

The MULLET RAPPER

What's Happening in the Everglades & 10,000 Islands

TIDE TABLE &
RESTAURANTS
PAGE 11

JANUARY 13, 2018 - JANUARY 26, 2018



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P O Box 134, Everglades City, FL, 34139

Volume X • Issue # 303



Charity Plant Sale & Everglades Bike Ride Highlight Busy Weekend

There is something of interest for everyone this time of year. For those interested in plants, the **2nd Annual Plant Sale** for Everglades City School Athletics will be held at McLeod Park on **Saturday, January 13th**, see details on page 5.

The winter schedule of **bike rides** begins with a beautiful ride through Everglades City & Chokoloskee on **Sunday, January 14th**, see details on page 3.

Save the Date!

The Seafood Festival is Almost Here!

The annual Seafood Festival will take place from February 9th to 11th. Those who attend can expect to find delicious seafood and other foods, unique arts & crafts, rides for the kids at the carnival and amazing music during the three day event.

The festival is organized by the Betterment Association of the Everglades Area, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit which donates to local causes. For information, www.evergladesseafoodfestival.org or call (239) 695-2277.



Last year's music attracted big crowds at the big stage for Saturday & Sunday's performances!

Community Clean Up, Act II

*Come Out and Help Us Spruce Up One More Time Before Seafood Fest!
Saturday, January 20th from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.*

Wow. The community has progressed so much since "the day we'd all like to forget" back in September 2017. However, some areas could still use some help. On January 20th, we are going to organize again to pick up debris, glass and anything else still left so that we are ready to receive the influx of visitors for the 2018 Seafood Festival.

Last cleanup, volunteers from the community spread throughout the area to collect as much as possible in an effort to help our neighbors and the City. Since that time, FEMA has made their last major pick-ups and has left our community for good.

Now, anything left (like white goods) will need to be picked up by the county (which requires a call from the homeowner) or disposed of in the normal, pre-Irma fashion. Any small debris like glass, pieces of drywall and household items still in the grass still needs to get picked up and disposed of...and this is what we intend to do.

We are looking for volunteers who can lend us a hand. The Mullet Rapper will supply gloves and trash bags. We will offer lunch and have a drawing for prizes after the cleanup. We will meet at the temporary City Hall building and spread out from there.



Where: City Hall
When: January 20th, 9 am to 2 pm
What to Bring: Motivation!
What we Need: Volunteers!
Contact: The Mullet Rapper
Photos by Tim Brock

14th Annual Marjorie Stoneman Douglas Festival to be Held February 20-24



The annual celebration of the life of the Grand Dame of the Everglades will be hosted by the Friends of the Museum of the Everglades on February 20th through 24th. Although Marjorie Stoneman Douglas died in 1998 at 108 years of age, her power of observation and skillful use of the written word lives on. Her legacy serves as a challenge to succeeding generations, not only to persevere in the fight to save the Everglades, but to discover for themselves the incredible beauty of the natural wonder we call the "River of Grass."

This celebration features tours, speakers, arts and crafts and more. For more information regarding the festival, please visit evergladesmuseum.org.




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FEATURE: DEDICATE OUR FIREHOUSE, P. 8

If you have news, photos, announcements, or articles ... email us at: mulletrapper@gmail.com or call us at: 954-662-7003.

JANUARY 14, 2018 – FEBRUARY 17, 2018

<u>SUN</u>	<u>MON</u>	<u>TUES</u>	<u>WED</u>	<u>THURS</u>	<u>FRI</u>	<u>SAT</u>
14 Bike Ride, see p. 3	15	16 new moon ● Free Dental Screenings, See p. 3	17 Ladies Coffee Havana Café, 8 am	18 Book Club, see p. 3	19	20 Art-in-Glades, Pancake Fly- in, see p.3 Community Cleanup II, p.1
21	22	23	24 Ladies Coffee Island Café 8 am	25	26	<u>JAN 27</u> <u>RAPPER</u>
28	29	30	31 full moon ○ Ladies Coffee City Seafood 8 am	February 1	2	3
4	5	6	7 Ladies Coffee Havana Café 8 am	8 Lions Club, 6 pm Havana Café	9 Seafood Festival 	10 <u>RAPPER</u> Seafood Festival 
11 Seafood Festival 	12	13 Free Dental Screenings, See p. 3	14 Ladies Coffee Island Café 8 am Valentines Day ●	15 new moon ●	16	17 Pancake Fly- in, see p. 3

February 19: President's Day

February 20-24: MSD Festival

March 24: Calusa Days

THRIFT SHOP: Closed until further notice
 LIONS CLUB: 2nd Thursday of month, 6 pm
 DR DEMARTINO: Marco Island office information on p.3.
 DR MARTIN: Call for appointment: 813-787-9738
 AA: Wed., 5:00 pm, temporary City Hall bldg.
 MUSEUM: Open Monday-Saturday, 9 am to 4 pm. 239-695-0008
 CARNESTOWN Recycle and Trash: 2nd Saturday, 9 am to 3:30 pm

SKATING RINK: Closed until further notice
 REACH OUT: 3rd Tuesday, 9:30 am, location TBA
 LITTLE GATOR CLINIC: Not seeing patients at this time
 VETERANS SUPPORT: 2nd & 4th Wed. of month, noon—2 pm
 COMMUNITY CHURCH FOOD PANTRY: See p. 3
 SMALLWOOD STORE: 10 am to 5 pm
 PANCAKE FLY-IN: 1/20, 2/17, 3/17, 4/21 at 10 to 12, E-City Airport

SHERIFF AT CITY HALL: Tuesdays, 2 to 5 pm
 CHAMBER OF COMMERCE: Mon–Thurs (9 am to 2 pm); Fri-Sat (9 am to 3 pm)
 COLLIER COUNTY: 239-252-8999

POST OFFICE PHONE NUMBERS & HOURS: TEMPORARY HOURS DURING REMODELING
 Everglades City (239) 695-2174 (no phone now) Mon-Sat: 10 am to 3 pm-Truck in circle by City Hall
 Chokoloskee (239) 695-4468 Mon-Sat: 10 am to 3 pm– PO is reopened. Stamps, mail, no weighing.
 Ochopee (239) 695-2099 Mon-Fri: 8 am to 10 am, noon to 4 pm; Sat: 10 am to 11:30 am

SHERIFF: 239-252-9300 CITY HALL: 239-695-3781 PUBLIC LIBRARY: 239-695-2511 AIRPORT: 239-695-2778
 FAKAHATCHEE: 239-695-4593 BIG CYPRESS: 239-695-2000 EVG NATIONAL PARK: 239-695-3311
 CURBSIDE TRASH PICKUP (FRIDGES, WASHING MACHINES, TVs): 239-252-2380, CALL TUESDAY FOR THURSDAY PICKUP

What's Happening

In and Around Town



COME RIDE WITH US! January 14th

Join our group as we cycle through the beautiful Everglades and enjoy the nature and comradery of our fellow riders.

