

Denim Day

The city of Apopka wear blue jeans in solidarity with sexual assault victims. See page 7A.



Sports

Posluszny, Roberts, McCoy, McKinley all sign to play college ball See page 1B.



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Volume 102 Number 17

Friday, April 26, 2024 / 50 cents

Nonprofit honoring veterans shares wreaths information

By Teresa Sargeant
Apopka Chief Staff

Wreaths Across America recently visited the community with its mobile education exhibit (MEE) as part of its national tour. The tour is designed to raise awareness about Wreaths Across America's mission of remembering the fallen, honoring those who served in the military, and teaching the next generation the value of freedom.

The MEE was parked in front of the Apopka Community Center/VFW Building on Sunday, April

21. The VFW Post 10147 invited Wreaths Across America MEE.

One takeaway that visitors learned in the MEE is that the sponsored wreaths from Wreaths Across America aren't Christmas, seasonal, or holiday wreaths, but veterans wreaths with a lot of symbolism represented in every aspect.

According to Wreaths Across America, veteran's wreath has 10 balsam bouquets; each bouquet symbolizes a value that a veteran would represent. In addition, the evergreen represents longevity and endur-

ance, the forest scent represents purity and simplicity, the red bow represents great sacrifice, and the circular shape symbolizes eternity.

"If anything, I want them to take this knowledge with them because then they understand the importance of this wreath and why we want to get these wreaths on the special days. Because at the end of the day, it is believed that a veteran dies twice: once when their life ends and then second when

See WREATHS Page 8A



Wreaths Across America recently visited the community with its mobile education exhibit (MEE) as part of its national tour designed to raise awareness about Wreaths Across America's mission of remembering the fallen, and honoring those who served in the military, and teaching the next generation the value of freedom.



Photo by Apopka Police Department/Facebook

April is Autism Acceptance Month. During the Wednesday, April 17 Apopka City Council meeting a proclamation was read honoring and recognizing Autism Acceptance Month. Pictured (l to r) are City Commissioner Nick Nesta, City Commissioner Diane Velazquez, Apopka Officer Emmanuel Sosa, Mayor Bryan Nelson, and City Commissioner Alexander Smith.

City launches special needs registry during Autism Acceptance Month

April is Autism Acceptance Month. During the Wednesday, April 17, Apopka City Council meeting a proclamation was read honoring and recognizing Autism Acceptance Month.

Also this month, the Apopka Police Department has officially launched their Special Needs Regis-

try Program. The Apopka Police Department is providing decals free of charge to people who register. These decals alert first responders that there is an individual in the home or vehicle who may have limited communication, may require additional time to process, respond to and/or comply with verbal commands, may hide,

wander off, or may have no awareness of possible danger.

This program is not exclusive to individuals with autism. It's available to anyone who may have special needs.

To learn more about this program, visit apopka.gov/specialneeds-registry.

Gas district board approves energy choice ordinances

By Teresa Sargeant
Apopka Chief Staff

to choose their most preferred energy source.

The Lake Apopka Natural Gas District (LANGD) Board of Directors unanimously approved three ordinances about an energy choice initiative, giving homeowners the freedom

On Monday, April 22, Brent Haywood, LANGD CEO/general manager, presented the ordinances for the board to vote on separately. The documents will

See GAS Page 5A

Missing teen dies by vehicle crash

A driver who was reported missing and operating a stolen vehicle at the time of a vehicle crash in Apopka died from sustained injuries.

At 11:15 a.m. on Wednesday, April 24, the Apopka Police Department responded to a single vehicle crash in the vicinity of Kelly Park Road and Chandler Road, according to police.

The driver, a 17-year-old, was the sole occupant of the vehicle and was airlifted to a local trauma center. The driver succumbed to his injuries.

Upon the Apopka Police Department's preliminary investigation, it was determined that the deceased had been reported as a missing person and was operating a stolen vehicle at the time of the crash.

This is an ongoing investigation.

School Board greenlights half-cent sales tax referendum

The Orange County School Board approved a resolution ordering a referendum election for this November's ballot to continue the half-cent sales tax. If approved by Orange County vot-

ers, the referendum will help fund the district's capital construction needs for the next 10 years.

The Orange County School Board voted at its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday,

April 23, at the Ronald Blocker Educational Leadership Center in Orlando.

Since 2002, the half-cent sales tax has generated more than \$4 billion for school construction

and renovation. More than 50 percent of the revenue collected comes from tourists and non-Orange County residents. Over the last two decades, it has funded the renovation or replacement of 136

schools and the construction of 65 new schools.

The half-cent sales tax will generate funding over the next

See BOARD Page 11A

City gets result of the forensic audit

The city of Apopka received the results of its forensic audit, which was presented at the Wednesday, April 17, City Council meeting.

Daniel Anderson, a partner with Bradenton-based Maulden and Jenkins CPA, presented the city's 2023 fiscal year-end audit, beginning in mid-September 2023 when the audit process was planned to the beginning of this April. Usually the audit presentation is done in the summer-time.

In his presentation, Anderson talked about the au-

dit opinions and the annual comprehensive financial report, and the required communications under government auditing standards.

"We perform an audit to give our opinion on the fairness of the presentation of the financial statements," Anderson explained to the City Council. "We always want to point out we do consider the internal control structure such as the accounts payable process that plaintiff went through for the purpose of designing our procedures to sup-

See AUDIT Page 11A

Pancake Palooza



On Saturday, April 20, the People of Wekiwa Springs hosted the free community event Pancake Palooza at Wekiwa Springs Baptist Church, 584 N. Wekiwa Springs Road, Apopka. The event served pancakes, sausage, coffee, tea, orange juice and water. Juice boxes for the tots were also offered..

This week

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



Apopka Event of the Week

North Orange Branch Library, 1211 E. Semoran Blvd, on Saturday, May 4, from 2-3:30 p.m., in the meeting room: Dragon Tales. Bring your children ages 6-10 and immerse them in the legends of dragons as they hear stories and let their imaginations soar as they design and decorate their very own dragon masterpieces to take home.

Quotable

Although, in separate settings, all of them would be opposed to each other and might even be bitter enemies, they have each learned to modify their natural instincts for the benefits and joy of living together.
Guest editor explains pet family relationships that teach cooperation

Opinion

The Apopka Chief
A weekly newspaper founded in 1923

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John Ricketson

Consultant Emeritus
John Peery

Marketing Director
Jackie Trefcer

Reporters
Teresa Sargeant
Marshall Tempest, Neal Fisher

General Mgr Emeritus
Neoma Knox

Feb. 12, 1929 - Sept. 18, 2021

Our position

Pet family can be the best teacher of how humans should get along

Ike Hayden

Guest Editorial

OK, I will admit, we are animal lovers. I believe my wife is trying to put a ten-acre menagerie on our suburban lot!

Starting at the front door, we have a Cockatiel, named Charlie (do not stick your finger close without a peace offering), next is our pony-sized puppy, named Eleanor (Ellie for short) who is a “Newf-poo,” Newfoundland and Standard Poodle mix. We have a Banty rooster and a Black Rock hen named “Honey and Midnight” who will come in through the “doggie door,” eat their fill of dog food and go out for their morning routine of keeping the yard clean of ticks and other malicious insects.

The jester of our gang of misfits is Hamlet. You guessed it, our baby pig. He causes laughter and enjoyment with every move he makes. It seems he remains indecisive until the very last minute and then breaks into a mad scramble to get it done, whatever he decides it is. Hamlet and Ellie share the same bedtime cage and Hamlet will snuggle up to Ellie’s side with contented grunts of bliss, while Ellie tries to figure out the most comfortable position to maintain for them both.

