

## As tropics heat up, so do hurricane chances

By **KIM MOODY**  
STAFF WRITER

SEBRING — Self-isolation restrictions are loosening and the county is starting to open just in time for hurricane season. Floridians can consider their quarantine time as practice for hunkering down as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has predicted an above normal hurricane system. Hurricane season runs from June to Nov. 30.

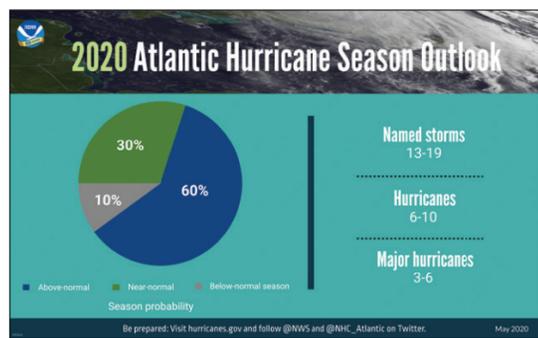
On Thursday, NOAA forecasters at the Climate Prediction Center

announced there was a 60% chance this year's season would be above-normal storm activity and 30% near normal and just a 10% chance of a below-normal season.

NOAA's hurricane forecasters are predicting 13-19 named storms with winds of 39 mph or higher. Of those storms, between 6 and 10 would become a hurricane with 74 mph winds or higher and 3-6 becoming major hurricanes with winds of at least 111 mph or higher. NOAA said it is 70% confident in the predictions in a press release.

Officials from NOAA explained several key climate factors that

are contributing factors to an above-normal activity. The El Nino Southern Oscillation is expected to be neutral or favor La Nina. El Nino helps to suppress the environment that hurricanes thrive in. The conditions are consistent with the "higher-activity era" documented since 1995. NOAA officials also said the ocean surface temperatures are warmer than average, less wind shear, weaker Atlantic trade winds and an "enhanced" west African Monsoon are other contributing factors.



COURTESY NOAA

The graph from NOAA shows a 60% chance of an above-normal hurricane season.

NOAA | 10A



FILE PHOTO

In this 2013 file photo, Diane Leiner, a Lake Placid resident, looks through caladiums for sale at the Bates Sons & Daughters stand during the annual Caladium Festival. Residents like her will have to buy directly from the growers since the festival has been canceled.

## Caladium Festival canceled because of COVID-19

By **KIM MOODY**  
STAFF WRITER

LAKE PLACID — A 30-year tradition is being halted as the coronavirus causes the cancellation of yet another major event — the Caladium Festival on July 24-26. The 24th annual Car & Bike show and the Dr. Tom McDonald Caladium Festival slated for the same weekend are also canceled.

It is not the first time that the festival has been canceled, but organizers say it is very rare for it to happen.

The festival was started in 1990 by local growers Carolyn Phypers of Happiness Farms and Dot Bates of Bates Sons & Daughters Caladiums. Phypers and Bates ran the festival until they turned it over to the Greater Lake Placid Chamber of Commerce in 2007, according to Jennifer Bush, executive director of the Greater Lake Placid Chamber of Commerce.

Since then, the festival has grown from raising awareness for the local colorful

CALADIUM | 10A

## Memorial Day remembered

Tanglewood community gathers for ceremony

By **SHARON WEATHERHEAD**  
CORRESPONDENT

SEBRING — Tanglewood held a Memorial Day Remembrance Ceremony on Monday morning. Residents and presenters braved the light rain and the cool morning to attend.

"We've posted all of the military flags at the entrance to the clubhouse to recognize our military. They will remain posted until Tuesday morning," John Nelson said.

Nelson organized the ceremony with assistance from his fellow veterans in Tanglewood. He served over six years in the U.S. Army during Korea and Vietnam. In the early 1960's, he was part of the Military Assistance Advisor Group (MAAG) to (ARVIN), the Army of the Republic of Vietnam.

Memorial Day is a U.S. Federal holiday where we honor those who died for our freedom while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. Memorial Day previously was celebrated on May 30, but is now observed on the last Monday of May. It is sometimes also called Decoration Day.

It is so important to remember than millions of Americans died in a number of wars to obtain, protect and preserve our freedom.

Some say that President Abraham Lincoln was the founder of Memorial Day back in 1863 when he was at a dedication ceremony at the graves of soldiers at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. In 1868, General John A. Logan issued a proclamation calling for the day to be observed annually nationwide.

