

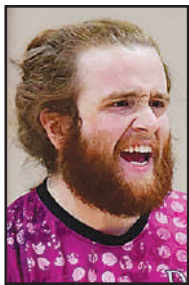
New home

A family rings in the New Year with a new house dedicated to them by Habitat for Humanity. See page 6A.



Sports

Fomer AHS State Champion Bowler finishes second at PBA's 2023 Regional Players Invitational See page 1B.



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Volume 102 Number 2

Friday, January 12, 2024 / 50 cents

City Council reviews charter, ponders changing form of government

By Teresa Sargeant
Apopka Chief Staff

The Apopka City Council reviewed the city charter in regard to its current mandate of the strong-mayor form of government and the benefits of changing that to the proposed council-manager form.

The public meeting took place on Wednesday,

January 10, in the council chamber of City Hall. Public comment was part of the meeting, and no action was due to be taken at the meeting.

Section by section, city attorney Cliff Shepard walked the City Council through the charter, which outlines how the Apopka government is structured. He clarified that he

is there to guide the City Council in discussing the charter.

“Just because I have said that I have nothing to discuss or no recommended changes (in a charter article), that doesn’t mean you don’t or may not have something. You certainly

See CHARTER Page 3A

15th annual MLK Parade sees more church entrants

By Teresa Sargeant
Apopka Chief Staff

With this year’s theme being “Remembering the Dreamer!” the 15th annual Apopka Martin Luther King Jr. Parade will feature more entrants from churches and bring back the post-parade program honoring Dr. King after years of cancellation due to COVID.

Organized by the South Apopka Ministerial Alliance (SAMA), the parade will take place on Monday, January 15, starting at 2 p.m., beginning at the Apopka Community Center/VFW Building located at 519 S. Central Avenue, go eastward, then southward on Marvin C. Zanders



Monique Morris
... MLK Parade chair

Avenue, and westward on 13th Street to the John H. Bridges Community Center.

Like the Apopka Christmas Parade that the Foliage Sertoma Club organizes yearly, the Dr. King

Parade is open to everybody and is not about race, said parade chair Monique Morris.

“It’s not a black-and-white thing,” she said. “This is for everybody, for all to come together in unity.”

Expecting up to 100 entrants this year, the increase of those from churches reflects the vision of SAMA President Rev. Richard King, of the St. James AME Church, Morris said.

“We’re trying to go back to the foundation, which are the churches,” she said.

The judged parade will feature appearances and entrants by school bands,

See MLK Page 9A

Alonzo Williams Jr., first Black city commissioner, dies at 85

By Teresa Sargeant
Apopka Chief Staff

Alonzo Williams Jr., who made history as the first African-American Apopka city commissioner, died on Tuesday, January 9, in Albany, Georgia. He was 85.

In 1970, Williams was elected Apopka city commissioner in City Council Seat 1 and served 24 years uninterrupted in this position until his retirement in 1994. During his time as commissioner, he also served as a member of the Lake Apopka Natural Gas District Board.

Williams’ younger brother, Dr. Robert Williams, said in an interview that what he would like Williams to be remembered for are “his leadership qualities and for being



Photo by Williams family/Facebook

Alonzo Williams Jr., who made history as the first African-American Apopka city commissioner, died on Tuesday, January 9, in Albany, Georgia. He was 85.

See WILLIAMS Page 12A

Tucker drops out of Seat 3 race

By Teresa Sargeant
Apopka Chief Staff

Ryan Tucker announced this week that he is withdrawing from the Apopka City Council Seat 3 race.

In his Tuesday, January 9, statement on his Facebook campaign page, Tucker said that “upcoming changes in my career, a healthy work/life balance

and a strong desire to pour into our local church at a greater rate all led to this decision.”

The following is Tucker’s Facebook statement in full:

“Good Morning Apopka!

“After much thought, prayer and conversation, my family and I have made



Tucker

See TUCKER Page 5A

City will break ground for permanent Fire Station 6



In this file photo, the city and its partners cut the ribbon on the Harmon Road extension in August 2023. Harmon Road will also be the site of the Friday, January 12, groundbreaking for the permanent Fire Station 6.

By Teresa Sargeant
Apopka Chief Staff

The city of Apopka will hold a groundbreaking ceremony for Fire Station 6 on Friday, January 12, at 3 p.m. on the northeast corner of Ocoee-Apopka Road and Harmon Road in Apopka.

Access to the site will be made available as well as an on-site designated parking area. There will be signage directing everyone the day of the event.

On Wednesday, January 3, the Apopka City Council approved 5-0 to award Miller Construction

Management a construction manager at risk (CMAR) contract for Fire Station 6 with the guaranteed maximum price of \$3,677,800 and an added 10 percent contingency for a total of \$4,310,580.

“Basically, what a CMAR does – construction manager at risk – now that they set that price, they cannot go above it. They’re held within that. They assume the risk, basically, make sure that we’re within. We hope to come in under budget, of course, but you know, that’s, that’s the stuff we’re

See STATION Page 12A

2023 brings city beautification, endless politics

By Teresa Sargeant
Apopka Chief Staff

Note: This is the second of a four-part series reviewing the news in Apopka in 2023 as written in the pages of The Apopka Chief. This week covers April, May and June.

April

In two separate votes, the Apopka City Council showed no confidence for Sean Wylam as fire chief and to recommend termination of Michael Rodriguez as city attorney ... The 61st annual Apopka Art and Foliage Festival will dominate the last weekend of April at

Kit Land Nelson Park ... Miss Apopka Sarah Sarver unveils her portrait at the Wednesday, April 5, City Council ... The community dedicated a new mural highlighting Wekiwa Springs flora and fauna as part of the residents’ persistent efforts to rescue Wekiwa Springs from blight and to beautify the area. ...

The city intends to update its transportation impact fees for several types of upcoming developments that, if the City Council approves a revised city ordinance, would go into effect this summer. ... In spite of the 3-2 no confidence vote the City Council took last

week, Mayor Bryan Nelson said he will not take action himself to terminate Sean Wylam as fire chief. ... The Development Review Committee (DRC) reviewed the first submittal of a major development plan for a 144-bed behavioral hospital ... A current University of Central Florida (UCF) student will represent Apopka in the Miss Florida USA competition next month in Miami.

The Apopka City Council voted 4-1 to get a declaratory judgment on City Attorney Michael Rodriguez ... The Apopka Planning Commission voted unanimously, 4-0,

to recommend approval of the major development plan for the casual restaurant and sports bar, Miller’s Ale House, which was proposed as part of the Apopka City Center.

A petition was initiated to recall Bryan Nelson as mayor on the grounds of, among the reasons, refusing to hold anyone accountable for the death of a firefighter. ... As the city continues to upgrade its cemetery that so far included driveway repaving and fence installation, the city is also considering hiking up its costs for plot spaces and columbarium use. ... A woman who moved to Apopka recent-

ly was sentenced this week to more than three years in federal prison by U.S. District Judge Kathryn Kimball Mizelle. ... A 10-year-old Apopka girl was shot, but is expected to recover from her injuries.

May

Apopka High School alumnus Jalen Carter was the ninth pick of the first round of the 2023 NFL draft on Thursday, April 27, after playing college football as a defensive lineman for the Georgia Bulldogs for the past three years. He was the first pick

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Find Public Notices
Online at: TheApopkaChief.com/public-notices OR
FloridaPublicNotices.com



Apopka Event of the Week

VFW Post 10147, at 519 S. Central Ave., will hold its fundraising breakfast on Saturday, January 20, from 8-10 a.m. at a cost of \$7 for a meal consisting of scrambled eggs, sausage links, pancakes, biscuits and gravy, orange juice, coffee and water.

