

Zellwood senior warns locals of downtown robbery

Woman urges residents to be alert

By Teresa Sargeant
Reporter

An elderly woman who was the victim of a robbery last summer is warning locals that there may be an international robbery ring whose members may be using aliases in each town they target.

Boatwright, 94, of Zellwood, has been a 30-year customer of Bank of America and holds a credit card and two bank accounts with the institution. Usually, she only withdraws a few hundred dollars from an ATM. However, because she needed a larger sum of cash — \$1,000 — to pay for help that was visiting her home later that day on June 26, 2024, she visited the Bank of Apopka in downtown Apopka.

Once Boatwright reached home, she discovered her money — which was in an

envelope — had disappeared. Believing she must have dropped her cash somewhere, she phoned the Apopka bank to check its whereabouts.

The following day, the bank manager called Boatwright with surprising news: She didn't misplace her money — it was stolen. The manager advised that she file a police report.

"He said two people followed me in. One went to the teller a couple windows from me so he could hear what I was doing, and then the other one waited," Boatwright said. "Then when I got the money, the teller put it in an envelope. I put it in my purse, and I walked out to the car, and they followed me out. Somewhere between the bank and my car, the money disappeared."

The bank manager told Boatwright the thieves were "very slick" in their actions, and that they were members of an international ring whose members change their names in every city. The bank cap-

tured the suspects' images on video and showed them to all the bank employees and the police.

The bank staff and the police confirmed to Boatwright that it was her on the surveillance video as well. Yet she couldn't remember anyone following her because she was too focused on what she called her "bad feet" and maneuvering her walker to pay attention.

At first, Boatwright wasn't going to file a police report, calling the situation "hopeless," but her granddaughter, a bank manager, convinced her otherwise.

"They've got the picture of their faces, and she said they might be able to find them," Boatwright said. "So, we decided to go to the police department."

Boatwright filed a police report on July 4, 2024. Since reporting the crime, Boatwright called the police for updates on the investigation.

In an April 2 message to The Apopka Chief respond-

ing to a public records request, Sgt. Kim Walsh confirmed that the robbery did take place last summer at the Apopka Bank of America.

"I can confirm the Apopka Police Department documented via report 202441002073 taken on 07/29/2024 a Grand Theft occurred at Bank of America, 33 E Main St. Apopka, on June 26, 2024, at approximately 2 p.m.," she wrote. "The victim in this case has enacted Marsy's Law. This case is an active investigation."

Boatwright never recovered her money. Despite police involvement, the incident has been a hard case to solve due to the suspects using aliases as they travel, she said.

"As far as the \$1,000, I don't ever expect to see that again, because the bank was not responsible, they said, for anything outside [the building], even though they [the thieves] had followed me inside," Boatwright said. "I felt

like the bank should have reached out a little bit more to me than what they did, but that's their rules."

The robbery heightened her awareness of her being a potential target again and therefore changed the way she does her banking.

Boatwright mentions that her daughter, Karyn Boatwright, now accompanies her to the bank for safety.

"My daughter always goes with me (now)," Boatwright said. "She always goes with me because she's living with me now. So, she always takes me to the bank. She won't even let me drive there."

Boatwright said she doesn't know of anyone who may be getting robbed by the same suspects.

Boatwright carries a handbag over her neck and keeps it in front of her instead of her side, making it more difficult for any thief to steal from her person. She offered a final piece of advice on safeguarding oneself from

robbers: "I would just say for people to beware of their surroundings."



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Most Florida home and business owners are familiar with the damage that can come from severe storms. If not, it is important to brush up on the topic, because one can never be too prepared for what a severe storm or hurricane can do to unkept trees. Right now, is the time to prepare for the possibilities ahead. Storm preparation might feel extensive but if it saves homes, office buildings and trees from damage, it's always worth the effort. This can be a busy time of year for tree servicing companies so it's important to get on the books sooner rather than later.

"It's important to have your trees inspected and pruned annually. This can be done quickly and will save you money in the long run. In most cases, maintaining trees is far less expensive than removing and replacing them. This proactive measure can help assure that your trees are healthy and reduce any risk of storm damage to your home or property down the road," stated James Maltby, owner and operator of Maltby's Tree Service and Landscaping.

