

Donation

Loaves & Fishes receives a donation from the Apopka Police Department. See page 6A.



Sports



WHS Boys' Basketball hold Senior Night See page 1B.

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Volume 102 Number 5

Friday, February 2, 2024 / 50 cents



A memorial service was held for the late former Apopka City Commissioner Alonzo Williams Jr., who died on January 9 at age 85 in Albany, Ga., at the Apopka Community Center/VFW Building, on Saturday, January 27. From Friday, January 26, to Sunday, January 28, flags such as this one in front of the VFW Building (pictured), were flown at half-staff throughout the city.

Proclamation read for Alonzo Williams Jr. at memorial service

Editor's note: The following is the proclamation that Mayor Bryan Nelson read in remembrance of late former Apopka City Commissioner Alonzo Williams Jr. at his memorial service on Saturday, January 27, held at the Apopka Community Center/VFW Building in Apopka. The mayor will read the same proclamation

at the Wednesday, February 7, City Council meeting.

WHEREAS, Commissioner Alonzo Williams, Jr. was born December 19, 1938, to the late Mr. and Mrs. Alonzo Williams, Sr. in Clarcona, Florida; and

WHEREAS, Alonzo at-

tended the public schools of Orange County and graduated from Phyllis Wheatley Senior High School in 1958; and

WHEREAS, Alonzo worked for several businesses in Apopka before establishing businesses of his

See WILLIAMS Page 12A

City Council candidates engage in second forum

The four City Council candidates discussed a wide scope of community topics including the homelessness crisis in the area, elected officials having to report assets worth more than \$1,000, and the city-owned Camp Wewa at the Apopka City Council Candidate Forum for Seats 3 and 4.

Organized by the Apopka Informed Voters group, the forum took place on Thursday, January 25 at Victory Church on Park Avenue in Apopka.

Campaigning for City Council Seat 3 are Darryl Richardson and Nadia Anderson. Commissioner Kyle Becker, who currently occupies Seat 3, announced late last year that he won't run for re-election.

Running for City Council Seat 4 are incumbent Nick Nesta, who is seeking his second term, and challenger Eric Mock.

Hank Dunn of the Apopka Informed Voters was the debate moderator.

The City Council election for Seat 3 and Seat 4 is Tuesday, March



Anderson ... Seat 3 candidate



Richardson ... Seat 3 candidate



Nesta ... Seat 4 incumbent



Mock ... Seat 4 candidate

19. The last day to request a vote by mail ballot is Thursday, March 7. Presidential preference primary and municipal elections both are Tuesday, March 19. Early voting starts Monday, March 4 and ends

Sunday, March 17 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. View the full debate online at fb.watch/pX-maBMAoRA/ on the The Apopka Chief's Facebook page.

Talks continue about homeless resource center

By Teresa Sargeant Apopka Chief Staff

At the first meeting of the year, the Next Step Foundation reminded attendees that it's still seeking land to build the Apopka Resource Center (ARC) to assist the homeless in getting back on their feet, as well as discussing legislation passing through the Florida Legislature that would create green spaces for the unsheltered to stay by permit.

The Next Step Foundation held its ARC community meeting on Tuesday, January 30, at the First Presby-

See HOMELESS Page 10A



This file photo shows that one of the three properties the Next Step Foundation is considering to acquire for building the Apopka Resource Center is this city-owned vacant land located at 207 E. Eighth St. Apopka.

City to hold two special meetings this month

This month, the city of Apopka will hold two separate special meetings, one for the Kelly Park Interchange form-based code, and the other one for the city charter review.

The Apopka City Council and the Apopka Planning Commission will host a joint workshop about the Kelly Park Interchange form-based code on Tuesday, February 13, beginning at 6:15 p.m., in the Apop-

See MEETINGS Page 3A

Festival to coincide with historic trail opening

The East Lake Historical Society's 10th annual Heritage Festival will be held at Rock Springs Run State Reserve this year to coincide with the official launch of the Historic Ethel Trail on Saturday, March 9.

The combined free event will include exhibitors with displays from local organizations and crafters, children's activities, historical memorabilia, as well as food and music.

The Historic Ethel Trail will be officially opened with a VIP-studded ribbon cutting ceremony followed by guided walks along the 1.5-mile wheelchair-accessible loop and tram rides for the mobility

impaired.

"We are delighted to partner with the Wekiva Wilderness Trust in launching this exciting historic trail as part of our 10th annual Heritage Festival activities," said Maureen Miller, president of the East Lake Historical Society, in a news release.

The Historic Ethel Trail winds through the heart of what was once a sprawling post-Civil War township at Rock Springs Run State Reserve with a station, store, post office, cemetery, and one-room school. Twelve interpretive panels along the way de-


See TRAIL Page 8A



Photo courtesy of Wekiva Wilderness Trust

The East Lake Historical Society's 10th annual Heritage Festival will be held at Rock Springs Run State Reserve this year to coincide with the official launch of the Historic Ethel Trail on Saturday, March 9. Pictured is the Finley Click homestead cabin at Ethel built around 1890.

This week Section A Opinion..... 2A Bus. Review ..... 5,8A Chief Jr. .... 7A Worship ..... 9A Kapers .....11A Dining & Ent..... 12A Section B Sports ..... 1B Legal ads ..... 6-11B Classified..... 12-14B Service Dir. .... 14B Find Public Notices Online at: TheApopkaChief.com/public-notices OR FloridaPublicNotices.com





Apopka Event of the Week

Saturday Sounds concert is Sat., Feb. 3 with The Porchdogs and Street Performers, at the amphitheater, Northwest Recreation Complex, 3710 Jason Dwell-e-y Parkway. The Porchdogs specialize in accordion-driven Louisiana Cajun and Zydeco as well as New Orleans R&B classics. There will also be Street Performers giving interactive specialty acts

Quotable

Though they are theoretically safe in America, they must live the rest of their lives knowing they have targets on their backs.

Guest columnist on protection needed for residents of U.S.

Opinion

The Apopka Chief  
A weekly newspaper founded in 1923

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Our position

Hong Kong's transnational repression threatens human rights in America

Michael Cunningham,

Research Fellow, China, The Heritage Foundation's Asian Studies Center.

Key Takeaways: On Dec. 14, the Hong Kong government announced HK\$1 million bounties against five human rights activists, including... Joey Siu, a U.S. citizen.

More must be done to ensure activists are protected not only in word but also in deed.

America must awaken to this threat and act now to safeguard both U.S. sovereignty and the rights of everyone who lives in this country.

Last month, two Washington, D.C., residents awoke to the news that an authoritarian government halfway across the world had slapped a bounty on their heads. Sadly, their experience is not unique. It represents an increasingly widespread phenomenon that threatens human rights here in the United States.

On Dec. 14, the Hong Kong government announced HK\$1 million bounties against five human rights activists, including Frances Hui, who received political asylum in the U.S. in 2022, and Joey Siu, a U.S. citizen. They joined eight others, including U.S.-based Anna Kwok and Dennis Kwok (no relation), who had the same action taken against them in July. Their crime? "Collusion with foreign countries or external elements to endanger national security." In layman's terms, they advocated for democracy and human rights in their native city and asked the U.S. and other foreign governments to do the same.

The Hong Kong government's long-arm repression should worry Americans of all stripes. Not only does it threaten the constitutional rights guaranteed to people on U.S. soil, but Siu's targeting shows that even U.S. citizens aren't safe. This is especially concerning given Hong Kong Chief Executive John

Lee Ka-chiu's pledge to "pursue [the targeted activists] for the rest of our lives even if they run to the ends of the earth."

Hong Kong used to be a bastion of freedom. Even after the UK handed the city back over to China in 1997, mainland Chinese dissidents would flock to Hong Kong, and Beijing usually left them alone, in deference to Hong Kong's autonomy under the "one country, two systems" framework agreed to before the handover.

What Taiwan's Election Tells Us About China and 2024

Everything changed in 2020 when, after a year of unrest sparked by the government's callous response to pro-democracy protests, Beijing imposed a draconian National Security Law (NSL) on the city, which banned a broad range of political speech. Many freedom-loving people have since fled Hong, but even now they aren't truly free. The NSL is extraterritorial, meaning it applies to activities conducted anywhere in the world, as the experiences of these 13 activists show.

The "crimes" for which they stand accused aren't illegal in the countries where they operate, nor were they considered unlawful in Hong Kong until 2020. Nevertheless, if the Hong Kong authorities ever get their hands on them, these individuals face possible life imprisonment or even prosecution in mainland China, where the outcome could be even worse. Though they are theoretically safe in America, they must live the rest of their lives knowing they have targets on their backs.

The State department condemned the bounties and reiterated that "Hong Kong authorities have no jurisdiction within United States borders, where the advocates for democracy and freedom will continue to enjoy their constitutionally guaranteed

See HONG Page 4A



Gun violence problem is addressed

In response to the growing concern regarding gun violence within our community, Orange County Mayor Jerry L. Demings has taken a proactive step by reconvening the Orange County Citizens Safety Task Force. This task force, initially established in 2020, engages faith-based leaders and community organizations to collaboratively address the issue of gun violence and violent crime.

The task force's recommendations underwent a thorough re-examination in 2021, incorporating essential modifications to ensure they continue meeting

County Commissioner  
District 2



Christine Moore

the evolving public safety needs of our community. Central to these recommendations is the crucial role played by the Orange County Citizens' Commission for Children (CCC).

The CCC has been charged with investing in programs falling under the umbrella of "Positive Youth

Development." These programs aim to connect our youth with caring adults, providing life skills, leadership training, arts, technology, educational enrichment activities, community service projects, employment opportunities, and academic support. In essence, these initiatives offer mentorship, conflict resolution skill-building, life skills training, jobs, and job skill training, contributing to the overall success of our youth.

The CCC has fulfilled the task force recommendations by focusing on

See MOORE Page 4A

Parent academies have different formats

As many people know, Orange County Public Schools is the eighth-largest school district in the entire country. As such, there are many working parts that create the environment in which our diverse student population can learn.

The school district has many different departments that work together to address the needs of the schools, students, and families. One of the biggest parts of helping our kids learn is helping families by supporting parents.

One of the ways that OCPS supports our families is through the OCPS Parent Academies. Our OCPS Parent Academies are offered in many different formats and offer parents and caregivers valu-

Orange County School  
Board, District 7



Melissa Byrd

able information on varying topics that help families navigate daily issues.

As stated on the webpage, "The OCPS Parent Academy is committed to making a sustainable impact on student success, parenting and advocacy and personal growth/wellness. Our goal is to empower, engage and educate families and caregivers by providing high-quality training sessions, resources

and access to skills and services."