Quotable

LibertyUnderFire published 52 columns this year (2023) exposing truths that the Deep State* tried to censor.

Guest articles on stories published to expose censorship

Opinion

The Apopka Chief A weekly newspaper founded in 1923

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John Ricketson

Consultant Emeritus
John Peery

Marketing Director
Jackie Trefcer

Reporters
Teresa Sargeant
Marshall Tempest, Neal Fisher

General Mgr Emeritus
Neoma Knox
Feb. 12, 1929 - Sept. 18, 2021

Our position

What truths broke through censorship in 2023?

By Harold Pease, Ph. D.
Liberty Under Fire

That stories are breaking through the Deep State “censorship complex” show that patriots are winning—and winning big. LibertyUnderFire published 52 columns this year exposing truths that the Deep State* tried to censor. Following are 7 excerpts from these, space denies 45 others. Each paragraph ends with the name and date of each column. These are in published order.

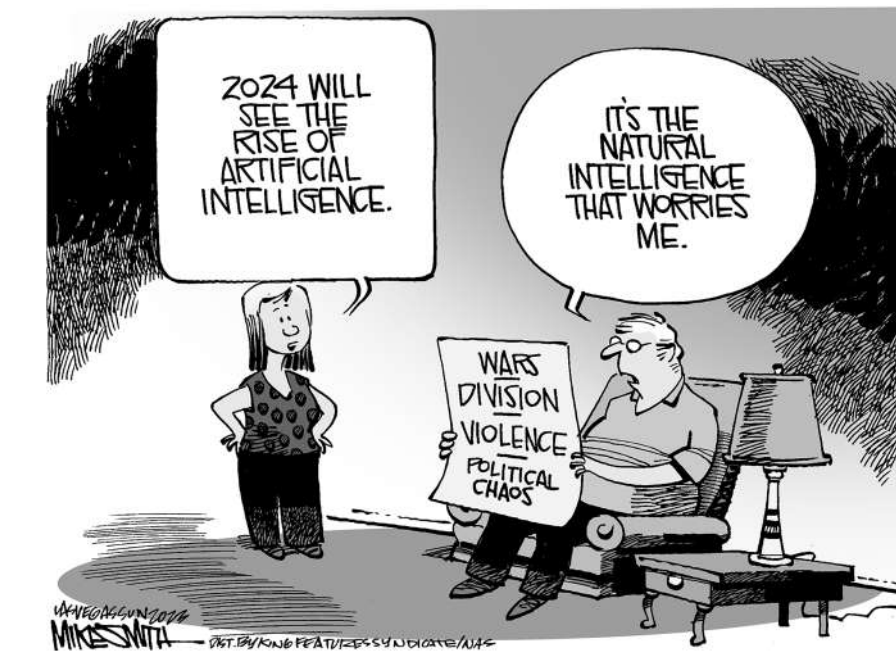
1. Until Elon Musk purchased Twitter and stopped its censorship, the Deep State thought it secure for them, a place where government (Department of Homeland Security DHS, and FBI agents in particular), Big Tech, Big Media, Big Pharma, Democrats, and the Deep State, could speak freely to co-conspirators to overthrow the government of the United States, more specifically its popularly serving and elected president. They succeeded in removing Donald J. Trump from the White House—a Coup. America would never know and all future elections could be rigged in the same manner preserving Deep State power. Twitter conversations would never be revealed. This is what the Twitter Files, from which this column is taken, *document (Twitter File Tweets Confess Rigging 2020 Election, Jan. 6, 2023)*.

2. The FBI “Orchestrated it. A review of the Election Fraud Protest of January 6, 2021, in which hundreds were arrested and 34 are still held without trial two years later in what inmates call the DC Gulag, must start with Ray Epps an FBI agent. He texted his nephew, “I WAS IN THE FRONT WITH A FEW OTHERS. I ALSO ORCHESTRATED IT.” In fact, videos of him encouraging the crowd to riot exist. LibertyUnderFire.com covered his orchestrating it with five other key placed accomplices—none arrested. When Senator Ted Cruz asked a Justice Department spokeswoman if Epps was a confidential human source working for the FBI she said, “I can’t answer that question” (*J6, FBI “Orchestrated it,” Big Tech Censored Half of it, Committee Sealed it, Jan. 13, 2023*).

3. Every American has to be asking. “Outside humanitarian concerns, why do we care about Ukraine?” Biden provides little or no money to stop the invasion on our southern border but provides Abram tanks and risks World War III with Russia to protect Ukraine’s. Citizens do not care, but the Deep State does. WHY??? It is the Deep States’ border. Ukraine is THEIR COUNTRY since 2014 and Volodymyr Zelensky coming into power in 2019, their puppet. Their playground where they have only their rules limiting them and no Constitution to stop gain-of-function research, money laundering and etc. as in America. (*Why Risk War with Russia to Protect Ukraine’s Border? Feb. 17, 2023*).

4. According to Conservative Treehouse in a recent breakthrough article titled “The Parliamentary Motive Behind the J6 Fedsurrection,” March 12, 2023, Nancy Pelosi played the dominant role in stopping the January 6, 2021 Electoral College count. The federal government had motive in creating the J6 crisis which permitted her “to trigger an emergency session and avoid the 2020 election certification challenges,” thus seating Joe Biden without thorough constitutional review (*How Pelosi Stopped the Jan. 6, Electoral College Count and Installed Biden, March 24, 2023*).

5. The Mother of All Bombs (MOAB) was dropped on the Biden’s and the nation May 9, and 10, 2023, that if true, or even partially true, should have resulted in the immediate resignation of Joe Biden as president. It came from three places of the world: Ukraine, China and Romania. On May 9, the Ukrainian prosecutor, that Joe Biden personally picked, thought Joe Biden “corrupt enough that he wanted to come to the US Attorney and prove that. Biden’s own guy turned him in.” As a result of this whistleblower and other evidence, James Comer and his Senate counterpart Chuck Grassley released a joint statement “claiming the FBI has proof showing then—Vice President Joe Biden commit-



Quality of place impacts all residents

I’m now reading Richard Florida’s book entitled, *The Rise of the Creative Class*. The author is a professor at the University of Toronto’s School of Cities and Rotman School of Management. He is also a distinguished visiting fellow at NYU Schack Institute of Real Estate.

Florida, in his seminal work, defines the creative class as a “diverse group of engineers and managers, academics and musicians, entrepreneurs and designers, and programmers, unified by their engagement in creative or restorative work.” I will not focus on details of the cre-

County Commissioner
District 2



Christine Moore

ative class, but instead will discuss the factors which shape the “quality of place” in our cities and suburbs which are impacted by the engagement of this creative class.

So, how do we improve the quality of our corridors, cities, and suburbs? How do we find cre-

ative people to participate in the work?

Florida recommends looking at “what is there and who is there.” He states the combination of buildings and natural environment create a setting primed for success. I recently drove through an unincorporated section of Apopka to find dozens of “no trespassing” signs. You know what that means? The residents are being inundated by the wrong element. They need help in reclaiming their neighborhood.

Florida also suggested asking, “What’s going on

See MOORE Page 4A

Parents, students need one another

Happy New Year!

A new year is always a wonderful time full of possibility. I find myself looking back and reflecting as well as looking forward to what lies ahead. Where can the year take us? What can be accomplished or improved? What can I do today to set us up for success tomorrow? These are questions I try to answer both personally and professionally.

This week I thought I would share some thoughts I had about what we can do today as parents to help our children as students. So here are four things you can do in the new year to help your child’s education in the future.