We have two Fighting fish named Sparkle and Bubbles that live in separate tanks (to keep them from fighting). Also, in that line of aquatics, we have a large Goldfish “Pudgy” that my wife won at the Apopka fair. Finally, we have a momma cat Grayson, and her kitten Maxwell. Both have been neutered and have promised to allow us the pleasure of living with them if we maintain the facilities, keep food for them, give them all the required worship by rubbing them down, and making sure they are not molested by any of the “lower” animal classes.

Each one of our unique animal family has carved a niche in our hearts and all have learned there is peace, joy, and fulfillment in belonging to one another. There are times I am amazed by the way they

regulate their behavior to make space for one another. Not one of our animal family has ever shown aggressive behavior toward us or the other animals. Although, in separate settings, all of them would be opposed to each other and might even be bitter enemies, they have each learned to modify their natural instincts for the benefits and joy of living together.

Oh, that we could learn from the example of these animals! Our nation was founded on Judeo-Christian principles, and our founding fathers fashioned a constitution for the uniting of all people under one heading: American. Over the last two-hundred-fifty years, our immigration policies have been hashed over and rehashed, and they have had small amounts of limited success until these last five-plus years. The laws we have on our books as the law of the land for immigration are being completely ignored, and the insanity we see in the halls of congress are completely devoid of any common sense.

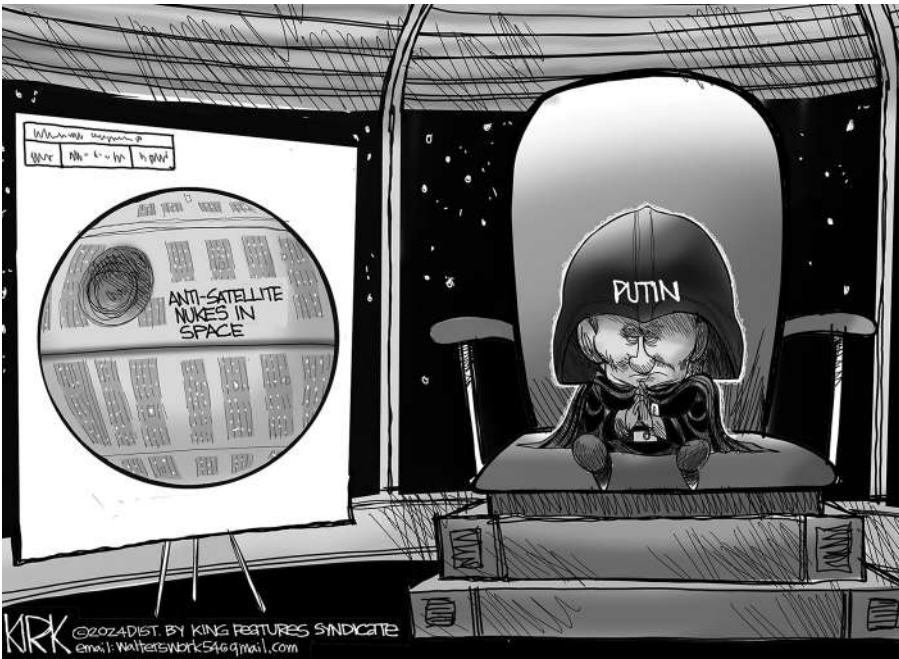
It is almost comparable to Dr. Frankenstein’s creation. We have allowed these bozos to sing sweet lullabies, filling us with lies, and false promises so we will keep them in their beds of luxurious lifestyles.

Meanwhile, the middle class is being diminished and will one day become an old, dilapidated, extinct dinosaur who will be remembered only by the historians who will have no followers because history is being destroyed before our eyes.

I can remember a time when men and women meant what they said, and only an unforeseen happenstance could change their goal. I can look back to a point in time when a handshake was better than the most ironclad contract. I know there are those of you that can remember leaving the keys hanging in your ignition overnight, and not losing sleep over it.

How did we change so fast, without even a whimper? Why did being a citizen of the greatest na-

See MENAGERIE Page 4A



DLE is home of Counselor of the Year

This time of the school year is always filled with fun and celebrations, but our local Apopka schools have a lot to celebrate, even more than usual! I thought I would share some of the good news with you all.

First, our own Apopka Blue Darter Marching Band and Cheer Team traveled to Washington D.C. to march in the 2024 National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade. They traveled up on buses leaving at 4:30 in the morning!

They spent several days visiting the nation’s capital sightseeing and ended the trip with a wonderful performance of the song “Orange Blossom” right in front of the White House. We are so proud of course that Apopka was represent-

Orange County School Board, District 7



Melissa Byrd

ed during this event. But more than that, I’m thankful to the staff and parents that made this trip happen for our students. This is a trip and experience they will never forget! Way to go Blue Darters!

Second, our own Dream Lake Elementary School counselor, Ms. Lucy Dorlus, was named Elementary School Counselor of the Year by the Orange County School Coun-

selors Association. This is an incredible honor considering how many elementary schools there are in OCPS.

This is a very deserving recognition of Ms. Dorlus’ dedication and hard work supporting our littlest students. Often school counselors get overlooked, but they play such a vital role in helping our students have what they need to be successful in the classroom. They are such a valuable resource for our teachers, families and students. I’m thrilled that one of our own counselors in Apopka was recognized for this honor. Congratulations, Ms. Dorlus!

Finally, Chef Christo-

See BYRD Page 4A

Legislation is to reduce property loss

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (April. 24, 2024) –

Today, Governor Ron DeSantis signed SB 7028, legislation that builds on the successful My Safe Florida Home (MSFH) program. The program provides free home inspections and up to \$10,000 in grants to allow Florida homeowners to strengthen their properties against storms with home hardening products like impact resistant doors and windows, while cutting insurance costs through mandatory home mitigation discounts. The average insurance policyholder discount has totaled over \$1,000.

Providing an additional \$200 million in funding for the program, the bill also ensures that homeowners who need the program the most can utilize its benefits and authorizes an applicant to receive a home inspection under the program without being eligible for a grant or applying for a grant. The Governor also signed legislation to create the My Safe Florida Condominium Pilot Program.

“A proven way to prevent hurricane damage and property loss is to fortify homes against storms,” said Michael Carlson, President and CEO of the Per-

sonal Insurance Federation of Florida (PIFF). “Governor DeSantis, the Florida Legislature and CFO Jimmy Patronis have prioritized storm recovery and preparedness by supporting the My Safe Florida Home Program and adding funding to cover more Floridians on the waiting list. We’re also glad to see the condominium pilot legislation signed into law and hope this program proves it can reduce the risk of loss for condo owners as well.”

Earlier this year, it was reported that of the 3,897 homeowners who had com-

See INSURANCE Page 4A

This Week In God’s Word

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.
— 3 John 1:4

Mema Says

The pain you’ve been feeling doesn’t compare to the joy that is coming.

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



Operation Best Foot Forward Begins April 30 to promote pedestrian safety

Orlando, Fla. --

Recognizing that less than 50% of Central Florida drivers are yielding to pedestrians near parks and trails, the Best Foot Forward for Pedestrian Safety program will be kicking off its quarterly pedestrian safety enforcement, dubbed Operation Best Foot Forward, to bring awareness and education to drivers to keep pedestrians safe near parks and trail crossings in Central

Florida.

Law enforcement agencies will be conducting a two-week high-visibility crosswalk enforcement from Tuesday, April 30 to Friday, May 10 across six Central Florida counties: Osceola, Orange, Seminole, Volusia, Brevard and Marion as part of FDOT’s Target Zero initiative to reduce traffic-related serious injuries and deaths to zero.