I'm particularly proud of this initiative of the district because we all know that parenting is hard. There are so many issues that arise in our children's education, and we don't always know the best way to advocate for our children. These academies are meant to bridge that gap and give parents the tools they need to help their children through any obstacle or topic.

Parent academies are offered in many different formats, including in-person district-wide workshops, regional workshops, virtual trainings, and lunch-and-learn short Facebook

See BYRD Page 4A

This Week In God's Word

"The Lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love."  
Psalm 33:5

Mema Says

Just because it's a kind or sweet thing to do, doesn't mean it's the will of God for you.

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Parents have responsibility of teaching respect to their children

The lack of respect we see in so many people today is overwhelming. I have thought about why we see adult men wearing hats in places where it used to be taboo. In churches today, we see kids (adults too!) on cell phones, children running out of, or into a building, and not holding the door for the person behind. There are so many examples of disrespect. I could fill the entire article up and still need more space.

What in the world is



Ike Hayden

going on? How did this mode of lack of respect get so far out of hand?

I remember as a child my parents taught me social graces, and when I refused to exemplify those

graces, I faced a chastening of proportional value. A more defiant refusal made for a more serious chastening, and my dad did not use any of the chastening of today. He had a razor strop that had two or three layers of leather and a handle at the end. His belt filled in if we happened to be away from the house and I needed a "reminder" of the lack of respect I had exhibited. It seems all our fathers were of the same mind when it came to teaching respect. My friends

and I used terms like, "sir, ma'am, please, thank you, you're welcome," and many more that showed politeness and respect. If we were wearing a hat, we would take it off when entering a home, restaurant, or any place of business.

All of us were recipients of the same education. We did not have to tell each other to do those things; our parents all used the same rule book when it came to raising children to respect others, especially our elders. Those that were

more prone to disrespect were those whose fathers were absent when it came to chastisement. Either the father was no longer present, or he did not appear to care enough about his child to prepare them for a life of working around, or with others.

We knew kids like that, and although we played together, we tried not to go to public places with them for fear that someone might think their disrespect would be the way of all of us.

As I grew older, I found the social graces I had learned paid off in great returns. When I entered the Navy, I did not have to learn "sir, ma'am," or any other term of respect because it was a natural response to authority. It was all because of the corrections made by my mom and dad while teaching me right from wrong.

One thing I see today that is completely ignored is proper teaching about

See HAYDEN Page 4A



# State documents and personal expression are different things, and is explained by bill sponsor

By David Beasley  
The Center Square

Florida driver's licenses and other state government documents would have to list a person's gender at birth under a bill pending in the House of Representatives.

House Bill 1639 was sponsored by Republican Rep. Doug Bankson, who helped found and is a pastor with his wife at Victory Church in Apopka.

The legislation would also require insurance companies that cover sex transitioning surgery to also cover detransitioning surgery.

"I call it the Compassion and Clarity Act," the legislator told The Center Square.

The requirement of birth gender on government documents has an important medical aspect, the legislator said.

"For first responders, if the patient is unable to speak, it's important to know what the underlying sexual framework is of their body," Bankson said. "If you don't know that sex at birth was female, if there are ovaries and a possible pregnancy, that could be a major issue. Seconds count when it comes to medical."

The purpose of state documents such as driver's licenses is not personal expression, Bankson said.

"Personal expression is just that, it is everyone's personal right," he said. "But this is a government document. So, I believe it is important to have a standard that is based on a scientific fact of our sex at birth."

The American Civil Liberties Union, however, has condemned the bill.

"The anti-trans bill, HB1639, seeks to deny the

legal existence of transgender individuals by requiring that individuals provide their sex assigned at birth instead of their gender on their driver's license and government identification cards," Kara Gross, legislative director and senior policy counsel at the ACLU of Florida, said in a statement. "This repressive legislature is not only trying to censor the very existence of trans individuals, it is one bill away from threatening their very existence by forcing them to choose be-

tween their gender identity or criminalization, simply for not conforming to the rigid gender classifications imposed by the majority in the legislature."

Bankson denies that the legislation is anti-trans.

"I actually have genuine compassion for people dealing with gender dysphoria," he said. "I think it is a difficult path and no one knows but the person who has walked it. I think we need to have human dignity and respect of one another. I don't hate anyone."

## Meetings: Charter review is 2nd this year

Continued from page 1A

ka City Hall council chamber. The workshop will follow the Planning Commission meeting, scheduled the same day at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall.

On Thursday, February 15, the City Council will

have its second charter review meeting of the year, 5-7 p.m. in the Apopka City Hall council chamber. The City Council will review and discuss the city charter.

View the city of Apopka (apopka.gov) agenda page to learn more about both meetings.

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thru  
Sun., February 4, 2024

**KID: THE SUPER MARIO BROS. MOVIE** (PG) 11:00A-1:00; 3:20; 4:20; 7:00; 8:00;10:10  
**THE CHOSEN: SEASON 4 EPISODES 1-3** (NR) 12:20; 3:30; 7:40  
**MEAN GIRLS** (PG-13) 12:30; 3:40; 6:50; 9:40  
**THE BEEKEEPER** (R) 12:40; 4:30; 7:20; 10:00  
**MIGRATION** (PG) 1:10-; 1:20-; 4:00; 6:40  
**WONKA** (PG) 12:50; 4:10; 7:10; 9:50  
**POOR THINGS** (R) 9:30

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## Hong: Words and deeds needed

*Continued from page 2A*

freedoms and rights.” Statements such as this are helpful, but more must be done to ensure activists are protected not only in word but also in deed.

In 2022, I wrote about Operation Sky Net, a Chinese government program under which its security services conduct unsanctioned operations abroad to harass and intimidate wanted persons to return to China and face prosecution. Under this program, Chinese police pressure their targets’ relatives in China, employ local thugs to harass targets abroad, and even enter the U.S. and other countries on tourist visas, where they illegally intimidate their targets into returning to China.

Fortunately, Hong Kong law enforcement have not yet emulated their mainland counterparts’ extreme disregard for other countries’ sovereignty. But it’s likely only a matter of time before either mainland Chinese or Hong Kong authorities use these tactics in their efforts to repatriate Hong Kongers in the U.S.

Hong Kong has already begun applying pressure on family members and associates of some activists on its bounty list. Furthermore, in May a Boston man was charged with giving Chinese government officials information regarding activists, including participants in pro-Hong Kong democracy protests that Frances Hui organized back in 2019. Hui also faced stalking and death threats at the time, harassment that went unpunished. **Don’t Hand China a Victory in the Pacific**

In December testimony to the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party, Anna Kwok described what it’s like to live in the U.S. while being wanted in Hong Kong. “Even though I [am] in the Land of the Free,”

she said, “I [am] not free; I [am] trapped in the constant mental pressure of being hunted.” Kwok’s testimony further explained the chilling effect such transnational repression has, not only on the targeted individuals, but on entire communities, where free expression is stifled by the fear of suffering similar consequences.

Washington must use all the diplomatic and legislative tools at its disposal to clamp down on these repressive acts by Hong Kong, China, and other hostile foreign forces inside the United States. Such activities violate America’s sovereignty and the rights which the U.S. Constitution guarantees to everyone in this country.

Congress should pass legislation requiring the State Department to report on cases of transnational repression on American soil, create a tip line for victims and witnesses, and require U.S. government employees to be trained to recognize and deal with such repressive acts.

More fundamentally, the entire justice system needs training. Police departments and courts at the federal, state, and local levels aren’t prepared to deal with the influx of transnational repression now taking place on U.S. soil. Education is needed to train law enforcement and justice officials and to ensure immigrant communities understand their rights and how to report transnational repression to the authorities.

Hostile foreign forces routinely stifle the constitutional rights of people in America, including U.S. citizens. America must awaken to this threat and act now to safeguard both U.S. sovereignty and the rights of everyone who lives in this country.

This piece originally appeared in RealClear World.

## Moore: Grant monies will be needed

*Continued from page 2A*

three key areas: Juvenile Prevention/Di-version, Mental and Physical Health, and Family Support Services. The CCC has also recommended numerous agencies, two of which are in District 2 - New Journey Youth Center, Inc., and Redeeming Light Community Services, Inc., located in Apopka, to implement these programs effectively.

The commitment of CCC extends further through the utilization of mini-grants, benefiting non-profit organizations that are not currently funded by the county. Notable recipients include 8 Waves Corporation and Man-Up Mentoring, both aiming to reduce youth violence through mentoring and education services.

As of October 2023, approximately 3,163 youth have benefited from these services. The reported performance measures for all agencies highlight the tangible positive impact on our community. Examples include higher GPAs, improved personal safety awareness, and more pro-social behavior.

Looking ahead, the CCC has executed contracts with five Credible Messengers from agencies like Child of this Culture, Inc., and New Image Youth Center, Inc. These messengers will primarily serve youth aged 10-25, residing in areas where the frequency of violent crime is the highest. The goal is to break the cycle of justice system involvement and violence through transformative mentoring.

On a yearly basis, the Orange County Citizens’ Commission for Children solicits proposals from nonprofit agencies in Orange County for program services to be funded. This funding, totaling over \$5.1 million in programs/services in February 2024, is allocated through the Citizens’ Review Panel for Human Services, ensuring transparency and community involvement.

To learn how to access these funds, contact the Orange County Mayor’s Office by emailing CitizensSafety@ocfl.net.

In conclusion, the Citizens’ Safety Task Force, in collaboration with the CCC, is committed to making District 2 a safer and more resilient community.

## Byrd: Parent Academy is at AHS

*Continued from page 2A*

live discussions.

This weekend on Saturday, our own Apopka High School will be hosting the next in-person district-wide Parent Academy titled Championing Your Child: Getting Them What They Need When They Need It. The Academy will run from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and will cover a variety of topics like reading strategies, acceleration and remediation, parent-teacher conferences, handling emotions and conflict, and more.

You can register today by going to [ocps.net](https://ocps.net), clicking on Current Families

then Parent Academies and Trainings. There you will see all the trainings offered including several interesting virtual workshops.

These workshops are on topics like College Disability Services and Accommodations, Parents as Leaders, Building Resilience in Stressful Times, and Rigorous and Advanced Course Options for Middle and High School Students.

All of the academies and workshops are recorded and available to watch on the OCPS Families Channel on YouTube. There, families can also find other helpful videos

like planning for college, multilingual workshops, and my personal favorite: numerous videos on reading with your child at home.

While our primary business is, of course, educating students, that can only happen when children feel supported and come to school ready to learn.