Number one is to read with your child.

Orange County School
Board, District 7



Melissa Byrd

This seems like a simple one, but believe it or not, it’s a big one. We all know how important reading is when children are, so I won’t belabor that one. But as children grow, they can easily become uninterested in reading. Especially in today’s world of instant visual stimulation through video, the act of sitting with a book can be boring to adolescents. We have to find ways to excite them about

reading.

Even if you have a teen, find a book you both might be interested in and read together, either aloud or on your own, and discuss it. A great way to build interest is to find a book that is also a movie they enjoy. Read the book and then watch the movie.

Maybe there is a particular topic that interests your child. Find a book on it and read it together. They will enjoy learning more and sharing their interest with you.

Not everyone has to love reading books, but being able to read critically is a vital skill to success as an adult. When children don’t get enough practice read-

See BYRD Page 4A

This Week In God’s Word

“If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.” Romans 14:8

Mema Says

Be yourself, warts and all.

The Apopka Chief is published every Friday and entered as Periodicals, postage paid at Apopka Post Office, under the Act of Congress of March 23, 1879. The Apopka Chief newspaper is published by Foliage Enterprises, Inc., every Friday at 400 N. Park Avenue, Apopka, Fla., 32712-3417. An annual subscription is \$25 in Orange County and \$30 outside Orange County. Phone 407-886-2777. **Postmaster: Send address changes to The Apopka Chief, PO Box 880, Apopka, Fla., 32704-0880.**



See NEWS Page 4A

Our nation is losing its identity because of countless illegal entrants

I am in complete agreement with what Jeff Foxworthy stated, “If you can get arrested for hunting or fishing without a license, but not for entering and remaining in the country illegally, you might live in a nation that was founded by geniuses but is run by idiots.”

I watch the multitudes of illegal aliens crossing our southern border without any vetting or identification to establish the reason for their invasion of our beloved nation. The na-



Ike Hayden

tion of the United States of America has always been established by our borders, and without them, we are no longer a nation!

The United Nations has been active in push-

ing, prodding, and assisting these illegals to overrun our borders to encourage a “one world” government domination. Organizations such as Doctors Without Borders, the International Red Cross, UNICEF, and a host of NGO’s (non-governmental organizations) are involved with aiding, and abetting these law-breakers as they make their way to the United States. They provide maps showing the best travel routes, the place to catch trains, buses, way stations where

they can take time out to shower, sleep, do laundry and even receive clothing for their appearance on the trek.

Have you noticed that most of the illegals show up with backpacks, can- teens, are well-fed and rested? It has been established there are terrorists, criminals, rapists, child molesters, and many other devious individuals that are part of this movement. That is not counting the “get- aways,” those who ran and were not caught. How are

we to deal with them?

Our Homeland Security is a joke, our DOJ (Dept. of Justice) will lock you up for protecting yourself or your family with a weapon. Many of our law enforcement personnel are made impotent by the woke generation’s demands for a “kinder” approach to dealing with societal miscreants.

I love Florida’s sheriffs – the ones that advise us to keep weapons, and after we learn safety and the proper use of such, to

use them to stop a killing or any other life-threatening situation involving family and friends. It is time we stand up for each other!

When asked why I carry a weapon, I have responded with, “a cop is too heavy!” We have stretched our first responders to the max and then complain because we feel unprotected. We want more first responders, but when asked for more money to be received through taxes, we

See HAYDEN Page 4A

Charter: Its last review was in 2014

Continued from page 1A

may. And if you do, you will have your time to bring it to my attention and then we'll have that discussion. When I say 'none' (for a charter article) it means that I have seen no legal reason that you all need to change it, or I have never heard anybody express some sort of a desire to look at the potential for changing the thing."

"This is your charter," Shepard later told the Council. "My goal is to lead you through where I know there might be problems and also know where

there has been interest expressed in looking at the issue."

Charter sections cover form of government, boundaries of the city limit, how the City Council is structured, salary of city commissioners, the mayor's role, general powers of the City Council, Council-employee relationship, and how City Council meetings are conducted.

The city charter review is nothing new in debating Apopka's form of government; the last review took place in 2014. Commissioner Kyle Becker pointed

out the benefits of having a council-manager form of government. They include the city's ability to hire a skilled professional with organizational skills as the city manager, and that this would be an individual who leads with business principles and full understanding of local, state, and federal laws rather than politics.

"At the end of the day, the mayor instructs all of staff absent of us setting budgets and policies," Becker said. "If we were to go to a proposed form of government where we have a council-city manager,

what that looks like is, obviously the makeup of the Council doesn't change, but we all become equal partners in this policy-making initiative. No one member of the city council has authority greater than the other."

Members of the public commented on the city charter, expressing the desire to see the strong-mayor form change, better language clarity, that voters should be given the opportunity to vote on any charter changes.

Debate for 2 council seats is Tues., January 16

The city of Apopka will hold a general election on Tuesday, March 19, from 7 a.m.-7 p.m., at assigned precincts, for two council seats: Council Seat 3, currently held by Kyle Becker, and Council Seat 4, currently held by Nick Nesta.

Candidates running for Seat 3 are Nadia Anderson and Darryl Richardson to replace Becker, who announced late last

year that he won't seek reelection.

Candidates running for Seat 4 are incumbent Nesta and Eric Mock, challenger.

A debate between participating candidates has been scheduled for Tuesday, January 16, from 6-7:30 p.m., at the Apopka Community Center/VFW Post 10147, 519 S. Central Ave.

For ticket and registration information for the debate, visit sales@apopkachamber.org.

If necessary, there will be a runoff election at a date yet to be determined by the Orange County Supervisor of Election. (OC-SOE) Early voting will be held at the Apopka Community Center/VFW Post 10147, located at 519 S. Central Ave. Voters may also go to the OCSOE office, located at 119 W. Ka-

ley St., Orlando.

If you are not currently a registered voter, the registration books will be open until Monday, February 20, at 5 p.m.

Please note that the OCSOE office will be open from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., on Saturday, February 18, to allow people to come in and register for the first time or to make necessary changes to their information prior to the book close.

NORWF will meet Thurs, Jan. 18, at The Back Room

The Northwest Orange Republican Women Federated will present guest speaker Loren Spivack "The Free Market Warrior" and author, on Thursday, January 18, at The BackRoom Steakhouse, 1418 Rock Springs Road, Apopka.

Loren Spivack is a popular speaker at Republican and conservative events all over the United States. He was the keynote speaker at the Michigan, Illinois, and Minnesota state conventions of Republican Women Federated in autumn 2023.

In the past, he has been the keynote speaker at state Republican Women Federated conventions in Virginia, California, Arizona, and Nevada.

Loren was, along with Kelly Ann Conway, the keynote speaker at the Delaware state Republican Convention in April of 2023. Previously, he has been a keynote speaker at the Idaho and Oregon state Republican Conventions.

He spoke at the Michigan GOP's biannual Mackinac conference in 2023. Always

with a fresh take, Loren examines the issues of our time through the eyes of an economist. And reveals fundamental truths underlying the political challenges we face. He speaks on a very wide variety of topics both narrowly focused (for example "The Path Not Taken: Fixing American Healthcare with Capitalism") and very broad (for example, "Why We Fight: Understanding The Modern Left")

Loren Spivack is an author and writes parodies that teach conservative principles and offer conservative critiques in a humorous way.

So far, he has written six books: "The New Democrat," a parody of the Obama Administration; "The Gorax," an anti-environmentalist parody; "The Wizard of Iz," a parody of the Clintons and the Democrats in general; "To Think That I Saw It on CNN Live," A parody of the media in the Trump era; "Motley Clique," a parody of Critical Race Theory' and identity politics; and "Kamalat," a parody of the Biden Administration.

