

Orange Beach Community News

Orange Beach, Alabama

July 31, 2006

by Ken Grimes, Jr.

The heat is still on as summer in Orange Beach continues to be a hot one! Only a week left until school starts back and kids are wrapping up summer camps and clinics all over town and summer jobs are fizzing out as many college students prepare to head back to campus. This year marked new territory as many of the camps brought new talents and hobbies to many locals all the while keeping them occupied for the brief break from the classroom.



Orange Beach Lions Club officers for 2006 at first meeting



Orange Beach Lion's Club recently inducted its new officers for the coming year. Paul Cope serves as President, Steve Gravely as Vice President, Bonnie Lee as Secretary, and Jeanie Hammett as Treasurer. Scott Hardee was named Tail Twister for the year. The Club presented long time member Bob Olson with a plaque honoring the 2005/ 06 Lion of the Year. Mr. Olson at 82 continues to exemplify his leadership skills in the club and the community. Kurt Carranza was

recognized as Past President. Leading the initiation of new officers was Past



Angela Webb is newest member of the Orange Beach Lions Club as Paul Cope and Dr. Steve Gravely welcome her.

District Governor Felix Lomangino from Mobile who stressed the importance of service by each member. The first order of new business was to initiate the clubs newest member Angela Webb. Congratulations Angela! Watch for a busy year with plans evolving for the annual golf tournament, all star band and other fundraisers which raise funds for scholarships and for vision needs through Lions Club International. Great job Lions. The club meets the first and third Wednesday of each month at noon at Lester's on Canal Road.



Bob Olson is the Lion of the Year for 2005/06

It's race time in Orange Beach! Powerboat racing that is with the roar of the engines and spectacle of high speed vessels making their way around the course in the Gulf of Mexico.



Watch for more details in the next two weeks as we get ready for racing on August 20th. Check out the info at www.thunderonthegulf.com and make your plans to get a good seat in the sand. The action is just a few yards off the shoreline so dig in and hold on!

Call 980-RACE for information and details on the event.



Tents down by the bay? It's just the Waterfront Festival of Art which is nearing the deadline to apply for entry. Applications are due by August 10th at the Art Center. The event is September 2nd and 3rd which is a really nice two day show. Contact Cyndi Brewer at 981 ARTS for more info on entering the show. The Orange Beach Art Center has lots of great gift items as it continues to set new sales records each month. The 313th Army Jazz Combo will be playing on Saturday, September 2nd for entertainment. An official ribbon cutting will take place on Friday, August 18th at 10am for the new Art Supply Component of the Center. Finally, Orange Beach has professional art supplies and top quality brushes and artistic items for the professional to novice. Stop by and shop with Cyndi. That day an "Open House" will also be held from 9 – 5pm.

The Orange Beach Senior Activity Center has a busy calendar planned for this August and there is plenty of opportunities for you to get involved in what cranks your engine. Call 981-3440 for details on classes and trips coming this month. Here are your Bridge Scores for the past two weeks. Winners on Tuesday July 18th: 1st: Ernest McConnell; 2nd: Joan Nagy; 3rd: Bobbie O'Farrell and for Thursday July 20: 1st: Marv Maudlin; 2nd: Lanier Maudlin; 3rd: Oliveth Archer. Winning on Tuesday July 25: 1st: Chuck Ogle, 2nd: Evelyn Shaver; 3rd: Joan Nagy and on Thursday July 27: 1st: Earnest McConnell; 2nd: Chuck Ogle; 3rd: Wilson Pierce. Keep shufflin'. Our hats are off to Mrs. Shirley Mooney of Orange Beach who has been selected by the Alabama Senior Citizens Hall of Fame to receive a 2006 Golden Eagle Honorary Award for her outstanding and valued contributions to the lives of older citizens. The Awards and Induction Ceremony will be held in Montgomery on September 24, 2006. Way to go Shirley and congratulations on this honor.

As Summer 2006 comes to an end it is time to get ready for back to school. Try to do as much school shopping locally which keeps those tax dollars in town and remember that this coming weekend is an Alabama Tax Free holiday on school supplies, uniforms, computers and more. There are still a few end of summer events for the kids to attend. According to Orange Beach Tennis Coordinator Rhett Russell, the Orange Beach Tennis Center is hosting an End of Year Summer Kid's Tennis Party on Friday, August 4th from 6-8 pm. Drills, games and pizza will be provided. Rhett says be sure to bring your racquet and smile as plenty of tennis fun will be had by all. For more info call the Tennis Center at 974-NETS.