For more information, please email info@evergladesrogg.org or call Patty at: 239-695-2397. You can also review the schedule online at www.evergladesrogg.org/events.

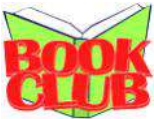
January 14 – Everglades City / Chokoloskee (on-road). Meet at McLeod Park, Everglades City, 9 am
February TBD – Loop Road in the Big Cypress & ENP (off-road). Meet at west end of Loop Road

March 11 – Ave Maria (on-road). Meet at McLeod Park, Everglades City, 9 am

April 8 – Bear Island in the Big Cypress (off-road). Meet at Bear Island (end of Turner River Road)



Book-of-the-Month Club January 18th, 9:30 am



Join us as our annual book club meets each month at 9:30 a.m. to discuss an interesting title. Below is our winter schedule. For more details, contact Patty Huff at: 239-695-2397.

Jan. 18: Granny D's Walk Across America at Age 90, hosted by Dianna Pollock

Feb. 15: The Orphan Train, hostess to be announced

Mar. 15: A Girl Named Tommie, author will attend and Elaine Middelstaedt will lead discussion

Apr. 19: The Tale of Edgar Sawtelle, Hostess Diann Lock, 498 Collier Ave., phone: 812-361-7402

PANCAKE FLY-IN BREAKFAST January 20th, 10 am to noon



The pancake fly-in is back! Please join us each month to meet and enjoy a free pancake breakfast with sausage and coffee. Of course, fly-ins are encouraged and we welcome walk-ins as well! Fly-in dates are: 1/20, 2/17, 3/17 and 4/21. We hope to see you there!



SEAFOOD FESTIVAL!!! FEB 9, 10 & 11

The annual Everglades City Seafood Festival will take place February 9, 10 & 11.

The three days of fun will feature foods, carnival rides, arts & crafts and the (almost) famous collectible Budweiser mugs. Great country music will be performed by local artists and national headliners! See you there!

FOOD BANK OPEN! Wednesdays 11 am to 1 pm

The Harry Chapin Food Bank has resumed weekly distribution every Wednesday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the parking lot in front of River Wilderness Waterfront Villas, 210 Collier Avenue, across from the Marathon Service Station. This is a temporary arrangement until Jinkins Fellowship Hall at Community Church has been repaired.

COMMUNITY SERVICES



FREE DENTAL SCREENINGS ALL AGES- FEB. 13TH 9 am to 4 pm

The *Healthcare Network of Southwest Florida's Health & Smiles Mobil Dental Bus* is scheduled to be in Everglades City on **February 13th** from 9 am to 4 pm, in the Fire Station parking lot, providing free dental health screenings. You can also schedule an appointment for cleanings, fillings, extractions and x-rays. For more information or to make an appointment call 239-986-7323.



DOCTOR'S CLINIC

Dr. Kirk DeMartino is seeing patients in his Marco Island Office. You may call his office to schedule an appointment to see him there: (239) 642-5552.



NATURAL MEDICINE

Dr. John Martin can see patients in Everglades City. Call to make an appt. or leave a message: 813-787-9738.



~ ACCOUNTING SERVICES ~ MIKE "THE TAX GUY"

Local and professional, personal & business tax services in Everglades City. Call 239-595-4203 to set an appointment. Email: nfn19842@naples.net for more information.



THRIFT SHOP

Sorry...the thrift shop is currently closed for repairs! We are working hard to reopen as soon as possible! Thanks for your patience while we make repairs.

A Message from Fire Chief Kingman Schuldt



Did you know that heating equipment is a leading cause of home fire deaths? Half of home heating equipment fires are reported during the months of December, January, and February. With a cold spell now affecting SW Florida it is a great time to review some heating safety tips. As energy costs continue to rise, families often turn to space heaters and other methods as a less expensive alternative for keeping their houses warm. Space heaters may be less expensive to operate, but is important to be aware of how to use them safely.

Here are some simple steps than can prevent most heating-related fires from happening.

- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from heating equipment, like the furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable space heater.
- Have a three-foot "kid-free zone" around open fires and space heaters.
- Never use your oven to heat your home.
- Have a qualified professional install stationary space heating equipment, water heaters or central heating equipment according to the local codes and manufacturer's instructions.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.
- Remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed. Always use the right kind of fuel, specified by the manufacturer, for fuel burning space heaters.
- Make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room. Ashes should be cool before putting them in a metal container. Keep the container a safe distance away from your home.
- Test smoke alarms at least once a month.


3 Quick (and Safe) Tips to Keeping a House Warmer in Cold Weather

Close your curtains: While sunlight is a helpful (and free) way to keep your house warm during the day, as soon as the sun goes down it's a good idea to close your curtains to stop heat from being lost.

Close doors to rooms you're not using: Heating oil company Petro recommends closing doors to create a "pocket of heat" in one room or to lessen the amount of space in your home to heat, allowing warmer air to stay in the rooms you are using

Put a rug down: Tiled floors and uninsulated floorboards can make a room freezing, but they can also directly make you cold when you walk on them.

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12/30/17 Puzzle Solution

1	A	2	Z	3	U	4	R	5	E	6	C	7	A	8	S	9	S
10	V	11	I	12	S	13	A	14	S	15	O	16	P	17	A	18	L
19	I	20	N	21	E	22	P	23	T	24	B	25	E	26	L	27	O
28	W	29	V	30	C	31	R	32	E	33	B	34	B	35	A	36	G
37	O	38	P	39	E	40	R	41	I	42	M	43	A	44	N		
45	G	46	O	47	O	48	D	49	M	50	O	51	R	52	N	53	I
54	N	55	R	56	I	57	F	58	F	59	K	60	A	61	N		
62	A	63	L	64	L	65	F	66	E	67	D	68	A	69	T	70	P
71	F	72	R	73	A	74	M	75	E	76	I	77	N	78	T	79	E
80	R	81	I	82	T	83	E	84	M	85	A	86	S	87	O	88	N
89	E	90	G	91	E	92	T	93	A	94	L	95	A	96	N	97	D
98	S																

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**An Update from Athletic Director,
Coach Jill Whitcomb**

Happy New Year from Everglades City School's athletic department! Boys' and girls' basketball is now in full swing, as well as, cheerleading! Every game is an away game since our gym is still under reconstruction. The boys' varsity is led by senior Scout Morris who continues to lead the team in scoring! The girls' varsity is led by seniors Ashlyn Goff and Jasmine Lucas whose on court leadership guides the team. Check the Everglades City School website at www.collierschools.com/EVG for the teams schedules. Middle school basketball starts January 13 and runs through February 10! All games are played at Marco Island Charter Middle School on Saturdays. Come out and support our Gator athletes!