During Operation Best

Foot Forward, plainclothes officers and deputies will cross streets at marked crosswalks, giving drivers enough time to slow down and stop safely. Drivers who do not stop as Florida law requires will be pulled over and face a minimum \$164 citation and three (3) points on their driver’s license. Most crosswalks chosen for enforcement are near parks and trail crossings.

According to data col-

lected by the Best Foot Forward for Pedestrian Safety program this year, only 49% of drivers yield to pedestrians within a half-mile of parks and only 46% of drivers yield to pedestrians at trail crossings. In a recent study by Injury Prevention, the risk of child pedestrian fatalities is more than twice as high near parks compared to schools. This may be related to the built-in environment within school zones that slows

down drivers during times when children are most likely to be walking. This quarter’s operation aims to instill that same sense of cautiousness around parks and trail crossings, especially as the school year comes to an end and more children will likely spend time outdoors at parks and trails.

Operation Best Foot Forward is part of the Best Foot Forward coalition’s larger effort to improve road safety. Studies show

that driver behavior changes when you combine these enforcement strategies, education, and engineering over a sustained period.

For a complete schedule of the intersection locations including time and day as well as an interactive map, visit: <https://www.iyield4peds.org/operationbff/>

About the Best Foot Forward for Pedestrian Safety Program

See BEST FOOT Page 4A

Emancipation Day event is May 18

Emancipation Day 2024 will be on Saturday, May 18, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Alonzo Williams Park, 515 S. Hawthorne Ave., Apopka.

Vendors interested in participating in the event should to go to shorturl.at/bvOS2 and fill out the form.

According to the Florida Department of State website, "Emancipation was proclaimed in Tallahassee on May 20, 1865, 11 days after the end of the Civil War, and two years after the Proclamation first issued by President Abraham Lincoln freed those enslaved in Southern states."

Stamp Out Hunger food drive is May 11

The National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) will conduct its annual national food drive on Saturday, May 11. NALC's food drive, which was first held in 1983, helps feed millions of Americans.

The Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, the country's largest one-day food drive, provides residents with an easy way to donate food to those in need.

Customers simply leave their donation of non-perishable food items next to their mailbox before the delivery of the mail on Saturday, May 11 (boxed and canned goods only, no glass). Letter carriers will collect the food donations that day as they deliver mail along their postal routes.

Food collected in Apopka will be donated to Loaves and Fishes to help local families.

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AdventHealth is the proud platinum sponsor of the 2024 Apopka Art & Foliage Festival. Stop by our booth on Saturday, April 27 to get your photo taken with the NASCAR show car, and take home your special keepsake.





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You're Invited!

The 2024 Apopka Mayor's Prayer Breakfast

**Thurs, May 2nd, 2024**
6:30 am – 8:30 am

**Apopka Community Center**
519 S Central Avenue, Apopka

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER: TIMOTHY BARTON**

Timothy Barton is the President of WallBuilders, a national pro-family organization that presents America's forgotten history and heroes, with an emphasis on our religious, moral, and constitutional heritage. WallBuilders has been recognized from coast-to-coast for its work in education, history, law, and public policy, integrating the elements of Biblical faith and morality throughout all aspects of American life and culture.

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Menagerie: Lifestyle is changing, but country is worth fighting for

Continued from page 2A

tion GOD ever created on Earth, the United States of America, become a slur on the tongues of those illegal... and *legal* aliens? To call them “immigrants” is a slap in the face of those who came over to the United States to prosper through their challenging work, and the building up of the country they now call home.

Even those who came over as slaves, given the opportunity, bettered the United States, and raised

men and women who were willing to give their lives to increase the awareness of their plight.

When George Washington Carver was born, his momma ran away from the plantation owned by Mr. Carver, and Mr. Carver sent a “slaver” (bounty hunter) after them. The slaver came back after three days, dropped the little baby in Mr. Carver’s arms, and said,” his momma didn’t make it, but I brought you the baby, even though he will never amount to much.” That baby

became one of the most illustrious scientists in the world.

Men, like Martin Luther King, brilliantly used the vocabulary and the verve and energy of each message to move millions to new heights of expectations, and hope.

Why are we allowing ourselves to be lulled into such a sedentary lifestyle?

My United States of America is worth fighting for. I was taught from infancy to love her and cherish her... with my *life*.

If, during WWII, someone would have stood in public and shouted “death to America,” another citizen would have done away with him or her and been given a medal for doing it. We had a love for our nation!

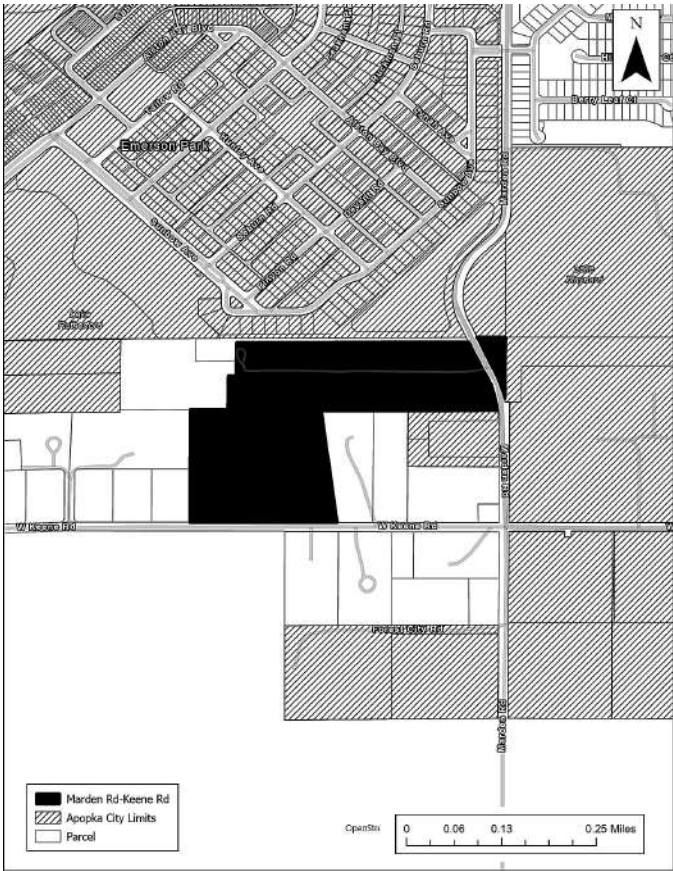
We had a love for one another. Not because we were all the *same*, but because we were all *Americans*.

Want to know how to get back to loving America? Come over to my house one day and study my wife’s menagerie!

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 **JIM HALL** has made an application to the City of Apopka City Council for an **ANNEXATION** of properties located at west of Marden Road and north of W. Keene Road. This application relates to the following described property:

ORDINANCE NO. 3049
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 THE JAMES H. PAGE LIFE ESTATE AND THE ANNETTE H. PAGE TRUST; LOCATED NORTH OF W. KEENE ROAD, AND WEST AND EAST OF MARDEN ROAD, COMPRISING 32.0 ACRES, MORE OR LESS; PROVIDING FOR DIRECTIONS TO THE CITY CLERK, SEVERABILITY, CONFLICTS, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.



Parcel Identification Number(s): 20-21-28-0000-00-016, 20-21-28-0000-00-004, 20-21-28-0000-00-032, 20-21-28-0000-00-029, 20-21-28-0000-00-033, 20-21-28-0000-00-014, 20-21-28-0000-00-012, 20-21-28-0000-00-018
Contains: 32.0 +/- acres

NOTICE is given that public hearings for Ordinance No. 3049 will be held by the **City of Apopka City Council** at its regularly scheduled meetings in the City Council Chambers of the Apopka City Hall, 120 E. Main Street, Apopka, Florida on **Wednesday, May 1, 2024 beginning at 1:30 P.M. and Wednesday, May 15, 2024 beginning at 7:00 P.M.** or as soon thereafter as possible.