Loren's seventh book, which parodies public education, will be out early this year.

Spivack founded "Free Market Warrior" in 2009 to make a positive difference in American politics and economics. He conducts economic literacy seminars across the United States. So far, Spivack has delivered his famous seminar on economic literacy to over 200 groups in 20 states. Loren Spivack lives in Massachusetts. He and his wife have six children.

The NORWF lunch meeting will be from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Guests are asked to arrive by 11:15 a.m. to register. Cost of buffet lunch is \$25 with reservation and \$30 at the door without a reservation. There is limited seating so reservations should be made now by Sunday, January 14.

For more information and reservations, contact Marty Harrison at 407-886-1922 or martyaoii@aol.com. Reservations can be made online at www.norwf.org.

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CENTERS THROUGHOUT CENTRAL FLORIDA!

Moore: Quality of place becomes important to everyone’s happiness

Continued from page 2A

there?” Is there vibrancy of street life, café culture, arts, music, and people engaging in healthy outdoor activities? Florida believes we must offer active, exciting, and yes, creative endeavors. While he recommends “street buzz” and “diversity,” he also stands behind residents who want to retreat to the solitude of their home, enjoy a quiet pocket park, or even drive to some nearby rural country-like area. Successful places provide a range of options, claims Florida.

The author quotes from another book, *Cosmopolitan Culture*, which states a great city has two hallmarks: tolerance for strangers and intolerance

for mediocrity. These are precisely the qualities which appeal to members of the creative class and are qualities conducive to innovation and the formation of new businesses.

Florida posits that places should be valued for their “authenticity and uniqueness.” This uniqueness derives from historic buildings, established well-kept neighborhoods, distinctive music scenes, and specific cultural attributes. And in our case, our incredible environmental assets, like Rock Springs, Wekiwa Springs, and the Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive provide authenticity for northwest Orange County. What we need is more distinction by neighborhood. On January 20th,

People of Wekiwa Springs and I are cleaning up the Bent Oak right-of-way making way for a Clay Springs Elementary School “Art Garden.” My Thompson/Votaw area now has a beautiful mural and gathering place. These types of activities can and should be expanded all over.

Here is a new concept for me: Florida recommends creating “scenes.” Scenes are defined as places where experiences are created and enjoyed. Places are effective areas for “sharing, affirming or rejecting feelings, sensibilities, and values.” Florida shares ideas such as film festivals, tattoo parlors, and punk music, local craft stores, farmers markets, community centers, and art

festivals.

Another new concept for me is defined in the book by sociologist Manuel Castells as “identity.” He believes that in our constantly changing, post-modern world, where so many traditional institutions no longer exist, fewer people now ask, “where do you live” and rather “where do you work?”

Castells notes that many of the creative class express an interest in getting involved in their communities. He says this is not because they are do-gooders, but desire to establish their own identity in a place. I have loved designing and erecting pole banners as a reward for community achievements. The people love the ban-

ners as much as I do by curating the project.

The author expresses that, at first, social critics complained the ideas in his book were suggesting cities squander money on useless enterprises. However, with further research, it was discovered that a place is an important contributor to everyone’s happiness and well-being. That’s hardly useless or insignificant. Psychologist Daniel Gilbert in his book *Stumbling on Happiness*, found the three most important decisions we make in life are “where to live, what to do, and whom to do it with.”

The study also indicated that the most highly-valued attributes of a city are not solely basic services or economic opportunities,

but the place’s social and cultural amenities, friendliness, as well as natural and physical beauty. Gallup expanded upon these findings in the Soul of the Community Study. The study found the main qualities which create a memorable and strong sense of place are the social offerings, such as entertainment, places to meet, openness (how welcoming is the community?), and the area’s aesthetics (physical beauty and green spaces).

We have much to be thankful for in District 2. Nevertheless, it is good to strive to be the best. I hope you gathered some fresh ideas from this column and choose to be an active participant in creating a character community.

Byrd: Exposure presents windows of possibilities to every child

Continued from page 2A

ing, their skills lessen and deteriorate. This is why we have to continue to keep kids engaged in reading any way we can.

Second, schedule conferences with your child’s teachers.

If you haven’t met with or had a phone call with your child’s teachers recently, reach out and connect.

The midpoint in the year is a good time to reconnect and discuss prog-

ress as well as goals for the remainder of the year.

Teachers appreciate knowing that parents are partners and sometimes there are things that your child needs help with that can be addressed at home and school that will make your child more successful.

Third, discuss the future with your child.

It’s never too early to start to discuss careers or jobs that are out in the world and to explore the different pathways to those jobs. We discuss this at the

district often: how do we expose children to all the possibilities of career options that are available to them?

Have discussions with your child about what interests them, or if your child expresses an area of interest, research together what it takes to get into that career/job and explore the path.

There are numerous pathways that are available to them in high school that can set a child up for a paying job right after gradua-

tion, explore those options as well. Explore all the Career and Technical Education dual enrollment options at our local schools. Middle school is a great time to start having these discussions.

Finally, go on a field trip with your child.

There are many low-cost places to explore in our area of the state that provide a lot of opportunities for discussion and learning.

For example, the Orlando Science Center is

about to open a new Life exhibit featuring 300 animals and immersive habitats.

Some other ideas are the Central Florida Zoo in Sanford, the Apopka History Museum, the Orange County History Center, the Kennedy Space Center and SeaWorld offer free admission for kids 5 and under.

Remember, every experience you expose your child to is a window you are opening in their minds to the possibility of their future.

One of the biggest obstacles I see in my role on the school board is children who approach graduation with no idea where they want to go next because they have had no exposure to the possibilities.

One of the best things we can do as parents is expose our children to all the world has to offer so they can find the path that fits them best.

My hope for this year is that we can expand the possibilities for all our children!

Hayden: Quality of care shown to our veterans should equal that of illegals

Continued from page 2A

throw a tantrum. Our police, firefighters, and other first responders put their lives on the line to keep us alive, safe and secure in our daily endeavors, and we expect them to do that many times without even a pat on the back, or just a simple thank you.

It reminds me of the treatment of our veterans. Someone said we should cross over into Mexico and come back as an illegal alien. We would receive free health care, free phones, nice rooms

in a huge hotel, money to spend, and on and on. It is not the workers at the VA facilities, it is the administration that has cut funding, and lowered the standards for veterans’ care.

A friend of mine was supposed to have a liver scan last month, but because the VA has pigeon-holed his request for a new motorized wheelchair, he had no way to get there. He had to reschedule, and they set up a new date in March.

He does not know why they wanted a liver scan, but if it is something deadly, they may be able to let

his wife know after the autopsy.

Our veterans also have become GI (government issue) and have spent time, lost limbs, and even given their lives so we can live free and breathe the air of Democracy. If the funds given for those illegal aliens would have been directed to our first responders and our veterans, we would experience growth in our first responder numbers and faster service for our vets.

Our military men and women have been trained and conditioned to obey or-

ders instantly without question, i.e., “ours is not to question why, ours is just to do or die,” and then when our military service is finished and we seek assistance for our health needs, we are told our needs are not of concern to those in Washington, D.C., especially the Commander-in-Chief. His administration has more concern for our foreign enemies, the illegal aliens, and the globalization of our government, than for the men and women he has placed in harm’s way.

We are seeing rogue

nations thumb their noses at our military. We have seen our overseas bases decimated by rockets fired by terrorist groups that have no fear of retaliation from our present administration.