We have some great news to report! We are now honoring our perfect attendance students each month. In November, we had one middle school student with perfect attendance and two high school students. We recognized those students and challenged all our students to strive for perfect attendance. In December, we had 11 middle school students and 8 high school students with perfect attendance! We are hoping to make January even better!



**Plant Sale at McLeod Park to Benefit
Everglades City School Athletic Department**

Please come out to McLeod park on Saturday, **January 13th from 9 am to 1 pm** and help support our area's kids! The Mullet Rapper is hosting the 2nd Annual Plant sale where 100% of the proceeds are donated to the school to help fund athletic programs for all ages. See you there!

School Schedule:
January 24: Report cards issued
February 14: Early dismissal day
 For school information, visit <http://www.collierschools.com/EVG>



**Donations to School Athletics Slowed by
Hurricane Irma...But 2018 is Looking Great!**

Hurricane Irma impacted everything the latter half of 2017, including Mullet Rapper sales. **The Rapper now donates 100% of the proceeds brought in by the sale of the print edition.** We started last September...and then got rudely interrupted by an uninvited guest (Irma), leaving the total collected for 2017 at \$416.

However, 2018 is off to a great start and we expect to surpass that figure in the near future. We will publish updates as the year progresses. Thank you for the support for our school and area children!

TAXING THINGS

by Mike the Tax Guy

2018 TAX LAW CHANGES

The Internal Revenue Service announced today that the nation's tax season will begin Monday, Jan. 29, 2018 and reminded taxpayers claiming certain tax credits that refunds won't be available before late February. The changes made by the tax reform bill go into effect for the 2018 tax year, which means you'll first notice them on your tax return that you file in 2019.

Income Tax Rate		Income Levels for Those Filing As:	
2017	2018-2025	Single	Married-Joint
10%	10%	\$0-\$9,525	\$0-\$19,050
15%	12%	\$9,525-\$38,700	\$19,050-\$77,400
25%	22%	\$38,700-\$82,500	\$77,400-\$165,000
28%	24%	\$82,500-\$157,500	\$165,000-\$315,000
33%	32%	\$157,500-\$200,000	\$315,000-\$400,000
33%-35%	35%	\$200,000-\$500,000	\$400,000-\$600,000
39.6%	37%	\$500,000+	\$600,000+

Efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act, otherwise known as Obamacare, in 2017 were unsuccessful, but the tax reform bill repeals the individual mandate, meaning that people who don't buy health insurance will no longer have to pay a tax penalty. This change doesn't go into effect until 2019, so for 2018, the penalty can still be assessed.

The personal exemption of \$4150 per person has been eliminated; for employees receiving W2 compensation it may be necessary to review employers Form W4 to verify that the deduction amount does not result in an underpayment of income tax.

While many deductions remain under the new tax law, there are several that didn't survive. Gone for the 2018 tax year are the deductions for:

- Casualty and theft losses (except those attributable to a federally declared disaster)
- Unreimbursed employee expenses
- Tax preparation expenses
- Other miscellaneous deductions previously subject to the 2% AGI cap
- Moving expenses
- Employer-subsidized parking and transportation reimbursement

**COMING SOON: A NEW MEDICARE CARD THAT WILL NOT
DISPLAY SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS.**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently announced it is preparing to issue Medicare cards that will use new unique numbers in place of cardholder SSNs. CMS said it would begin mailing new cards to beneficiaries in April 2018.

CMS accelerated work on this project after President Obama signed the *Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015* (MACRA) to protect seniors from identity theft.

Recipients should contact their healthcare providers to advise of their new identification number.

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My Little Slice of Paradise

By Kathy Brock

*Where Does a Great Horned Owl Nest?
Anywhere She Wants To!*

Winter in the Everglades area is a very interesting time of year for bird lovers. Not only are we blessed with the beautiful white pelicans each season, we have numerous other migratory birds that call the Everglades their winter home.



However, some of the most interesting displays are the ones by some of our native species. Early December marks the time our Ospreys begin the nesting season. They reclaim their nests, add some more "support" and then go through the beautiful mating rituals they repeat year after year.

Male ospreys will perform a noisy aerial display with a stick or fish in its talons high above the nest, often 600 feet or more. I watched as one had a fish as he came back to the nest site. When he arrived he gave the fish to his mate and she quickly flew off with it.

The male will also aggressively defend his nest from other birds including osprey...but it seems the great horned owl is another story.

You see, each year our resident great horned owls choose their site. Last year, they chose the electrical station off of Camelia Street. However, hurricane Irma blew that nest away. So, this year I have been searching...knowing they are here (you can hear them hoot in the night), wondering where they will nest.

Recently, I found her...high atop one of the lights over by temporary City Hall. Of course, this had been an osprey nest for several seasons...but not this year! What Mrs. Owl wants, Mrs. Owl gets...and that is that.



Sandee Harraden

The good news is the osprey can rebuild, and it looks like they have chosen another light pole not far from their original. Even better, the location chosen by Mrs. Owl puts it right

where we can watch her adorable offspring grow up before our eyes! Local nature photographer Sandee Harraden took the photo above last year...hopefully, she will get some more amazing photos this season! You can contact Sandee @sjharraden@aol.com.. Sandee, thanks for letting us use your photo!