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

April 26, 2024
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Apopka City Council
Community Development Department
176326

Insurance: Program is for homeowners

Continued from page 2A

pleted the process, 1,928 said they experienced an insurance premium discount.

PIFF encourages homeowners to participate in the state’s home hardening program, which includes an initial home inspection, application through grant approval, construction, final inspection and reim-

bursement. For additional information and resources, please visit mysafehome.com.

About PIFF: The Personal Insurance Federation of Florida, Inc. (PIFF), is a leading voice for the personal lines property and casualty insurance industry in Florida.

PIFF represents national insurance carriers and their subsidiaries, in-

cluding many of the state’s top writers of private passenger auto and homeowners multiperil insurance. Together, PIFF members write more than \$13 billion in premium in the state.

PIFF advocates for a healthy and competitive insurance marketplace for the benefit of Florida consumers. Follow us @PIFF-News. Visit PIFF.net to learn more.

Byrd: Culinary leader is the best

Continued from page 2A

pher Bates, the program director for the Magnet Academy of Culinary Arts at Wekiva High School, won the National Teacher of the Year Award from the Center for the Advancement of Foodservice Education.

This is a tremendous honor and is the second national award for Chef Bates. He was also honored with the James H Maynard National Award for Classroom Innovation last year.

Chef Bates is a visionary leader who designed and created the Culinary Arts Magnet program and has developed it into a na-

tional and state-recognized program in a few short years. This is the only culinary magnet in Orange County and is growing by leaps and bounds every year and continues to gain impressive industry partnerships.

Most importantly is that Chef Bates inspires numerous students each year to continue their culinary experience.

He ignites a passion for culinary arts in these young people. You see it when you walk into the kitchen where they are working.

These kids are on fire for this work and the pas-

sion they have is a direct result of the passion that Chef Bates has for teaching them.

Chef Bates will represent Orange County and Apopka in San Antonio in June when he receives his national award. We are so incredibly proud of him for this great honor.

I’ve said it once and I’ll say it again, incredible things are happening in our schools every day and we have some of the most dedicated and spectacular professionals working in our local schools. Congratulations to all of you who make a difference every day!

Best Foot: Pedestrian safety is a must

Continued from page 2A

The Best Foot Forward for Pedestrian Safety (BFF) program is administered by the local non-profit Bike/Walk Central Florida (BWCF). BFF was created to reverse the conflict between pedestrians and drivers by focusing on one specific behavior change – getting more drivers to yield for pedestrians at marked crosswalks as Florida law requires. More than a campaign, Best Foot Forward is a behavior change-based program designed to improve road safety through consistent and persistent education, high-visibili-

ty crosswalk enforcement, and low-cost engineering countermeasures at marked crosswalks. Best Foot Forward operates in six Central Florida counties and is the largest pedestrian-focused grassroots coalition in the nation, working with more than 40 local and regional partners. Since launching in 2012, the percentage of drivers yielding to people in marked crosswalks has increased from 17 percent to more than 50 percent on roads with a speed limit of 35 mph and lower and 2 percent to 45 percent on roads 40 mph and higher. To learn more, visit iyield-4ped.org.

About Bike/Walk Central Florida:

Bike Walk Central Florida (BWCF) is a regional advocacy organization for bicyclists and pedestrians. Since 2010, the organization has worked on behalf of local pedestrians and bicyclists to advocate for safe and convenient places for people to bike and walk, regardless of where they live or where they need to go. Focusing on their four pillars of policy, perception, practice, and sustainability, BWCF works tirelessly to advocate for policies, programs and infrastructure that is fair and accessible to all.

Tell them you saw it in The Apopka Chief

Everybody has an opinion. Why not share yours?

Send a letter to the Editor online 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, news@theapopkachief.com



City of Apopka Telephone Numbers

City Hall407-703-1700
Mayor’s Office407-703-1701
City Administrator407-703-1649
City Clerk407-703-1704
Community Devel.407-703-1712
Code Enforcement407-703-1738
Finance Dept.407-703-1725
Fire (non-emerg.).....407-703-1756
Parks and Rec. Dept.407-703-1741
Police Chief407-703-1769
Police (non-emerg.).....407-703-1771
Job Line407-703-1743
Solid Waste Collect.....407-703-1731
Street Maintenance407-703-1731
Utility Billing407-703-1727
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 Mayor407-836-7370
County Commission.....407-836-7350
County Attorney407-836-7320
Clerk of the Court.....407-836-2065
Elections Supervisor.....407-836-2070
Fire/Rescue407-836-3111
Solid Waste407-836-6601
Garbage Collection.....407-703-1731
Health Dept.407-836-2600
Hunting/Fishing Lic888-347-4356
Parks and Rec. Dept.407-836-6200
Property Appraiser407-836-5044
Sheriff Administrative407-254-7000
Non-Emerg. Complaint.....407-836-4357
Utilities407-836-5515
All other departments407-836-3111
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 Bankson407-476-6787
Carolina Amesty (Dist. 45).....unknown
State Senators
Geraldine Thompson (Dist.11) 407-297-2045
Orange County Commissioner
Christine Moore407-836-7350
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 Chief407-886-2777
Museum of the Apopkans.....407-703-1707
Chamber of Commerce.....407-886-1441

Gas: Initiative means to help consumers make best decision

Continued from page 1A

go to the city councils of Apopka, Winter Garden and Clermont, LANGD's member municipalities.

LANGD's energy choice initiative is about giving consumers the right to determine the best energy needs for their budget and lifestyle by giving communities a mix of energy choices.

The electrification movement proposes the move to an all-electric, single-source model that eliminates the use of natural gas and natural gas products. A single-source energy model would eliminate competition, thus allowing electric companies to monopolize the energy landscape

and deprive consumers' right to choose their energy source, Haywood said at the LANGD Board of Directors March 25 meeting.

Electrification lives on the misconception that electricity is equivalent to natural gas in affordability, dependability and cleanliness, Haywood explained.

In June 2021, Florida House Bill 919, which Governor Ron DeSantis signed into law, effective July 2021, which prevents local governments from banning fuel sources and protects the rights of those who currently have the choice to use natural gas.

However, that didn't stop developers – mostly outside the area – from taking it upon themselves to

deny homeowners energy choice, Haywood said.

According to the American Public Gas Association, families are losing more than \$1,000 per year in energy cost dollars without a choice.

Families in LANGD's parent cities are losing more than \$35.9 million per year as a result of natural gas not being used or not being a choice. This number was based on the data collected from the 2020 Census data combined with LANGD's service territory data.

LANGD's energy choice initiative is not a new subject. The subject had been broached at board meetings multiple times over the years.



Fri., April 26, 2024 thru Sun., April 28, 2024

CHALLENGERS (R) 1:00; 4:00; 7:00; 10:00
CIVIL WAR (R) 1:10; 4:10; 6:50; 9:40
UNsung HERO (PG) 1:20; 4:20; 7:10; 9:50
GODZILLA X KONG: THE NEW EMPIRE (PG-13) 1:30; 4:30; 7:20; 10:10
SPY X FAMILY CODE: WHITE (DUB) (PG-13) 1:40
THE MINISTRY OF UNGENTLEMANLY WARFARE (R) 1:50; 3:50; 6:40; 9:30
GHOSTBUSTERS: FROZEN EMPIRE (PG-13) 2:00; 4:50; 7:40; 10:20
ABIGAL (R) 2:10*; 2:30**; 5:00*; 5:10**; 7:50; 10:30
SPY X FAMILY CODE: WHITE (SUB) (PG-13) 4:40; 7:30; 10:10
KID: MINIONS (PG) 12:30**

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Flags to fly half-mast on April 26

Gov. Ron DeSantis said that flags are to fly half-mast on Friday, April 26, until Bob Graham's burial near his home in Miami, as he was Florida's governor from 1979 to 1987. Gov. Graham's age was 87 at his time of death on April 16, 2024. He also spent three terms in the U.S. Senate representing Florida.