We have our US Navy warships being targeted by drones, ships’ crews being taunted by pirates in international waters, and this administration remains relatively silent.

A former administration, (of which this administration is but an extension), experienced a U.S. Navy Gunboat being sur-

rendered to a pirate group to keep “peaceful” talks going. Not only were our sailors humiliated and put in jeopardy, but the United States of America was re-defined as pushovers in the minds of our adversaries.

“The straw that broke the camel’s back” has been implemented. Now, our veterans, who, at one time or another put their lives on the line to keep us free, will have to pay increased copays for care at the VA Hospitals.

Being an illegal alien is looking better all the time!

News: Child trafficking exposed in the movie ‘Sound of Freedom’

Continued from page 2A

ted bribery in exchange for policy decision with a foreign national.” Treason!! Comer reported, “Based on the financial records we have obtained via bank subpoenas, we can now confidently trace at least \$10 million in total from foreign nationals’ and their related companies going to the Biden family, their business associates and their companies.”

It was virtually ignored by Deep State media outlets: Washington Post, New York Times, Politico, CNN, MSNBC, ABC and CBS (*House Finds Biden used over 20 Shell Companies to Hide Money from China, May 12, 2023*).

6. The effects of the movie

“Sound of Freedom” are that child trafficking is now one of the hottest stories in America—it no longer can be hidden.

The vast number who viewed it was large enough to break the sound barrier. As evidence the New York Times, Los Angeles Times and Hollywood Reporter declined to cover it but still box office sales reached 18.2 million surpassing “Indiana Jones.” Hiding such evil is unconscionable but worse, who supports a society selling its children to satisfy adult perverse sexual appetites? Let us name a few: Disneyland, Hollywood, Deep State news outlets, most social media outlets, and finally, even the Biden Administration. Opposition

to the film “Sound of Freedom” by these is obvious and universal but where is the opposition to the hideous practice of pedophilia it documented. By their actions they still mostly defend the practice (*Movie Broke Sound Barrier on Pedophilia so WHO is Selling God’s Children?, July 21, 2023*).

7. The four-year-long 306-page Durham Report identified the “real colluders” in the Trump/Russian Collusion Hoax that these colluded to define Trump as a Russian agent therefore unelectable. Turns out, it was created and financed by Hillary Clinton, directed and implemented by the then, president and vice president, Barack Obama and Joe Biden. The

main stream media, and the deep state were accomplices in amplifying the fake narrative. The FBI and DOJ served as soldiers in its implementation and cover-up. Before the 2020 election, it was a coup to keep Trump from being elected, after his election, to remove him from power—a coup to overthrow the newly elected government.—treason (*The First Coup to Overthrow an Elected President was 2016—NOT—2020, May 26, 2023*).

**Deep states: an alleged secret network of especially nonelected government officials and sometimes private entities (as in the financial services and defense industries) operating extralegally to influence and enact government policy.*

ALL ABOUT APOPKA

The Apopka Chief

Established 1923
(USPS 545-440)

The Apopka Chief is published every Friday and entered as Periodicals, postage paid at Apopka Post Office, under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879. The Apopka Chief newspaper is published by Foliage Enterprises, Inc., every Friday at 400 North Park Avenue, Apopka, Fla., 32712-3417. An annual subscription is \$25 in Orange County and \$30 outside Orange County. Phone 407-886-2777. Postmaster: Send address changes to The Apopka Chief, P.O. Box 880, Apopka, Fla., 32704-0880.

The Apopka Chief is a consistent award-winning community weekly newspaper and a member of the Florida Press Association. The newspaper won the group’s award as its best newspaper in 1982, 1987, and 1988, the only three-time winner. Letters to the editor are welcome, but must be signed and include a daytime telephone number, address, or email address for verification. Management reserves the right to edit letters.

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Tucker: 'Apopka is a great city, but we face many challenges.'

Continued from page 1A

the decision to withdraw from the upcoming election for Apopka City Council Seat 3. Upcoming changes in my career, a healthy work/life balance and a strong desire to pour into our local church at a greater rate all led to this decision.

"We cannot begin to adequately thank everyone who has been in our corner from day one and offered their love, support and encouragement. You all will never fully know and understand what that meant to us.

"Apopka is a great city,

but we are facing many challenges. Leadership is always rooted first in humility. I encourage all sitting, and future, leaders of our city, to navigate their positions humbly, always putting the interests of their community first. Good luck to those running on March 19th and I encourage all of Apopka to get out and vote and make your voice heard."

Tucker leaving the race leaves now Nadia Anderson and Darryl Richardson as Seat 3 candidates. Commissioner Kyle Becker, who is currently in Seat 3, announced late last year

that he won't seek re-election.

The Apopka City Council Seat 4 candidates are incumbent Nick Nesta and challenger Eric Mock.

The Apopka Area Chamber of Commerce will host the debate for Seat 3 and Seat 4 races on Tuesday, January 16, 6-7:30 pm. at the VFW Building/ Apopka City Center, 519 S. Central Ave., Apopka.

Election Day for Apopka City Council Seat 3 and Seat 4 March 19.

The Apopka Chief reached out to Tucker for further comment.

Tell them you saw it in The Apopka Chief

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THE COLOR PURPLE (PG-13)
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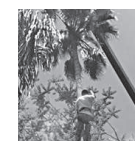
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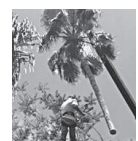
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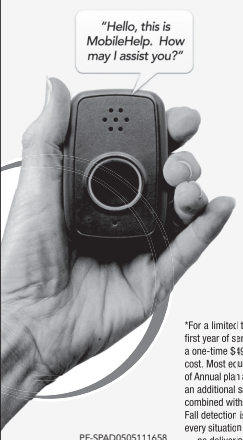
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A brand-new Habitat for Humanity Seminole-Apopka home was dedicated on Wednesday, January 3, in Apopka, to new owner LaTonya Riley (c) with her son Cameran Barnes (r). Among many in attendance were Orange County Mayor Jerry Demings (l).

Habitat dedicates new home to family

A brand-new Habitat for Humanity Seminole-Apopka home was dedicated on Wednesday, January 3, new owner LaTonya Riley and her son Cameran Barnes were cheered on by family and friends, Habitat volunteers and staff, community CEOs who had worked on the home, Orange County Mayor Jerry Demings, and Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) Superintendent Maria Vasquez.

Riley works for OCPS as a bus monitor and was touched by the turnout.

“This is one of the best ways to get our New Year started here at Habitat for Humanity as we welcome LaTonya and her son home to their new place in Apopka,” said Habitat for

See HOME Page 10A

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A Dream, A Movement, An Inspiration to the World Martin Luther King Jr.

'I Have a Dream' By *The Rev. MARTIN LUTHER KING Jr.*, August 28, 1963

I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of captivity.

But one hundred years later, we must face the tragic fact that the Negro is still not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languishing in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. So we have come here today to dramatize an appalling condition.

In a sense we have

come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men would be guaranteed the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check which has come back marked "insufficient funds." But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. So we have come to cash this check – a check that will give us, upon demand, the riches of freedom and the security of justice. We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now. This is no time

to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to open the doors of opportunity to all of God's children. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood.

It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment and to underestimate the determination of the Negro. This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. Nineteen sixty-three is not an end, but a beginning. Those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. There will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation un-

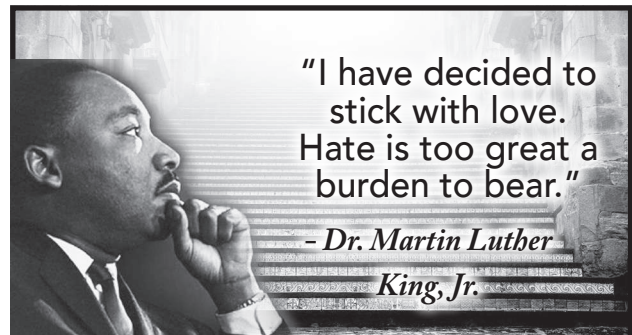
til the bright day of justice emerges.

