

Voter's Guide

Meet the candidates of the 2024 Apopka City Council. See section C for candidates' questions and answers.



Sports

WHS girls basketball didn't allow Horizon a chance to come back. See page 1B.



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Volume 102 Number 9

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Community honors 29 legends for Black History Month

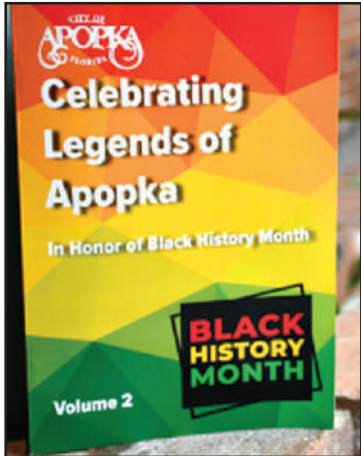
By Teresa Sargeant
Apopka Chief Staff

The city of Apopka honored 29 legends – one individual for each day of this month – who have left a legacy in the community for the city's second annual Black History Month book project and event celebrating the legends.

The Celebrating Legends of Apopka in Honor of Black History Month event took place at the Apopka Community Center/VFW Building on Tuesday, February 27.

Volume 2 of "Celebrating Legends of Apopka in Honor of Black History Month" was compiled by the Apopka Youth Council, the Apopka Museum, and the city of Apopka. Apopka Youth Council members read a biography of each individual at the event while a free book was given to the honoree's family.

"The people who we are honoring tonight, I knew. I grew up with this generation," said Francina Boykin, Apopka Historical Society vice president and local historian. "They were my leaders, they were my guides, and I learned a lot from them. I've taken that with me wherever I have gone, and I continue and I am who I am, I do what I do, and I love what I do. And that is documenting the very rich history of



'Celebrating Legends of Apopka' Vol. 2

this community."

Boykin discussed the history of the Apopka area as dating back to the first half of the 19th century, when the first slaves arrived from Georgia to the area and settled in the Rock Springs area, currently known as Kelly Park. These slaves belonged to Major William Delk, a plantation owner at Rock Springs.

Among the slaves that Delk eventually freed was Anthony Frazier, who became a landowner and Orange County road commissioner. Frazier was one of the Apopka legends honored in 2023. "I urge you to visit our local museum to get involved, and we are accountable to our history,"

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The Celebrating Legends of Apopka in Honor of Black History Month event took place at the Apopka Community Center/VFW Building on Tuesday, February 27. Besides honoring the 2024 legends and their families and a special proclamation, the event included special musical performances by singer Mark Wright-Ahern (pictured above) and the Wekiva High School Varsity Choir.

Club members wear traditional African garments



The Apopka Progressive Senior Citizens Club celebrated Black History Month on Tuesday, February 27, at the John H. Bridges Community Center, 445 W. 13th St., Apopka. The celebration included lunch, a musical performance by club members (left), and vendors. Club members wore traditional African garments to the event. The Progressive Senior Citizens Club boasts over 150 members from all over Central Florida, meets every Tuesday at the Bridges Center for various activities.

Wildlife Drive is back open

The Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive is scheduled to reopen on Friday, March 1. This follows the drive's temporary closure on Saturday and Sunday, February 24 and 25, due to wet conditions and forecasted rain on the night of Friday, February 23. The closure was a precautionary measure to ensure the safety of visitors.

By reopening on March 1, the drive is resuming its regular operating hours from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays.

Nestled in the eastern part of the Lake Apopka North Shore property, the 11-mile one-way drive provides a scenic route from Lust Road to Jones Avenue in Orange County.

Festival marks Wekiva Parkway's completion



Photo courtesy of FDOT

The Florida Department of Transportation held a festival on Saturday, February 24, in Sorrento to commemorate the Wekiva Parkway's completion. The event featured a plaque dedication by government partners and community leaders.

Last weekend, hundreds of people helped celebrate the completion of the Wekiva Parkway – and Central Florida's beltway – at a community festival organized by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).

FDOT held the festival on Saturday, February 24, at the Neighborhood Lakes Trailhead in Sorrento to thank government partners and the community for their contributions to the Wekiva Parkway vision and for their patience during construction.

The event highlighted the Wekiva Parkway's 10-mile trail, with guided nature tours and organized

bike rides. The trail enhances pedestrian and cyclist safety and makes it easier to get to the Lower Wekiva River State Preserve, Rock Springs Run State Reserve, Seminole State Forest, and Wekiva Springs State Park.

The key theme touted by speakers during a ceremony at the event was the environmental stewardship that went into developing the much-needed Wekiva Parkway.

"Wekiva Parkway is a project that has been decades in the making and involved many thought leaders, collaborations with several agencies, and

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This week

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



Apopka Event of the Week

English for Social Interaction is at the North Orange Branch Library, 1211 E. Semoran Blvd., on Tuesday, March 5, and meets from 2-2:45 p.m., in the Meeting Room. You will learn the different meanings of words and phrases and how they are used. Words sometimes mean different things in different cultures.

Quotable

Independents have a vision of America that is based on the values of fairness, inclusion, diversity of opinion, honest debate and pragmatic growth and innovation.

Guest columnist on securing voting rights for Independents

Opinion

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A weekly newspaper founded in 1923

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Our position

Independent Voters must secure voting rights for primary elections

By: Will Conway
Campaign Director, LetUsVote

LetUsVote is launching across the country today, dedicated to organizing independent voters to stand up for their rights. Independent voters are the largest group of voters in America today, but they are treated like second-class citizens. They've been marginalized because they are unorganized. Until now.

- New Report - Independent voters across 22 states challenge the conventional wisdom that they are just partisans in disguise.

- Independent voters are shut out of voting in primary elections across the country -state by state rules.