Every child needs an advocate and support system if they are going to be successful.

I’m incredibly proud of our school district for recognizing how important this is and finding a way to give each child this pathway to success.

## Hayden: Discipline is good versus evil

*Continued from page 2A*

what is good and bad. In the Garden of Eden, Satan told Adam and Eve that if they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they would be as gods knowing good and evil.

They already knew good from evil but what they wanted was to *decide* what was good and what was evil. GOD had already told them what was good and what was bad, so their disobedience did not come from ignorance or from curiosity, it came from a desire to oversee their own lives without restrictions.

Is that not what we hear sometimes, “*you can’t tell me what to do!*” Our children have so many options today to control their lives without mom and dad’s interference.

If you do not believe that, how about the deputy that was just arrested for using a belt to chasten his daughter?

When did we parents give up the raising of our children to the state? The sheriff in this case stated he holds his deputies to the highest standard. Does that mean he does not have the

right to discipline his own children?

We are not talking about child abuse, but just a good old lickin’.

The guidebook we used to use had one standard for everyone, and it said in **Proverbs 13:24 He that spares his rod hates his son: but he that loves him chastens him when needed.**

They have taken our guidebook away and have listened to the gurus of tender, caressing, positive, feelings, emotional, role-playing, childcare and correction, and where has that gotten us?

We have a generation of kids today that are completely out of control, are driven completely by emotions, and have not one lick of common sense.

Our high schools are pumping out kids that cannot read their diplomas and think they ought to have a job that pays top dollar so they can afford a new car, the best \$1,000 phone, and time off for beach-time whenever they want.

As far back as I can remember, my parents, and educators taught me that I needed to be thankful for

what I have, and work for what I want.

The guidebook we have thrown away and taken from our educational system is the Bible. Even people that did not claim Christianity used that book as a lesson for living.

How often I have heard people use the Bible verse, “Spare the rod and spoil the child.” They could not tell you where in the Bible it is, but they knew it, and would quote it as a guide for discipline.

The progressives do not want diversity, they desire segregation. They do not want equality, they want equity (they are not the same). They do not want inclusiveness, they want Marxism (a classless society).

Overall, I would say they have willing partners, (the sheriff allowing his deputy to be arrested for trying to teach a lesson by discipline to his own daughter), instructing our kids **they can decide** what is right or wrong, not following the laws and rules set by the parents.

Is that no the very thing that lost the garden of Eden for Adam and Eve?

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Send, bring or email your signed letters of  
approximately 250 words to the Editor,

The Apopka Chief

400 N. Park Ave., Apopka 32712

For info: 407-886-2777

Fax: 407-889-4121

Email: [news@theapopkachief.com](mailto:news@theapopkachief.com)

Submit your letter online at  
[www.theapopkachief.com](http://www.theapopkachief.com)

### 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.

[www.theapopkachief.com](http://www.theapopkachief.com), [news@theapopkachief.com](mailto:news@theapopkachief.com)



#### City of Apopka Telephone Numbers

City Hall 407-703-1700  
Mayor's Office 407-703-1701  
City Administrator 407-703-1649  
City Clerk 407-703-1704  
Community Devel. 407-703-1712  
Code Enforcement 407-703-1738  
Finance Dept. 407-703-1725  
Fire (non-emerg.) 407-703-1756  
Parks and Rec. Dept. 407-703-1741  
Police Chief 407-703-1769  
Police (non-emerg.) 407-703-1771  
Job Line 407-703-1743  
Solid Waste Collect. 407-703-1731  
Street Maintenance 407-703-1731  
Utility Billing 407-703-1727  
Medical, fire emergency 911  
The city of Apopka was chartered in 1882. It is located at 28°30 north latitude and is 150 feet above sea level. Its population is about 48,000 and its total area is more than 30 sq. mi. **www.apopka.net**

#### Orange County Telephone Numbers

Animal Services 407-836-3111  
Auto/Boat Tags 850-617-2000  
Building Dept. 407-836-8550  
County Mayor 407-836-7370  
County Commission 407-836-7350  
County Attorney 407-836-7320  
Clerk of the Court 407-836-2065  
Elections Supervisor 407-836-2070  
Fire/Rescue 407-836-3111  
Solid Waste 407-836-6601  
Garbage Collection 407-703-1731  
Health Dept. 407-836-2600  
Hunting/Fishing Lic 888-347-4356  
Parks and Rec. Dept. 407-836-6200  
Property Appraiser 407-836-5044  
Sheriff Administrative 407-254-7000  
Non-Emerg. Complaint 407-836-4357  
Utilities 407-836-5515  
All other departments 407-836-3111  
Medical, fire emergency 911  
**www.orangecountyfl.net**

#### Other Area Numbers of Note

**U.S. Senators**  
Rick Scott (Rep.) 202-224-5274  
Marco Rubio (Rep.) 407-254-2573  
**U.S. Representative**  
Daniel Webster (Dist. 11) 352-241-9220  
**State Representatives**  
Doug Bankson 407-476-6787  
Carolina Amesty (Dist. 45) unknown  
**State Senators**  
Geraldine Thompson (Dist. 11) 407-297-2045  
**Orange County Commissioner**  
Christine Moore 407-836-7350  
**Orange County Public Schools**  
Pupil assignment 407-317-3233  
Bus routes 407-317-3800  
Superintendent 407-317-3200  
School Board 407-317-3200  
**Miscellaneous**  
The Apopka Chief 407-886-2777  
Museum of the Apopkians 407-703-1707  
Chamber of Commerce 407-886-1441



## Voter registration deadline for upcoming Apopka election is Monday, February 19, 5 p.m.

The city of Apopka will have 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 re-election.

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

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 Com-

munity Center/VFW Post 10147, located at 519 S. Central Ave. Early voting begins March 4 and ends March 17, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. For mail-in ballots, the last day to request one for the March 19 election is March 7.

Voters may also go to the OCSOE office, located at 119 W. Kaley St., Orlando.

If you are *not* a registered voter at this time, the registration books will be open until Tuesday, February 19 at 5 p.m.

Please note that the OCSOE office will be open from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., on Saturday, February 17, 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.

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**Why Did You Close Your Location in Apopka?**

Without Covid testing, there wasn't enough demand to keep the facility open. We have a platform that allows our employees and/or our customers to be able to order our testing services at over 20,000 electronic sites in almost every city in the nation. Employees can easily be scheduled for testing services and complete the test the same day at a facility near their workplace or home.

**Are You Currently Performing COVID Testing?**

Yes, we are currently offering COVID-19 testing services to employers and their employees. These tests can be done virtually, or one of our agents can come on-site to test at an employer's office. Both tests come

with a report should they need clearance to return to work.

**What Other Services are You Currently Offering?**

We offer drug and alcohol screening, physicals, general lab tests, and titer testing. We understand that different companies have different needs and, as such, have customized our services to meet the specific needs of each organization. Our services are sold to Employers for employment screening, Medical Employers for titer testing, and the general public for those who want to order a blood test to monitor cholesterol, or any other screening needed. No need for a doctor's order as our Medical Director has nationwide prescriptive authority.

**At Which Sites Can an Employee Get Tested?**

We have designated testing sites in strategic locations where employees can get tested. We have over 20,000 sites nationwide that allow your employee / applicant to get tested close to their home or workplace. We have over 200 sites in the greater Central Florida area.

**How Can I Order a Service?**

We have made it easy and convenient for employers to order our services. You can place your order online by utilizing our portal or you can call our knowledgeable support staff at 844-573-8378 or support@workplacescreening.com

Again, we appreciate the trust you placed in **Workplace Screening Intelligence** to perform your COVID testing



*Workplace Screening Intelligence is providing drug screens physicals, titer screening, and general health screening. To schedule a drug screening, titer screening for healthcare workers, call 844-573-8378. Pictured above is Phil Dubois, founder, and CEO of Workplace Screening Intelligence.*

and hope you will continue to trust us with your employee screening as well as personal health testing. Let our 30 Years of experience be your peace of mind.

About **Workplace Screening Intelligence**:

Philip Dubois is the founder and CEO of **Workplace Screening Intelligence**. His knowledge represents over 30 years of excellence in service and support to thousands of employers, hospitals, clinics, and other stakeholders in the laboratory testing industry.

He's an expert in the field of drug testing, titer testing, and other lab tests, including all aspects of alcohol testing. His resume includes extensive know-how in the various means of testing as well as federal

and state testing laws, company policy development, and risk remediation.

Dubois is a former chairman and executive board member of the Drug and Alcohol Testing Industry Association, Inc., (DATIA). As chairman of DATIA, a 1,600-member group based in Washington, D.C., he championed the effort for the employer's rights to a safe and drug-free workplace and for safer and drug-free roads. He is a board member of National Drug and Alcohol Screening Association (NDASA), chairman of the Government Affairs Committee, and a member of the Political Action Committee (NDASA PAC).

Advertisement

All public/legal notices printed in **The Apopka Chief** are also loaded to our website: **www.theapopkachief.com** as well as to the state-wide Florida Press Association's website: **www.floridapublicnotices.com**

Both Websites have searchable capabilities.

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# IRS investigates tax crimes, gives tax tips

WASHINGTON – IRS Criminal Investigation (CI) dedicates 70 percent of its time and resources to investigating tax crimes that include questionable refund schemes, return preparer fraud, abusive tax schemes, and more. This tax season, CI is cracking down on schemes that victimize U.S. taxpayers.

“Tax crimes surge during filing season because criminals steal unknow-

ing taxpayers’ information, hack into the servers of CPA firms and tax preparation services and victimize unsuspecting taxpayers with the false promise of huge tax refunds,” said CI Chief Jim Lee in a news release.

In fiscal year 2023 alone, CI initiated 1,409 tax crime investigations and identified \$5.5 billion in tax

See TAX Page 12A

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## APD donates to Loaves & Fishes

On Wednesday, January 10, the Apopka Police Department donated \$2,000 to Loaves and Fishes, a non-profit, non-denomination Christian food pantry that serves nine ZIP codes. “We were blessed to receive the attached check from The Apopka Police Department, which helped us tremendously this holiday season,” said Lory Reeves, Loaves and Fishes director. “Overall, we provided holiday food for 382 families (and) Christmas toys for 982 children!” Pictured (l to r) are Michael McKinley, Apopka police chief; Bryan Nelson, Apopka mayor; Karen Valiente, Loaves & Fishes senior director; and Jerome Miller, Apopka deputy police chief. Loaves and Fishes is located on 206 E. Eighth St., Apopka.