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Additional \$1.5 billion will go toward Everglades restoration

By Andrew Powell
The Center Square

Governor Ron DeSantis announced on Monday, April 22, an additional \$1.5 billion to restore the Everglades and provide water

quality improvements for fiscal 2024-25.

Approximately \$850 million will be allocated to Everglades restoration. This includes \$614 million for the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan

and the Everglades Agricultural Area Reservoir.

DeSantis said that when he became governor in 2019, there had been persistent neglect of Everglades projects and other natural resources.

DeSantis said that in January 2019, the Legislature allocated \$2.5 billion over four years.

At the beginning of DeSantis' second term in 2023, the governor and the Legislature pledged another

\$2.5 billion over the next four years, upping it to \$3.5 billion.

In the current fiscal year, \$1.7 billion has been spent on water quality and the Everglades projects.

Florida has invested

\$6.5 billion into environmental protection, restoration efforts, water quality, and infrastructure since 2019. Planned projects have also been able to break ground up to a year ahead of schedule.

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Lake Apopka Natural Gas District Celebrates Safe Digging Month & Locator Appreciation Week

Spring is officially here, and with it, one of the busiest times of the year for outdoor projects. Consequently, it's also the time of year when the most damage occurs to underground utilities such as cable, sewer or natural gas lines. In fact, an underground utility line is damaged approximately every six minutes in the United States.

Hitting an underground utility line can cause a whole slew of inconveniences like lengthy service outages, fines, repair costs, or even possible injury. To prevent this, National Safe Digging Month – observed every April – was established by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration to raise awareness for safe digging practices and encourage those about to begin any excavation project to call 811, a nationwide toll-free number.

Contacting Sunshine 811 is free and legally required before starting any digging project in Florida. When contacting 811, the organization then notifies utility companies of pending excavation projects so buried lines can be located and marked, so you can begin your dig project safely.

Celebrating over 30 years of service, Sunshine 811 is Florida's leading authority on



Contacting Sunshine 811 is free and legally required before starting any digging project in Florida. For more information, please contact Lake Apopka Natural Gas District main office at (407) 656-2734.

safe digging practices. Its mission is to help you avoid expensive underground utility damage, which could otherwise burden taxpayers with billions in costs annually, and they're committed to addressing unsafe digging practices through community education, proactive participation, and ongoing innovation. Learn more at <https://sunshine811.com>.

Here are a few tips to help you dig safe this summer:

1. Florida residents should call 811 at least two (2) full business days before any digging project. For example, if you plan to begin work over the weekend, reach out by Tuesday or Wednesday to ensure you're able to hit the ground running come Saturday.

2. Always treat locator flags and paint markers as approximate and leave a "tolerance zone" of 24 inches from the outer edges of a buried

line.

3. Locator marks must always remain visible. Never place dump piles or building materials over marks; call 811 again if the marks fade.

4. Do not use mechanized equipment near the utility lines. The safest thing to do is manually dig to expose the utility line and avoid damaging it. Here's a quick breakdown of what the different-colored locator flags mean:

- RED: Electricity, Power, and Lighting
- ORANGE: Communication
- YELLOW: Gas, Oil, Steam and Petrol
- GREEN: Sewer Drain Lines
- BLUE: Water
- PURPLE: Reclaim Water, Irrigation and Slurry

Keeping safety at the forefront of our mission, April also provides an opportunity to shine a spotlight on the men and women whose job it is to mark underground

utilities. From April 24-28, we at **Lake Apopka Natural Gas District** proudly celebrate Locator Safety Appreciation Week and the experts who help us navigate around potential hazards while expanding our natural gas network. Thank you for all you do!

This National Safe Digging Month, join **Lake Apopka Natural Gas District** and Sunshine 811 in promoting safe digging practices to keep utility lines intact and everyone safe. And remember, always call 811 before you dig!

Interested in exploring the benefits of natural gas for your home or business? Contact the District's marketing team at (407) 656-2734 ext. 307, marketing@langd.org, or visit <https://www.langd.org/> for more information.

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April 24th was Denim Day



The city of Apopka participated in Denim Day on Wednesday, April 24, joining millions worldwide, standing in solidarity with sexual assault survivors and one another. The city of Apopka supports the Victim Service Center of Central Florida and their efforts to prevent the traumatizing effects of sexual violence and help heal those that have been impacted.

Photo courtesy of city of Apopka/Facebook

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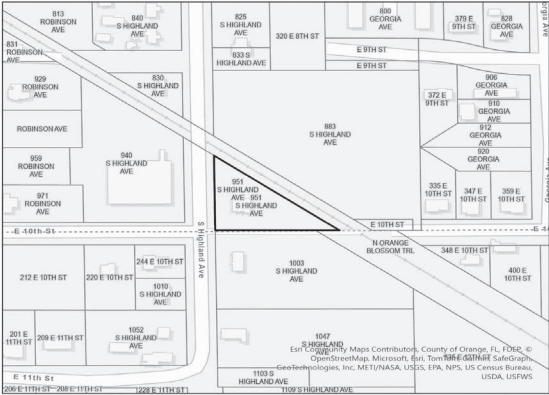


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PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE SMALL-SCALE FUTURE LAND USE AMENDMENT CITY OF APOPKA

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to Secs. 163.3184 and 166.041(3)(c), Florida Statutes and the Apopka Code of Ordinance, Part III, Land Development Code, Article II, Section 2.4.7.B, that **JOSEPH LEWIS** has made an application to the City of Apopka Planning Commission and the City Council for a **CHANGE IN THE FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATION FROM RESIDENTIAL LOW TO INDUSTRIAL FOR 0.57 +/- ACRES.** This application relates to the following described properties:

**ORDINANCE NO. 3051
AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF APOPKA, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT OF THE APOPKA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF THE CITY OF APOPKA; CHANGING THE FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATION FROM RESIDENTIAL LOW TO INDUSTRIAL FOR PAVE A LOT ASPHALT MAINTAINANCE INC GENERALLY LOCATED EAST OF S HIGHLAND AVENUE, AND NORTH OF E 10TH STREET, OWNED BY JOSEPH LEWIS, COMPRISING 0.57 ACRES, MORE OR LESS, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**



Parcel Identification Numbers: 15-21-28-0000-00-106
Contains: 0.57 +/- acres

Notice is given that the **City of Apopka Planning Commission** will hold a public hearing to consider Ordinance No. 3051 at its regularly scheduled meeting in the City Council Chambers of the Apopka City Hall, 120 E. Main Street, Apopka, Florida on **Tuesday, May 14, 2024 beginning at 5:30 P.M.** or as soon thereafter as possible.

FURTHER NOTICE is given that a public hearing for Ordinance No. 3051 will be held by the **City of Apopka City Council** at its regularly scheduled meeting in the City Council Chambers of the Apopka City Hall, 120 E. Main Street, Apopka, Florida on **Wednesday, June 5, 2024 beginning at 1:30 P.M.** or soon thereafter.