But there is something that I must say to my people who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice. In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred.

We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force. The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny and their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone.

And as we walk, we

Continued on page 8A



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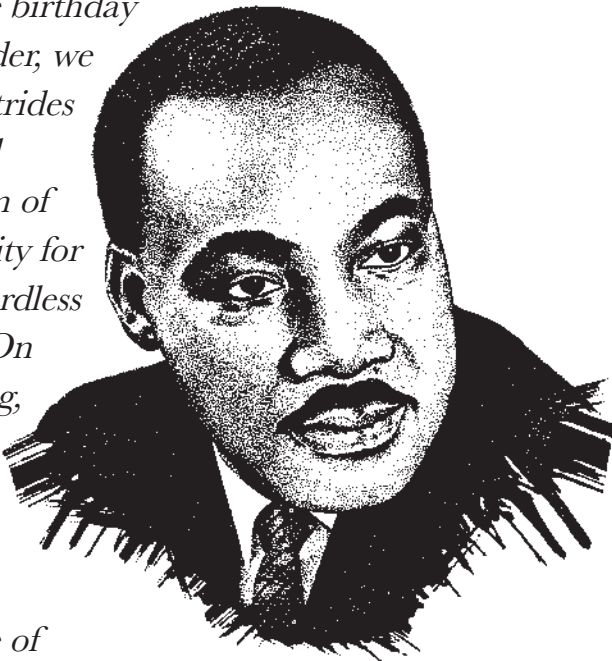
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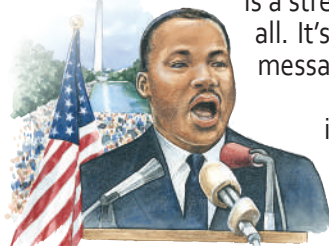
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Let this day be an inspiration to do something in our community that helps others and changes our society for the better.

The Apopka Chief & The Planter Newspapers

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A Dream, A Movement, An Inspiration to the World Martin Luther King Jr.

Continued from page 7A

must make the pledge that we shall march ahead. We cannot turn back. There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, "When will

you be satisfied?" We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satis-

fied as long as the Negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow cells. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive.

Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed. Let us not wallow in the valley of despair.

I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frus-

trations of the moment, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that, one day, this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that, one day, on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at a table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that, one day, even the state of Mississippi, a desert state, sweltering with the heat of injustice and oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today. I have a dream that, one day, the state of Alabama, whose governor's lips are presently dripping with the words of interposition and nullification, will be transformed into a situation where little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls and

walk together as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today. I have a dream that, one day, every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

This is our hope. This is the faith with which I return to the South. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with a new meaning, "My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring."

And if America is to be a great nation this must become true. So

let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania!

Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado!

Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California!

But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia!

Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee!

Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring.

And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"

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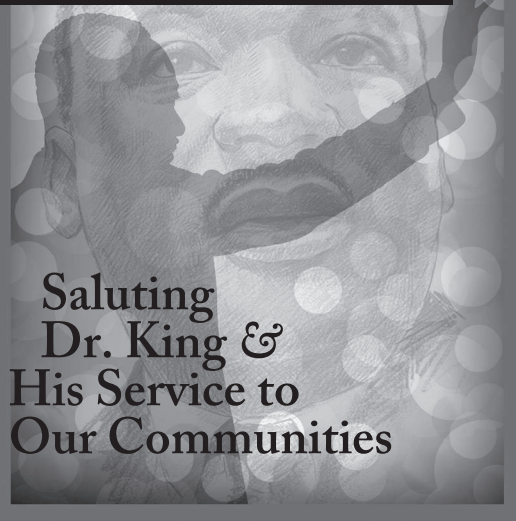
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A Dream, A Movement An Inspiration To The World

As we remember Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his contributions to our country, we are both humbled and inspired by his vision, courage, commitment and hard work. Together, let's honor and uphold his message of equal opportunity and service to our communities in our thoughts, our words and our actions.

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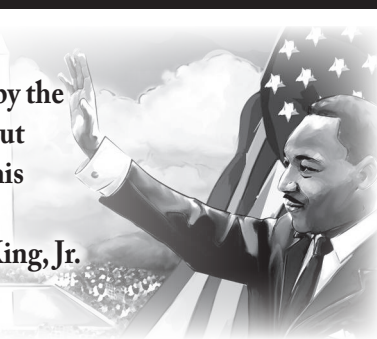
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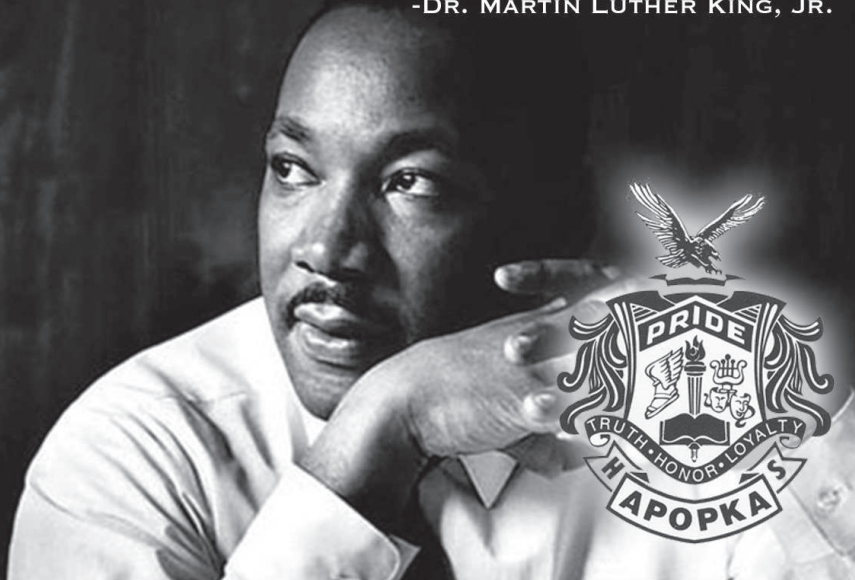
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2023: City attorney resigns, residents petition recall of mayor, OCPS opens sixth adult education campus

Continued from page 1A

of the Philadelphia Eagles. ... Michael Rodriguez tendered his resignation as city attorney following a contentious battle with the Apopka City Council over how he performed his job. ... The Apopka Mayor's Prayer Breakfast started the day at the Apopka Community Center/VFW Building on South Central Avenue on Thursday, May 4, to coincide with National Day of Prayer. ... A motorcyclist died at the hospital as a result of a vehicular collision with a garbage truck.

Per Florida Statutes 100.361, the petition to recall Mayor Bryan Nelson must bear 1,762 signatures – 5 percent of the city's total registered voters of 35,243 – and is due in the city clerk's office at Apopka City Hall on Friday, May 19, said Susan Bone, city clerk. ... With family, friends and elected officials in attendance, three new police officers took their oath of office on Monday, May 8, in the council chamber of Apopka City Hall. ... A 36-year-old Apopka man riding a bicycle was instantly killed when a pickup truck collided with him, according to Florida Highway Patrol (FHP).