Tell them  
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## Family survey for school is now open, lucky plate is a free snack or prize



### Message from Principal Sarasty:

What does it mean to be a Lovell-Wildcat? There are many answers to that question.

One person may say that it's hard to be a Lovell Wildcat because we push them to do their work and engage in learning every day. Another person may say it's great to be a Lovell Wildcat because people are nice and caring and make learning fun.

We want to know what you think. This month students, parents and teachers will complete a survey about our school.

Please let us know what we are

doing well and the areas we have for improvement. I think being a Wildcat means you are accepted as you are and expected to have the right effort and attitude to set yourself up for success.

I look forward to hearing your feedback on what being a Wildcat means to you.

Family Survey: Lovell families, the OCPS Annual Stakeholder Survey is now open.

We ask that all of our families take a few minutes to complete this survey as soon as possible. Please make sure to select Lovell Elementary for the students who attend our school.

The survey is available in a few different languages including Spanish. To select your language once you click on the survey link you will need to select the dropdown arrow and select your desired language.

Please use the link below to complete the survey or you can also find the link on the OCPS website at OCPS.NET and click on the image title "Tell Us About Your Child's School."

<https://surveys.panoramaed.com/ocps/family/surveys>

We thank you for your support!

### House News

Congratulations Meraki for winning the House Challenge for the month of January!

### Message from Mrs. Denhard, OCPS Food Service Manager:

Starting February 24th on Fridays, we will have a lucky plate. If your child gets a lucky plate they will get a free snack or prize. So please encourage your children to come and enjoy breakfast and lunch with us.

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## STEM Magnet School signup has deadline of February 15

STEM magnet program provides an enhanced curriculum focusing on science, technology, engineering and math knowledge.

Students will cultivate their critical thinking and problem-solving skills to be prepared for higher education and 21st Century.

There is a list of all OCPS magnet programs offered at the elementary, middle and high school level. Students must apply for the magnet program at [www.schoolchoice.ocps.net](http://www.schoolchoice.ocps.net).

If there are more applicants than the number of seats available in a specific program, students are selected through a lottery. The application window is Nov. 1, 2023 – Feb. 15, 2024.

Students who currently reside in Orange County and who will be entering a grade from kindergarten through 10th in the 2024-25 school year may apply for a magnet program seat. Students applying for kindergarten programs must be 5 years old before Sept. 1.

The Office of School Choice Services in Orange County Public Schools works to increase awareness among parents and community members about voluntary public school choice options in Florida. School Choice means providing parents the opportunity to be involved in selecting the school their child will attend.

It also means providing services and assistance to help children receive the instruction that best meets their needs.

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# Trail: Ethel’s rediscovery was by accident

Continued from page 1A

scribe the history of Ethel and what life was like back then.

“Almost nothing was known about Ethel until two headstones were found by accident in a remote pasture,” Don Philpott, president of the Wekiva Wilderness Trust, was quoted as saying in the news release.

Wekiva Wilderness Trust is the volunteer non-

profit group that supports the work of the Wekiva River Basin State Parks that includes Rock Springs.

“That discovery led to a 10-year research project that has unearthed a treasure trove of information about Ethel which flourished between 1870 and 1920, and the 3,000-acre pre-Civil War Delk Plantation, the largest in central Florida, around present-day Kelly Park,” Philpott said.

Guided tours will be conducted twice a month, but visitors can now do the walk themselves with a self-guided brochure available at the trailhead. School groups are also being encouraged to visit to learn more about their local history.

There are plans to reconstruct two homestead cabins, based on a photograph of a one-room cabin built at Ethel in 1888. One

will be a small museum and the other will be furnished – sparsely – as it would have been around that time.

The East Lake Historical Society is a non-profit organization in Sorrento, dedicated to preserving and sharing the rich history of the East Lake community. Since its 2008 establishment, the society has worked to collect, document, and exhibit the area’s history.

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When your trees and lawn are aesthetically pleasing, the value of your home and property can increase substantially. Your home’s exterior and landscaping are the first, and often the only impression others will get. If their first impression is one of poor maintenance and a drab appearance, that’s going to change their view of the rest of your home. As such, keeping your trees maintained will help them to stay healthy, and they’ll be an amazing feature of your landscaping.

Almost all trees benefit from regular maintenance and pruning, though young trees require the most upkeep to grow into a structurally sound and aesthetically desirable shape. Improper tree pruning can easily result in costly or even irreversible damage to your valuable trees and landscape. For this and many other reasons, it makes sense to hire a professional tree service.

“When it comes to your home or business landscape, the importance of preventive maintenance should never be overlooked. Regular pruning ensures that your trees will have the greatest possible growing conditions and can thrive for many years to come. Tree pruning also enhances the appearance of your property and can add to its real estate value. Possibly one of the most important aspects of tree pruning, that is often overlooked, is that



In order to have beautiful and safe trees, proper pruning is necessary and important for a tree’s health. Call Maltby’s Tree Service and Landscaping today at 321-689-5866 to schedule your free residential or commercial evaluation and estimate.

it can minimize the potential for costly storm-related damages,” stated James Maltby, owner and operator of **Maltby’s Tree Service and Landscaping**.

Regular maintenance is key to keeping your trees healthy. Pruning is essential for a dynamic and cohesive landscape. Not only are dead and dying branches removed, but pruning stimulates new growth by enhancing overall sunlight penetration and air circulation. Eliminating weak spots also prevents any existing damage from worsening that could result in lasting damage or an untimely tree death. Pruning also allows you to keep a close eye on your trees’ direction of growth. This, in turn, further promotes their long-term stability, safety, and health.

Trees at risk that need professional service can have:

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- Decay: Soft or crumbling wood or a cavity where the wood is missing can pose a serious hazard
- Branches that are touching or laying on your rooftop
- Low hanging branches that obstruct the street or sidewalk
- Branches that appear diseased or insect infested
- Cracks: Deep splits that extend through the bark into the wood

“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.

**Maltby’s Tree Service and Landscaping** is an established Apop-

ka family business that is fully licensed and insured, including Workers’ Compensation on all employees. For your convenience and peace of mind, a management team member is always on site for all services and property evaluations.

**Maltby’s Tree Service and Landscaping** is reachable 24 hours-a-day for any after-hours emergency service. They can easily assess the condition of your trees and property and then suggest the best course of action to take. And they’ll be happy to quote commercial tree trimming or removal jobs. With over 20 years in business, you can rest assured you’re in good hands with a company that prides itself on a job well done.

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# Obituaries

**EUGENE ALEXANDER MCGUCKIN**, age 84, of Kingston and formerly of Apopka, passed away Sunday, January 21, 2024 at his home surrounded by his family. He was born March 11, 1939 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Survivors include children: Guy McGuckin, Rosie Hill & husband, Donnie Joe, Ginger McGill & husband, Bryan; several grandchildren and great grandchildren. He is preceded in death by his loving wife, Myrtle Lee McGuckin; grandson, Cody Hanks; great-granddaughter, Amanah Adkins; great-grandson, Blazer Beaumia; parents, Eugene & Alice McGuckin; and four brothers.

...

**Mary Lizzie Bridges Beckett**

A Celebration of Life Service for Mary Lizzie Bridges Beckett, age 86, of Apopka, FL, who passed away on Wednesday, January 24, 2024, will be held Saturday February 3, 2024, at 11:00 A. M. at New Hope Missionary Baptist Church, 927 S. Central Blvd., Apopka, FL. Reverend Alexander Smith, Pastor.

Interment will follow in the Edgewood-Greenwood Cemetery, Apopka, FL. Visitation will be held Friday, February 2, 2024, from 5-7 p.m. at New Hope Missionary Baptist Church, Apopka, FL.

Marvin C. Zanders Funeral Home, Inc.  
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**In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.**  
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But those who wait on the Lord Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint. Isaiah 40:31

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## It Can Always Be Worse

On the day that I was receiving the news that this would indeed be my last day of employment, my next-door neighbor was getting the news that she had a brain tumor.

I did not know about her very serious diagnosis until the next day. In fact, I was doing my best to keep my spirits up, calling friends and family, and frankly feeling a bit sorry for myself when I ran into her out front of my house.

When she told me the news, and she was incredibly positive about it, I realized immediately that being out of work is of very little concern in comparison to a serious health issue.

The good news for her was that the tumor is not malignant and

that surgery is an option, and apparently a pretty good option in her case.

Sometimes the news is really bad, and we are told that the tumor is malignant, or that there isn't anything that can be done for us, but even then there is always hope.

Sometimes the hope is simply that they can keep us comfortable in our last days, or that we will have time to spend with family and friends.

But ultimately, the great hope of Christians, and of people of almost every faith, is that a loving God is looking out for us, and waiting to welcome us to our eternal home when our sojourn here on earth is done

- Christopher Simon

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Matthew 5:16

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# Homeless: Bill requires cities to set up spaces for homeless to stay by permit

Continued from page 1A

terian Church of Apopka. An expansion of the First Baptist Church of Apopka's weekly homeless ministry, the Next Step Foundation will leverage resources and helping hands of other churches and the general community to further assist the homeless. Three potential properties are up for consideration, but none of them are immediate, said David Schorejs, Board of Director member for the Next Step Foundation. Schorejs explained all three locations are in an accessible area where the homeless could get to the center.

