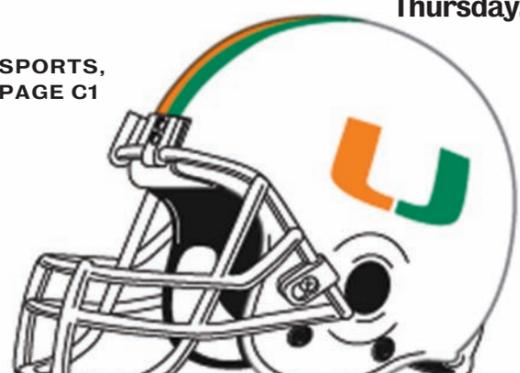


COLLEGE FOOTBALL KICKS OFF
Miami to take on Charleston Southern.

SPORTS, PAGE C1



TOMORROW FOOTBALL PREVIEW
NFL, college and local high school special section.

Hurricane Gustav death toll hits 22



ARIANA CUBILLOS • The Associated Press

Residents bail water with buckets at the flooded front of a house Wednesday during heavy rains caused by Hurricane Gustav in Leogan, Haiti. The death toll from Hurricane Gustav is up to 22 in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Haiti's civil protection director Marie Alta Jean-Baptiste says mudslides and flooding have killed at least 14 people in Haiti, including a young girl who was swept off a bridge by floodwaters. **STORY, A14**

Cluster plan may be key to Nov. 4

Tuesday's Republican primary winners all back controversial 'Valliere Amendment' that would reshape Martin growth plan

BY GEORGE ANDREASSI
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MARTIN COUNTY — The Republican primaries for Martin County Commission delivered three votes or a majority for the controversial Land Protection Incentives Amendment, which would allow clusters of houses on agricultural tracts in exchange for the conservation of the rest of the land.

And three outspoken opponents of the clustering initiative, including Commissioner Lee Weberman, went down to defeat. That calls into question the value of the issue in the upcoming general election, in which all three Democratic candidates also oppose the "Valliere Amendment," named for its sponsor, Commissioner Susan Valliere.

"Three of the candidates that favor some form or another of the Valliere Amendment were the three people that won (Tuesday) night," said Ed Ciampi, winner of the GOP primary in District 5. "So I think that the general public is not necessarily afraid of the Valliere Amendment, as some of our opponents would have led us to believe."

Opponents of the Land Protection Incentives Amendment say it will lead to costly suburban sprawl and has loopholes that would allow the land initially set aside for preservation to be developed. Environmental activists have filed an administrative challenge against the proposed amendment to the county's growth plan.

Supporters of the clustering initiative say it will help the public obtain land for conservation that taxpayers could not



Valliere



Ciampi



Weberman

INSIDE: Important election dates and Web links. **A11**

See **CLUSTER**, page A11

Bill Clinton forcefully backs Obama; Biden speaks

Barack Obama received approval for the Democratic presidential nomination Wednesday, backed by former rival Hillary Clinton's call for unanimity.

"No matter where we stood at the beginning of this campaign, Democrats stand together today," declared Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz of Florida. **STORY, A4**

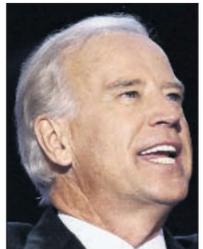
CAMPAIGN ROUNDUP

- The delegates also accepted Obama's choice of Delaware Sen. Joseph Biden as vice presidential running mate.
- Former President Bill Clinton, Wednesday's keynote speaker, said, "With Joe Biden's experience and wisdom, supporting Barack Obama's proven understanding, insight and good instincts, America will have the national security leadership we need."
- Barack Obama will deliver his full acceptance speech tonight.

INSIDE: Today's convention schedule. **A4**
Treasure Coast voter turnout results. **A12**



RON EDMONDS • The Associated Press
Former President Bill Clinton speaks Wednesday during the Democratic National Convention in Denver.



Biden

"These times require more than a good soldier. They require a wise leader. A leader who can deliver change. The change that everybody knows we need."

WHAT A WEEKEND! MARTIN COUNTY

WEEKEND HAS GONE TO THE DOGS

We've pretty much dried out from Fay and apparently got lucky to avoid Gustav. Celebrate what is forecast to be a beautiful weekend by getting out to one of these events.

- The Blake Library is going to the dogs (and cats). The sixth year of **Paws to Read**, a program in which children read to therapy dogs and cats, will kick off with a reception at 6:30 p.m. today at the library, 2351 S.E. Monterey Road, Stuart. Learn about the program and sign up for future sessions. About a dozen therapy dogs are expected to attend. For information, call (772) 221-1407.
- Help give 5-year-old Kyle Wahl of Port St. Lucie and others two things they need by attending a **blood drive** and fundraiser from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Friday at Toyota of Stuart, 5101 S. U.S. 1 in Stuart. Blood donors will get certificates for free oil changes, gas cards and other gifts. A silent auction will include a football signed by Bob Greise and a basketball signed by Billy Cunningham. For information, call Mirta Morgan at (561) 371-0679.

- Canines and felines also will take center stage at **Vibin' in the Park**, a fundraiser for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals from 3 to 8 p.m. Saturday at Indian RiverSide Park, 1707 N.E. Indian River Drive, Jensen Beach. There'll be live music, lots of pet-related vendors and games and activities for kids. Get your dog washed and/or its claws clipped, \$5 for each service. For information, call (772) 692-7501.
- **Sunset tours:** 6 p.m. Thursday, House of Refuge, 301 S.E. MacArthur Blvd., Stuart; \$20; (772) 225-1961, ext. 107.
- **Democratic Party party:** 7 p.m. Thursday, Best Western Hotel, U.S. 1, Stuart; (772) 221-0405, martin-countydemocrats.org.

MORE EVENTS, A11

LAKE OKEECHOBEE RISES 2 FEET

The floodgates of the S-65E Lock and Dam Flood Control Structure are open after Lake Okeechobee's level rose 2 feet in a week — the fastest the lake ever has risen. It's just before Florida's wettest month and busiest time for potential hurricanes to approach. **STORY, A13**



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