Recipes for Good Eating
Submitted by Bonnie Woodward
Cheesy Baked Grits

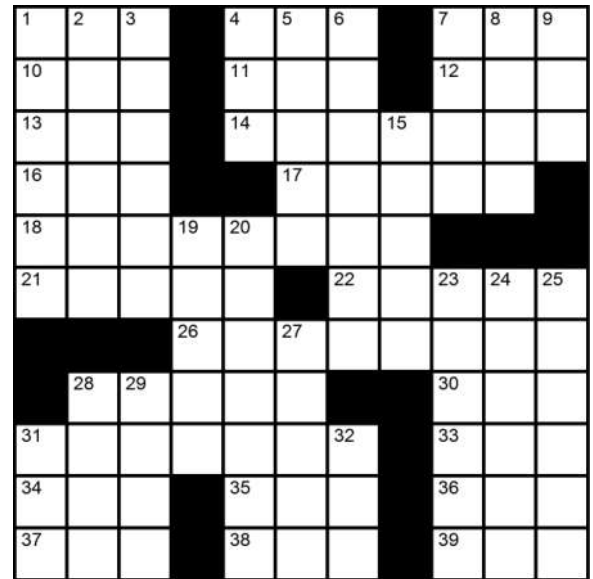
Ingredients
1 qt. milk
1/2 C. butter
1 C. uncooked grits
1 tsp salt
1/2 tsp white pepper
1 C. shredded cheddar cheese
1/3 C. butter
1/2 C. grated Parmesan cheese

Directions:
Preheat oven to 350. Lightly grease med baking dish. Bring milk to boil over med heat. Melt 1/2 C. butter in boiling milk. Gradually mix in grits & cook 5 min, stirring constantly. Remove from heat & season with salt and pepper to taste. Beat with a whisk until smooth. Mix in cheese & 1/3 C. butter. Transfer to prepared baking dish & sprinkle w/Parmesan. Bake 1 hour in the oven until firm. This can be served with breakfast or dinner and is excellent reheated so make plenty!

MULLET RAPPER CROSSWORD

Across

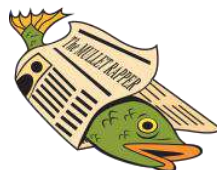
- 1 Label for Elvis
- 4 Trucker's bedroom?
- 7 Youngster
- 10 Original internet provider
- 11 Undergarment
- 12 Not truth
- 13 Corn eater's leftover
- 14 Ways of doing things
- 16 Mamie's other half
- 17 Rubbed in during Lent
- 18 787 or MD90
- 21 Opened the door
- 22 Some final resting places
- 26 To a certain extent
- 28 Utah's --- Hatch
- 30 Jacket with tails
- 31 Actress Weld
- 33 A biting one is red
- 34 Portable bank
- 35 Ram's woman
- 36 Fifth sign
- 37 Chokoloskee is one
- 38 Steep
- 39 Wrongdoing



1/13/18

Down

- 1 Kind of discrimination
- 2 A Christmas treat
- 3 Einstein's first name
- 4 TV network with eye logo
- 5 From eastern old Iran
- 6 Droopy-eared hound
- 7 Run away
- 8 Outer edges
- 9 Some say it to the dress
- 15 Type of pillow
- 19 Kind of poker
- 20 Person with special access
- 23 Tin, steel, and others
- 24 Sultanate in Borneo
- 25 Churchyard gravedigger
- 27 Dumbfounded
- 28 "--- sight!"
- 29 Cognac bottle name
- 31 Bar bill
- 32 Nevertheless



**Fire Station History by
City Council Member Tim Smith**
The History of Everglades City Fire Station



Recently at a Council meeting I mentioned that I would like to get public input on naming our Fire station after an important member of our City. I have been thinking that maybe a lot of people here do not know the history behind that thought...

I moved here with my family around 1970. Soon after that, my dad operated a marina at the Everglades bridge. I remember one time a local guide Cecil Brown was towing his airboat over the bridge and it caught fire in the middle of it.

At that time the city's only fire truck was a 1940's era truck. I remember someone trying to drive it up the bridge to put out the fire and it wouldn't make it. Someone had to push it up with another truck to put the fire out.

A few years later we purchased a new Fire truck. It was housed in the city barn which is near the current VR corporation RV park now. The city manager was the fire chief and whoever showed up at a fire department would help the best we could. Often the best we could do was "save the slab."

Soon after this, Ochopee started with an actual fire department. This was a huge improvement but there was still a delay in getting to Everglades.

One of the fireman for Ochopee was Tom Mitchell. Tom had a vision that Everglades City would have its own Fire Department. He is a driven individual. He worked on the plans. He worked on the people who were putting on the Seafood festival at the time to raise funds to build the Fire Station. When funds ran short, he worked on the fisherman and anyone he could to raise what money he needed to build the station.

He worked himself on building the station, and then got volunteers to help keep the costs down.

Most people thought it was crazy to build such a big station with living quarters when we only had one truck. But Tom had a vision of what we needed. He also wanted to build the station two stories tall to protect the living quarters and provide an emergency operations center (EOC). He wasn't able to get that done, it is ironic that after Irma we could have really used this.

Today, we have a fully staffed, highly trained, and equipped fire station. And, a dedicated advanced life support ambulance stationed here full time. All of this is directly related to one man's vision.

But he didn't stop at this. He also had a vision that the kids in all of our communities needed a recreation center. And our nearly vacant city park needed to be upgraded with a pavilion and better equipment.

He put the same passion into these projects as he did the Fire Station. And through all of this he served a full career to our communities as a Firefighter and EMT.

My hope is everyone understands and agrees with the importance in naming our Fire Station in honor of the dedication Tom Mitchell has had for all of our area communities.

Editorial

**The Florida Everglades is a Sanctuary for Wildlife,
Not a Place for Oil Drilling Investment**

By Kevin O'Donnell

The Big Cypress National Preserve is a tropical savanna on the western half of the Florida Everglades. The waters that flows through Big Cypress National preserve feed the great Everglades watershed, which in turn, feeds Florida's underground aquifer. Big Cypress is a totally unique environment only found in Florida. Many species exist in the preserve that can be found nowhere else in the world. The Florida Panther, Ghost Orchid, Florida Black Bear, and Wood Stork are all examples of endangered species that rely on the Big Cypress Preserve to sustain life.

The Collier family was one of the first pioneering families in Southwest Florida and the Everglades. In 1911 Barron Collier purchased 1.3 million acres of what is now Collier, Lee and Hendry counties. In 1943 Humble Oil and refining Co., with permission from Collier, discovered oil in what is now Big Cypress Preserve and are still harvesting barrels of oil in the same location in Big Cypress today. Since the 1970's, there have been disputes on whether there should be more oil drilling in the preserve and the effects it will have on the environment.

Surveying and drilling would disrupt the amount of land these species can call home and further damaging the preserve. An oil company out of Texas called Burnett Oil Co. has decided that the Big Cypress Preserve will be their new site for oil drilling. The process in which the oil company detects oil is harmful to the unique environment of Big Cypress. Burnett Oil uses a method in oil surveying in which a machine pounds the earth with heavy steel plates in order to detect seismic movement for the presence of oil. Evidence of the surveys was prominent throughout the surveyed areas leaving behind muddy pot holes and damaged or fallen trees.

In the spring of 2017, Burnett Oil Company requested permits to go into Big Cypress National Preserve and survey the land for future oil drilling. These permits are issued by Florida Department of Environmental Protection FDEP. The company was required to clean all damages done by the survey and to leave the preserve by July 15, 2017. The company was forced to stop the surveys early because of the wet season. The National Park Service concluded that the company did not abide by the permit and left much of their damage to be cleaned by the preserve's staff.