- Election Administration - partisan by design. Independents cannot even work as poll workers or serve on election boards in almost every state! Our system is designed by partisans for partisans - leaving independents as second-class citizens.

LetUsVote is launching amid record-high registration for independents across the country, even as millions of independents are barred from voting in crucial primary elections. Gallup announced in January that independent identification is tied for an all-time high. LetUsVote is a concerted effort to organize independent voters - into a movement, not a party - for full voting rights and a seat at the political table.

LetUsVote is a campaign of Open Primaries, in partnership with Unite America, The centerpiece of our effort is to motivate millions of independents to sign the #LetUsVote petition against voter suppression in primaries and preventing voter discrimination up and down the ballot in all 50 states. The petition is available at LetUsVote.org/petition.

"Independents want a different political culture" said Will Conway, Campaign Director for LetUsVote. "But millions of them are prevented from voting in taxpayer funded

primary elections across our country, because they don't buy what the two parties are selling. It's been allowed to persist for years because independents haven't built a strong movement. LetUsVote offers community and hope for the record number of independents who feel increasingly pushed aside."

24 states bar independents from voting in presidential primaries altogether, and 15 states deny independents from voting in state and federal primary elections. Meanwhile, state laws across the country prohibit independent voters from serving as poll workers, watchers, inspectors or registrars. They are barred from serving as election judges and on Boards of Elections. They are alternatively ignored or dismissed by politicians, the media and the leadership of both the Democratic and Republican Parties. LetUsVote is dedicated to ending the war on independent voters.

"Independent voters have the numbers, but not the narrative," said John Opdycke, Founder and President of Open Primaries. "Let UsVote is working to change that in a meaningful way. This is not a liberal thing or a conservative thing - it's a 'we don't like how the parties divide and conquer while the problems facing our country go unsolved' thing. Independents have a vision of America that is based on the values of fairness, inclusion, diversity of opinion, honest debate and pragmatic growth and innovation.

We need to unleash the power of independents! The country needs us in a big way."

LetUsVote encourages citizens, organizations and influencers who are passionate about improving our democracy to join the movement. Sign the #LetUsVote petition, share it with your network, and take a stand for the voting rights of registered independents.

For media inquiries, contact: Will Conway. LetUsVote Campaign Director.

Email: will@letusvote.org.
Phone: (418) 319-4253



Walkability is important for growth

I am reading two great books about walkability and new urbanism by Jeff Speck - "Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time" and "Walkable City Rules: 101 Steps to Making Better Places."

While most of my commission seat is located either in a municipality, suburban area, rural settlement, or corridors to blighted urban areas, I still believe the principles shared in these two books can make walkability a reality in our areas. Walking and biking on interesting streetscapes are beneficial for every citizen - a child

County Commissioner
District 2



Christine Moore

walking to school, a senior getting a bit of exercise, or even someone walking to work.

Author Jeff Speck says, "walkability is an end and a means." Walkability is useful as it contributes to urban vitality. Since the mid-century, most American cities have effective-

ly become no-walking zones. Downtowns, according to Speck, have turned into places that are easy to reach, but not worth much once you get there. Outdated building codes, uninviting streetscape, and anti-social building styles have created public spaces that are unsafe, uncomfortable, and just plain boring.

What are his solutions for fixing the unwalkable conditions? Let's explore three of Jeff Speck's 101 ideas and apply them to portions of unincorporated District 2.

Idea 97: Rebuild or re-

See MOORE Page 4A

Career training is important now

Last week, I wrote about the difficulty many students are having obtaining admission to our four-year state universities. As expected, the acceptance rates for the University of Florida confirmed that once again many students did not receive the acceptance they were hoping for last Friday.

UF received over 70,000 applications this year; just three years ago it was 52,000. It's not surprising the application size is going up with the graduation rates in the state steadily increasing every year. More and more kids are graduating high school and want to pursue higher education. Plus, the Florida legislature opened in-state tuition rates to grandchildren

Orange County School
Board, District 7



Melissa Byrd

dren of Florida residents in 2022.

It is becoming more and more important to expose our children to all the various pathways they have to explore other ways to have a successful future other than immediate admission to a four-year university.

Last week, I mentioned the very attractive path that begins at a local state college first and then

transferring to a four-year university as a junior. This option is a great one that allows students to make a slower transition to college life with smaller classes and campuses to navigate.

However, an ever-increasing popular option is the abundance of career and technical programs that are available that students can take while they are in high school that prepare them for a career immediately after graduation or while attending college.

Students who pursue this path have numerous options provided by Orange Technical College (OTC). These classes are offered at the home schools as well as at our five Or-

See BYRD Page 4A

This Week In God's Word

"What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?"
Matthew 16:26

Mema Says

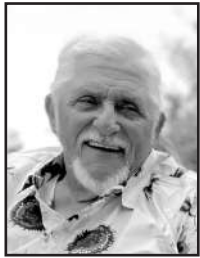
Eating well avoids many an illness.

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Walt Disney's dream was for everyone to relive childhood memories

On Sunday July 17, 1955, in Anaheim, California, Disneyland opened its gates at 2:30 p.m. and Walt Disney himself christened his new 500-acre park with these words. "To all who come to this happy place: welcome. Disneyland is your land. Here age relives fond memories of the past...and here youth may savor the challenge and promise of the future. Disneyland is dedicated to the ideals, the dreams and the hard facts which have created America... with the



Ike Hayden

hope that it will be a source of joy and inspiration to all the world."

Disneyland was one of Walt's greatest dreams come true. He designed it and orchestrated the

construction of the park. Walt wanted a park where adults could relive childhood memories and children could lead the way. Because of the popularity and success of Disneyland, Walt and his brother Roy planned a similar park in Central Florida. In 1965, Walt and Roy announced their plans for a theme park and started purchasing enough property for their new park. Twenty-five square miles, to be exact.

