

HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN

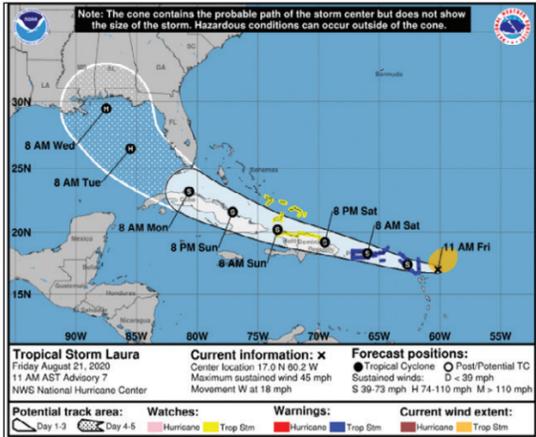
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COURTESY/NOAA

The path of Tropical Storm Laura as of Friday morning's update.

Laura and 14: A tale of two storms

By KIM MOODY
STAFF WRITER

SEBRING — It would appear there are no rules in 2020. Why would hurricane season be any different. For the first time since reliable records were kept (1850s), there is a good chance of two hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico at the same time early next week. The two storms that the National Hurricane

Center is watching are Tropical Depression 14 and Tropical Storm Laura. Laura is slated to become a Category 1 hurricane and Tropical Depression 14 is scheduled to be Tropical Storm Marco and strengthen to a Category 1 hurricane as well. There is another disturbance far out in the Atlantic off the coast of Africa. National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration Meteorologist Nicole Carlisle jokingly said, "Let's get through one storm at a time." Tropical Storm Laura currently has winds of 45 mph and is moving west at 14 mph. As of Friday afternoon, it is about 210 miles southeast of the northern Leeward Islands. Tropical Storm Laura is the storm that could affect Florida. Laura was

named about 9:30-10 a.m. Friday after hurricane hunters found a center, albeit disorganized, Carlisle said. The good news ... as of 11 a.m., Laura ticked west. The current – but still capable of changing – course, takes most of Florida out of the "cone of error," including Highlands County. However, the

STORM | 8A



KIM MOODY/STAFF

A fatal accident took place in Placid Lakes at Grape Road and Waterway Avenue NW, just after 1 a.m. Friday.

Early Friday morning crash is fatal

2nd crash leaves 1 in critical condition

By KIM MOODY
STAFF WRITER

LAKE PLACID — A report put out by the Florida Highway Patrol showed a single vehicle crash led to the death of a 20-year-old male at about 1:05 a.m. Friday. The incident took place at Grape Road, near the intersection of Waterway Avenue NW, a residential area in the Placid Lakes subdivision of Lake Placid.

According to the FHP report, the unidentified male was driving a sedan-type vehicle west on Grape Road, approaching the intersection of Waterway Avenue NW. For unknown reasons, the driver did not stop at the intersection and drove through it, onto the north shoulder of Waterway Avenue NW, according to the report.

This caused the sedan to collide with the trees and brush. The car overturned. Highlands County EMS pronounced the man dead at the scene.

The report shows the driver did not have a seat belt on.

In a recent policy change, FHP is no longer releasing names on their initial press reports. The year, make and model of the vehicles involved are also not included in that report.

Final reports with full details must be purchased once approved by all

CRASH | 8A

Temporary closure



MARC VALERO/STAFF

The seawall replacement project at Veterans Beach on Lake Jackson is nearing completion while other improvements continue at the city-owned park.

Work continues in area of Veterans Beach boat ramp

By MARC VALERO
STAFF WRITER

SEBRING — The public boat ramps will be closed at Veterans Beach on Lake Jackson on Monday for about a month for demolition and then construction of a new dock.

The work is part of a half-million dollar project involving the parking lot, seawall and dock between the two boat ramps.

Public Works Director Ken Fields said, "We're going to be closing the boat ramp on Monday, Aug. 24 for about four to five weeks. We're wanting to get the word out to residents who may have a boat on the water and want to remove it or who may want to put a boat back in the water." Boaters will have until Sunday afternoon to use the ramp before its closure. The ramp will be closed Sunday evening.

"We are trying to work out another location somewhere on the lake that we can allow the residents who live on the lake to either put their boat back in the water or remove their boat from the water," Fields said.



MARC VALERO/STAFF

Both boat ramps at Veterans Beach will closed starting Sunday evening for about four to five weeks for the demolition of the existing pier and construction of a new pier.

The City of Sebring was planning improvements already for the only public boat ramp on Lake Jackson when, in September 2017, Hurricane Irma caused more damage to the seawall and parking lot.

The project started in mid-July with the first phase involving the construction of the seawall.

With the seawall work nearly complete, the boat ramps will be closed and the entire parking lot in front of the boat ramps will

be closed for the work to replace the concrete pier between the ramps with an aluminum fixed pier.

The pier will have a 40-foot gangway that goes to a 60-foot floating dock that will also be made of aluminum.

Fields said the seawall is looking good. The concrete caps have been poured on most of it. The lake level is a little high, which might prevent workers from pouring the last little section of concrete, but they are

working on a way to do that.

The project is a week ahead of schedule so they want to start the demolition work and construction of the new pier on Monday, he said.

The project includes enlarging the parking lot with a wider turning area making it easier for the launching of boats. The truck and trailer spaces will be larger.

When the parking lot work is done the men's and women's bathrooms will be renovated.

Highlands adds 3 more COVID-19 deaths

By MARC VALERO
STAFF WRITER

SEBRING — Highlands County had three more reported deaths from COVID-19 in the latest daily update from the Florida Department of Health, which brings the total to 53. The report shows 18 more positive cases in the county for a total of 1,697.

Statewide, there were 4,684 more virus cases for a total of 593,286.

There was an increase of 119 Florida resident deaths from the Thursday

count, with deaths of people who tested positive in Brevard, Broward, Charlotte, Miami-Dade, Duval, Escambia, Highlands, Hillsborough, Indian River, Jackson, Lee, Leon, Manatee, Martin, Nassau, Okaloosa, Palm Beach, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Putnam, Seminole, St. Johns, Suwannee and Volusia counties.

The Florida resident death count is now 10,168 with 136 non-resident deaths.

Miami-Dade County has had 2,219 Florida resident deaths, the largest number in the state.

In Highlands County among age groups, the 25-35 age group has the most cases with 277, followed by the 55-64 age group with 255 cases and the 45-54 age group with 254 cases.

Among the Highlands resident cases, 793 are male and 903 are female with a median age of 47.

Currently there are 36 who are hospitalized in Highlands County due to COVID-19.

The previous day testing data results show statewide from 69,695 tests that 6.79% were positive. In Highlands, 405

test results in the previous day had a positive rate of 4.44%.

Glades County had only 14 test results from the previous day, but half of them were positive.

Hendry County had 67 previous day virus test results with a positive rate of 23.88%.

Nationwide, there have been 5,589,013 cases with 174,504 deaths.

Worldwide, there have been 22,754,063 COVID-19 cases with 794,814 deaths.



Classifieds.....B2-4
Comics.....B6-9
Lottery.....A2

Obituaries.....A4
TV Listings.....A11

Viewpoints.....A6
Weather.....A12

Good morning To
Sandra Cecil
Thanks for reading!