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

Apopka City Council
Apopka Planning Commission
Community Development Department

April 26, 2024

Publish: The Apopka Chief

176327

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Wreaths: Apopka hosts holiday wreath-laying event at cemetery

Continued from page 1A

their name is forgotten. So, our goal is to make sure that those names are never forgotten,” said Robert Z. Easley, MEE ambassador. The concept for Wreaths Across America was planted in 1992, when Morrill Worcester, owner of a wreath company in Maine, had a surplus of 5,000 holiday wreaths. He gave the wreaths to Arlington Na-

tional Cemetery to lay on veterans’ graves. This was inspired by a memory he had as a 12-year-old paper boy, when he won a trip to Washington D.C., where he visited the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. The wreath-laying on veterans’ graves became a quiet tradition for over a decade, until a photographer took a photograph of rows of veterans’ graves covered

in wreaths and snow. This image circulated around the internet, sparking national interest in wreath-laying on veterans’ graves. In 2007, the Worcester family and several veterans’ organizations formed Wreaths Across America as a 501(c)(3). In 2022, Wreaths Across America and its national network of volunteers placed over 2.7 million sponsored veterans’

wreaths on headstones of our nation’s service members at 3,702 participating locations. This is the fourth year the city of Apopka will conduct a Wreaths Across America ceremony at Edgewood-Greenwood Cemetery. The Edgewood Greenwood Cemetery currently has 389 identified veterans buried there, with more probably to be identified

for next December, according to Retired. Col. Loretta Forlaw, a member of VFW Post 10147 Auxiliary. “Each wreath costs \$17. We work with great sponsors and local volunteers. Some folks just come to do volunteer work, some buy wreaths. We have some great sponsors also. So, we just look forward to having a special event like this to heighten the awareness so people know that veterans

are being recognized at the holidays with the wreaths.” This year, National Wreaths Across America Day will be held on Saturday, December 14, when over two million volunteers and supporters will honor veterans at over 4,225 participating locations in all 50 states, at sea and abroad. For more information, visit wreathscrossamerica.org.

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JOHN (MONIE) HOUCHINS

John (Monie) Houchins, 90, passed away April 20. Born in Petersburg, Va., he was two days shy of being 91, his birth date being April 22, 1933. He moved to Florida in 1972, opened College Park Restaurant in 1973 and sold it in 1988. He then retired.

He loved fishing and was able to catch a 10 pound bass April 6, his last day of fishing. The biggest one he caught weighed 13 pounds. He also loved watching his race car compete at New Smyrna Speedway.

Monie's survivors are his wife Terri of 43 years, three children: Nancy Turner, William (Judy) Houchins, and David (Dawn) Santo, and his sister: Toni (George) LaPierre; nine grandchildren, 17 great grandchildren and 3 great, great grandchildren.

He is preceded in death by his son Donnie Houchins and his brother Richard Houchins.

Funeral services will be Saturday, May 4, at 12 p.m., at Highland Memorial Gardens on Semoran Blvd. (Hwy 436) in Apopka. In lew of flowers send donations to Hospice in Altamonte Springs.



Monie shown here with one of his large catches.

Obits

JOHN (MONIE) HOUCHINS, 90, passed away April 20, 2024. Born in Petersburg, Va., on April 22, 1933. He is preceded in death by his son Donnie Houchins and his brother Richard Houchins. Survivors wife, Terri; children: Nancy Turner, William (Judy) Houchins, and David (Dawn) Santo; sister, Toni (George) LaPierre; nine grandchildren; 17 great grandchildren; 3 great, great grandchildren.

...



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Fame & Fortune are Ephemeral

I remember hearing an author who had recently won the Pulitzer Prize for Literature remark that although she was pleased, she wanted to keep things in perspective.

She asked “How many Pulitzer Prize winners from the past can you name?” Most ordinary folks probably can’t name one, and if we go through a list of them, we probably recognize a few, but the fame of even celebrated authors is certainly brief, and also narrow, in the sense that most people don’t keep up with famous authors.

We live in a time when many people get their 15 minutes of fame, or their 15 seconds on Tik Tok, but in the grand scheme of things, we’re all likely to be forgotten.

We inscribe our names and dates on tombstones, and perhaps inscribe a clever epithet, and the fact that we are inscribing it on granite or some other rock tricks us into thinking that we are doing something for the ages.

But we’re fooling ourselves. Life is short, and even if our tombstones will last a thousand years, it’s nothing but a blink of the eye. Take heart that life is brief and that fame and fortune are ephemeral. It makes us realize that nothing is so important as to give us pause or make us worry.

Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow you may die. I would add only that you should be kind to everyone you meet, for tomorrow they may die.

– Christopher Simon



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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

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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Proverbs 14:26

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Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding. Proverbs 4:7

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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Forest Avenue Baptist Church
407-886-4374
Fountain of Life Baptist Church
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One Way Christian Church
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The Church at Oak Level
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Pleasant View Baptist Church
407-886-6717
Riverside Baptist Church
407-295-3850
Springs Community Baptist Church
407-889-2240
St. Luke's Full Gospel Baptist Church
352-735-9199

Fame & Fortune are Ephemeral

(See message above.)

“Now listen, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.’ Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, ‘If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.’” James 4:13-15 NIV



Trinity Baptist Church
407-886-2966
Wekiwa Springs Baptist Church
407-886-7864

Bible

Bear Lake Bible Chapel
407-563-3931

Biblical Science

IDMR
321-948-3298

Catholic

St. Francis of Assisi
407-886-4602

Charismatic Episcopal

Ascension Church, CEC
407-880-9555

Christian

Christ Centered Christian Church
321-331-0036
Journey Christian Church
407-884-7223
Real Life Christian Church
352-735-LOVE

Christian Science

Christian Science Church
407-389-4200

Church of Christ

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Plymouth (and Apopka) Church of Christ*
407-886-1466
Church of Christ of West Orange
407-656-2770
Tri-City Church of Christ
407-920-1757
10th Street Church of Christ
407-884-4835

Church of God

Church of God of Zellwood
407-886-3074
Grace Street Church of God
407-298-9188
Healing Waters Church of God
407-886-3780
Park Avenue Worship Center
407-886-2696
Sorrento Church of God
352-735-4245

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

Apopka Ward
407-880-9877

Episcopal

Church of the Holy Spirit
407-886-1740

Faith and Word

Word of Life
407-886-7427

Full Gospel

Millenium of Glory
407-814-0041

New Covenant Perfecting Ministries
407-880-8898

Holiness

St. Elizabeth Church of God by Faith
407-886-6290
St. Matthew Holiness
407-889-2274
Temple of Faith Church
407-884-6960

Independent

True Temple of God
407-880-8181

Interdenominational

New Vision Community Church
407-886-3619
Northwest Community Church
407-578-2088
One Accord Christian Fellowship Church
407-523-3002

Jewish

Congregation Beth Am
407-862-3505
Congregation of Reform Judaism
407-645-0444

Lutheran

St. Paul Lutheran
407-889-2634

Methodist

First United Methodist
407-886-3421
Bear Lake United Methodist
407-862-1531
Zellwood United Methodist
407-889-4426

Moravian

Rolling Hills Moravian Church
407-332-8380

Nazarene

Calvary Church of the Nazarene
407-889-2148
Apopka Springhill Church of the Nazarene
407-884-8322

Non-Denominational

Anointed Word Family Worship Center
407-886-4989
Casa De Oración Internacional
321-239-7680
Center of Faith Church for All People
407-464-9375
Church on the Edge
407-869-1133
City of Destiny (The)
407-884-6322
Compass Community Church
407-880-6110