Unfortunately, Walt died two months later, leav-

ing Roy to be the one to set up what he named Disneyworld. If Walt were alive today to see what his family-oriented park has become, he would be flabbergasted.

The deal about Disneyworld being sovereign and setting up its own district (Reedy Creek) was an agreement between Walt Disney and Orange County. Reedy Creek was agreed to because of time saving, costly trips to Orange County for permits to construct and operate different

rides, buildings, and other structures that needed permits. Orange County and Reedy Creek were to co-habit that part of the state together and be in tune with what the state of Florida thought relevant to "family ideals, the dreams and hard facts which have created America," according to Walt's christening statement for Disneyland.

When Disneyworld reared its ugly "woke" ideals and made a huge statement about their involvement with the "woke" gen-

eration, it broke the bond of those ideals and dreams for a family-oriented, joyful place as an inspiration to the entire world. Governor Ron DeSantis stood up for the families of Florida and all those who bring their children to experience the magic of Disneyworld and started the process of bringing Reedy Creek once more under the authority of Orange County and the state of Florida.

Our governor is try-

See HAYDEN Page 4A



The Florida Department of Transportation held a festival to commemorate the Wekiva Parkway's completion. The event featured a tree planting by government partners and community leaders.

Wekiva: Parkway's last section opened on Jan. 27

Continued from page 1A

countless discussions with residents and environmentalists," said Mike Heffinger Jr., FDOT District Five Director of Transportation Operations. "And the result of all of the combined hard work is a sprawling 25-mile roadway that completes Central Florida's beltway, but more importantly honors the natural treasures and wildlife found throughout."

The FDOT developed the \$1.6-billion parkway as a joint venture with the Central Florida Express-

way Authority. Florida's Turnpike Enterprise oversees the toll operations on the FDOT sections. The last section of the 25-mile Wekiva Parkway opened on January 27, making the final connection between State Road (S.R.) 429, S.R. 417, and Interstate 4 (I-4).

The parkway completed what is now a 100-plus-mile beltway around the region, while helping to protect the natural resources along the Wekiva River.

The completion of the

See WEKIVA Page 5A

PHMSA Environmental Review Notice of Availability

In cooperation with the Lake Apopka Natural Gas District, Orange County, Florida, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), has prepared a Tier 2 Environmental Assessment (EA), as required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, for the proposed replacement of approximately 13.13 miles of vintage steel and vintage plastic polyethylene (PE) pipe in multiple areas of the system with modern polyethylene pipe. PHMSA published a Tier 1 Nationwide EA for the Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization Grant Program (NGDISM) on November 9, 2022. The stated purpose of NGDISM is for municipality or community owned utilities to repair, rehabilitate, or replace its natural gas distribution pipeline system or portions thereof or to acquire equipment to (1) reduce incidents and fatalities and (2) avoid economic losses by providing grant opportunities to municipality or community owned utilities. The Tier 1 EA is available at <https://www.phmsa.dot.gov/sites/phmsa.dot.gov/files/2023-07/Tier-1-PHMSA-2022-0123-0001.pdf>. The Tier 2 EA is available for review and comment on the web at <https://www.phmsa.dot.gov/about-phmsa/working-phmsa/grants/pipeline/tier-2-site-specific-environmental-documents> and a copy is available at Lake Apopka Natural Gas District, 1320 Winter Garden Vineland Road, Winter Garden, FL 3478. Please submit all comments to: PHMSABILGrantNEPACOMMENTS@dot.gov and reference NGDISM-FY22-EA-2023-20 in your response. Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act, PHMSA has issued a No Historic Properties Affected finding which is available for review in the Tier 2 EA. Comments on the Tier 2 EA are due by March 11, 2024.



Now Accepting Nominations Foliage Sertoma

SEARCH FOR A SERVICE TO MANKIND HONOREE



For over 100 years, Sertoma Club, nationally, has honored individuals who contribute outstanding, selfless SERVICE TO MANKIND.

Foliage Sertoma Club is keeping this tradition by continuing search for citizens contributing outstanding service to our area.

It's time we publicly recognize the selfless volunteers who donate so much time, talent and treasure to our Apopka Area every year.

Join us by submitting nominations of individuals you know are deserving of this award by **MARCH 22nd** and attending the dinner celebration with all the honorees and the Mayor at the Fran Carlton Center, 6-8pm on April 10th.

WHO CAN NOMINATE: Nominations can be submitted by Civic Groups, Churches, Youth Organizations, Schools, Non-profits. However, you do not have to be a member of an organization to nominate someone for the award or to be nominated for the award.

NOMINATION FORMS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT: FoliageSertoma.org and at The Apopka Chief and The Planter Newspaper office

For more information or to have forms emailed, contact Bev Winesburgh at bwine@earthlink.net or 407-257-1396.

Foliage Sertoma Club of Apopka
PO Box 718, Apopka, FL 32704
FoliageSertoma.org
Contact: Lorena Potter, President • 407-583-7349

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- ★ Vendors
- ★ Food
- ★ Craft Beer, Cider & Wine!



Casey Brents 7 PM - 10 PM



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INTEREST CAR SHOW**
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SUNDAY, MARCH 10
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Byrd: Career Training classes are available on high school campuses

Continued from page 2A

ange Technical campuses throughout Orange County. At Apopka and Wekiwa High Schools, students can dual enroll with OTC, meaning they start their day at their home school and ride the bus to the OTC West, South or Main campus for courses. Dual enrollment programs available include: Building Construction Technology, Carpentry, Electricity, HVAC/Refrigeration, Plumbing and Welding Technology, 3-D Animation Technology, Automotive Collision and Service Technologies, Digital Cinema Production, Digital Media Design, Hotel and Resort Business Management, Modeling Simulation Design, Pharmacy Technician, Medical Assisting and many others.

