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# The Apopka Chief

Your trusted local news source

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Volume 102 Number 26

Friday, June 28, 2024 / 50 cents

## Road transfers from Orange County to city are approved

By Teresa Sargeant  
Apopka Chief Staff

The Apopka City Council approved 5-0 each on three road transfers from Orange County to the city so the city could upgrade these infrastructures to keep up with local growth.

The sections of Ocoee-Apopka Road in discussion were from south of Keene Road to 13th Street, Binion Road from Areca Palm Drive to Hayden Valley Street, and Golden Gem Road from Capital Reef Way to Kelly Park Road.

Orange County has been requesting the city to take ownership of Ocoee-Apopka Road for almost 10 years, according to a staff report in the Wednesday, June 19, Council agenda packet.

The city's growth has impacted roadway capacity on city and county roads, including portions of Binion Road, Ocoee-Apopka Road, and Golden Gem Road, which are all county owned, maintained and operated.

"This is an agenda, and it's been a long time coming," said Pamela Richmond, city of Apopka transportation coordinator. "We've been trying to get some things done on these roads for several years. Actually, I want to start with Ocoee-Apopka Road. Maybe three years ago when development started coming in, we all acknowledged something needed to be done there. In fact, I remember (Apopka City) Com-

missioner (Alexander) Smith looking at me and saying, 'I don't want to hear that it's Orange County's road. I want to hear what we're going to do.' So, we have two agreements in place with different developers to help us take care of that problem."

Richmond explained that city staff worked with Orange county on several occasions trying to get them to help the city fix some of their roads because such roads have been under the county's jurisdiction and are expensive to fix. Because county representatives declined to assist, city staff had to undertake such projects by partnering with developers, Richmond said.

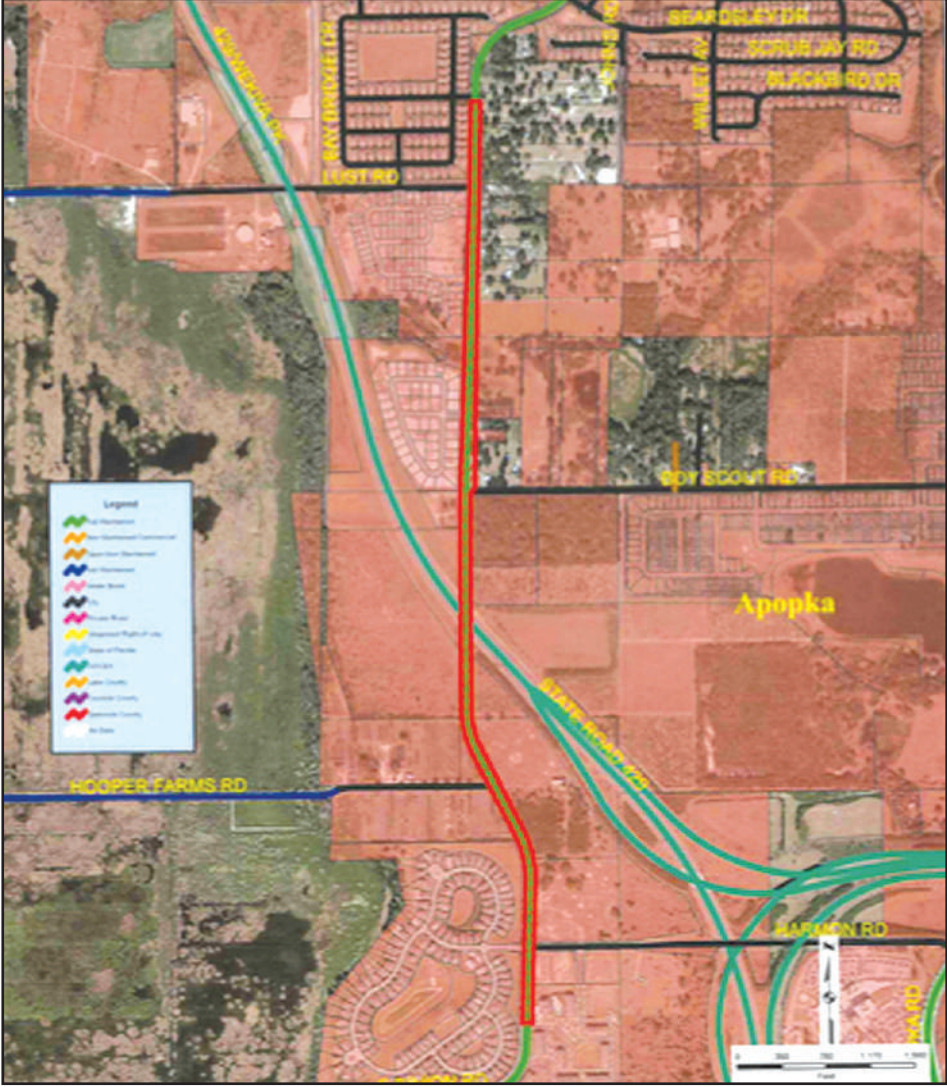
### Ocoee-Apopka Road

The first road the City Council voted to approve from county to city transfer was Ocoee-Apopka Road, the portion south of Keene Road to about Alston Bay Boulevard, where it turns into four lanes. From Harmon Road up to 13th Street, the city had originally planned on going all the way up to Hawthorne Avenue.