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vice can have:

- Branches that are rubbing each other or rubbing wires on your home or business
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"If you have a tree that has grown too large for your property, is damaging your foundation, or is in danger of breaking or falling on the roof of your home, this can be a major concern. Before these things happen, call us. We have trained professionals to evaluate each situation and to provide you with the best in customer service. We pride ourselves on a fast response time and the best prices guaranteed," stated Maltby.

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ing is a full-service tree company that offers tree trimming, tree removal, landscaping, and monthly maintenance. Along with these services, they're the experts to use for new landscape installation and stump grinding. Their staff is always ready to assist you and will make sure your landscaping and tree needs are met to your satisfaction.

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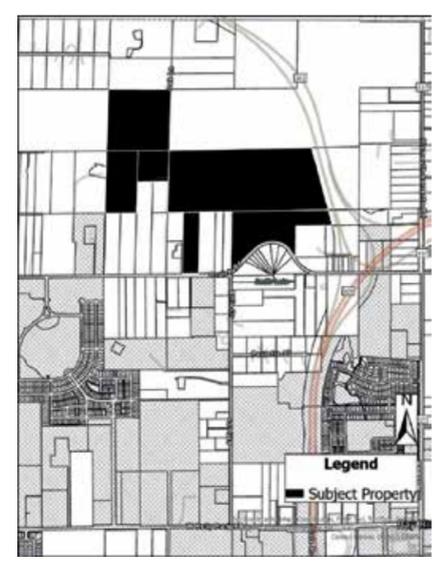
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PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE ANNEXATION CITY OF APOPKA

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to Florida Statutes 171.044, the Apopka Code of Ordinances, Part III, Land Development Code, Article II, Section 2.5.1.A, that **APIAN ENGINEERING, INC. C/O LUKE M. CLASSON, P.E.** has made an application to the City of Apopka City Council for an **ANNEXATION** of a property located on the southwest corner of the northwest corner of Ondich Road and SR 453/SR 429. This application relates to the following described property:

ORDINANCE NO. 3107

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF APOPKA, FLORIDA, TO EXTEND ITS TERRITORIAL AND MUNICIPAL LIMITS TO ANNEX PURSUANT TO FLORIDA STATUTE 171.044 THE HEREINAFTER DESCRIBED LANDS SITUATED AND BEING IN ORANGE COUNTY, FLORIDA, OWNED BY PM S-1 REO, LLC; HMF, LLC; CHARLES P. STALLINGS; KIM L. STALLINGS; EUPELL E. STALLINGS, JR.; AND CRYSTAL DENISE STALLINGS; LOCATED ON THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF ONDICH ROAD AND SR 453/SR 429; COMPRISING 199.46 ACRES, MORE OR LESS; PROVIDING FOR DIRECTIONS TO THE CITY CLERK, SEVERABILITY, CONFLICTS, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.



Parcel Identification Number(s): 01-20-27-0000-00-007, 01-20-27-0000-00-034, 01-20-27-0000-00-053, 02-20-27-0000-00-010, 02-20-27-0000-00-011, 02-20-27-0000-00-020
Contains: 199.46 +/- acres

NOTICE is given that public hearings for Ordinance No. 3107 will be held by the **City of Apopka City Council** at its regularly scheduled meetings in the City Council Chambers of the Apopka City Hall, 120 E. Main Street, Apopka, Florida on **Wednesday, May 7, 2025 beginning at 1:30 P.M. and Wednesday, May 21, 2025 beginning at 7:00 P.M.** or as soon thereafter as possible.

Affected parties and the public may appear at the above listed hearings to speak. The proposed Annexation can be inspected at the Apopka Community Development Department located at Apopka City Hall on weekdays between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. City Hall address shown below. Please be advised that, under State law, if you decide to appeal a decision made with respect to this matter, you will need a record of the proceedings and may need to ensure that a verbatim record is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), persons with disabilities needing assistance to participate in any of these proceedings should contact the City Clerk's Office at 120 East Main Street, Apopka FL 32703, Telephone: 407-703-1704, no less than 48 hours prior to the proceeding.

**Apopka City Council
Apopka Planning Commission
Community Development Department**

April 25, 2025