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YOUR HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER SINCE 1919

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COURTESY PHOTO/HCFR

This Avon Park crash occurred Christmas night and had multiple injuries with four people being airlifted to other hospitals.

Four flown to trauma centers after Christmas wreck

By KIM LEATHERMAN

STAFF WRITER

AVON PARK — A two-vehicle, head-on crash sent four people to trauma centers and another person to a local hospital. The Florida Highway Patrol had not

released a crash report by press time on Thursday; details are few.

About 7 p.m. two cars were traveling in opposite directions of travel along State Road 17 near East Sears Road at the point of impact. The crash shut traffic down for hours as

multiple first responder agencies helped the injured, assisted with traffic and investigated the wreck.

Highlands County Fire Rescue Chief Marc Bashoor said there were four people who were "trauma alerts," where

injuries show "signs and symptoms of being traumatic," he said.

Another man was transported to a local hospital with non life-threatening injuries. The man was alert and talking at the

WRECK | 4A

Sun 'N Lake looking at going to popular vote



PHIL ATTINGER/STAFF

From left: Sun 'N Lake Supervisors Joe Branson, Neal Hotelling and Raymond Brooks talk with staff for the special improvement district during their most recent board meeting.

May have authority to go ahead, with County Commission approval

By PHIL ATTINGER
STAFF WRITER

SEBRING — Sun 'N Lake of Sebring officials still have more steps to take to revamp their elections process to popularly-elected supervisors.

At their most recent meeting, David Schumacher, attorney contracted to represent the special improvement district, said he met with County Attorney Joy Carmichael this month and believes the district can transition completely to popularly-elected seats and add methods with minimum effort.

Schumacher cited an opinion made by his predecessor and colleague, attorney John McClure, at the meeting on Aug. 24, 2012, when the district went from having three landowner-chosen seats and two popularly-elected seats to two landowner seats and three popular seats.

It was at that time that the district also went to its current system of counting

VOTE | 4A

Holiday markdowns

Shoppers return to the stores

By MARC VALERO
STAFF WRITER

SEBRING — It's the encore of holiday shopping — the day after Christmas where the rush is on for 50% savings for next Christmas and to save on things we really want right now.

As predictions go, the day after Christmas ranks as the third biggest shopping day behind Black Friday, which is the busiest day, and Super Saturday (last Saturday before Christmas), which is the second busiest day.

Two Saturdays before Christmas is in fourth-place in sales, behind the day after Christmas.

While there is no sense of urgency



MARC VALERO/STAFF

Christin Saunders shops Thursday at the Sebring Walmart.

to get those last-minute gifts for this year, shoppers on the day after Christmas want to hit the holiday

aisles before the selection dwindles in a matter of hours.

A man at the Sebring Walmart attempted to cross the busy front aisle to reach one of the self checkout lines.

After waiting a bit to make a dash between the shoppers, he said, "It's like U.S. 27 in here."

A couple of women discussed their shopping "strategy" as they made their way through Walmart.

Christin Saunders had a full shopping cart with a lot of what she was getting earmarked for her "children" — a whole classroom of children. Saunders is a kindergarten teacher at Sun 'N Lake Elementary School.

"I am a teacher so I go ahead and get stuff for the following year," she explained. "I do stockings. Each kid in my class gets a stocking every year, so I go and buy stuff for next year."

Saunders also purchased snacks for snack time at school, and gift wrapping and some stuff for herself.

After Christmas is also a good time



MARC VALERO/STAFF

There were many reasons to shop on Thursday — savings on Christmas items, prepping for New Year's Eve and getting an early start on Valentine's Day items, which are already on the shelves in some stores.

SHOP | 4A



JERRY MEISENHEIMER/CORRESPONDENT

Eddie May Henderson and Santa (Oscar Wagner), who arrived with bell in hand to Henderson's Christmas dinner.

Henderson Christmas dinner brings community together

By JERRY MEISENHEIMER
CORRESPONDENT

LAKE PLACID — More than 40 years ago, a young woman decided to host a community Christmas Dinner in Stuart Park in downtown Lake Placid. It was such a success, that two years later Placid Masonic Lodge No. 282 invited her

to bring the event inside, out of the elements. Each year it grew larger.

Now, 81, that same woman, along with her family members, brought people of all races, colors, shapes and status together again. The only common thread was that most of the volunteers and diners were wearing some type of Christmas

attire and a smile.

This year, the number of dinners served was over 800.

Eddie Mae Henderson is that woman. Her name around Lake Placid is highly recognizable. She doesn't look for praise and believes God has chosen her to keep this tradition going.

Henderson spends

much of the year planning for the Christmas Day Dinner. With the help of local businesses, donations, and volunteers, people are able to enjoy a hearty turkey and ham treat, with all the fixings.

Many of the dinners are delivered to shut-ins, families in distress, and

DINNER | 4A



Classifieds.....B5-B8

ComicsA9-10, B11-12

LotteryB2

Sports

B1

TV Listings

A11

Viewpoints.....A6

Weather.....A12

Good morning To

Terry Lewis

Thanks for reading!



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