Dayspring Community Church
407-814-4996

Everlasting Covenant Christian Center
407-884-8598

Faithworks Church
302-293-1391

Freedom Fellowship
407-299-6311

Freedom Ministries
407-886-6006

Grace Gospel Church
321-438-4554

Grace Pointe Church
407-889-3383

Graceworx Community Church
321-228-4599

Happy Hill Ministries
407-889-0583

Holy Tabernacle Church
407-928-8617

Hosanna To The Highest Ministries
407-491-4266

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407-415-6218

Ministries of Good Life
407-703-7464

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407-880-3421

New Beginning Worship Center
352-455-9173

New Life Word of Faith
321-460-8205

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407-703-7346

Renewal Church
407-410-5378

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407-886-4570

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407-445-1230

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407-227-8829

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Church in the Son
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407-310-8672

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Way of Grace Ministries
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Presbyterian

First Presbyterian of Apopka
407-886-5943
St. Andrews Presbyterian Church
407-293-6802

Reformed Church in America

Rolling Hills Community Church
407-886-7664

Seventh-day Adventists

Apopka Seventh-day Adventist
407-889-2812

Florida Living SDA Church
407-284-7472

Forest Lake
407-869-0680

Franco-Haitian
407-296-4368

Genesis Spanish
509-264-4873

Maranatha
407-290-1800

Seventh-day Adventist
407-292-9210

Orlando Vietnamese
407-339-4974

Seventh-day Adventist
321-870-8583

Pine Hills
407-291-4816

Plymouth-Sorrento
407-884-0595

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Templo Asamblea Bíblica
Lake Howell Branch Chapel
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Unity Church of Christianity
407-295-9181

Ukrainian

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Food pantry finishes annual fundraiser



Loaves and Fishes, on 206 E. Eighth St., Apopka, has ended its annual long March Match Madness, which ran March 1-31. The Christian food pantry ministry collected \$56,589.98 and received a \$50,000-match, bringing them a total to \$106,589.98. The Loaves & Fishes staff and volunteers (pictured) express gratitude to the entire community for its support and kindness to help feed those in need. Loaves & Fishes helps approximately 300 qualified families/individuals each week, which amounts to over 24,600 items distributed each month. Operating hours are Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Photo by Loaves and Fishes

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Water schedule has changed

This week, the city of Apopka Department of Public Services has enacted a state of water supply conservation to ensure an adequate supply of potable and reclaim water.

With an increasingly faster depletion of the water supply being observed at the city of Apopka potable and reclaim water plants, the city is entering the mandatory water conservation restrictions listed below.

The following restrictions are in effect beginning Wednesday, April 24:

Restriction type: Mandatory

According to the St. Johns River Water Management District, restricted irrigation activities are permitted before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m. and are limited to alternate days. Addresses ending in odd numbers may water on Wednesday and Saturday. Addresses ending in even numbers may water on Thursday and Sunday. Non-residential irrigation may water on Tuesday and Friday.

At this time, we are requesting that residential and commercial customers do not install new sod until the water restrictions have been rescinded.

Any irrigation practices are restricted to 15 minutes per zone.

Consequences of violating the restrictions are:

First Violation: Written Warning
Second Violation: \$50 Fine
Third Violation: \$100 Fine
Subsequent Violations: \$500 Fine

Each day in which any violation exists shall be deemed to constitute a separate offense.

Drought Level: Heat Wave
Restriction: Mandatory
Restricted Activities: Outside Water Use in General
Watering Lawns & Gardens

For more information, contact the Department of Public Services by phone at 407-703-1731.

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SUDOKU ANSWERS

PUZZLE CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 2B

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

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Puzzle Solution

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

The Crossword Puzzle is found on page 2B

Audit: Nelson asks that more items be added to audit

Continued from page 1A

port our opinion. However, we're not issuing an opinion on the effectiveness of those internal control generally accepted auditing standards, as well as government auditing standards to provide reasonable not absolute assurance that the financial statements are free of material misstatement. The financial statements are the responsibility of city's management. I'm happy to report that we've issued an unmodified opinion, which is the highest form of assurance that we can provide."

"I'm happy to report that there are no current year findings, which again, is the first time in at least six years or potentially beyond that. I only went back six years," Anderson continued. "That your auditors can stand up here and say that we had no findings in performing the audit. I spoke previously about the single audit. The city did receive and

spend approximately \$3.8 million in federal awards, which required Maulden and Jenkins to perform an audit over two major programs covering \$3.2 million of the \$3.8 million of those expenditures. We had no issues in regard to compliance or internal controls over compliance with respect to those grants that we tested."

Mayor Bryan Nelson asked Anderson two questions. The first was when was the last time Anderson spoke with the mayor or about the audit. Anderson said it was when his firm began the planning phase around last August-September. Nelson's second question was if Anderson ever donated money to campaigns with anybody sitting on the dais. Anderson replied no.

Before Anderson's presentation, City Finance Director Blanche Sherman provided an overview of the city's check processing, which includes a lot of checks and balances between de-

partments, Sherman said.

"So, it's kind of simple, but it's not simple," Sherman said. "There's a lot of checks and balances, A lot of steps that we go through. A lot of review and oversight."

Commissioner Nick Nesta gave his thoughts regarding the forensic audit: "I know you're asking for scope, things like that, you want very specific items labeled and things like that. I know we had the discussion and I wrote emails back and forth and I stated it in the minutes that we also approved earlier today that my presentation was as granular as I want to get. I think it needs to be a very wide-cast net was the whole point of this, that the 5-0 vote agreed to. So, if you want, I don't know to what extent you need my assistance on that level, but I don't know if there, it doesn't need to get more granular than that."

"It needs to be a wide net.

That's the whole point of it. I don't know what else to, it doesn't need to get more specific, I guess is my concern is that the more specific we get, the more things we're going to miss," Nesta said.

Sherman said she'll make a draft based on the information she has, then send it to each City Council member for a final review.

During his mayor's report, Nelson asked for six items to add to the forensic audit.

*To verify the business tax receipt payments from 2013 to current for Nester Real Estate Consultants, BRPC consulting and Nelson's Insurance Services;

*Qualify checks for all candidates for the 2022 and 2024 elections;

*The number of late campaign reports for Nesta, Commissioners Alexander H. Smith and Diane Velazquez, former Commissioner Kyle Becker, and Nelson for all the elections, and es-

pecially look at all seven of Nelson's elections;

*Verify or discredit the excess income of interest income of One Florida Bank over Synovus Bank from June 2021 to June 2023 when One Florida decided not to take on any city of Apopka deposits.

*Verify the extra earning that Nesta secured and continue to generate. Nelson referenced a Promises Made, Promises Kept" postcard from Nesta's latest reelection campaign, which stated, No. 2, fiscally responsible spending: I successfully advocated and secured a solid investment option earning approximately \$1 million more per year in interest for the residents' funds, meaning lower taxes and the ability to invest back into the community.

*To know the excess spending on attorney fees since the city's inside counsel Michael Rodriguez resigned in May 2023.

Board: Other highlights include a strategic plan update

Continued from page 1A

decade to maintain and update current schools and build new schools in high-growth areas of the county. In addition, this funding will help to enhance student security and provide updated technology in schools.

The next step is to send the referendum to the Board of County Commissioners for approval to place on the November 5 ballot.

Strategic Plan update

The Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) Safety and Emergency Management Office presented on the purpose of OCPS having a Family Reunifi-

cation Plan to safely reunite students and employees with their families if a school or facility is closed or unexpectedly evacuated due to a natural or manmade disaster.

This plan provides a framework to establish, manage, and demobilize a Family Reunification Center. It defines the roles and responsibilities of staff, ensures the safety and accountability of students, and establishes procedures to expeditiously reunite students with a parent, guardians or other authorized individual under controlled circumstances.

