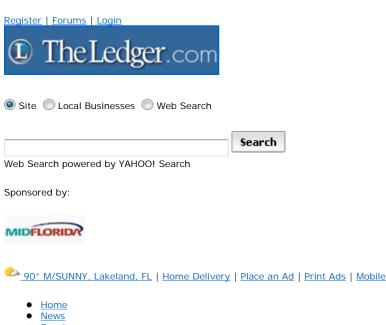
- The Ledger
- News Chief
- TIMEOUT
- Polk Voice
- The Reporter
- Vision Latina
- Polk Moms



- **Sports**
- Entertainment
- <u>Living</u>
- Opinion
- Obituaries
- Real Estate
- Jobs Cars
- Classifieds
- Editorials
- <u>Letters</u>
- **Forums Columnists**
- News Chats



- Enlarge Text
- <u>Email</u>
- Print
- Comments
- Share
 - Your Name Your Email Recipient's Email
 - Send

- O WITH PHOTO
- O <u>NO PHOTO</u>
- O DIGG
- O <u>FACEBOOK</u>
- Yahoo! Buzz
- O YAHOO
- O <u>NEWSVINE</u>
- O <u>DEL.ICIO.US</u>

State Needs Silver Alert, The Amber Alert For Alzheimer Patients

Published: Monday, June 9, 2008 at 6:01 a.m. Last Modified: Monday, June 9, 2008 at 6:51 a.m.

Florida has a higher number of residents older than 65 than any other state in the nation. The Alzheimer's Foundation of America said more than 300,000 of those residents have Alzheimer's disease, and about six in 10 will wander away and become disoriented.

The association said of those who wander, most are found within five miles of their home. Of those not found within 24 hours, half will be seriously injured or die.

An 81-year-old Largo man was one of the lucky ones. He was found about a week ago more than 150 miles away from his home. Florida Highway Patrol troopers located him in his van on Alligator Alley near Fort Myers.

WORKING IN EIGHT STATES

The incident was the impetus for state Reps. Tom Anderson, R-Dunedin, and Kurt Kelly, R-Ocala, to announce they will file a bill for the next session of the Florida Legislature that would set up a Silver Alert program. It's an Amber Alert for seniors - only instead of using media alerts and road signs with changing type to notify a community of a child who has been kidnapped, the information would be about missing persons.

It's working in eight states, and has resulted in the safe return of a majority of those reported. When 83-year-old Helen Long left her North Carolina home without notice last January, her daughter called state police, who sent out a description of her truck on the state's Silver Alert system. Six hours later, a UPS driver spotted the truck and called for help. Long was returned to her home unharmed.

"The beauty of Silver Alert is that it's something people can remember," Carlos Higgins of the National Silver-Haired Congress, told Stateline.org. "If you just say 'Silver Alert,' people know there's a confused elderly person out there who needs help."

STARTED IN 2006

Colorado was the first state with the program in 2006. Others quickly followed. In April, U.S. Rep. Gus Bilirakis, R-Palm Harbor, introduced a bill to create a \$5.6 million federal grant program to help states establish a Silver Alert system.

Bilirakis filed the bill after Mary Zelter, 86, signed herself out of an assisted-living facility in Largo in late February and went off to the store in her white Sebring convertible. She didn't return. Seven days later, her body and the car were found in the Intracoastal Waterway off Clearwater Beach, about eight miles from her home. Zelter apparently mistook a boat ramp for the continuation of a road and drove her car into the water.

"This tragedy unfortunately highlights the very real problem of older residents, many of whom suffer from diseases which leave them easily confused and disoriented, wandering away from their homes or caregiving facilities and meeting harm because family, friends and authorities could not find them in time," Bilirakis said.

Silver Alert costs little and could piggyback on the Amber Alert system. The Legislature should take quick action to get it up and running.

- •
- -
- Enlarge Text
- Email
- Print
- PrintShare

O Your Name
O Your Email
O Recipient's Email
O Send
O WITH PHOTO
O NO PHOTO
O DIGG
O FACEBOOK

Yahoo! Buzz

O YAHOO

0

O NEWSVINE
O DEL.ICIO.US

ADD A COMMENT

Start or join a forum on this topic.