Recently, Burnett oil Company requested another permit to go back into the preserve and survey for oil. The Conservancy of Southwest Florida, the National Parks Conservation Association, and the Center for Biological Diversity all encouraged the FDEP to refuse the company's permit. FDEP renewed the permit and Burnett Oil Company was given permission to start surveying in Big Cypress October 24 2017.

The FDEP is concerned with the effects of the surveys in the preserve and plan on sending inspectors to help with National Park Service in repairing the wet prairies that were damaged in the spring.

In order to monitor the future surveys, the National Park Service has requested that a group of ecologists be present on every survey trip. However, the National Park Service expressed concerns that the surveys were progressing much too fast for ecologists to have a chance to do proper monitoring.

Burnett Oil Company plans on surveying 70,000 acres of the preserve utilizing the current permit, which expires October 5, 2018. The company has also indicated that this will not be the last time they survey the preserve with plans on surveying over 200,000 acres by the end of their stay in Big Cypress Preserve.

That is nearly one third of the total acreage (720,000 acres) in the Preserve. The trade-off of leaving a completely unique environment, found nowhere else in the world, compared to having another source of a fossil fuel that may be replaced by something synthetic or less carbon emitting in the future is obvious.

Leaving the Big Cypress Preserve and the rest of the Everglades in their natural state will not only be morally correct but economically smart. A clean and natural Big Cypress Preserve means clean water for Florida residents, healthy fish for the booming seafood industry in Florida, increase in tourism, more jobs for tour guides and environmentalists, and a step in the direction of conservation and a future of less dependence on fossil fuels. Oil drilling in Big Cypress will destroy habitats for rare and endangered wildlife, degrade the reputation of Big Cypress Preserve and encourage more development in an area that needs more protection and care.

From the editor: Kevin O'Donnell is an Economics Student at FGCU. A requirement for his studies was to write an op-ed article about a local economic issue. Kevin is interested in the health of the Everglades and submitted the above article to the Mullet Rapper.

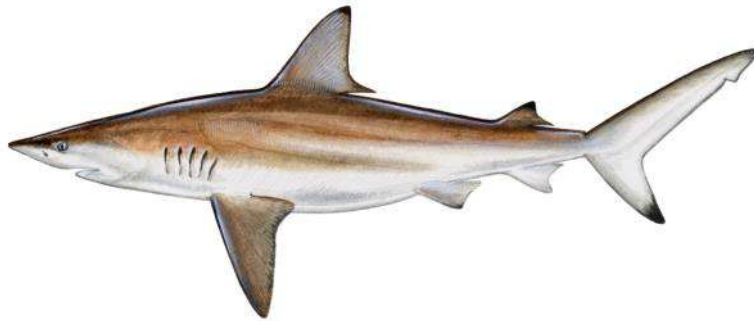
The Mullet Rapper does not take editorial positions on particular issues; individual contributions to the paper express the opinions of specific authors unless explicitly labeled otherwise in a subheading. The inclusion of a particular piece in the paper does not mean that individual staff members or editors concur with the editorial positions represented therein. The Mullet Rapper welcomes contrasting responses to any article published digitally or in print.



Living Gulf Coast

by Charles Sobczak

Blacktip Shark (*Carcharhinus limbatus*) Other names: blacktip reef shark, black finned shark, guliman / Status: FL=stable, IUCN=NT / Life span: to 15 years / Length: 2.5-6 ft (76-182 cm) / Weight: 20-75 lb (9-34 kg); Florida record: 152 lb, IGFA: 270 lb 9 oz / Reproduces: live pups in the nearshore waters / Found: in all inland and coastal waters of Southwest Florida.



The southwest coast is one of Florida's major blacktip shark nurseries. This small, timid shark is a regular catch of inshore fishermen and considered to be one of the better eating sharks found in our local waters. There are 28 unprovoked blacktip shark attacks recorded in Florida, with no fatalities. The blacktip shark is not considered dangerous when compared with the bull, great white, and tiger sharks.

The blacktip is one of only a handful of animals known to be capable of parthenogenesis, allowing the female blacktip to give birth to pups without fertilization. The Nile monitor lizard, Komodo dragons, and bonnet-head sharks are also capable of this highly unusual asexual reproduction. The reasons for this unusual ability are unclear.

The blacktip is considered a game fish by the IGFA. It makes long, quick runs, leaps out of the water frequently, and does not come to the boat easily. Wire is mandatory, as its sharp teeth will tear through monofilament leader in seconds. Unless taken for the dinner table, the blacktip, as well as all sharks, should never be lifted out of the water (especially vertically!). Its internal organs are not designed to withstand the forces of gravity for any length of time. Although holding one up high with a pair of Boca-grips might make for a great photo op, in all likelihood you are killing or seriously injuring the fish for a snapshot. If you are planning to release your fish, keep it in the water, take your picture, revive it if necessary by dragging it behind the boat, and set it free.

It is best to use non-stainless steel circle hooks (the kind that rust quickly) and either remove the hook (very carefully) or cut the wire as close to the hook as possible. The hook will rust away within a short time, and if the fish is never lifted out of the water, internal injuries will be avoided. Catch-and-release shark fishing can be a thrilling way to spend an evening to say the least.

The blacktip dines predominantly on fish. It takes menhaden, Spanish sardines, pinfish, grunts, catfish, mojarras, and triggerfish, as well as skates and rays. It is preyed upon, especially the pups, by finfish and most of the other sharks. The mortality rate for Pine Island Sound juvenile blacktips has been estimated to exceed 85 percent. Unlike most sharks, blacktips tend to stay close together, and once a school is located, the fishing can become quite frenetic.

This article is an excerpt from *Living Sanibel-A Nature Guide to Sanibel & Captiva Islands* by Charles Sobczak. The book is available at all the Island bookstores, Baileys, Jerry's and your favorite online sites. Photos by Richard "Dick" Fortune.

SAWFISH NEWS by Tonya Wiley Havenworth Coastal Conservation

Science to Save the Endangered Smalltooth Sawfish: Several research partners conduct various research activities on the biology, behavior, and ecology of the endangered smalltooth sawfish population in the United States. These partners include state and federal governments, universities, nonprofits, and international organizations. The results of these research projects are used to inform management decisions and enhance recovery efforts for this endangered species.