If you haven't checked recently, these are very well-paid lines of work these days as the trade industries are desperate for new hires. For example, welders can enter the field making \$80,000 a year. Students graduate from these programs with industry certification ready to work in these high-demand fields. Remember: that is without a college education debt to pay back. Students don't even have to leave their high school campus to get these great training courses. OCPS has worked hard to bring back these CTE (Career Technical Education) classes to our high school

campuses because the demand is so high for these programs and the trained workers they produce within our community. Apopka High School offers the following CTE classes on its campus: Agritechology, Animal Science and Services, Horticulture Science and Services, Digital Photography, Digital Video Technology, Accounting Applications, Business Management and Analysis, Early Childhood Education, Applied Robotics, Engineering Pathways, Biomedical Sciences, Fundamental Foodservice Skills, Entrepreneurship, Diesel Systems Technician. Next year, they will be bringing Building Construction Technologies to the campus as well, and

we are very excited for this program to be offered at Apopka High School. Wekiwa High School offers many CTE courses, as well. Those include Agritechology, Animal Science and Services, Agriculture, four different Digital Video Technology classes, various Engineering Pathways courses, several

Culinary Arts and Hospitality and Tourism courses as well as Entrepreneurship. Next year, the school will be adding more Hospitality and Tourism Management courses and additional Entrepreneurship courses. They are also very excited to bring Medical Assisting to the campus which will provide another

great career option for our students. As you can see, the options are vast, so let's encourage our kids to explore the many pathways that are available for a successful future. If you have questions, please reach out to one of the College and Career Counselors that are in every high school.

Moore: Ideas are successful elsewhere

Continued from page 2A

stripe wide roadways. This was completed in 2010 in Lancaster, California, creating a \$282-million impact. They spent only \$11.2 million retrofitting their main street. The effort doubled pedestrian activity, reduced injury crashes by 49 percent, pedestrian crashes by 78 percent and led to 57 new businesses opening. It also provided more than 800 new housing units and created around 2,000 jobs. All I can say is, WOW! What did they do? They restriped the four-lane roadway and created a beautiful on-street parking area in the middle of the road. This could work on Park Avenue in Apopka. Idea 100: Don't give up on sprawl, or retrofitting suburbia. This idea has many potential applications in District 2. The author describes the "monotony of sprawl." That is what our people organizations are endeavoring to eradicate this year through a new contest, "The Most Creative Corridor." Thus far, People of Lockhart are preparing

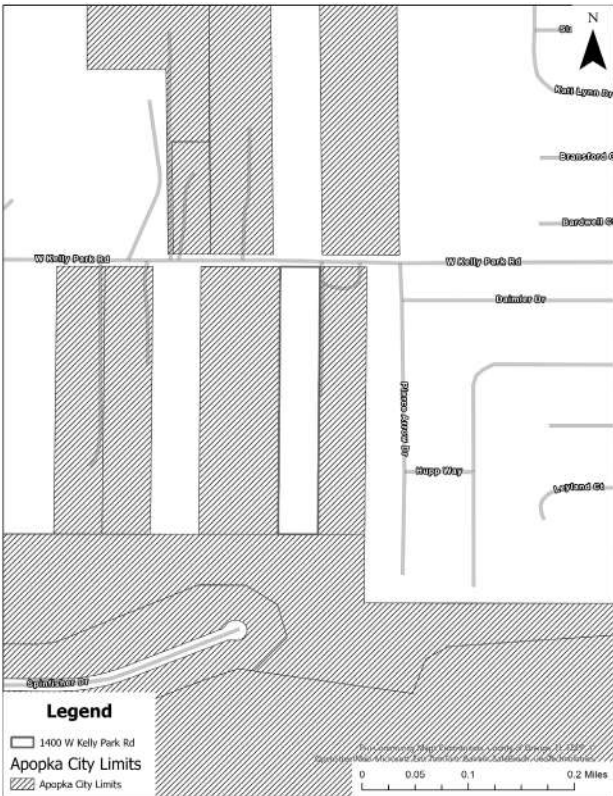
blighted fencing for students to paint an extravaganza of roses on Rose Avenue. People of Wekiwa Springs are working with supportive subdivisions to create more interest. Chelsea Ridge is planting jasmine to jazz up their pond. Sweetwater will be wrapping trees in beautiful solar, rope lighting. Majestic Oaks will create a rock garden respite under a large oak tree. I'll be adding decorative cups on county pond fencing with a \$50 investment. None of this needs to be expensive. The idea is to create interest and break up the monotony of suburbia while enticing walkers to core areas for a cup of coffee, ice cream, drink, or even watching a movie. We just want happy, healthy, walkable communities. Idea 101: Dream big, too! The author lists projects in Chicago and Michigan that have built large parks and transit options. Mayor Daley in Chicago constructed the \$200-million Millennium Park in the early 2000s. Within 10 years, the city saw \$3 bil-

lion invested in new private construction near the park, which incidentally now attracts five million visitors annually. Another example in the book is Grand Rapids, Michigan. After the secret service wouldn't allow a parade in the downtown for President Gerald Ford due to so many empty spaces, local business owners pledged to move operations downtown. They also built a new arena and convention center. A medical school and several hotels followed shortly thereafter. Before long, Grand Rapids enjoys one of the healthiest downtowns in the entire Midwest. Time permitting, I will discuss more ideas from the "Walkable City" books by Jeff Speck. I hope you are inspired and join one of the three exciting groups implementing these ideas: People of Lockhart, People of Wekiwa Springs, People of Clarcona-Ocoee, and soon the People of Southern Apopka. Together, we can make our communities more livable, walkable, and the best they can be.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE ANNEXATION CITY OF APOPKA