NEXT ARTICLE IN EDITORIALS

NEXT

Deal to Cut Paybacks Is Fair

Polk County School Board members finally resolved a situation Tuesday that has been festering all too long: The board approved an agreement between the school administration and the Polk Education Association - the union for the teachers - that...

EVENTS CALENDAR MORE EVENTS SUBMIT EVENT

- 30 Mon
- 1 Tue
- 2 Wed
- 3 Thu4 Fri
- Sponsored by:

POLK/MOms con

EVENTS SEARCH

Search

enter event type or date



Orlanda Regional Healthcare is now

Graduate Nurse Information Session



Wednesday, July 9, 2008 - 4pm-7pm Lewis Pavilion at 6. D. Anderson Canter Center Orland

M. D. Anderson Cancer Center Orlando 1400 S. Orange Ave. + Orlando, FL

Presentation will be held at 5pm • Raffle and door prizes!

RSVP to Erica.VanSyoc@orlandohealth.com or call 321-843-2313

Free Valet Parking will be available at Orlando Regional Medical Center entrance.

Make a date to visit Orlando Health's (formerly Orlando Regional Healthcare)
Graduate Nurse Informational Session. Learn all about our unwavering
commitment to provide caring, quality healthcare to the people of Central
Florida. Get the details of our network's individual facilities and the right
career path for you.

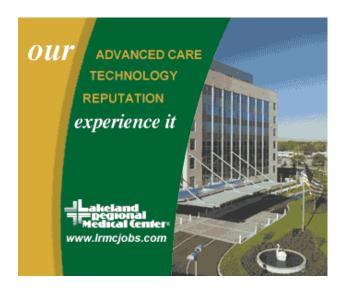
Orlando Health is a recognized healthcare facility that qualifies for the Nursing Student Loan Forgiveness Program. http://doh.state.fl.us/PHNursing/NLF/NSLEP.html

We also offer a comprehensive benefits package that includes medical/dental plans, life insurance, shift differentials, a retirement plan, tuition reimbursement, sick child care, and more. EOE/Tobacco-Free Workplace

Can't make it? Apply online at: www.OrlandoHealthGN.jobs



- Most Read
- Most Emailed
- Auburndale Crime Map
- Local Business Agenda
- Local Health Events
- Health Events
- Bartow Crime Map
- Market Values
- The Local Agenda
- Market Values
- Auburndale Crime Map
- Hospital to Appeal \$12 Million Judgment
- Alice Collins: All About Love of YMCA
- Park Ranger Dies As Tree Hits Car
- Final Divorce Applications In Bartow For March 1-31
- Fla. Gets Set For 1st Execution Since 2006
- <u>Falling Tree Kills Park Ranger</u>



FEATURED BUSINESSES



Midflorida Federal Credit Union 129 S Kentucky Ave Lakeland, FL 33801 (863) 686-7587



Williford Flooring Company Inc 4820 US Highway 98 N Lakeland, FL 33809 (863) 858-5612



Orange Acres Ranch 5130 Alturas Babson Park Cutfoff Road Lake Wales, FL 33853 (863) 537-2381

Free Credit Report with All 3 Scores

Free 3-bureau Credit Report includes Transunion, Equifax, Experian.

FreeCreditReportsInstantly.com

Refinance \$300,000 for Only \$965/Month

300,000 Mortgage for only 965/month. Save 1,000's - No obligation.

www. Home Loan Help Line. com

Refinance and Save \$1,000\$

150,000 Mortgage for 483/month. Compare up to 4 free quotes.

www.pickamortgage.com

No Time for School? Graduate Online

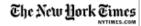
Get a Degree in as Few as 2 Yrs- Graduate Faster with Online Classes.

www.ClassesUSA.com

Ads by Yahoo!

One less thing to worry about first thing in the morning.





- Contact Us
- About Us
- Advertising
- <u>Subscribe</u>
- Work for Us
- Help
- Privacy Policy
- <u>Corrections</u>
- RSS
- Terms of Service
- Photo Reprints
- Site Map

Copyright $\ensuremath{\text{@}}$ 2008 The Ledger.com — All rights reserved. Restricted Use only.