Congratulations to Jeffrey Ybarra who recently entered his 1st tournament event ever at the Oakwood Swim & Racquet Club Junior Novice Tournament held July 15-16, 2006, in Mobile, AL. Jeffrey, who played in the 12 and under division, played a total of 4 matches, scores were: 8-0, 8-0, 8-5, 8-3. More impressive is that he has only learned how to play tennis this summer at the City of Orange Beach Tennis Center and he had wins over kids who have played competitive tennis for over 2 years. His parent's, Chris and Barbara Ybarra, say, "once he takes a private lesson, he will practice for hours on a certain groundstroke, volley, or serve for hours at a time. He will not quit until he masters each shot." Great job Jeffrey.



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The Orange Beach Golf Camp just wrapped up with a trip to Magnolia Springs under the guidance of coach Andy Kelley. Taking the youngsters to play on a course they can reach was a good starting point. From all accounts the camp had great success. A special recognition goes out to the Orange Beach Summer Camp staff which include Recreation Specialist, Sunshine Keenan, and counselors: Amber Watson, Erin Davis, Jessica Avera, Tausha Wilkins, Matthew Miller, Michael Glover, Samantha Price, David Eckman, Samantha Khan, Gabby Peters, Sarah Bryant, and Lisa Chick. It was another successful year of Camp Gator, serving Orange Beach children and growing their skills during summer break. Sunshine Keenan served as "Camp Queen" for the fourth straight year seeing the numbers grow annually.

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According to Angela Williams, Recreation Center Coordinator, Amber, Tausha, Matt, Michael, Sam, David, Samantha, Sarah, and Lisa are going away to school and we are so glad that Jessica, Gabby, and Erin are staying to help lead our After School Program.

Each year many city facilities are heavily staffed with part time and seasonal employees who work during the summer months to make a few paychecks while becoming a major part of the overall city employment roster. Many of these young men and women have worked for the City of Orange Beach for several years and developed many skills that will help them in their college and work careers. We thank all our part time employees for their hard work and wish them the best as they travel back to school and other employment opportunities.

Got some news around Orange Beach? Let us know what's going on by sending your community news to obecon@gulfnet.com and be sure to log onto www.cityoforangebeach.com and register to receive the weekly newsletter online which has much more detail and color photography on other events.



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Orange Beach, Alabama

Sea, Sand and Stars Learning Center nears completion

By Ken Grimes, Jr.

A vision of Orange Beach Elementary School Principal Steve Baker began more than three years ago as a dream and is now almost in operation. Creating an environmental learning center on the local campus is soon to be seen by all as the Sea, Sand & Stars Learning Center at Orange Beach Elementary School. This state of the art 7,700-square-foot facility, has five teaching stations inside and five teaching stations outside the building. "There is a planetarium, a climate-controlled



weather station, a technology laboratory, a 5,000-gallon saltwater aquarium and a 'touch tank' where children can touch sea animals such as fish and turtles and horseshoe crabs. Steve Baker said that his dream started when a teacher at his school came back from a field trip to the Pelican's Nest, a K-1 learning center in Fairhope. He

and several teachers visited that center, Turtle Point in Escambia County and the J.S. Scott Center in Biloxi, all hands-on learning centers. Then Wendy Helms, a third grade teacher at OBES, helped him sketch out plans for Sea, Sand & Stars which brings all learning aspects of those facilities plus much more into our fine facility right here in Orange Beach.



The Sea, Sand & Stars Learning Center is both an educational center and a valuable new landmark for the city according to Jeff Moon, City of Orange Beach Administrator. "In Orange Beach, we always try to put the needs of our children first and the



Progress continues on the SSS as boardwalks, center and finishing touches are underway.

Sea, Sand & Stars is an opportunity for our children to learn in a very unique way and it will also be a major attraction for our residents and visitors." Construction for the \$1.5 million center is provided by Brett-Robinson in conjunction with its Pheonix West project on the beach. Thanks to Tommy Robinson, Gene Brett and Tillis Brett, the Learning Center will provide a very unique and first class public benefit to the community and beyond. The City Council of Orange Beach provided funds for architectural services and for furnishings and equipment which brings the ultimate investment to over \$2 Million dollars. We welcome Lisa Allen as Director of the Sea, Sand and Stars along with Rhonda Brantley as Consulting Teacher. These two ladies bring a lot of energy and expertise to the program and are very excited to serve in these new roles. Watch for lots of activities this Fall as the facility opens to the public.