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to Florida Statutes 171.044, the Apopka Code of Ordinances, Part III, Land Development Code, Article II, Section 2.5.1.A, that **Jose Chaves** has made an application to the City of Apopka City Council for an **ANNEXATION** of a property located at 1400 W Kelly Park Road. This application relates to the following described property:

ORDINANCE NO. 3043
AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF APOPKA, FLORIDA, TO EXTEND ITS TERRITORIAL AND MUNICIPAL LIMITS TO ANNEX PURSUANT TO FLORIDA STATUTE 171.044 THE HEREINAFTER DESCRIBED LANDS SITUATED AND BEING IN ORANGE COUNTY, FLORIDA, OWNED BY MICHAEL A GENTLES; LOCATED at 1400 W KELLY PARK ROAD, COMPRISING 5.06 ACRES, MORE OR LESS; PROVIDING FOR DIRECTIONS TO THE CITY CLERK, SEVERABILITY, CONFLICTS, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.



Parcel Identification Number(s): 17-20-28-0000-00-008
Contains: 5.06 +/- acres

NOTICE is given that public hearings for **Ordinance No. 3043** will be held by the **City of Apopka City Council** at its regularly scheduled meetings in the City Council Chambers of the Apopka City Hall, 120 E. Main Street, Apopka, Florida on **Wednesday, March 6, 2024 beginning at 1:30 P.M** AND **Wednesday, March 20, 2024 at 7:00 P.M.**

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

March 1, 2024
Publish: The Apopka Chief
Apopka City Council
Apopka Planning Commission
Community Development Department
175896

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Hayden: Go back to the past success

Continued from page 2A

ing to keep Disneyworld from turning into a statement against the nuclear family, and a promotion of anti-family ideals exhibiting a corrosive, rebellious attitude of ME first. I say corrosive because the lifestyle they promote neither encourages, nor does it engender joyful living. Their ideals are the big shows, the flamboyant flashing of indecency, claiming a banner of their own, parading their bizarre dress, and actions, and making a mockery of down-to-earth moms and dads who are doing their best to raise children who love the United States of America, and to be law-abiding, tax-paying citizens of the greatest nation in the world. Displaying the kind of lifestyle exhibited by the woke generation, tears at the hearts of every American when seeing the degradation that results from something in their lives that is missing. If you dig a little deeper into their past, you might find a home that was being held together by an overworked mom who needed a husband to be a part of child rearing. For whatever reason, dad was absent, and mom was left alone to be the complete source of learning, chastising, watching over, protecting, and being the bread winner. No man was there to be an example of manhood for the boys, a loving shoulder for a daughter to lay her head on, and a pillar of love and strength for the mother to depend on. Walt Disney founded a place called

Disneyland and later Disneyworld, to bring families together in a healthy, happy environment where adults could enjoy being kids again, and children could enjoy their parents being in touch with its magic as much as they were. Today's woke movement is moving in a completely different mode. It separates people and families. It removes ethical barriers that were set up to protect our youth and our nation's morality, and it leads to ungodly living that results in deviance, separation, loneliness, and in some cases, suicide. To understand the chasm that separates our lifestyle now from that of fifty years ago, look at and compare the past theme of living as families to today's lifestyle. Thank GOD for Ron DeSantis and his stand – not against Disneyworld – but the factions that would tear the heart out of Walt Disney if he were alive today, and those that would change the magic of Disneyworld into the stagnation of the woke mob. Remember the words of Walt himself. "To all who come to this happy place: welcome. Disneyland is your land. Here age relives fond memories of the past ... and here youth may savor the challenge and promise of the future. Disneyland is dedicated to the ideals, the dreams and the hard facts which have created America ... with the hope that it will be a source of joy and inspiration to all the world."

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.theapokkachief.com, news@theapokkachief.com



City of Apopka Telephone Numbers

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City Clerk 407-703-1704
Community Devel. 407-703-1712
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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
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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**

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Marco Rubio (Rep.) 407-254-2573
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Daniel Webster (Dist. 11) 352-241-9220
State Representatives
Doug Bankson 407-476-6787
Carolina Amesty (Dist. 45) unknown
State Senators
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Orange County Commissioner
Christine Moore 407-836-7350
Orange County Public Schools
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Superintendent 407-317-3200
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Museum of the Apopkans 407-703-1707
Chamber of Commerce 407-886-1441

Wekiva: Work on parkway's first section began in 2013; opened first stretch in 2016

Continued from page 3A

beltway means added convenience for area residents, businesses, and visitors. Previously opened sections of the parkway are seeing more than 21,000 vehicles a day, making travel easier and reducing commute times. Traffic on the elevated parkway means fewer vehicles on S.R. 46, enhancing safety for people and wildlife.

Many of the agencies and organizations that collaborated on the parkway's environmental protections took part in the festival. Among them were the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, St. Johns River Water Man-

agement District, Wekiva River Basin State Parks, Friends of the Wekiva River and Friends of the Seminole State Forest.

Local government partners Lake County, Seminole County, as well as the cities of Mount Dora and Apopka also took part. All told, nearly 30 agencies and organizations shared games, fun activities, and specialized vehicles with eventgoers. The Seminole High School jazz ensemble and drumline provided music.

The Wekiva River Basin provides habitat for rare or threatened species including black bears, bald eagles and burrowing owls. Parkway protections in-

cluded purchasing 3,400 acres of land for conservation, limiting the number of interchanges in natural areas, installing 1.5 miles of wildlife crossing bridges, and moving about a mile of County Road (C.R.) 46A out of the Seminole State Forest to reduce collisions between vehicles and wildlife.

Work on the first sections of Wekiva Parkway began in 2013, with FDOT opening the first parkway stretch in 2016. The Wekiva Parkway was the first expressway in Central Florida to feature all electronic tolling, for customer convenience and to keep traffic moving.