Local business owners are launching a beautification program in downtown Apopka with an anticipated start date of June 3 and will involve mural painting in select locations ... AdventHealth Central Florida opened its sixth infusion center at its Apopka location, which will start serving its new patients next week with multiple services including blood and blood product transfusions, cancer-related injections and chemotherapy. ... Apopka police and Orange County are investigating the death of a woman whose body was discovered behind a dumpster at the Wekiva Riverwalk Plaza in Apopka, according to a Tuesday, May 16, press release from the APD. ... Last month, teams from the Apopka High School (AHS) robotics program competed in the VEX Robotics World Championships in Dallas, Texas. ... The U.S. Department of Transportation Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) on Tuesday, May 16, presented a \$3.1 million check to Lake Apopka Natural Gas District at its Win-

ter Garden offices as part of the Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization Grant Program (NGDISM).

The petition for Apopka Mayor Bryan Nelson's recall has failed to get enough signatures to move the recall forward, collecting 1,692 signatures instead of the required 1,762. ... The question of hiring a new city attorney came up at the Wednesday, May 17, Apopka City Council meeting in light of revisiting a resolution to a 195-unit affordable housing development, as its developer alleged that the city staff voted on the project without recording the staff meeting and therefore violating Sunshine state laws. ... The Apopka High School Class of 2023, which included 751 seniors, graduated on Tuesday, May 22. The commencement ceremony was held at the Amway Center in downtown Orlando. ... Around 250 people attended the third annual Apopka's Emancipation Day held at Alonzo Williams Park on Saturday, May 20, a day when, in 1865, all the enslaved in Florida learned they were free. ... The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) will hold a public meeting regarding project plans on North Orange Blossom Trail (U.S. 441) from Wadsworth Road to the Lake County line on Tuesday, May 30, at 5:30 p.m.

June

At least 14 businesses and 45 youths are participating in the Apopka Youth Works (AYW) Summer Youth Program, which kicked off this week. ... The city of Apopka and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 10147 held a Memorial Day service on Monday, May 29, at the Edgewood/Greenwood Cemetery. ... The Wekiva High School Class of 2023 holds its commencement ceremony on Tuesday, May 30, at the University of Central Florida's Addition Financial Arena in Orlando. ... An elderly Apopka woman with disabilities who had been missing for nearly three weeks was recovered in good health on Monday, May 29, in Orlando, according to police.

The Apopka City Council voted 2-2 that the developer of Southwick Commons, the 192-unit apartment complex proposed for construction at

the Apopka City Center, sticks to what city staff calls the industry standard for balcony size, which staff says must be at least 4-feet deep by 6-feet of exterior outdoor space. ... A ribbon cutting celebrated the more than \$3-million finished rehabilitation of a one-mile stretch on U.S. 441 from CR-437A/Central Avenue to Bradshaw Road in Apopka, meant to improve safety along the corridor and to extend the existing roadway's life. ... Apopka Juneteenth Freedom Day will include the first annual parade and fourth annual celebration, both of which will take place on Saturday, June 17. ... Artists painted several murals in downtown Apopka on Saturday June 3, as part of a community-wide effort to usher in more visual beauty and vitality to the area.

Nearly 10 years presented many hurdles including property acquisition and COVID. However, that didn't stop Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) from achieving its end goal: the opening of its sixth, \$1.5-million Orange Technical College (OTC) campus that will provide adult education and more in the Apopka area. ... City administrator Edward Bass died on Saturday, June 10, at age 50 from complications related to mouth cancer. Visitation and funeral arrangements have been made. ... If the city goes ahead with an election to ask voters about mass annexing unincorporated South Apopka, the city could hold a vote-by-mail election for an estimated \$12,080 or the vote-in-person option for about \$9,300, according to Orange County Supervisor of Elections Bill Cowles. ... So far, the city of Apopka interviewed two candidates for the city attorney position with another interview lined up this week. ... On Friday, June 9, citizens and community leaders gathered at the Linda Chapin Theatre inside the Orange County Convention Center to hear Orange County Mayor Jerry L. Demings' 2023 State of the County address.

Although Michael Rodriguez submitted his resignation as city attorney last month, the city will still cut him a weekly check until July 7 when his resignation goes into effect ... On Tuesday, June 20, the city of Apopka's Parks and Rec-

reation Department hosted a ribbon cutting to celebrate the renovations to the Fran Carlton Center including new flooring, lighting, updated kitchen and bathrooms, and new furniture. ... A nonprofit organization awarded scholarships to six middle school students in a ceremony that was held at the Billie Dean Community Center in Apopka on June 3. ... Apopkan Nathaniel Plummer, 13, will be in Washington, D.C., July 9-11 for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) 2023 Children's Congress, joining more than 160 other youths from across the nation to meet face-to-face with member of Congress and top decision makers in the U.S. government about Type 1 diabetes. ... Veterans, including those from VFW Post 10147 located in Apopka participated in the annual flag retirement ceremony held on Thursday, June 14, in Reiter Park, Longwood.

A Tallahassee attorney hired by the city of Apopka to determine whom the City Charter gives the legal authority to hire or fire the city attorney and city clerk has opined that those actions are determined by separate decisions by both the mayor as one entity and the City Council as a separate entity. ... In his update from the Florida Legislature's 2023 session that ended on May 8, state Rep. Doug Bankson told the Apopka City Council that the state budget has more than \$10 million in funding for capital projects in the Apopka area, the majority of it for water improvement and flooding issues with Lake Apopka restoration and regional aquifer recharge improvements that will also aid in flooding on the east side of Apopka. ... A proposed car wash again met opposition at a meeting of the city's Development Review Committee (DRC) on Wednesday, June 28, while an apartment complex that has been controversial and ended up in court sailed through DRC and appears to be on its way to construction in the next few months. ... Behind-the-scenes paperwork continues in downtown Apopka, where the four owners of Propagate Social House plan to open up a food hall where a longtime pet feed store stood for decades.

MLK: Parade will resume honorary program at the Bridges Center

Continued from page 1A

nonprofit organizations, churches, dignitaries, and more.

Six high school bands will perform in this year's parade: Oak Ridge, Evans, Ocoee, Jones, Wekiva, and Apopka. As well, two other bands will perform: Drumlines of America and Young Blacks in Action.

The after-parade program will take place at the Bridges Community Center, where youth will perform and free food will be offered.

The parade's grand marshals are as follows: community is Daryl Schofield, owner of Unity Funeral home in Apopka; for education, Bobbie L. McKenzie, who taught for over 45 years in the public-

school system and still works with children, and Angela Griffin-Simmons, teacher for Orange County Public Schools; and youth is Delia Miller, mural painter who created many within the community including those at Alonzo Williams Park and on Thompson Road.

Johnny Simmons, an Apopka resident now attending Morehouse College in Georgia and former parade grand marshal, has returned to assist organizing the parade. He has returned back every year to do this since moving away for college, Morris said.

For entrant applications or more information, call Monique Morris at 407-702-4223.

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Home: Eight CEOs volunteered to build house on Habitat World Build Day

Continued from page 6A

Humanity Seminole-Apopka CEO Penny Seater. “LaTonya is very hard-working ... and has a hard time making ends meet. She’s excited about being able to purchase this house and create more stability for her son, who has been instrumental in helping her with her sweat equity hours. Every Habitat family must put in a minimum of 200 sweat equity hours.”

Mayor Demings presented LaTonya with the ceremonial key to her new home, expressing his pleasure at Orange County’s partnership with Habitat.

“Today, we were lucky enough to be able to put the Riley family into a new home by donating surplus land to make this project a reality,” Mayor Demings said. “In addition, we provided some funding through our Housing for All Trust Fund and we will continue to do that to put families in homes here in Orange County.”

