am - 9:00 pm; Fri - Sat
- Grimm's Stone Crab (takeout):**
8 am - 6 pm; Mon - Sat
- Havana Cafe:**
8:00 am - 3:00 pm; daily
- Ivey House:**
7:00 - 9:30 am; daily
- Joanie's Blue Crab Cafe, Ochopee:**
10:00 am - 5:00 pm; Wed - Mon
Live Music on weekends
- JT's Cafe & Gallery, Chokoloskee:**
9 am - 5 pm; daily
- Leebo's Rock-Bottom Bar:**
4:00 pm; Mon - Sat
noon; Sunday
- Oyster House Restaurant:**
11:00 am - 9:00 pm; Sun - Thurs
11:00 am - 10:00 pm; Fri, Sat
- Right Choice Pizzeria (takeout):**
5:00 - 9:00 pm; Thurs - Mon
- Rod & Gun:**
7:00 - 10 am Breakfast; daily
11:30 am - 9:00 pm; daily
- Seafood Depot:**
Breakfast: 5:30 - 10:30 am; Fri - Sun
11:00 am - 9:00 pm; daily
Cabana Bash: 4 - 7 pm, Sat
- Subway:**
10:00 am - 8:00 pm; daily
- Susie's Station:**
11:00 am - 5:00 pm; daily
- Triad Seafood:**
10:30 am - 3:00 pm; Mon - Thurs
10:30 am - 6:00 pm; Fri, Sat, Sun

For a list of CHURCH SERVICES, see www.evergladesmulletrapper.com or phone us for a copy. A current list is also on the Notice Board outside the Captain's Table.



Church Rails Painted

Holy Family Catholic Church has a new look. Pete and Pat Rinkevich, Les Brucker, Mike Danosky, and Denise Rousseau have brightened up the railings at the entrance of the Church.

Mass is offered each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. with coffee and sweets served afterwards and a pot luck luncheon once a month (this Sunday, January 11). The Church is also open on Fridays from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. for prayer and at 9:00 a.m. the rosary is said. Everyone is invited to attend.

LUNCH SPECIALS

The Seafood Depot have lunch specials during the week now, as well as the popular Sunday Fried Chicken:

- Monday: Taco Bar
- Tuesday: Meat Loaf
- Wednesday: Baby Back Ribs
- Thursday: Turkey Club
- Friday: Pot Roast

Put your order in early to get them while they last.

MEET A FAMOUS FLYER

Ted "Dutch" Van Kirk, an aircraft navigator during World War II, will be the guest of honor at a reception on **Friday, January 23**, at 6:00 p.m. at the Museum in Naples.

Now in his late 80s, he took part in the flight of the *Enola Gay* which dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima. He also flew over Europe and brought General Dwight Eisenhower to North Africa.

The event is presented by the Friends of Collier County Museums. Attendance is limited so for reservations and info, phone them at 252-8476.



A wonderful New Year Eve of Bluegrass-Gospel music was enjoyed by many at the First Baptist Church. Musicians including the Rev. Pastor Clifton Tomes at the piano celebrated with instruments and singing the "ole year out", ending with refreshments of home baked cakes and home churned ice cream.

OBITUARY

Kent Orner, 72, passed away of a heart attack on December 4, 2008, while visiting family in Pennsylvania. He had moved to Chokoloskee permanently in 1994, after fishing in this area for almost 50 years and building his home 24 years ago. He served on the Ochopee Fire Control District Advisory Board for 10 years. He is survived by his wife Donna, three children, and many grandchildren.

TOWER GIFTS

"Eyes of the Everglades" is a new gift shop in the Tower Building just opposite the National Park and next to the Oyster House.

You can also gain admission to the Tower itself through the shop. Originally built in 1984 and named after Ernest Hamilton, the Tower has 200 steps and is 75-feet high (it was granted a zoning variance). The view from the top is spectacular!

The shop is open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily.

Big Cypress Plans

An Environmental Assessment for Commercial Services in Big Cypress National Preserve is available for public comment until **Saturday, January 24**. For a copy, phone Christine Clark at 695-1153 or see <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>.

SNOOK CLASSIFIED

FOR SALE: House on 1.02 Acres. Sale price \$188,000 or for rent at \$900/mon. For info, call 321-439-7635

FOR SALE, Condo: 1 bed, 1 bath, large living room, wrap-around balcony, pool privileges, sheltered parking, rental potential at managed site. Only \$169,000. Phone 289-7477.

RESIDENTIAL RENTAL in E-City: Dock available for extra fee. Contact 961-3986 for details.

FOR SALE: Ford 1966 Mustang, Needs Restoration, \$3,500, Call Mark, 239-273-2403.

Classified Ads cost \$15/month. Phone us at 695-2397 or email mulletrapper@gmail.com



Thanks to Helen Bryan who sent us this photo and email:
Celebrating the New Year through the weekend found a lot of family activities going on at Chokoloskee causeway, including picnics, canoeing, many boaters fishing, and those that didn't have boats waded to waist-deep water cast netting for mullet, with good luck.

JOBS VACANT

Everglades Isle Motor Coach Retreat is hiring restaurant, bar, maintenance, and housekeeping staff. Stop by at the lighthouse near the bridge for an application or phone 695-2600.

The Census Bureau is hiring for the 2010 census. There will be full & part-time jobs in an office or in the field. For info, see www.2010censusjobs.gov where you can download an application or phone 1-866-861-2010.

PUT YOUR JOB ADS IN THE RAPPER ... no charge!

USED INK CARTRIDGES
Drop off computer or photocopier cartridges at City Hall or the Thrift Shop to benefit Reach Out's subsidiary that helps stray animals. For info, phone Barbara at 695-3167 or see www.recycle4charity.com.

The MULLET RAPPER

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We strive to present the facts accurately without political bias or personal opinion.
The views expressed in signed articles are not necessarily those of the editors or publisher.

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