Fri., March 1, 2024 thru Sun., March 3, 2024

DUNE: PART TWO (PG-13)
10:00A; 11:00A; 12:00; 1:00; 2:00; 3:00*; 3:10***; 4:00; 5:00; 6:00; 7:00; 8:00; 9:00; 10:00; 10:40

THE CHOSEN: SEASON 4
EPISODES 7-8 11:30A; 3:00***; 3:10*; 6:30

DEMON SLAYER: KIMETSU NO YAIBA (R)
English Subtitles 10:30A; 4:30; 7:30; 10:20

English Dubbed 1:20

ORDINARY ANGELS (PG)
10:10A; 1:10; 4:10; 7:10; 9:50

BOB MARLEY: ONE LOVE (PG-13)
10:20A; 10:50A; 1:30; 4:20; 7:20; 10:10

ARGYLLE (PG-13) 9:40

KID: HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON (PG) 9:40A**

KID: THE IRON GIANT (PG) 9:30A**

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Senate bill to introduce county commissioner term limits

Andrew Powell
The Center Square

A bill that would put term limits on Florida county commissioners passed a key hurdle in the Senate Committee Rules on Monday, February 26.

Senate Bill 438, sponsored by state

Sen. Blaise Ingoglia (R-Spring Hill), would introduce term limits for county commissioners and would require certain counties to hold a referendum election to ask voters if they approve or disapprove of term limits in their county.

In the bill's text, it says that a person

is prohibited from being on a ballot for re-election to the office of county commissioner if they had served in that office for eight consecutive years. The person would also have a waiting time of at least two years before they could run for the county commissioner's office in another county.

While introducing the bill to the Senate Committee on Rules Monday, February 26, Ingoglia introduced an amendment that would allow constitutional counties to put the question of term limits to voters this coming November, as they currently do not have the authority to do so.

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BUSINESS PROFILE

Your Guide to Local Businesses

Central Florida Audiology - Hearing Loss Is Not Just an Ear Problem

Hearing loss can be challenging enough with its profound effect on communication and quality of life, but did you know it can accompany other chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and dementia? Such comorbidities, or coexisting diseases, make regular hearing checkups even more important to catch potential problems early and address them for overall wellness.

Cognitive Decline

Research has long pointed to links between hearing loss and decreased brain functioning over time. Some of the statistics may surprise you:

- On average, seniors with hearing loss experience significantly reduced cognitive function 3.2 years before their normal-hearing counterparts.
- Hearing-impaired seniors experience thinking and memory problems 30 to 40 percent faster than their normal-hearing counterparts.

- Those with hearing loss are two, three, or nearly five times as likely to develop dementia, depending on the severity of their hearing impairment.

The causal relationship between hearing loss and cognitive decline isn't completely clear, but some research suggests that addressing hearing loss could cut dementia cases by a third. Additionally, struggling to hear conversations in crowded places, asking friends and family to repeat themselves, and feeling exhausted by the effort to understand what others are saying can inspire a vol-

untary withdrawal from socializing, which can lead to isolation and depression.

Dual Sensory Impairment

It's probably easy to see that the eyes and ears work together as a team. Both help you perceive the world around you, with hearing even enhancing the sense of sight. They both also help you — in conjunction with your joints, muscles, and brain — stay balanced and steady on your feet. Some researchers have discovered links between vision and hearing impairment. One study found that even after accounting for age, the two conditions (which are together known as "dual sensory impairment" or DSI) are somehow associated and significantly affect both physical and mental function.

Cardiovascular Disease

Like hearing loss, which affects an estimated 466 million people according to the World Health Organization (WHO), cardiovascular disease is a global public health challenge.

Exactly how heart disease and hearing loss are connected isn't yet conclusive in all cases, but researchers have found that:

- Hearing loss is more prevalent among those who have a history of circulatory disorders, such as cardiovascular disease, than among those who don't.
- Cardiovascular disease can cause decreased hearing sensitivity by restricting blood flow to the structures of the inner ear.
- People with heart



Have you been impacted by hearing loss? Whether your hearing difficulties are a new development or a lifelong issue, the experts at **Central Florida Audiology** can help. Please call (407) 358-7045 to schedule a free hearing consultation or visit www.central-floridaaudiology.com. Pictured above is Amy Davis, founder of **Central Florida Audiology**.

disease are 54 percent more likely to experience a hearing loss, according to one study — even more so if they've suffered a heart attack.

Balance and Falls

Many people don't realize that hearing and balance are linked, but in fact, research has shown that falls are much more common among those with hearing loss. If that doesn't sound particularly serious, keep in mind that falls are leading cause of injury-related death for seniors over the age of 65, and the second leading cause of unintentional deaths among all age groups worldwide.

Balance and equilibrium are controlled by the body's vestibular system, involving parts

of the brain, eyes, inner ear, and sensory systems, including skin, joints, and muscles. Keeping your hearing in the best shape possible can help reduce the risk of balance issues.

Diabetes

Hearing loss is twice as common among people living with diabetes. Much like presbycusis, or age-related hearing loss, diabetes-connected hearing issues commonly take a toll on higher-frequency hearing, which impairs the ability to understand speech in noisy settings. Diabetes-associated hearing loss could affect one or both ears, may occur suddenly or gradually, and could appear with or without balance problems.

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Garden Club hosts fashion show



The Foliage Garden Club of Apopka models for the Butterflies, Birds, and Bees in Our Garden Fashion Show and Luncheon on Saturday, February 24, at the First United Methodist Church of Apopka. The annual fundraiser was held in benefit of the beautification of Apopka. Chico's provided the fashions featured in the show. Participants in the show are (l-r) Charlotte White, Christy Faircloth, Kathy Gill, Dena Morrow, Pamela Smith Groseclose, Pam Santella (Chico's model) and Leslie Dempsy. Photo courtesy of Foliage Garden Club.