Collecting Sawfish Data: Researchers collect sawfish data using a variety of methods: (1) carcasses that are found and collected, (2) sawfish incidentally caught in federal fisheries, and (3) sawfish that are collected during research field surveys for the species. Necropsies of sawfish carcasses provide the opportunity to collect data necessary for understanding age, growth, maturity, and reproduction. Carcass recoveries provide valuable opportunities because these data are especially important and can only be collected through dissection, and researchers are not interested in sacrificing any individuals from the wild of a critically endangered species.

Fisheries observers aboard commercial fishing vessels are trained to sample any sawfish incidentally captured in federal fisheries. These chance opportunities provide valuable insight in to where fisheries overlap with sawfish and the condition of sawfish upon release.

Research field surveys for smalltooth sawfish are the most important method for collecting data. A variety of survey methods are used to capture live sawfish for scientific purposes, including longline, rod-and-reel, and gillnets. Once captured, measurements and samples are taken from each sawfish prior to tagging and release. These surveys are instrumental in monitoring trends in the abundance of the population.

Samples: Small tissue samples are collected during field capture of live sawfish and from old rostra for genetic analysis. Genetics are useful in understanding population structure, diversity within the population, and both the size and health of the current population in comparison to the historical one. Scientists are using genetics to determine whether there is significant movement and genetic exchange between the U.S. and Bahamas populations of smalltooth sawfish.

Blood samples are collected from sawfish to measure reproductive status and stress physiology. Hormones within the blood are used to assess reproductive cycling and periodicity. Blood samples for stress physiology can be used to assess post-release mortality risk from a variety of fisheries and gears.

Acoustic Tracking: Scientists are using the most recent technology to track the movements of smalltooth sawfish. This tracking involves capturing the animals, equipping them with acoustic transmitters, and releasing them. Depending on the objectives of the project, scientists may track them from a boat using hydrophones to determine short-term microhabitat use or set up a network of in-water receivers (acoustic listening stations) to track longer-term broad-scale movements. Acoustic transmitters can be active for up to 10 years.

Satellite Tagging: Larger juvenile and adult sawfish caught during surveys are also often fitted with GPS satellite tags. Because far less is known about these larger animals, researchers hope that satellite tags can reveal important adult habitats. Satellite tagging studies to date have shown that larger sawfish spent a large portion of their time in shallow coastal waters with periodic excursions to deeper waters off the shelf edge.

Population Monitoring Through Encounter Reports: If you catch or see a sawfish take a quick photograph of the sawfish, estimate its size, note your location, and please share the details with scientists. The details of your sightings or catches of sawfish help to monitor the population and track the recovery progress. You can share your information by calling 1-844-4-SAWFISH (844-472-9347) or emailing sawfish@myfwc.com.

In upcoming "Sawfish News" articles this year I will provide more details about the organizations working on each of these important components of the sawfish research projects. For more information about endangered sawfish, visit: <http://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/pr/species/fish/smalltooth-sawfish.html> or <http://myfwc.com/research/saltwater/fish/sawfish/>.

Local News

FWC Monitoring Sea Turtles, Manatees During Cold Weather

As Florida's residents and visitors managed during the recent cold-weather conditions, the state's unique and treasured fish and wildlife species needed some extra care as well. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is prepared and ready to prioritize this critical mission.

"We are committed to conserving our natural resources, and are staged and ready in strategic areas throughout the state," said FWC Executive Director Eric Sutton. "Our team of FWC staff, partners and volunteers are monitoring the status of marine species affected most by the cold, and are prepared in case rescues are needed."



Sea turtles are one species that can be affected by cold weather. When the water temperatures drop, stunned sea turtles may float listlessly in the water on or near shore. Although these turtles may appear to be dead, they are often still alive. It is important to report these turtles to the FWC Wildlife Alert Hotline as soon as possible.

"Our staff, partners and permitted volunteers are already working to rescue sea turtles in northwest Florida. Nearly 100 turtles have been rescued so far. We are also monitoring the Mosquito Lagoon and other areas of the state to see if sea turtles are being impacted there," said Kipp Frohlich, director of FWC's Division of Habitat and Species Conservation.

The Florida manatee is another species that can be impacted by extreme cold weather. When water temperatures drop, manatees gather in warm-water habitats such as discharge canals at power plants and natural springs. The FWC asks that boaters be extra vigilant in watching for manatees in shallow waters near the coast, both inland and coastal, and obey all posted manatee speed zone signs.

"Boaters should avoid areas where large numbers of manatees are gathered," said Gil McRae, head of FWC's Fish and Wildlife Research Institute. "Aggregated animals should not be disturbed, as this could cause them to leave the warm-water sites that help them cope with cold temperatures."

Sustaining adequate winter habitat for manatees remains a statewide conservation goal.

If you see something, call the FWC Wildlife Alert Hotline at 888-404-FWCC (3922).

Park News

National Park Fee-Free Days 2018

FREE PARK ENTRY DAYS!



The first fee-free day of 2018 is just around the corner! In honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, all national parks will waive their admission fees on January 15, 2018. Take advantage of this opportunity to #FindYourPark at any of these sites across the nation!

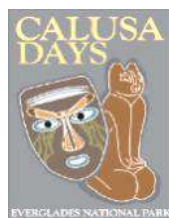
You can also enjoy great scenery and history with great savings at a national park for free on any or all of the entrance fee-free days in 2018:

- **January 15: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**
- **April 21: First Day of National Park Week**
- **September 22: National Public Lands Day**
- **November 11: Veterans Day**

"National parks connect all of us with our country's amazing nature, culture and history," said National Park Service Deputy Director Michael T. Reynolds. "The days that we designate as fee free for national parks mark opportunities for the public to participate in service projects, enjoy ranger-led programs, or just spend time with family and friends exploring these diverse and special places. We hope that these fee-free days offer visitors an extra incentive to enjoy their national parks in 2018."

During fee-free days, the 124 national parks that charge entrance fees waive them for all visitors. The entrance fee waiver for the fee-free days does not cover amenity or user fees for things such as camping, boat launches, transportation, or concession tours or rentals. For more information, please visit: <https://www.nps.gov/planyourvisit/passes.htm>.

Calusa Days, March 24th



Join the fun on Saturday, March 24th for a free outdoor event! Help Everglades National Park celebrate Calusa Days by learning about the 10,000 Islands. Come discover how these fascinating islands have shaped many lives.

WHERE: Everglades National Park's Gulf Coast Visitor Center, 815 Oyster Bar Lane, Everglades City 34139

WHAT to Expect: 10am-3:00pm engaging outdoor demonstrations * interesting activities* riveting storytelling * thought provoking programs.

