

Sanford Herald

82nd Year, No. 179— Sanford, Florida

NEWS DIGEST

INSIDE

Sports

Raines says he's ready

SANFORD — Sanford's own Tim Raines is ready to get to the Montreal Expo's spring training camp in West Palm Beach. After a 32 day lockout by the major league owners, players are finally able to get to the business of baseball.

Raines was the victim of collusion by the owners during his free agency two years ago and says he has been through "a lot" in his past nine seasons in the major leagues. "I've been playing for almost 10 years and I still have fun playing. When it's not fun anymore, I'll walk away," he said.

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Maranatha leads church league

SANFORD — Maranatha Pentecostal took sole possession of first in the A League in Sanford Church Slowpitch Softball play this weekend. First Nazarene, First Baptist of Markham Woods and Holy Cross Lutheran stayed tied for first in the B League.

The results in the B League had First Nazarene besting First Baptist of Geneva 19-11, Markham Woods handled Calvary Christian 22-15 and Holy Cross squeezed out a 14-13 triumph over Grace Christian.

In the A League, St. Stephen's Catholic of Winter Springs hammered Central Baptist 18-4 in four innings. Maranatha knocked First Baptist of Osteen from the ranks of the unbeaten 14-9 and the Church of God blasted Grace United Methodist 18-3 in four innings.

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BRIEFS

Ramp restrictions miss mark

SANFORD — An ordinance designed to allay noise complaints about skateboard ramps has missed the mark, Sanford Police Chief Steven Harriett told city commissioners yesterday.

The commission had hoped to control noise associated with skateboard ramps in residential neighborhoods by adopting ramp restrictions March 12. But, Harriett said, the commission failed to amend the city nuisance ordinance to include references to recreational ramps.

"The problem continues," he said.

Commissioners agreed to take up the issue again March 26.

Skateboarders protested earlier commission proposals to ban ramps in residential areas. After hearing skateboarders' concerns, the commission agreed to restrict ramps to back yards, no less than 10 feet from rear and side property lines.

The ordinance also restricts ramps to three feet in height, and limits usage to between 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Plaque to honor Thomas

SANFORD — The city will officially honor Harold Thomas, director of the West Sanford Boys & Girls Club who died last month.

City Commissioner Bob Thomas Monday asked the commission to honor Thomas with a bronze plaque on the 919 Persimmon Ave. recreation facility. Commissioners agreed the plaque is needed.

Harold Thomas, 24, directed the club since its opening in November. He died Feb. 27 in an automobile accident while driving a club member home.

From staff reports

TOMORROW

What the census means to you

On Friday, 106 million American heads of households are expected to receive in the mail the official U.S. census questionnaire. By law, it must be filled out and returned to the government.

What does the census mean to you?

A three-part series beginning tomorrow will explain what the census is all about and tell you what it means for Florida and the community where you live.

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Sunny, windy, cool



A high near 70 and winds from the northwest at 20 mph today, with temperatures dropping to the low 40s tonight with winds at 15 to 20 mph. Highs only in the 60s tomorrow.

For more weather, see Page 2A

Boat races hit snag

Crowd control concerns some commissioners

By LAURA L. SULLIVAN
Herald staff writer

SANFORD — A plan to hold nationally televised powerboat races on Lake Monroe is "fraught with stumbling blocks," city officials said yesterday.

Promoters of the Sanford Challenge '90 met with the city commission yesterday to discuss plans for the May 12 and 13 races sanctioned by the American Power Boat Racing Association. The event is the first hydroplane race to be held on Lake Monroe.

City commissioners said yesterday they would welcome the attention brought to Sanford by the event, but were concerned about controlling a crowd of 25,000 spectators expected to turn out for the races. Commissioners also said they were miffed about being presented with the plan late in the organizers' planning.

"The concept is fine, but I'm concerned about the logistics," Commissioner A.A. McClanahan said.

City Manager Frank Faison said the plan is "fraught with stumbling blocks," such as legal questions surrounding the city's liability, traffic congestion, parking and trash.

Police Chief Steve Harriett had recommended requiring 10 off-duty police officers to handle the race crowd, but said he would have to look at the plan again after he learned the crowd projections yesterday.

"If we're talking about 25,000 people, we're going to need a lot of help," Harriett said.

Commissioner Whitey Eckstein said he was unhappy with Sunset Sports Associates, a Sanford athletics programming and promotion

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Herald Photo by Tommy Vincent

The massive facelift plan for U.S. Highway 17-92 would affect virtually all of the route contained within the boundaries of Seminole County. Preliminary plans

call for beautification, redevelopment and rezoning along the thoroughfare, including this section that intersects with S.R. 436 in Casselberry.

Officials want to make Sanford anchor of 17-92 'main street' plan

By J. MARK BARFIELD
Herald staff writer

SANFORD — U.S. Highway 17-92 should become the tree-lined "Main Street" of Seminole County, with Sanford as its exclusive "upscale" northern anchor, a group of government and business officials decided during a brainstorming session Monday.

That agreement was reached after unanimous consent that the 14-mile north-south roadway is an apparently uncontrolled eyesore of signs and decaying, vacant shopping centers.

"The whole of the street is like Topsy," said Sanford Mayor Betty Smith. "It just grewed." (She referred to the novel "Uncle Tom's Cabin," in which the character Topsy explained to Miss Ophelia she didn't know how she was born, only that she was.)