"All of those three locations are right in an area where our people of need would come to and it would be easy to service them. It's not right in a housing area where people are going to be frustrated, so they could all work, but they're not ready yet. So, we're still in that kind of stuck position." Schorejs reminded meeting attendees that a piece of city-owned vacant land located at 207 E. Eighth Street is still up for consideration to build the ARC. At an ARC meeting last summer, Schorejs said that the NSF must raise \$30,000 to purchase this land. Duke Energy owns a section of the 207 E. Eighth Street tract, therefore if the Next Step Foundation wants to acquire this property, that Duke section must be added on so the land is large enough to build the ARC on. The city is in talks with Duke about this issue, Schorejs said. The second property for consideration is a foreclosed property on Central Avenue at the bus hub. Once the property forecloses, the property reverts to the city for the foundation's use. The last possible property is one located at the Billy Dean Community Garden, located on South Park Avenue at East Ninth Street. In addition, the foundation is trying to pursue properties that aren't owned by the city of Apop-

ka. For these properties, the City Council would have to vote on this matter. The ARC would provide a hub for local government, local businesses, and faith-based organizations to coordinate efforts in helping the needy of the community. The shelter would provide a safe, transitional place for homeless to stay as they move from crisis to stability. **Legislative bill** Martha Are, CEO of Homeless Services Network, discussed a legislation that is passing through the Florida Senate and House of Representatives, which would require municipalities to create green spaces for the unsheltered to stay by permit. Known as Senate Bill 1530 and House Bill 1365, if the legislation becomes law, that might cause what Are called unintentional consequences: the expensive cost to establish such camp sites such as for infrastructure and security while there is no funding, potential lawsuits filed against a city, and some municipalities ending up pushing their problems into other areas. "There are just a lot of potential ramifications of these unintended consequences," Are said. "Just hoping we can maybe slow this down, give us more time to try and work with the sponsors to create, what are some other options for this. I think this is an opportunity for communities

of faith to weigh in." The bill has already passed through the first committee in both the State House and Senate. Each has two more committees to pass through. Are encouraged meeting attendees to tell their representatives about concerns with the unintentional consequences of the bills and therefore that the representatives table the bills until further review of their impact are conducted. As well, Are said she would give attendees additional information to say to representatives. **Other items** The IRS reinstated Next Step Foundation as a non-profit. The which the foundation lost its 501(c)(3) status during COVID because there were changes in the board and some reports weren't getting sent in, Schorejs explained. So far, a local citizen donated \$10,000; and a local church donated \$10,000. Another \$5,000 was donated to provide hardware and software to establish the Homeless Management Information System that would serve as a database of resources provided to clients; and \$200 per month came from a local church. The next NSF community meeting is Tuesday, February 27, at the First Presbyterian Church of Apopka, 500 S. Highland Ave., Apopka.

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# Imagine how delicious a home-roasted chicken would smell

Marvin Woods' Roasted Chicken from *The New Low-Country Cooking*, according to Woods, "is simple to make and is one of my favorite multi-purpose recipes. For basics, I'll pair it up, with or without a sauce, with vegetables and a starch. Then, I'll let the leftovers cool, slice up the chicken, and make sandwiches with it. I'll even dice the leftovers to make chicken salad."



We have Woods' Rutabaga Carrot Mash also from *The New Low-Country Cooking*. Rutabagas are an excellent source of vitamin C, potassium, and phosphorous and have a low glycemic load of 7, according to the USDA.

Marv says, "Rutabagas are believed to be a hybrid of turnips and cabbage and to have originated in Russia only about 250 years ago. They are also known as Swedes or Swedish turnips. They are available year-round, but their peak is in the fall. Rutabagas are frequently coated with wax before they are shipped so they will hold up better. As with other root vegetables, when cooked, the rutabaga has a slightly sweet taste. It pairs beautifully with other vegetables. Look for rutabagas that are smooth, firm, and heavy for their size. And if they are coated with wax, make sure to use a very sharp knife and cut carefully."

Here is another Marvin Woods recipe. This one is for Sweet Potato Fries, and it looks scrump-dilly-icious! He says, "Simple to make, these are a nice change of pace from ordinary French fries. I serve these fries with steak or pork chops, but they work well with most anything that you would ordinarily serve with French fries. Try sprinkling them with Marv Spice (see below) or dunking them in Marv's Hot Sauce or another favorite hot sauce."

Woods says about his Marv Spice (Savory), "I use this spice mixture in my Macaroni and Cheese as well as in fish, chicken, and meat dishes that I feel can use a touch of inspiration." This time, we are using it with Sweet Potato Fries!

Regarding Marv's Hot Sauce, he warns us with a note: "Be aware that we are dealing with fresh carrot juice as the main ingredient for this recipe; it may sour after the 7-day storage period." He adds, "Hot sauce was and still is a favorite condiment throughout Africa and most of the Southern states. Africans use a lot of different types of peppers to spice up their foods when

they cook. They believe that hot sauce has health-giving qualities, such as reducing high blood pressure.

"Here in the States, chile peppers are grown in abundance in the Georgia region, and a lot of the commercial hot sauces on the market today are produced in the South. In Southern homes, hot sauce is frequently used on greens, fried chicken, pork chops, fried shrimp, and shrimp cocktail. It has unlimited uses as a seasoning. It's healthy and it's hot."

Mississippi Mud Cake. Ummm, ummm. We have Southern Living's recipe for this renowned delicacy from *Southern Living All-Time Favorites*.

## ROASTED CHICKEN

*The New Low-Country Cooking*  
by Marvin Woods

**1/2 teaspoon salt**  
**1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper**  
**1 tablespoon paprika**  
**1/2 teaspoon celery salt**  
**1 tablespoon vegetable oil**  
**One 3-pound fryer chicken**  
**2 sprigs fresh thyme, or**  
**3 tablespoons dried**  
**2 sprigs fresh rosemary, or**  
**3 tablespoons dried**  
**2 cloves garlic**

1) Preheat the oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit. 2) Mix the salt, pepper, paprika, and celery salt together. Rub the oil all over the chicken, and then sprinkle the spice mixture over the chicken. Rub the mixture in a little. Take a sprig of rosemary, a sprig of thyme, and a clove of garlic, and insert them between the skin and the meat on one side of the breast. Repeat this procedure on the other side. 3) Place a rack in the bottom of a roasting pan. Set the chicken on its side on the rack, and place in the oven. Bake for 20 minutes. Then turn chicken to its other side and bake for 20 minutes more. Turn it breast side up, and roast another 10 minutes. Then check the breast meat with an instant-read thermometer. Once the breast reaches 155 degrees Fahrenheit, measure the thigh temperature, which must be a least 165 to 170 degrees Fahrenheit. When the chicken is done, remove it from the oven and let it sit for 15 to 20 minutes on a cutting board before carving. This resting period will make it easier to carve the chicken.

## RUTABAGA CARROT MASH

*The New Low-Country Cooking*  
by Marvin Woods

**3 to 4 rutabagas, peeled and coarsely chopped**  
**1 Vidalia onion, cut in half**

**Salt to taste**  
**4 carrots, coarsely chopped**  
**1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter**  
**Freshly ground black pepper to taste**

Place the rutabagas and one of the onion halves in a large saucepan. Add water to cover and salt the water. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium heat. Reduce the heat and simmer until the rutabagas are tender when pierced with the point of a sharp knife, about 35 minutes. Drain.

Meanwhile, place the carrots and remaining onion half in another large saucepan. Add water to cover and salt the water. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium heat. Reduce the heat and simmer until the carrots are tender when pierced with the point of a sharp knife, about 20 minutes. Drain.

Place the rutabagas, carrots, and onions in a food processor fitted with the metal chopping blade, or in a blender. Process just until the mixture is smooth. Add the butter and process to combine. Taste and check the seasoning, adding salt and pepper if needed.

## SWEET POTATO FRIES

*The New Low-Country Cooking*  
by Marvin Woods

**1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg**  
**1/2 teaspoon chili powder**  
**1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper**  
**1/2 teaspoon celery salt**  
**1/4 teaspoon ground coriander**  
**1/4 teaspoon ground cumin**  
**Vegetable oil for deep frying**  
**6 sweet potatoes, cut into julienne strips**

In a small bowl, stir together the nutmeg, chili powder, cayenne, celery salt, coriander, and cumin. In a deep fryer or a large deep skillet, heat the oil over medium-high heat until it registers 375 degrees Fahrenheit on a deep-fat thermometer. Add the sweet potato strips and cook until crispy and golden, 5 to 7 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the cooked sweet potatoes to several layers of paper towels to drain. Sprinkle with the spice mixture.

## MARV SPICE (SAVORY)

*The New Low-Country Cooking*  
by Marvin Woods

**1 tablespoon ground nutmeg**  
**1 tablespoon chili powder**  
**1 tablespoon cayenne pepper**  
**1 tablespoon celery salt**  
**1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper**

In a small bowl, mix all of the ingredients together until combined. Store in an airtight container for up to 6 months.

## MARV's HOT SAUCE

*The New Low-Country Cooking*  
by Marvin Woods

**10 carrots, juiced (about 3 cups juice),**  
**or 3 cups store-bought carrot juice**  
**1/4 cup Dijon-style mustard**  
**1/4 cup honey**  
**3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar**  
**3 to 4 tablespoons Tabasco Sauce**  
**1-1/2 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper**  
**Salt to taste**

Mix all the ingredients together in a noncorrosive bowl. Check for seasoning and add salt if needed. The sauce is ready for use. Store in an airtight glass container and refrigerate for up to 7 days.

## MISSISSIPPI MUD CAKE

Recipe from *Southern Living All-Time Favorites*

**1 cup butter, melted**  
**2 cups sugar**  
**1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa**  
**4 large eggs, lightly beaten**  
**1 teaspoon vanilla extract**  
**1/8 teaspoon salt**  
**1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**  
**1-1/2 cups coarsely chopped pecans, toasted**  
**1 (10.5 ounce) bag miniature marshmallows**  
**Chocolate Frosting**

Whisk together melted butter and next 5 ingredients in a large bowl. Stir in flour and chopped pecans. Pour batter into a greased and floured 15- x 10-inch jelly-roll pan.

Bake at 350 degrees for 20-25 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted into center comes out clean. Remove from oven; top warm cake evenly with marshmallows. Return to oven, and bake 5 more minutes.

Drizzle Chocolate Frosting over warm cake. Cool completely. Makes 15 servings.

Note: Substitute 2 (19.5-ounce) packages brownie mix, prepared according to package directions, for first 7 ingredients, if desired. Stir in chopped pecans. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Proceed with marshmallows and frosting as directed.

## CHOCOLATE FROSTING

Recipe from *Southern Living All-Time Favorites*

**1 (16-ounce) package powdered sugar**  
**1/2 cup butter**  
**1/4 cup milk, softened**  
**1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa**  
Beat all ingredients at medium speed with an electric mixer until smooth. Makes 2 cups.

## FEBRUARY 2024 ★ ★ EVENTS ★ WEEKLY ★ UPCOMING ★ ONGOING ★ ★

**SCHOOL STARTS UP: JANUARY 8, 2024** Traffic patterns changed. Stormy weather comes and goes! Be careful with your umbrellas. And always watch out for those pedestrians... and ducks. DON'T TEXT WHILE DRIVING - Please! YOU WILL PAY A FINE.

Children must be five years old on or before September 1 to start kindergarten. To enter first grade, a child must be six years old on or before September 1 and must have successfully completed kindergarten (Florida Statute 1003.21). Immunizations must be current.

UNLESS CHANGED: School Start Times for Elementary School & K-8: 8 a.m., Middle School: 9:30 a.m., High school: 7:10 a.m.