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Consider that less than 10% of U.S. citizens view a government web site daily, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. This contrasts dramatically with the percentage of adults who read a community newspaper every week, according to the National Newspaper Association.

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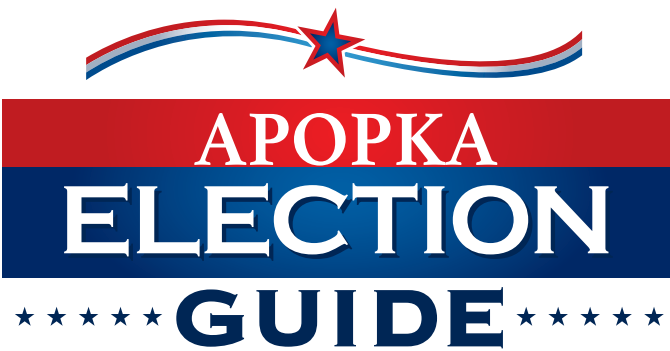


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Lake Apopka Natural Gas District - Your Energy, Your Choice: Why Freedom Matters in Energy Decisions

Life is full of choices: Where to live, what career to pursue and even what to have for dinner tonight. These choices paint a picture of who we are and what matters to us. At **LANGD**, we believe the same applies to your energy choices, and we believe you should *always* have the power to choose the energy source that best meets your needs.

However, not everyone feels the same way about choice when it comes to energy. Advocates for the recent trend of "electrification" propose moving to an all-electric, single-source model that eliminates the use of natural gas entirely – stripping consumers of their ability to choose the energy source that best fits their needs and budget.

In 2019, the city of Berkeley, California, became the first in the United States to ban natural gas. Since then, several other cities have passed similar legislation.

Thankfully, Floridians don't have to worry about their right to choose being restricted anytime soon. In July 2021, House Bill 919 went into effect – preventing local governments from banning fuel sources and marking a major step in the right direction to ensure consumer choice is a top



If you're considering joining the LANGD family, please connect with our marketing team at (407) 656-2734 ext. 307 or marketing@langd.org to learn more.

priority.

The "one-size-fits-all" approach to energy that the electrification movement pushes not only undermines consumers' right to choose, but also often stems from common misconceptions, which is why fully understanding the unique characteristics of different energy sources like natural gas is crucial before advocating for widespread adoption of any single solution.

Natural gas offers a multitude of benefits and advantages over other fuel sources that are often misrepresented by those who want to take away your right to choose, including:

Affordability – Studies show that natural gas is twice as efficient as electricity – and cheaper. In fact, U.S. consumers save an average of more than \$1,000 on energy bills

each year by making the switch to natural gas.

Dependability – Natural gas is delivered through reliable underground pipelines directly to your home or business, ensuring a reliable source of energy that's there when you need it. Even during power outages, natural gas consumers can continue cooking and enjoying hot showers, weathering storms in comfort.

Cleanliness – As the cleanest-burning fossil fuel available to consumers (*Forbes*), natural gas plays an important role in keeping our environment clean and safe for generations to come.

Domestic – With over 97% of natural gas produced in the U.S., America's energy dollars stay at home and in our communities.

With over 180 million Americans choos-

ing natural gas for these reasons and more every day, it's more important than ever before to stay informed about potential threats to your energy choices.

Your choice is a powerful tool, and when it comes to choosing the right energy mix for your home or business, the freedom to choose what best supports your lifestyle is extremely important. Don't take it for granted.

Want to learn more about making the switch to natural gas? For more information on natural gas service for your home, business or vehicle, please contact the District Marketing Team at (407) 656-2734 x 307, marketing@langd.org or visit www.langd.org to learn more.

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 - Ace Meat & Grocery, 439 S. Central Ave. & 5th St.
 - Apopka Chief rack, 400 N. Park Ave.
 - Apopka High School
 - Apopka Quick Mart (BP), Hwy 436 & Lake Cortez Dr.
 - Argos Family Diner, 3346 E. Semoran Blvd.
 - Beekays, N. Park Ave. (across from the old Fla. Hosp. location)
 - CenturyLink headquarters, SR 436
 - Chevron Diamond Gas – Hwy 441 & Plymouth-Sorrento Rds
 - Chevron Market, Hwy 441 & Roger Williams Rd.
 - Chuck's Wagon, Main St., (Hwy 441)
- Circle K & BP, Hwy 441 S. of Walmart
 - Circle K, Keene Rd / Clarcona
 - Citgo, 441 & Boy Scout Blvd (Plymouth)
 - Citgo, Rock Springs Rd. (behind store by mail boxes)
 - CVS #3748 - corner of Park Av & Hwy 441
 - Discount Beverage & Smoke (Across from Checkers, Highway 441
 - Circle K (Shell) #2404, Sheeler Rd at corner of Apopka Blvd.
 - Circle K (Marathon) #6157, S. Park Avenue
 - Circle K (Shell) #2334, Rock Springs Rd & Kelly Park Rd
 - Circle K #1288, Welch Rd & Wekiva Springs Rd.
 - Circle K (Marathon) #1063, Zellwood, 2691 Highway 441
 - Compare Fresh Market, 436 behind Aaron's
 - Crosby's Motor Inn,
- Hwy 441 & Errol Parkway (Errol Estate)
 - Lula Mae's Eatery, Central Ave S.
 - Marathon, Main St. (midland downtown)
 - McDonald's, Highway 441 (downtown)
 - Mobil, (Citgo) Hwy 441 (next to Burger K)
 - Orange County Service Center, N. Park Ave.
 - Perkins Restaurant Hwy 441, in Victoria Plaza Parking Lot)
 - Plymouth Post Office, Plymouth/Sorrento Rd
 - Porkies BBQ, Highway 441 (downtown)
 - Post Office, N. Park Ave. (Martin St)
 - Publix, Park Ave/Rock Springs Rd. & Welch Rd.
 - Sam's Discount, Overland & Apopka Blvd.
 - Sun Resort, 3000 Clarcona Rd.
 - Sunoco Happy Foods, Hwy 441 & Plymouth-Sorrento Rd.
 - Trader Mac's, Rock Springs Rd
- UPS Store (The), Rock Springs & Welch Rd. (Publix shopping center)
 - Walgreens, corner of Park Ave and Hwy 441
 - Walgreens, N. Park Ave/Welch Rd.
 - Wawa Store, 449 W. Main St. - corner of Hwy 441 and Bradshaw
 - Wawa Store, 441 & Piedmont Wekiva across from Walmart
 - Wekiva High School, Hiawassee Rd.
 - Winn Dixie #2246 – Hwy 441 (beside Lowe's)
 - Zellwood Station (inside MHP)
 - Zellwood Truck Stop Diner, Hwy 441
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Obituaries