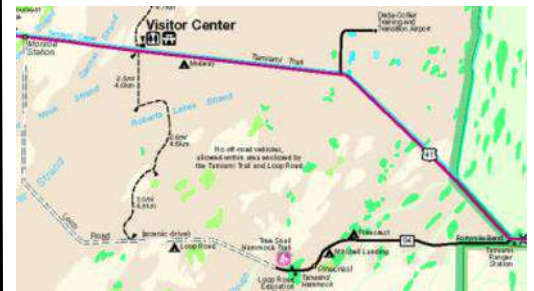
WHO will be there: At 1:00pm-2:00pm hear local historian Marya Repko tell The Story of Barron Collier.

On Friday, March 23rd 7:30 pm-8:30 pm & Saturday March 24th 11:00 am-12:00 pm, see Florida Public Archaeology Network's, Mallory Fenn, archaeo-astronomy program- ancient stargazing presentation.

Call the Gulf Coast Visitor Center at 239-695-3311 for more information

Big Cypress Scenic Loop Road Re-Opens for Visitors

Big Cypress National Preserve is pleased to reopen the scenic Loop Road on Friday, January 5 to visitors. Visitors can pick up a guide to Loop Road by stopping at the Oasis Visitor Center or Big Cypress Swamp Welcome Center. A digital copy is also available online: <https://www.nps.gov/bicy/planyourvisit/upload/BICY-Loop-Road-Scenic-Road-FINAL-2.pdf>.



Current road conditions on Loop Road are good. Visitors are encouraged to drive slowly and watch for wildlife on the roadway.

Mitchell's Landing and Pinecrest Campgrounds will remain closed. Persistent high ground water levels may have inundated some facility infrastructure. Additional updates and changes in closures will be provided by press release.

For up to the minute closures, updates, and program information, follow us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram at "BigCypresnps."

Did You Know This About Loop Road?

Few people know that **Al Capone** had a hunting lodge off of Loop Road in the 1950's! That is long gone now, but there are still plenty of relics in the area.

While visiting, you may see deer, otter, black bears or even a bobcat; alligators are plentiful. A rich array of bird life includes ibis, wood stork, egret, great blue heron, cormorant and anhinga. It is possible you could see a panther if you are very, very lucky!

Area Weather Observer Needed!



The National Weather Service needs an official weather observer in Everglades City to monitor

and report the weather on a daily basis (equipment to do so is supplied). It is easy to do and something very important to our area. Even if you are a winter resident, we still want to hear from you.

If this sounds like something you might be interested in, or if you have any further questions about what is expected, don't hesitate to contact Christopher Fisher at the National Weather Service by email at: christopher.fisher@noaa.gov.



EATERIES & AREA WORSHIP



Angler's Cove, Port of the Islands (642-1025): Monday - Wed 5 to 11 pm, Thurs to Sun Noon - 11 pm
Camellia Street Grille (695-2003): 12 noon – 9:00 pm; Thurs-Sunday
City Seafood (695-4700): 9:00 am – 6:00 pm; daily Supper Upstairs is Closed
Glades Haven Deli (695-2091): Deli Closed for Repairs Live bait available at marina
Havana Café (695-2214): 7 am to 3 pm daily Fri & Sat 5 pm to 8 pm
Island Café (695-0003): 6:00 am – 9:00 pm; daily
Ivey House (695-3299): 6:30 – 9:30 am; daily
Joanie's Blue Crab Café (695-2682): 11:00 am – 5:00 pm; Mon - Saturday Closed Sunday
Oyster House Restaurant (695-2073): Currently closed for repairs Please check back!
Rod & Gun (695-2101): 11:30 am - 8:00 pm; daily
Tastes of the Everglades (695-0075) Closed---reopening soon!
Triad Seafood & Café (695-2662): 8 am to 5 pm
****MARKETS****
Right Choice Supermarket (695-4535): 9:00 am – 7:00 pm; daily
Grimm's Stone Crab (239-695-3222): 8 am to 5 pm M-Sat, Closed Sunday ****FRESH PRODUCE**** 1181 Hamilton Lane, Chokoloskee Fri & Sat 9 am to 3 pm
****SUNDAY CHURCH SERVICES****
Chokoloskee Church of God Sunday: 10 am Sch., 11 am Worship We. 7 pm Hr. of Prayer
Copeland Baptist Church Sunday: 10 am School, 11 am Worship
Everglades Community Church 9:30 am Sunday Worship
1st Baptist Church of Everglades City 9:45 am Sunday School, 11 am Worship 6 pm Sunday, 7 pm Wed. Bible Study
Holy Family Catholic Church Sunday Mass 10:30 am
St. Finbarr Catholic Church, Naples Phone: 239-417-2084
San Marco Catholic Church, Marco Isl. Phone: 239-394-5181

EVERGLADES CITY -
BARRON RIVER TIDES
LAT: 25.87° N LONG: 81.37°W

1/13/18	Sat	7:33 AM	-0.2	L
1/13/18	Sat	1:54 PM	1.81	H
1/13/18	Sat	7:33 PM	0.66	L
1/14/18	Sun	12:17 AM	2.43	H
1/14/18	Sun	8:14 AM	-0.28	L
1/14/18	Sun	2:14 PM	1.87	H
1/14/18	Sun	8:15 PM	0.64	L
1/15/18	Mon	12:55 AM	2.49	H
1/15/18	Mon	8:52 AM	-0.35	L
1/15/18	Mon	2:39 PM	1.93	H
1/15/18	Mon	8:53 PM	0.61	L
1/16/18	Tue	1:29 AM	2.54	H
1/16/18	Tue	9:28 AM	-0.38	L
1/16/18	Tue	3:08 PM	1.98	H
1/16/18	Tue	9:29 PM	0.58	L
1/17/18	Wed	2:01 AM	2.56	H
1/17/18	Wed	10:04 AM	-0.38	L
1/17/18	Wed	3:40 PM	2.04	H
1/17/18	Wed	10:04 PM	0.55	L
1/18/18	Thu	2:31 AM	2.54	H
1/18/18	Thu	10:39 AM	-0.35	L
1/18/18	Thu	4:15 PM	2.09	H
1/18/18	Thu	10:39 PM	0.52	L
1/19/18	Fri	3:00 AM	2.49	H
1/19/18	Fri	11:13 AM	-0.3	L
1/19/18	Fri	4:51 PM	2.12	H
1/19/18	Fri	11:16 PM	0.48	L
1/20/18	Sat	3:33 AM	2.4	H
1/20/18	Sat	11:46 AM	-0.21	L
1/20/18	Sat	5:26 PM	2.14	H
1/20/18	Sat	11:56 PM	0.45	L
1/21/18	Sun	4:13 AM	2.28	H
1/21/18	Sun	12:19 PM	-0.09	L
1/21/18	Sun	6:01 PM	2.15	H
1/22/18	Mon	12:41 AM	0.4	L
1/22/18	Mon	5:02 AM	2.11	H
1/22/18	Mon	12:54 PM	0.05	L
1/22/18	Mon	6:36 PM	2.15	H
1/23/18	Tue	1:38 AM	0.34	L
1/23/18	Tue	6:03 AM	1.92	H
1/23/18	Tue	1:33 PM	0.22	L
1/23/18	Tue	7:13 PM	2.16	H
1/24/18	Wed	2:49 AM	0.25	L
1/24/18	Wed	7:33 AM	1.72	H
1/24/18	Wed	2:25 PM	0.39	L
1/24/18	Wed	7:56 PM	2.19	H
1/25/18	Thu	4:01 AM	0.11	L
1/25/18	Thu	9:11 AM	1.62	H
1/25/18	Thu	3:39 PM	0.54	L
1/25/18	Thu	8:48 PM	2.25	H
1/26/18	Fri	5:07 AM	-0.08	L
1/26/18	Fri	10:45 AM	1.63	H
1/26/18	Fri	4:53 PM	0.63	L
1/26/18	Fri	9:47 PM	2.36	H
1/27/18	Sat	6:08 AM	-0.28	L
1/27/18	Sat	12:10 PM	1.75	H
1/27/18	Sat	6:02 PM	0.67	L
1/27/18	Sat	10:52 PM	2.52	H