City of Apopka's Northwest Recreation Complex, 3710 Jason Dwellay Parkway, Apopka 32712, 407-703-1784. On any given weekend, you can see many, many families in attendance at the beautiful complex setting participating in various organized sport programs. Amenities at the complex include: Soccer Fields, Softball Fields, Baseball Fields, Multi-Purpose Fields, Sand Volleyball Courts, Outdoor Basketball Courts, Tennis Courts, **Walking Trail**, Amphitheater, Playground, Concession Stands.

11-mile wildlife drive (complete with directional signs) (opened in 2015) on Lake Apopka shores, by entering from Lust Road off Binion Road, about a mile south of Camp Weva in the Plymouth area, for one-way drive, 10 miles per hour, with possible wildlife spotting stops. **DO NOT FEED THE GATORS - IT MAY CAUSE CLOSING OF THE TRAIL** If you are stopping, drive will take more than 1 hour. Drive runs by canals used in muck-farming days. The one-way drive exits on Jones Road in Zellwood. You will see a freshwater marsh system and wildlife dependent on that type of system. The drive is open on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays and federal holidays and is controlled by the county. Open during daylight hours only (one hour after sunrise and one hour before sunset). Official sunrise and sunset hours can be found online. The road is closed on other days due to ongoing restoration work. The trail is 11 miles long.

**WEKIWA SPRINGS STATE PARK** is a 7,000-acre Florida State Park in Apopka, Florida. It is located 20 minutes north of Orlando, off Interstate 4 at exit 94, near Altamonte Springs and Longwood. The park also contains the head water of the Wekiwa River. Address: 1800 Wekiwa Circle, Apopka 32712, open from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. For information, call 407-884-4311

FRAN CARLTON CENTER OPEN, for seniors - senior activities at Fran Carlton Center. CALL 407-703-1642 FOR INFORMATION .

### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2

**ZUMBA FITNESS CLASS, FRIDAYS** at 9:00 a.m. at 11 N. Forest Ave., at the Fran Carlton Center.. Call 407-703-1642 for information. .

**CENTRAL FL CHRISIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**, 1806 S Bay St., Eustis, has Fellowship Friday meetings. For complete details of all chamber events, visit [cfchristianchamber.com/events-chamber](http://cfchristianchamber.com/events-chamber). Contact: [latrondra@cfchristianchamber.com](mailto:latrondra@cfchristianchamber.com)

### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3

VFW POST 10147 continues to have its fund raising breakfast on the third Saturday of the month on FEBRUARY 17, from 8-10 a.m. at 19 S. Central Avenue. Cost is only \$7.

**MUSEUM OF APOPKANS**, Saturday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 122 E. FIFTH STREET, APOPKA. Managed by Apopka Historical Society. Call 407-703-1624 for info.

**AVIAN RECONDITIONING CENTER**, for birds of prey, 323 Lester Rd., Apopka, hours: 9:30-1:30 p.m., The center is open on Saturdays to the public, weather permitting. Call 407-461-1056 for information.

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5

**FITNESS CLASS, MONDAYS** 9-10 a.m. 11 N. Forest Ave at Fran Carlton Center. Masks not required while exercising, but are when socializing before and after class. Temperature taken on entry. Pre-register. Call 407-703-1642 for info.

**CRAFTS & CHATTER**: 9:30-12 noon. Fran Carlton Center, 11 N Forest Ave.Masks required. Temperature taken. Pre-register. Call 407-703-1642 for info.

**OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS** meets Mondays at 6:30 p.m., Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit, 601 S. Highland Avenue. If you have a problem with food – overeating, anorexia, bulimia – there is a solution for you. For more information, visit [OA.org](http://OA.org) or call Carrie 781-867-1071. .

**TOASTMASTERS**: Forest Lake Church by Zoom. Time: 7 p.m., Open to everyone interested. For information, call 407-761-2943. Club Number: 4899556, District 84, Area D42. Orators of Excellence

### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6

**THE SERTOMA CLUB** meets the first and third Tuesday of each month, beginning at 11:30-noon, at Beef 'O' Brady's in The Back Room, 1410 Rock Springs Rd., Apopka. Interested community members are encouraged to attend and get acquainted. Meetings have resumed on first and third Tuesdays. Masks are encouraged.

**SENIOR CHAIR EXERCISE**, 9-10 a.m., 11 N. Forest Ave. at Fran Carlton Center. Masks not required while exercising, but are when socializing before and after class. Temperature taken on entry. Pre-register. Call 407-703-1642 for info

**ART CLASS**, 9:30-12 noon. Fran Carlton Center, 11 N Forest Ave. Masks required. Temperature taken. Pre-register. Call 407-703-1642 for info.

### WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7

The Altamonte Springs / Apopka VFW POST 10147. is NOW OPEN Wednesday and Saturday Mornings from (TIME CHANGE) 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. for coffee and doughnuts. (other hours by appointment only). 3rd Saturday of the month is VFW's fund-raising breakfast. Also, evenings of Tribute music are planned. Call 407-889-8266, or email [info@vfw-post10147.com](mailto:info@vfw-post10147.com) for information. The VFW Auxiliary has been formed and is active as well. Don't forget to visit its excellent Military Museum.

**ZUMBA FITNESS CLASS**, 9-10 a.m., 11 N. Forest Ave., at the Fran Carlton Center. Masks not required while exercising, but are when socializing before and after class. Temperature taken on entry. Pre-register. Call 407-703-1642 for info..

**SENIOR CHAIR EXERCISE**, 10-11 a.m., Billie Dean Community Center, 225 M.A. Board St., . Masks not required while exercising, but are when socializing before and after class. Temperature taken on entry. Pre-register. Call 407-703-1642 for info

**CITY OF APOPKA DRC** (Development Review Committee) meets every Wednesday at 9 a.m.-10 a.m. (or as long as necessary) at City Hall, 120 E. Main Street, Apopka. Check for the online version.

**BRIDGE CLASS**, 9:30-12 noon. Fran Carlton Center, 11 N Forest Ave. Masks required. Temperatures taken. Pre-register. Call 407-703-1642 for info.

**TOPS CHAPTER #646**. (Take Off Pounds Sensibly). TOPS, a non-profit organization, will help you reach a weight goal with support from friendly, caring members, education, and rewards. Each Thursday weigh-in begins at 9:00 a.m. – meeting ends at

10:15 a.m.. Come to its NEW location 220 W. Horatio Avenue, Maitland, FL 32751 to meet with others who have a like-minded goal to lose weight. No products, no specific diet to follow, no meds. Call 407-580-0897 for more information.

**MUSEUM OF APOPKANS**, Open on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, 12 noon-5 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 122 E Fifth St. 407-703-1642 for info.

**EARLY BIRD BINGO** at Bahia Shrine Center, 3101 E. Semoran Blvd.. Doors open at 5 p.m., and the early bird game starts at 6 p.m. For more information, call 407-660-8811.

**TOASTMASTERS**: still meeting every WEDNESDAY, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m., by zoom. For more information, call 407-765-2629 or visit [www.Apopkatostmasters.com](http://www.Apopkatostmasters.com).

### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8

**SENIOR CHAIR EXERCISE**, 9-10 a.m., 11 N. Forest Ave., at the Fran Carlton Center. Masks not required while exercising, but are when socializing before and after class. Temperature taken on entry. Pre-register. Call 407-703-1642 for info.

**ROTARY CLUB OF APOPKA** - For information, call 407-415-6588. Call for updated information on meetings and location.

**MUSEUM OF APOPKANS**, Open from noon to 5 p.m. on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from 9 a.m.-noon. 120 E Fifth St. Call 407-703-1624 for info.

**ZUMBA FITNESS CLASS**, 9-10 a.m., 11 N. Forest Ave., at the Fran Carlton Center. Masks not required while exercising, but are when socializing before and after class. Temperature taken on entry. Pre-register. Call 407-703-1642 for info.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

City of Apopka election for Seats 3 and 4 of City Commission on Tuesday, March 19, 7 a.m.-7 p.m.

Saturday nights Saturday Sounds at Apopka Amphitheater, 3710 Jason Dewiley Parkway, 5-7 p.m. Free.

VFW Post 10147 has fund raising breakfast Saturday, **February 17, 2024** 8-10 a.m., 519 S. Central Avenue. Cost is \$7.

### ONGOING EVENTS

Florida Railroad Museum, 101 S. Boyd Street, Winter Garden, is open Tuesday-Saturday, 11-3 each week excluding holidays. For info, call 407-656-0559. . Must see.

**CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS** are

public and will also be broadcast on this shortened link: <https://bit.ly/2ABrmsb>, and are normally held the first Wednesday at 1:30 p.m., and third Wednesday at 7 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 120 E. Main St., Apopka. Subject to change with notice. For info., call City Clerk 407-703-1704. Agenda and minutes of meeting can be found online. Once posted, check for any revisions by Tuesday at 5 p.m. before the meeting

**FOLIAGE GARDEN CLUB OF APOPKA**, meets the first Thursday of each month, September through May, at 10 a.m. at the Billy Dean Community Center at Alonzo Williams Park, 225 M.A. Board St., Apopka. Contact: [apopkafgca@gmail.com](mailto:apopkafgca@gmail.com)

**FREE PLANT CLINIC** in Apopka is open on Tuesdays. Do you have problems with your plants or lawn? Let a Master Gardener help. Orange County residents can bring their questions and samples to UF/IFAS Extension Master Gardener volunteers at the UF/IFAS Mid-Florida Research Education Center (MREC), 2725 Binion Road, Apopka, 32703; 9 a.m.-12 Tuesdays; 407-254-9200. Questions and photos to can be emailed to [orangecomgv@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:orangecomgv@ifas.ufl.edu). to be answered by Master Gardeners. A free plant clinic for commercial growers is open Tuesdays 1-4 p.m. at the same location.

**KIWANIS CLUB OF APOPKA** IS now meeting MONTHLY on the 3rd Tuesday at 8 a.m. at Seacoast Bank, 345 E Main Street, Apopka. Contact 407-464-4606 for information

**BROWN BAG LUNCH** - Third Saturday of each month, Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit at the corner of Highland and 6th St., Apopka, from 10 a.m.-12 p.m., offer to all who come a brown bag lunch. In addition, men's socks, flip flops, stuffed animals, some clothing, children's books and pet food which is donated by My Pet World, Apopka, may be available. If interested in volunteering, call Debbie at 407-620-5081 for information.