Riley is an Apopka native, the mother of three adult children and Apopka High School senior Cameran, the grandmother of four, and a cancer survivor. Her life changed in 2016, when her mother passed away and grief engulfed her. Not quite a year

later, she was diagnosed with breast cancer and had to quit her job at McDonald’s.

Thanks to family, friends, and the faith she had to support her, Riley fought the battle bravely. In remission from that cancer, she was then diagnosed with another form of the disease in 2020 and had to have major surgery.

Still fighting cancer, wanting to work, desiring something better for her life, and tired of her state of mind, Riley decided to focus on rebuilding her credit. That was spring 2022, when she also began working for OCPS. She learned about the Habitat Financial Academy from a friend and longtime Habitat homeowner, and enrolled in the course. Riley’s determination and new knowledge bore fruit, and her score now nears 800. That friend also encouraged her to apply to become a future homebuyer and the rest is history.

At the home dedication, Riley expressed her feelings of gratitude to all who supported her journey, and about the support and love she’s had from her son Cameran throughout the months.

“This is a dream come true. I

would like to thank Habitat for giving me the opportunity to go forth in the program,” Riley said. “You have an amazing program and I thank you for teaching me so much. I’d like to thank the CEOs for their volunteer work on my house. Even when I felt like giving up, you guys encouraged me to keep fighting and never give up. I’m proud of myself, and I’m proud of Cameran, who is ready to move. He never once said he didn’t want to go [and help on a job site].”

Learning that Cameran wants to become a firefighter after graduating from Apopka High School, Mayor Demings was thrilled.

“I told him I’m going to help him become a firefighter. I’ve got my ‘first dibs’ for him to become an Orange County firefighter,” Mayor Demings told the crowd.

Riley’s home was Habitat’s CEO Build home on Habitat World Build Day on October 2, 2023, to which eight corporate CEOs donated their time, talent, and treasure. Orlando Credit Union CEO participated in the build and came out today to cheer on Riley.

“I wouldn’t miss this for the world,” she said.

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SUDOKU ANSWERS
PUZZLE CAN BE
FOUND ON PAGE 4B

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Puzzle Solution

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The Crossword Puzzle is found on page 4B

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Obituaries

JANE MARTIN VAUGHAN, 92, Zellwood Station, passed away on December 27, 2023. Jane was born on November 11, 1931 in Louisville, Kentucky, to parents Charles and Ruth Martin. She is predeceased by her sister (Nancy Jo Martin) and survived by her son Jack Humphrey (wife Deb), granddaughter Lesley Novoa (husband Lito), great-granddaughter Alyssa Novoa, and many dear friends (Diane and Leslie, Jean, Pauline and Bill).

...



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Jane Martin Vaughan

Jane Martin Vaughan, Zellwood Station, passed away on December 27, 2023, peacefully with her family by her side. Jane moved up to Zellwood Station after living many years in Ft. Lauderdale, where she retired from Rinker Materials.

She was born November 11, 1931 in Louisville, Kentucky, to parents Charles and Ruth Martin. Jane was a graduate of the University of Kentucky; an avid University of Kentucky basketball fan and of course liked horses.

She enjoyed playing many different card games and family time.

She is predeceased by her sister (Nancy Jo Martin) and survived by her son Jack Humphrey (wife Deb), grand-daughter Lesley Novoa (husband Lito), great-granddaughter



Alyssa Novoa, and many dear friends (Diane and Leslie, Jean, Pauline and Bill).

Interment will be at Cave Hill Cemetery in Kentucky. Jane did not want a formal service, but a luncheon at Zellwood Station will be forthcoming so friends and family can share stories and memories.

Where Are You Going?

Someone recently remarked, in jest, that he was going to Hell after telling a joke that was a bit indelicate, even if it wasn't exactly blasphemous. His remark got me thinking about the ultimate destination of our souls, and what we ought to think and profess about that. There are some who say we should profess a high degree of certainty about going to heaven, perhaps in the hope that believing it strongly enough might make it true, or perhaps just in the hope that we can raise the bar a bit on our morals by professing that we are future saints. St. Paul tells us that we are saved by faith rather than by works, but he is quick to add that we shouldn't boast.

(Romans 3: 26-27) Who is so sure of their own faith, after all? Isn't it God's job to examine our hearts and decide whether we are going to heaven or not, and isn't the more humble approach to say that we just don't know, and should not presume to decide for God? It certainly isn't obvious that any of us deserves eternal bliss, or that our professions of faith will grant us instant entry into heaven. Since all have sinned and fallen short, perhaps the more honest and humble approach would be to say that we just don't know where we're going, but that we certainly hope we're going to heaven.

– Christopher Simon



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Matthew 5:16

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(See message above.)

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Williams: City of Apopka named a park in his honor

Continued from page 1A

a wonderful, protective big brother.”

On the family’s behalf, Alonzo Williams Jr.’s son Alonzo Williams III posted a statement on his father’s Facebook page: “It is with sadness and joy that I share with you the loss of my dad Alonzo Williams Jr. who transitioned on January 9. I’m asking that my Facebook family and friends lift his wife Betty, his brother Robert Williams, and myself up in love and light. The joy comes knowing that he is no longer suffering with the physical pains and issues of life and

has now entered into the Masters care. I take joy in knowing that for the past two and half years I was able to take care of him. There were good times and bad times, but as the song goes, ‘I Won’t Complain.’ Dad, you will be missed!

“Rest in eternal peace.”

On February 5, 2020, Mayor Bryan Nelson issued a proclamation declaring that date as Alonzo Williams Day. He presented the document to Williams himself at the Apopka City Council meeting the same day. This was in line with how, back then, the park at M A Board street and Hawthorne was named Alonzo

Williams Park in the former commissioner’s honor.

“I was sorry to hear about Alonzo Williams’ passing,” Nelson said in a statement. “As the first African-American Commissioner elected to the Apopka City Council, Alonzo was a trailblazer. He was very active in our community and will be sorely missed.”

Community leader Monique Morris said she was “shocked” upon learning about Williams’ death.

“It was a shock because I know he was such a healthy person and a fighter,” Morris said in an interview. “We have lost a great

man.”

Born in Clarcona on December 19, 1938, Alonzo Williams Jr. attended Orange County public schools and graduated from Phyllis Wheatley Senior High School in 1958. He worked for several businesses in Apopka before establishing businesses of his own, which included proprietorship of two local restaurants.

Williams served as a deacon at the New Hope Missionary Baptist Church for approximately 40 years. He worked with the Apopka Progressive Senior Citizens Club for many years and served as the club’s

business manager for several of those years.

Williams was living in Albany, Georgia, for a few years at the time of his death. He is survived by his family including his wife Betty Hayes Williams, son

Alonzo Williams II, and brother Dr. Robert Williams.

The city confirmed that it plans to honor Williams. The city is waiting for Williams’ final arrangements to be made first.

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Station: Building may wrap in one year

Continued from page 1A

working through in the contingency,” Apopka Fire Chief Sean Wylam told the Council.

At the meeting, Wylam said construction would finish in under a year once

groundbreaking takes place. He said the groundbreaking would take place within two weeks of January 3.

The city is looking to move the temporary Fire Station 6 to a semi-permanent location because

Advent Health Apopka is ahead of schedule in its \$26.3 million expansion.

The city is exploring different options for where to move the temporary fire station, and is prioritizing response times as where to move the fire station, Wyl-

am said.

The permanent Fire Station 6 will go up on the northeast corner of Harmon Road and Ocoee-Apopka Road, within vicinity of AdventHealth Apopka at the S.R. 414/S.R. 429 interchange.



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