Representatives of the county, the five cities touched by the road, and members of the Greater Seminole County Chamber of Commerce united in their call to have the highway redeveloped into a multi-faceted, landscaped central artery for the county that would not only be pleasing to traverse but would help unify north and south Seminole County and give a visual identity to the county.

Subcommittees will meet during the next month to decide how to meet the committee's objectives. The full committee will meet April 20.

Smith suggested when the redevelopment is underway, a name change might be in order for the road to help its identity.

Committee member Randy Morris, of Lake Mary, wryly suggested "Elm Street," the location of a haunted house in the "Nightmare on Elm Street" horror movie series.

Committee members agreed lands next to U.S. 17-92 had developed in an uncontrolled, nearly unregulated manner to such a degree it has become an eyesore for those who travel it — and those who avoid it.

Morris said when he has visitors arriving at Central Florida Regional Airport in Sanford, he directs them away from U.S. 17-92 when he gives them directions to his home.

"17-92 is like the backyard of the county," Morris said. "It's where you throw all the junk you don't want anyone to see. We need to turn the houses around."

Members of the committee agreed U.S. 17-92 should have a purpose as well as look nice. Morris recommended the roadway should be redeveloped into the central service district of the county where all residents would know any kind of service need or product they needed could be found there.

Ruby Homayssi, of Elmira's Pantry, Fern Park, said she also wanted the boulevard to be a place where she could not only find all the goods and services she needs, but also where she could walk along tree-lined walkways.

Several members stressed the roadway should help unify the county, having several separate characteristics as a motorist drives along the roadway, but having an overall "boulevard" feel unconstrained by city boundaries.

The committee agreed U.S. 17-92 should have seven distinct sections largely based on current development trends and desired changes.

The northernmost section would extend from the Interstate 4, U.S. 17-92 bridge to North French

See Anchor, Page 5A

A sign of the times

New ordinance takes effect in Longwood

By LACY DOMEN
Herald staff writer

LONGWOOD — Business owners on the east side of North County Rd. 427 are the first to be targeted by the city for illegal signs. Building Official B.J. Helms said last week.

"We want to get the information to the public before we start calling on these businesses," Helms said.

Building Inspector Roland Ray, Code Enforcement Officer Cathy Prier, and Helms will soon begin visiting area businesses to tell them if they are violating the new sign code. "Illegal signs, like the ones in the right-of-ways, need to come out," Helms said.

Ray, Prier, and Helms will carry sign inspection reports with them as they visit businesses on County Road 427, State Road 434, U.S. Highway 17-92, and Dog Track Road. The reports list violations such as oversized signs, improper setback, and signs placed in the right of way.

Although the city is in the process of bringing all existing signs into compliance, business owners whose signs are legal will also be inspected and receive notification of compliance. Helms said.

Helms said the city is not trying to create a hardship for any business, but to beautify commercial roadways. "We will notify owners of illegal signs and give them enough time to comply or remove the signs," Helms said. "We'll help them out with any questions they have, or in any way we can," he said.

Helms predicted the inspections would not be "a three month job, but a constant. Every hour we spend on this will be logged in to show the commissioners at the end of the year. We think we'll need another code officer then to stay on top of this," he said.

Little leaguer dies after being struck by pitch

United Press International

TAMPA — A 10-year-old boy died of cardiac arrest after being hit in the chest by a pitch during a Little League baseball game, authorities said Monday.

Ryan Wopke went into cardiac arrest when the baseball struck him in the chest near his left armpit during a game Sunday, said Hillsborough County Sheriff's Department Sgt. Gordon Davis.

The incident happened in the fourth inning at the Citrus Park Little League field in Hillsborough County, Davis said.

Wopke was up to bat and the pitch was wild, said Wopke's coach, Fred Bloomingdale.

Nobody dreamed that it would have come to this, Bloomingdale said.

His team, the Cardinals, was playing the Phillies.

He lost his breath and everyone thought he had the wind knocked out of him, he said. "He was gasping for air and then he went down on the

See Player, Page 5A

City rec department proposes merger with Seminole High

By LAURA L. SULLIVAN
Herald staff writer

SANFORD — City youth may soon find city recreation programs in their schoolyard if the Sanford City Commission and the Seminole County School Board agree on a plan to merge Seminole High School facilities with city programming.

During the first commission discussion of the plan recommended last month by Commissioner Whitey Eckstein, commissioners yesterday gave unanimous support to the concept. The commission agreed to approach the school board with the idea.

Eckstein, a teacher and golf coach at Seminole High School, said the city could use money spent for contracting part-time recreation employees to pay high school coaches and teachers to supervise after-school athletics and tutoring

programs for students in sixth through twelfth grades.

"Our kids have nowhere to go after school," Eckstein said. "If they aren't good enough to make the top 12 on the basketball team, that's it."

High school and middle school students surely need after school recreation to keep them off the streets and away from drugs, Eckstein said. The city offers after school programs for elementary students, he said, but nothing for older children.

The school board is going to have to do something with that area out there. We have too many kids just hanging out," he said.

Coaches and teachers, as professionals trained to deal with youth, would be a bargain for the city at part-time wages, Eckstein said. And they work cheap — supplements paid to teachers who

See Merger, Page 5A



Whitey Eckstein
...Recommends merger proposal

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