**APOPKA FOLIAGE TOASTMASTERS' CLUB**, Monday, 7 p.m., on Zoom, Apopka. 407-765-2629.

**NWOC FFA Alumni** – Monthly meetings (usually the 4th Monday evening in a month during the school year) are open to anyone. (Looking for more information)

**MUSEUM OF APOPKANS**, 122 E 5th Street, Hours open: Wednesday to Friday, from noon-5 p.m., and Saturdays from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.. Admission is free. Contains displays and information about Apopka's history, and has history books for sale. Monthly meetings of Apopka Historical Society are normally held on a Sunday

afternoon. For more information, go to [www.theapokkamuseum.com](http://www.theapokkamuseum.com).

**THE APOPKA ELKS LODGE 2422** meets first and third Tuesdays of month, 201 W. Orange. For more information, call 407-886-1600 or email [apopkaelks@aol.com](mailto:apopkaelks@aol.com) Bar Bingo every Monday night at 7 p.m. promptly. **GFWC APOPKA WOMAN'S CLUB**, meets at First United Methodist Church, 201 N. Park Avenue. Call 407-880-2111 for more information.

**CITY OF APOPKA PLANNING & ZONING** - usually the second Tuesday of the month. 5:30 p.m. City Council Chambers, City Hall, 120 E. Main St., Apopka. All meetings open to the public. Subject to change with notice. For info., call David Moon, 407-703-1739.

**BRIDGE GAMES AND CLASSES**: Every Monday and Friday morning at 9:15 a.m., at the Lake County Duplicate Bridge Club, 510 W. Key Ave., Eustis. For more information, call 352-315-9934 or visit [lakeduplicate.com](http://lakeduplicate.com).

**COMPUTER CLASSES** in both English and Spanish: Available daily or weekly at OCLS North Orange Branch.\* Classes are: Computer Basics, Excel, Word Resume Writing, Email for Seniors, ELLIS English Lab, Word, Online Job Searches, Power Point, Internet, Open Lab, How to use a mouse and keyboard, etc. Call OCLS North Orange Branch\* for more details.

**HABITAT VOLUNTEERS**: Go to [www.habitatseminoleapopka.org](http://www.habitatseminoleapopka.org), click on volunteers. There are a number of opportunities available at the Restores. Call 407-896-5855 or 407-880-8881 to sign up for information.

\*\*\*\*\*  
(OCLS) Orange County Public Library North Orange Branch Address: 1211 E. Semoran Boulevard, Apopka 436 (Semoran) and Thompson Road. [www.ocls.info](http://www.ocls.info). To reserve a space, call 407-835-7323. The library is now open again Mon-Sat. 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m., and Sunday afternoons

\*Apopka Area Chamber of Commerce, 180 E. Main St., Apopka. For more info, call 407-886-1441

### COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR INFORMATION

Events, fund raisers, and non-profit organizations Send info: fax 407-889-4121, or email [ads@theapokkachief.com](mailto:ads@theapokkachief.com) Subscribe to The Apopka Chief E-Editon or Home Delivery Call 407-886-2777 or Visit [www.theapokkachief.com](http://www.theapokkachief.com) In County: \$30 with E-editon, or \$25 for just postal delivery. Out-of-County: \$35 with E-Editon or \$30 for postal delivery



## Police conduct High Visibility Enforcement Details until mid-May

The Apopka Police Department is reminding citizens that officers are conducting High Visibility Enforcement Details (HVE) from now until the middle of May along U.S. 441 and east S.R. 436. This area is over-represented in traffic crashes resulting in

serious and fatal injuries to pedestrians and bicyclists, according to a Monday, January 29 press release from the Apopka Police Department.

HVE details are funded through a contract with the University of North Florida in partnership with

the Florida Department of Transportation's focused initiative to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety.

The goal of this enforcement effort is to increase awareness of and compliance with traffic laws that protect the safety of pedestrians and bicy-

clists.

Enforcement efforts will focus primarily on education to drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists. However, violations may result in warnings or citations depending on the circumstances.

According to the press

release, drivers are advised to obey speed limits, never drive impaired, and always watch for pedestrians and bicyclists. Bicyclists are advised to obey traffic laws, ride in the direction of traffic, and use lights when riding at night.

Pedestrians are ad-

vised to cross in crosswalks or at intersections, obey pedestrian signals, make sure pedestrians themselves are visible to drivers when walking at night, and use sidewalks when they are available.

## Williams: He served as commissioner from 1970 until 1994

*Continued from page 1A*

own; and

**WHEREAS**, Alonzo was married to Betty Hayes Williams. To this union came three sons, Alonzo Williams III, Robert Hayes, Jr. (LaTambra) and Tony Hayes; two daughters, Faye Sapp (Ulysses) and Latrecia Hayes-Goodson (Jermaine).

**WHEREAS**, Alonzo served as a deacon at the New Hope Missionary Baptist Church for approximately 40 years; and

**WHEREAS**, he worked with the Apopka Progressive Senior Citizens Club for many years and served as the club's business manager for a number of those years; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1969

Alonzo ran and was elected to the Apopka City Council representing District 1 from 1970 until his retirement in 1994. During his tenure, he was appointed by Mayor John Land to represent Apopka as a member of the Lake Apopka Natural Gas District Board and served concurrently while on the council for 24 years; and

**WHEREAS**, Alonzo Williams achieved the significant milestone of being Apopka's first African-American elected official;

and

**WHEREAS**, the City dedicated Alonzo Williams Park located on M. A. Board Street in Alonzo's honor; and

**WHEREAS**, Commissioner Williams passed away on January 9, 2024. He is survived by his wife, Betty; sons, Alonzo, Robert and Tony; daughters, Faye and Latrecia; brother, Robert; as well as several grandchildren, extended family, and friends; and

**WHEREAS**, we gather today, Saturday, January 27, 2024, at the Apopka Community Center to honor his memory.

**NOW THEREFORE**, I, Bryan Nelson, Mayor of the City of Apopka, Florida, by virtue of the authority vested in me, do hereby recognize Commissioner Alonzo Williams, Jr. and ask all citizens to join me in honoring his memory for his devotion, dedication and contributions to our community.

ATTEST:

/s/ \_\_\_\_\_

Susan Bone, City Clerk

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City to be affixed this 27th day of January 2024.

/s/ \_\_\_\_\_

Bryan Nelson, Mayor

SUDOKU ANSWERS								
PUZZLE CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 2B								
4	7	5	1	3	9	8	2	6
1	8	9	6	5	2	4	7	3
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5	6	3	4	9	1	7	8	2
2	1	8	5	7	6	9	3	4

## Tax: Filing season began January 29

*Continued from page 6A*

fraud. Six hundred fifty-five defendants were sentenced for tax crimes during the last fiscal year.

CI urges U.S. taxpayers to be vigilant this tax season:

\*Avoid return preparers who claim they can obtain larger refunds than other preparers or whose fee is a percentage of your tax refund.

\*Use a reputable tax professional who signs and enters a preparer tax identification number (PTIN)

on your tax return and provides you with a copy of the return for your records.

\*Never sign a blank tax form and ensure your refund goes to your account, not your tax preparer's.

\*Protect your personal and financial information. Don't click links or open attachments in unsolicited emails or text messages about your tax return or those claiming to be from the IRS. These messages are fraudulent and could contain malware that could compromise your personal

information.

\*Report fraud to law enforcement. Submit Form 3949-A, Information Referral, if you suspect an individual or a business is committing fraud.

The 2024 Tax Filing Season began Jan. 29, and the deadline to file, pay any tax owed or request an extension to file for most of the nation is April 15. The deadline for taxpayers in Maine and Massachusetts is April 17.

CI is the law enforcement arm of the IRS, responsible for conducting

financial crime investigations, including tax fraud, narcotics trafficking, money-laundering, public corruption, healthcare fraud, identity theft and more. CI special agents are the only federal law enforcement agents with investigative jurisdiction over violations of the Internal Revenue Code, obtaining a nearly 90 percent federal conviction rate. The agency has 20 field offices located across the U.S. and 12 attached posts abroad.

# Dining AND Entertainment

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**Hours**  
Mon. CLOSED  
Tues, Wed. & Thurs. 11:30AM – 10PM  
Fri. & Sat. 11:30AM – Midnight  
Sun. 11:30AM – 8PM

**Specials This Week**  
Wed. - Music Bingo - cash prizes, sponsored by Rotary  
Thurs. - Date Night Dinners, One Price Packages  
Fri. - Safia Valines 7pm  
Sat. - Johnny and the Moondogs 7pm  
& National Carrot Cake Day. Our "Carrot Cake" BOGO that day only!

**Specials Next Week**  
Tues. - 2-4-1 Appetizers & Bottled Beers & Wine  
Wed. - Karaoke 7pm with Crazy James  
Thurs. - Date Night Dinners, One Price Packages  
Fri. - All Bel. 7-10pm  
Sat. Night - Irish Angel, Misti Posey accompanied by Ennis Pruitt 7-10  
Sun. - Open Mic 3-6 pm. Host Paddy

Check out our Full Menu at [WWW.STEPHIESPUB.COM](http://WWW.STEPHIESPUB.COM)  
1061 W Orange Blossom Trail, Apopka  
407-703-8195

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				S	A	M	A	R	A			B	A	H					
	I	S	O	L	A	T	O	R				H	A	L	O				
	S	T	R	I	D	E	N	T			A	A	H	E	D				
	L	O	T	T	E						C	E	T	E					
R	A	M									M	O	T	S					
I	M	A	M								A	N	S						
B	I	C	U	S	P	I	D				N	I							
		C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	T	R	E	E					
							A	H			Z	W	I	E	B	A	C	K	
								R	M	A					E	R	S	E	
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R	U	G	A	E							A	P	I	A	R	I	E	S	
M	A	A	S								D	E	A	C	O	N	R	Y	
S	L	R									S	I	N	E	W	S			

**The Crossword Puzzle is found on page 2B**

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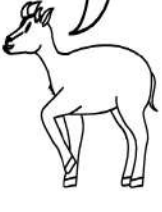
We're making lanterns to hang...




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...and trying some Chinese dishes too.



Kids: color stuff in!



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## 2024 The Year of the Dragon



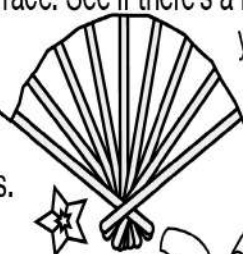
# Chinese New Year Celebration



The Chinese New Year celebration starts this year on Saturday, February 10th and will last 15 days, ending with the Lantern Festival on Saturday, February 24th. The Chinese Calendar has a 12-year cycle with each year represented by an animal. This year is the Year of the Dragon, the most powerful animal. It is said that the people born in each animal's year have some of the characteristics of that animal.