LAURA LEE CRUICKSHANK SKIDMORE COVENEY, 67, was born on March 24, 1956 in Detroit Michigan, passed away after a valiant fight with cancer on February 21, 2024 in Apopka. Laura is survived by her husband Paul Coveney, her brother Scott (Kim) Cruickshank, her sister Kim Lynch (Roger), 2 nieces, 3 nephews, her great nephew and her doggie Roxy. She is preceded in death by her parents and sister Diane.

...

MARTIN P. FRANCIS, 91, of Apopka, passed away on February 19, 2024. He was born in Trinidad on November 12, 1932 to parents Loretta Francis and George Patrick, and later married Georgia Francis. He is survived by daughters Kimberly Graham (Ulrick) of Ellijay, Georgia; Christine Francis, Atlanta, Georgia; Crescentia Ganpatt, Canada; and sons Mark Francis (Cynthia) of Apopka; Martin Francis-Motoki of Orlando, and Willie Avery (Kimberly) of Orlando. He is also survived by his sister, Margaret Francis Ranghill, from Trinidad, along with many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, cousins, and other loving relatives and friends. Martin is preceded in death by his wife, Georgia Francis; mother, Loretta Francis; father, George Patrick; brothers Rudy Patrick and Lewis Patrick; and sister, Maria Francis.

...



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Christopher Simon

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

In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:16

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Apopka Mayor Bryan Nelson (left) reads the proclamation declaring February 2024 as Black History Month in the community. Francina Boykin (right), local historian and Apopka Historical Society vice president, discusses the significance of honoring the legends of Apopka.

City: Funds from booklet sales go toward museum expansion

Continued from page 1A

Boykin said. “We hand our stories down to our children for the generations to know.”

Last year, the city released the Legends of Apopka booklet with 28 legends, one per day of the month. All the honorees featured in the booklet are no longer living.

Mayor Bryan Nelson read a proclamation proclaiming February 2024 as Black History Month in the city of Apopka.

Besides the honoring of the 2024 legends with their families in attendance, and the special proclamation, the event included special musical performanc-

es by singer Mark Wright-Ahern and the Wekiva High School Varsity Choir, and reception for all attendees.

Volume 2 of “Celebrating Legends of Apopka” are available for purchase for \$10, sales tax included. Funds will go toward expansion of the Apopka Museum. The booklets are available for purchase at the front kiosk in Apopka City Hall, 120 E. Main St., Apopka. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

2024 Legends of Apopka

The 29 Legends of Apopka of Black History Month are Jimmy Bakker Jr., Rev. Willie Bell, Albert Boykin, John Henry Bridg-

es, Rev. Dr. Herman Lee Dericho, Hannah Dixon Andrews, Bertha Gladden, Ethel Mae Grant, Richard Lewis “Jabo” Grant, John Hickey, Eddie Jamoldroy Justice, Jackie Lee Massey Sr., Rosalyn Aprina McFadden-Grubbs, Clifford James McKenzie, Leroy Victor Millsap Jr., Earma Lee Carey Peterson, Prince Pollard Sr., Leonard Rand, Martha J. Richardson, Eartha Mae Salmon, Wilford Sanders Sr., Herbert Scott Sr., Dr. Rev. Mayetta Sexton, Dr. Shirley Sharpe-Terrell, Frank Smith, Hannah Williams, Alonzo Williams Jr., Jessie Williams, and Chanell Latoni Wright.

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SUDOKU ANSWERS

PUZZLE CAN BE
FOUND ON PAGE 4B

8	3	5	7	6	1	4	9	2
9	2	4	8	5	3	6	7	1
6	7	1	2	4	9	5	3	8
5	1	3	9	8	4	2	6	7
4	9	8	6	2	7	3	1	5
2	6	7	3	1	5	8	4	9
1	8	2	4	9	6	7	5	3
7	5	6	1	3	2	9	8	4
3	4	9	5	7	8	1	2	6

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Puzzle Solution

P	A	R	S		E	C	T		B	A	T					
S	L	A	K	E		A	L	A		E	A	C	H			
T	A	J	I	K		R	E	C		B	L	E	U			
	E	A	M	E	S		N	A	T		L	A	D	S		
					A	M	E	R	I	C	A	S				
P	R	E	M	A	T	U	R	E	L	Y						
E	N	E	M	I	E	S		R	E	M						
T	A	L	E	R						B	E	R	M	E		
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						U	N	A	V	A	I	L	A	B	L	E
			R	E	S	O	N	A	T	E						
M	O	A	B		D	K	M		S	A	B	E	R			
E	L	B	A		Y	E	P			A	I	L	E	D		
N	E	B	N		N	E	E			R	A	B	I	A		
D	A	I			E	N	D			S	E	N	D			

The Crossword Puzzle is found on page 4B