Friends of Fakahatchee Announce
2018 Event Schedule



The Friends of Fakahatchee have announced their 2018 schedule of guided adventures to introduce visitors to Florida's largest state park -- Fakahatchee Strand Preserve. The park entrance is on State Route 29 in Copeland, FL, just north of Everglades City.

Ghost rider Tram Tours from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. are offered for \$25 per person on Thursday, Jan. 25 and Saturday, Jan. 27. The tours are named for the famous ghost orchid found in the park.



Naturalist Led Swamp Walks are scheduled for Saturdays on Jan. 20, Feb. 10 and Feb. 25. The Feb. 10 walk will be led by park biologist Mike Owen. On these five-hour adventures, naturalists lead participants deep into the swamp in knee high water. Swamp walks are \$75 and begin at 9:30 am.



The Combination Tram Tour and Swamp Walk is offered at 9:30 am on Tuesday, Jan. 16 and Tuesday, Jan. 23. This popular four-hour tour pairs a one-hour swamp walk with a guided tram tour for \$60 per person.

For required reservations and additional dates through March, visit: www.orchidswamp.org and click on Tours and Events.

**Feral Felines Donation Stolen!
Help is Needed**

Say it isn't so! Someone stole the donation for the feral felines from Right Choice Supermarket leaving Barbara, and the kitties, in a bit of a pinch. Can you help? If you can, please mail your donation to:
**Feral Felines, P O Box 564
Chokoloskee, FL, 34138**

CLASSIFIED ADS

RV HOOKUPS, Everglades City. Two Sites, 30 and 50 amps. Service, water, no sewage. Rent nightly or weekly. Rough boat ramp, 100 ft. dock. Private & secure. Contact Capt. Wayne of Fish Hunt Charters at 239-695-2445.

BOAT FOR SALE: 2016 Carolina Skiff 24 DLX. 2016 Yamaha F115 motor. 2nd Bimini top, Garmin 740, front bench/cooler. Used 3 months. Perfect boat for the Everglades. Very stable and perfect for commercial use, boating, guiding or photography. Mint. Asking \$28,000. Call Sandee Harraden @239-250-4662.

SELL YOUR ITEMS HERE: Reach the Everglades community with an impactful ad in the Mullet Rapper. Call 954-662-7003 for rates & information.

REDUCED! 2 stilt houses EC: NOW \$239,900 for 408 Buckner; NOW 339,900 for 309 S. Storter. GREAT shape! Call Steve 910-599-2698. Available dock.

FOR RENT: Studio apartment. Includes water, electricity and garbage pick up. \$700/mo. annual lease. 1st, last, security to move in. Call 239-340-4770.

FULL-TIME JOB: Cashier at Joanie's Blue Crab Café. Experience preferred. Must be reliable and honest. The restaurant is located at 39395 Tamiami Trail E, Ochopee, FL. Please call Joanie to schedule an interview to be considered for this position at: 239-695-2682.

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR LEASE: Deep water commercial dock and lot on Barron River at 909 DuPont St. in Everglades City. Perfect for business, commercial fishing or restaurant with chickee bar and tourist gift shop attraction, \$1000 / month. Contact: Rancho T Properties LLC, (727) 480-1640.

FOR SALE: RV Lots with docks. Call Bob Wells Real Estate @ 239-695-2660 for more information.

FOR SALE: New Forest Wolf Pup Toy Hauler. Ltd Pkg. 13.5 K A/C, 14" alum wheels, 20 BTU furnace, 6 gallon gas/elec. DSI water heater, friction hinge door, high gloss seamless countertop, LED pancake lights, night shades, RV fridge, spare tire, stabilizer jacks, stereo with in and outside speakers, upgraded, hypoallergenic evergreen mattress, all hoses and propane tank. Brand new, never used. Brought from Indiana for someone in need of housing. Will sell "at cost", \$13,000. Can be seen in Everglades City. Call 812-327-7195.

JOB OPPORTUNITY: Become an election worker for the 2018 elections. Qualifications: Be a registered voter in Collier County. Be able to read and write English. Complete the orientation and training. You must be available to work a 12-14 hour shift. Get started today! Complete your application at www.CollierVotes.com. Call us if you have questions. By email at: ElectionWorker@colliergov.net. Or by phone: (239) 252-VOTE (8683).

The MULLET RAPPER

What's Happening in the Everglades & 10,000 Islands

PUBLISHER

Kathleen Brock, K Bee Marketing, Inc.
P.O. Box 134, Everglades City, FL 34139
(954) 662-7003, MulletRapper@gmail.com

PUBLISHER EMERITUS

Patricia A. Huff, Snook Publications

EDITOR

Kathy Brock

PHOTOJOURNALIST

Helen Bryan

CONTRIBUTORS to this Issue

Marya Repko, Elaine Middelstaedt, Patty Huff

Marya Repko, Charles Sobczak

Mike Klein, Tonya Wiley, Kevin O'Donnell

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with no political or social bias.

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K Bee Marketing, Inc.

PO Box 134

Everglades City, FL 34139

Call or Text Us: (954) 662-7003

Visit our Website:

www.MulletRapper.com



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P.O. Box 134
Everglades City, FL 34139