The development of the reunification plan is in coordination

with OCPS' public safety partners.

Check presentation

Addition Financial presented the school board with a check for \$57,898. The funds were made possible through their Affinity Debit Card Program. The program donates three cents to the school district every time an OCPS branded debit card is used in a transaction. Addition Financial is a credit union that has partnered with OCPS for 87 years.

School Board recognitions

•West Orange High Student Advisory Council member, Brady Beahler, presented on the WOHS

culture and introduced the school's Unified Cheer in a performance. In addition, theatre students sang "S'Wonderful" from the musical "Nice To Work if You Can Get It."

•UCF and Orange County Environmental Protection Division (EPD) Air Quality Management (AQM) program air-quality slogan winner: Evans High sophomore Myron Divers for coming up with the motto, "Breathe Life into our Future. Act Now for Cleaner Air!"

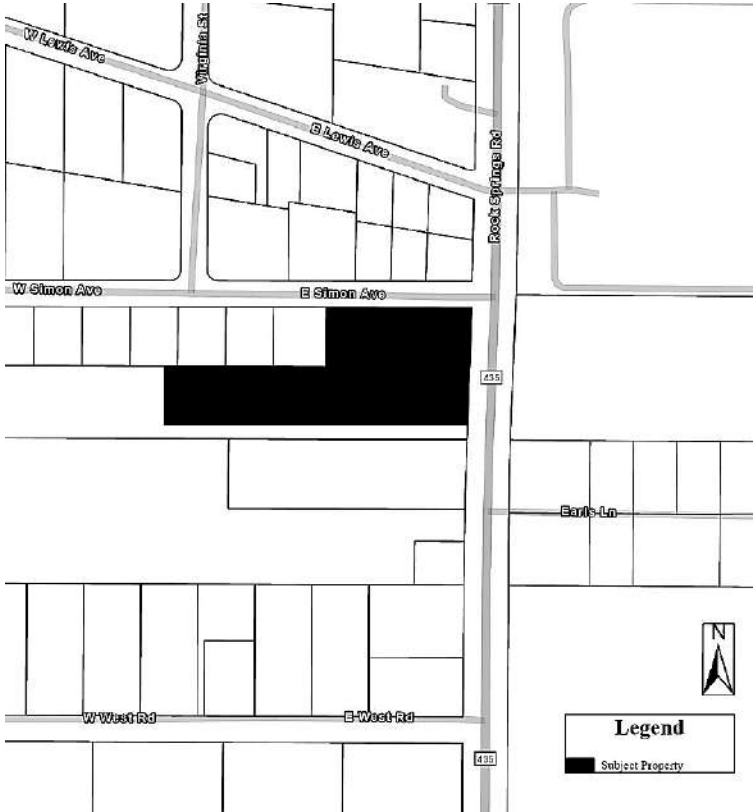
•OCPS' 10th Annual Green School Recognition Program Award winners were Dommerich, Sally Ride and Zellwood elementary schools

•Mental Health First Aid Summit Award winners: Mental Health Services team received awards for providing more than 17,000 OCPS employees with Youth Mental Health First Aid training.

•Mental Health Services winners include Coordinator of the Year: Honorable Mention – National: Maryann Anderson; Top Florida Mental Health First Aid Trainer and Top Mental Health First Aid Instructor - National: Elvira Medina-Pekofsky; Top Mental Health First Aid Instructor - National: Stephanie Panas, Tajuana Rushin, Lisa Diamond, Beverly Tuitt; Top 10 New Instructor at the National Level: Sheena Montgomery.

CITY OF APOPKA PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE SPECIAL EXCEPTION

NOTICE is hereby given that **JOEL R BREIDENBAUGH C/O MARCI CHANDLER, P.E.** has made an application, in accordance with Apopka Code of Ordinances, Part III, Land Development Code, Article II, Section 4.2.2.C to the City of Apopka Planning Commission for a **SPECIAL EXCEPTION TO ALLOW A PLACE OF WORSHIP IN THE RCE (RESIDENTIAL COUNTRY ESTATES) ZONING DISTRICT.** This application relates to the following described property located on the southwest corner of Rock Springs Road and Simon Avenue:



Parcel Identification Number(s): 16-20-28-0000-00-022
Contains: 3.16 +/- acres

Notice is given that the **City of Apopka Planning Commission** will hold a public hearing to consider the special exception request at its scheduled meeting in the City Council Chambers of the Apopka City Hall on **Tuesday, May 14, 2024, beginning at 5:30 P.M.,** or as soon thereafter as possible.

Affected parties and the public may appear at the above listed hearing to speak. 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, Florida 32703; Telephone: 407-703-1704, no less than 48 hours prior to the proceeding.

Apopka City Council
Apopka Planning Commission
Community Development Department

April 26, 2024

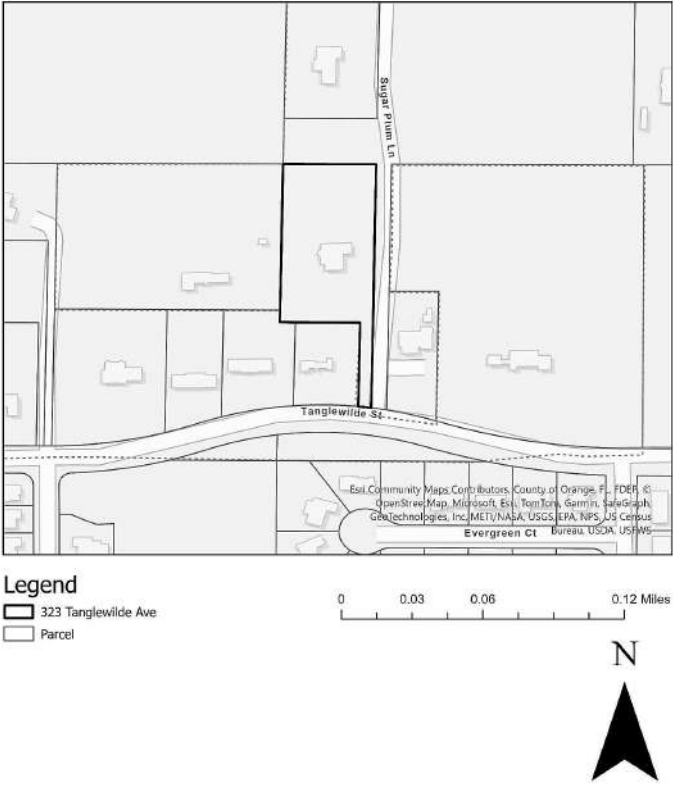
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176324

CITY OF APOPKA PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE SPECIAL EXCEPTION

NOTICE is hereby given that **MARGARET BRONSON-SEWELL** has made an application, in accordance with Apopka Code of Ordinances, Part III, Land Development Code, Article II, Section 4.2.2.C to the City of Apopka Planning Commission for a **SPECIAL EXCEPTION TO ALLOW AN ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (ADU) IN THE RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-FAMILY ESTATE (RSF-1A) ZONING DISTRICT.**

This application relates to the following described property located at 323 Tanglewilde Street:



Parcel Identification Number(s): 03-21-28-0000-00-089
Contains: 1.54 +/- acres

Notice is given that the **City of Apopka Planning Commission** will hold a public hearing to consider the Special Exception request at its scheduled meeting in the City Council Chambers of the Apopka City Hall on **Tuesday, May 14, 2024 beginning at 5:30 P.M.,** or as soon thereafter as possible.

Affected parties and the public may appear at the above listed hearing to speak. 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, Florida 32703; Telephone: 407-703-1704, no less than 48 hours prior to the proceeding.

April 26, 2024

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Apopka Planning Commission
Community Development Department

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