The New Year is a time of family. In many large cities there are lots of fun family events: dinners, parades, concerts, races, zoo visits and fireworks. Vendors sell flowers, fruits, candies and pastries. The U.S. Postal Service has even had a stamp with the design of a dragon on it to celebrate this holiday. Everyone can join in the fun!

Later, during the year, many areas have a Dragon Boat Festival. The boats are long, brightly painted, and shaped like dragons. The crews paddle to a drumbeat to win the race. See if there's a race near you!



Read the clues to fill in the puzzle about the Chinese New Year:

- This year, 2024, is the Year of the \_\_\_\_\_.
- It is to be full of \_\_\_\_\_ – following the quiet Year of the Rabbit.
- The dragon is one of the best known symbols in \_\_\_\_\_.
- It is mostly a symbol of good \_\_\_\_\_.
- The dragon is said to come from the sky – a heavenly, \_\_\_\_\_ creature.
- Dragons are wise and said to visit the Emperor to \_\_\_\_\_ him.
- Chinese dragons have long \_\_\_\_\_, short legs, five toes, sharp teeth and claws.
- Some are pictured with \_\_\_\_\_ and some are not, but they all can fly.
- A dragon dance is part of the \_\_\_\_\_ Festival held on the last day of celebration.
- A team of \_\_\_\_\_ makes up the dragon and controls the head and body.
- The \_\_\_\_\_ the dragon the more luck it will bring.
- \_\_\_\_\_ born in the dragon's year are said to be smart, leaders and risk takers.

Dragon

China

powerful

excitement

guide

dancers

wings

luck

longer

people

bodies


Lantern

## 12 Animals of the Chinese Zodiac

Connect the dots to see what glowing thing people make to hang for...

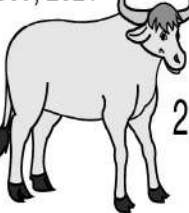
### The Last Day

2008, 2020




1. \_ a \_

2009, 2021




2. O \_

2010, 2022



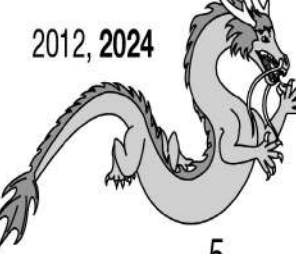
3. \_ i \_ e \_

2011, 2023




4. \_ a \_ i \_

2012, 2024




5. \_ a \_ o \_

2013, 2025



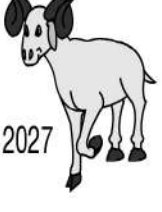
6. \_ a \_ e \_

2014, 2026




7. \_ o \_ \_ e \_

2015, 2027




8. \_ e e \_

2016, 2028




9. \_ o \_ \_ e y

2017, 2029




10. \_ o o \_ \_ e \_

2018, 2020



11. \_ o \_

2019, 2021



12. \_ i \_

In what year were you born?

Hiss! It's my year next year.

The

L \_ nt \_ rn

F \_ st \_ v \_ l

Fill in the vowels to spell the name of the celebration on the last day.

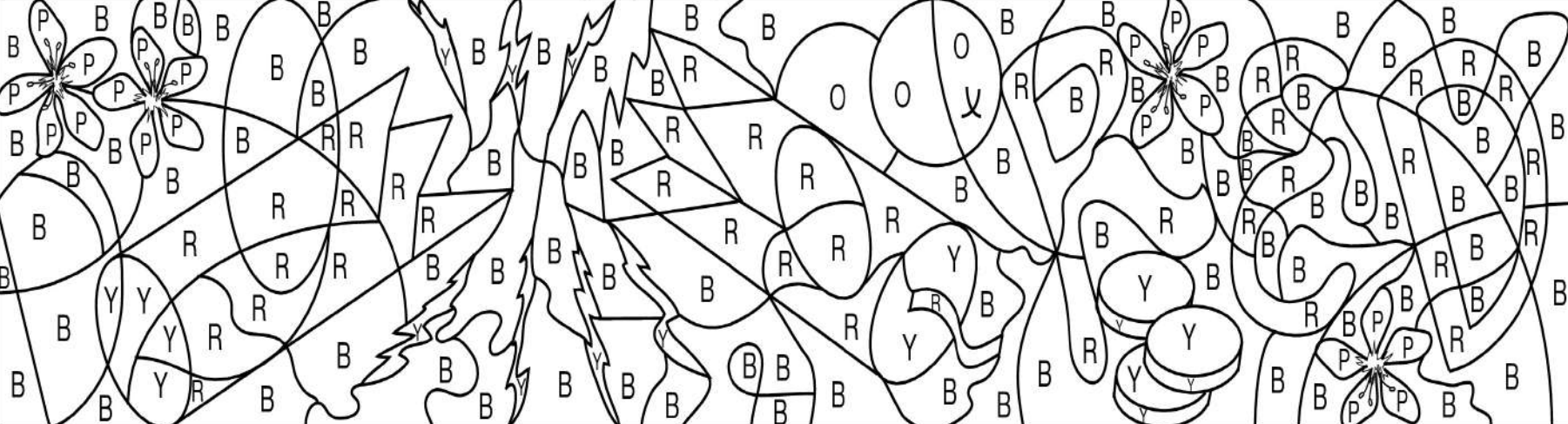
Each animal of the traditional Chinese calendar has qualities that are said to be shared by people born in its year. This year, 2024, is the Year of the Dragon. Dragons are smart and willing to take risks – so are the people born in the Year of the Dragon.

Fill in the blanks above with consonants to spell the names of the 12 animals of the Chinese Calendar.

## A Noisy, Joyful Celebration!

Good luck and good fortune! What noisy item used at the end of the day will drive away bad luck? What color do people decorate with or wear as a sign of joy and good luck? Use the color code to fill in the puzzle:

R = Red Y = Yellow  
P = Pink O = Orange  
B = Blue





## Fla. Museum of Natural History researcher determines effect of light on insects

Gainesville, Fla. ---

At night in the Costa Rican cloud forest, Yash Sondhi and a small team of international scientists switched on a light and waited. Soon, insects big and small descended out of the darkness. Moths with spots like unblinking eyes on each wing. Shiny armored beetles. Flies. Once, even a praying mantis. Each did the same hypnotic, dizzying dance around the bulb as if attached to it with invisible string.

Excitement spread through the group of researchers, even though they'd witnessed this phenomenon throughout their lives. The difference was they now had cutting-edge technology and high-speed cameras — capable of capturing the insects' fast, frenzied orbits — to map the hard-to-track movements of hundreds of insects and tease out secrets surrounding why they act so strange around light at night.

A surprising detail surfaced in the data: In flight, the insects kept their backs facing the artificial light source.

"You watch the videos in slow motion and see it happening again and again," said Sondhi, a postdoctoral researcher at the Florida Museum of Natural History and recent graduate of Florida International University, where he conducted the work. "Maybe when people notice it, like around their porchlights or a

streetlamp, it looks like they are flying straight at it, but that's not the case."

This never-before-documented behavior, published in the journal Nature Communications, provides a new explanation. For millions of years, insects have evolved to become masters of flight by relying on the brightest thing they see — the sky. Today, our lit-up world throws their instincts for a loop. Insects think the imposter "sky" they find is the real one and get trapped in an exhausting cycle trying to stay oriented. It's a futile effort that causes clumsy maneuvers and occasional crashes directly into the light source.

A good grasp of gravity is mandatory for all animals, especially expert flying ones, like insects that perform feats of flight that match or even surpass those of human pilots. When flying, though, they experience such rapid acceleration that their gravity sensing becomes unreliable. Instead, they need the sky, even at night, to discern which way is "up" and cruise along, maintaining control in the air. Easy when the light source is gigantic and spread out. When it's a concentrated bright spot? Not so much.

Sondhi started connecting the dots between insect vision, light and flight when he joined FIU associate professor of biology Jamie Theobald's lab in 2017.

The work really got off the ground, though, when he connected with specialists in the fields of insect flight and sensory systems. Together, they decided to collect and mull over a deluge of 3D flight data to see what, if anything, was revealed. That group included Sondhi and Theobald, as well as Sam Fabian and Huai-Ti Lin from the Imperial College London and Pablo Allen from the Council on International Educational Exchange in Monteverde, Costa Rica.

The research project kicked off at Lin's lab where Fabian works and has a motion capture arena like the kind used in movies — only insect-scale. Little markers were affixed in an L-shape along the backs of several moths and dragonflies, so when they flew around light, they were also collecting data on how they rolled and rotated and moved through three-dimensional space.

"On one of the very first experiments, I let a large yellow underwing moth take off from my hand and fly directly over the UV bulb, and it immediately flipped upside down," he said. "But we didn't know then if the behavior we saw and measured in the lab would also be seen in the wild."

National Geographic funding helped the team travel to Costa Rica — a country rich with diverse insect life — with their cameras to find out. In total, they

collected over 477 videos spanning over 11 insect orders, then used computer vision tools to reconstruct the flight paths in 3D. Together with the motion capture data, the researchers concluded all the species did, in fact, do what the large yellow underwing in the lab did.

"This has been a prehistorical question. In the earliest writings, people were noticing this around fire," Theobald said. "It turns out all our speculations about why it happens have been wrong, so this is definitely the coolest project I've been part of."

Previous theories may not have told the whole story, but this new one throws another issue into even harsher reality: Light is downright disruptive to insects and a conservation concern.

The good news is the team's study suggests light direction matters. The worst type of light is directed upward or emitted from a bare bulb. Shrouding or shielding may be key to offsetting negative impacts to insects.

They're also thinking about light color and whether warm tones have different effects and, of course, the still unexplained mystery surrounding attraction to light — and how it happens in the first place over great distances. That won't be easy, but then again, neither was this question.

"I'd been told before you can't ask why questions like this

one, that there was no point," Sondhi said. "But in being persistent and finding the right people, we came up with an answer none of us really thought of, but that's so important to increasing awareness about how light impacts insect populations and informing changes that can help them out."

Funding for the study was provided in part by the European Research Council (ERC-StG No.804315), the National Science Foundation (NSF IOS-1750833), the Florida International University graduate school, the Susan Levine Foundation, the National Geographic Society (EC-82941R-21), the American Philosophical Society and the Tinker Foundation.

The Florida Museum of Natural History has been inspiring people to value and protect the biological richness and cultural heritage of our diverse world for more than a century. Located on the University of Florida campus, the Florida Museum is home to more than 40 million specimens and artifacts, one of the nation's largest natural history collections. For more Florida Museum research and collections news, visit [www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/science/](http://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/science/) or follow us on social media, @FloridaMuseum.

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