Bob Kapp attended the ceremony at Tanglewood. "I was in the Army during Vietnam, which was very difficult. I left and later joined the Air Force."

The ceremony began with the presentation of the flags for Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard and the MIA/POW flag. Dr. Bill Burnham, pastor of Tanglewood Church, said the prayer.

"We remember and honor those



SHARON WEATHERHEAD/CORRESPONDENT

From left: Mike Labozetta, a former Marine, watches as Army veteran John Nelson plays "Taps." Dr. Bill Burnham is pastor of the Tanglewood Church.

SHARON WEATHERHEAD/CORRESPONDENT

Two veterans prepare to raise the flag Monday as part of Tanglewood's Memorial Day ceremony.

who paid the ultimate sacrifice; those that gave their lives for our freedom. Give us all comfort and strength."

There was complete silence as Nelson played "Taps" in a simulated style, using a bugle and a "Taps" recording from Arlington National Cemetery.

Some people confuse Memorial Day and Veterans Day, but they are not the same.

Memorial Day, celebrated the last Monday in May, commemorates the men and women who died while in

military services to their country; those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Veterans Day, celebrated on Nov. 11, is the day we honor all who served, whether in wartime or peacetime, regardless of whether they died or survived.

The poppy has become a symbol of Memorial Day. In war-torn battlefields, the red field poppy was the first plant to reappear. John McCrae, a Canadian soldier and physician, was inspired

MEMORIAL | 10A

## Highlands County adds another COVID-19 case

By **RUTH ANNE LAWSON**  
STAFF WRITER

The number of positive COVID-19 cases in Highlands County increased by one as of the Tuesday update. Highlands now has a total of 114 confirmed positive cases. The total hospitalizations are 36 with 35 residents and 1 non-resident. The number of deaths remains at 8.

The first positive case reported in Highlands County was on March 21.

Statewide, a total of 52,170 cases have been confirmed with deaths reaching 2,259.

The total number of tests administered in Highlands County is 3,861 with 3,741 negative tests results of which 63

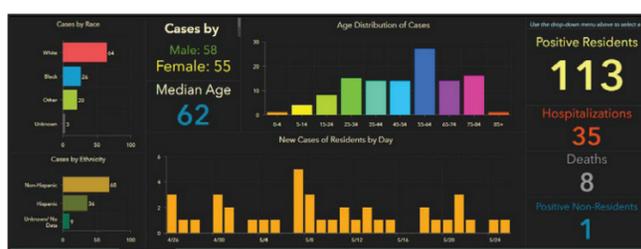
are non-Florida residents. Two results have come back inconclusive and four are waiting for results. The percent of positive cases is 3.0%.

Of the 114 positive cases in Highlands County, 113 are residents and 1 non-resident. The cases include 58 male and 55 females, ranging from ages 0 to 85, with a median age of 55.

The total number of positive cases in Florida increased by 1,303 for a total of 52,170 confirmed cases; 1,258 of those are non-Florida residents. The total number of deaths increased by 22, bringing the total to 2,259.

FDOH is releasing details of ethnicity and race regarding the positive cases in each of the state's 67 counties.

Highlands County's cases



A breakdown of the positive cases of coronavirus in Highlands County as of Tuesday, May 26, according to the Florida Department of Health.

by ethnicity are 36 Hispanic, 68 non-Hispanic and nine unknown/no data. The cases by race are 64 white, 26 black, 20 other and three unknown/no data.

Several residents commute to surrounding counties. Just to the north, in Polk County,

where there is a higher population, the total reached 891 positive cases with 261 hospitalizations and 50 deaths. Polk has also administered 18,771 tests, of which 17,845 have come back with negative results.

Highlands County has more

cases than DeSoto, Glades, Hardee and Okeechobee counties. Okeechobee has a total of 67 cases with no deaths; Hardee has 87 cases with no deaths; Glades has 24 cases with 1 death and DeSoto County has 121 positive cases with 8 deaths. There are many variables that could affect the numbers such as population and testing availability.

The city of Immokolee in Collier County had a surprising spike in positive tests with around 200 new cases being reported in just a week. Collier has a total of 1,305 confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Miami-Dade continues to lead the state in positive cases

UPDATE | 10A



Around Town ..... D1  
Classifieds ..... B2-4  
Comics ..... B5-8  
Highland Health ..... C1  
Lottery ..... A2  
NASCAR ..... B1  
TV Listings ..... D6  
Viewpoints ..... A6  
Weather ..... A12

Good morning To  
George Lagasse  
Thanks for reading!