Richmond explained there have been stormwater issues between Hawthorne and 13th Street, and that was why the city didn't take the road before.

The county has committed to fixing that, but I haven't seen it yet," Richmond said.

A new traffic signal will go up at



This map is presented as Exhibit A for the interlocal agreement between the City and Orange County regarding the transfer of jurisdiction of Binion Road from Hayden Valley Street to Areca Palm Drive.

See **ROADS** Page 3A

## Apopka Museum celebrates 55th anniversary with event



Photo courtesy of Apopka Historical Society

Among those who celebrated the Apopka Museum's 55th anniversary on Saturday, June 22, at the museum are (l to r) Nick Nesta, Apopka city commissioner; Diane Velazquez, Apopka city commissioner; Maribel Brinkle, Apopka Historical Society president; Betsy Townsend, Apopka Historical Society librarian; Trudy Weiss, Apopka Historical Society secretary; and Mayor Bryan Nelson.

By Teresa Sargeant  
Apopka Chief Staff

The Apopka Museum celebrated its 55th anniversary with its "55 & Still Alive!" celebration on Saturday, June 22, with food and refreshments, a tour of the museum and remarks from community leaders.

During her remarks to guests at the event, Maribel Brinkle, president of the Apopka Historical Society, explained that a "museum isn't just a repository of dusty artifacts. It's the beating heart of a community reminding us where we came from and inspiring us to build a future worthy of those who came before."

She said that the museum and the society's mission doesn't end at 55 years, but that the museum and the society "have a responsibility, a passion to pass this torch of knowledge to the next generation."

Brinkle credits the museum's members and supporters for its strength and advised "as we look to the future, we must acknowl-

edge the ever-evolving landscape of history."

"Imagine a future where artificial intelligence isn't just a technological marvel, but an integral part of our museum experience. Imagine AI exhibits, interactive and informative, that can guide visitors, answer questions, and even record our town's ongoing story," Brinkle continued.

"That, my friends, is the ultimate goal we strive for – an expansion that embraces the future while cherishing the past. Let's ensure our children and their children have a place to discover the magic and lessons of the past. It's a vision we can achieve together, one that secures our museum's legacy for generations to come."

The city has been exploring options for the museum that's outgrowing its space.

"Obviously we need to get this building renovated and add a room; that would be an awesome undertaking," said Mayor

See **MUSEUM** Page 7A

## City Council to conduct FY25 budget workshops

The Apopka City Council will conduct its budget workshops next month, reviewing all of the city departments' finances for fiscal year 2025.

All workshops will be live streamed on the city's YouTube channel (@CityofApopkaFL) from the Apopka City Hall Council Chambers on the following dates and times:

**\*Budget Workshop No. 1** on Monday, July 8, at 5 p.m. with Community Development, Economic Development, Parks & Recreation, and Administration

**\*Budget Workshop No. 2** on Tuesday, July 9, 2024 at 5:45 p.m. (following the Apopka Planning Commission) with Information Technology and Public Services

**\*Budget Workshop No. 3** on Wednesday, July 10, at 5 p.m. with Police and Fire

**\*Special Council meeting to approve and set proposed fiscal year 2024-25 millage rate** on Wednesday, July 10, at 7 p.m.

Visit the Agenda page at [apopka.gov](http://apopka.gov) to learn more about these meetings.

### Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive

Many wildlife species, like this Great blue heron as photographed on Friday, June 21, can be seen at Apopka Wildlife Drive, located on the North Shore of Lake Apopka. The drive is free and open to the public each Friday through Sunday and federal holidays. The entrance gate to the 11-mile, one-way drive is located at 2850 Lust Road, Apopka, and opens at 7 a.m. and closes at 3 p.m. The exit gate on Jones Avenue in Zellwood closes at 5 p.m.

### This week

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Find Public Notices  
Online at: [TheApopkaChief.com/public-notices](http://TheApopkaChief.com/public-notices) OR  
[FloridaPublicNotices.com](http://FloridaPublicNotices.com)



Apopka Event of the Week

July 4 Independence Day celebration sponsored by the City of Apopka will be at the Apopka Amphitheater, Northwest Recreation Complex, 3710 Jason Dwell-ey Parkway, from 6-9 p.m. This free, fam-ily-friendly event will have live music, local craft vendors, delicious food and refresh-ing drinks. Fireworks will end the evening beginning at approximately 9 p.m.

Quotable

“What we found was a fully func-tional, highly organized international human trafficking operation” based in Hillsborough and Manatee counties, said FDLE SAC Mark Brutnell.

Florida’s AG Moody and FDLE on need for new strike team on human trafficking

Opinion

The Apopka Chief  
A weekly newspaper founded in 1923

**Publisher**  
John Ricketson  
**Consultant Emeritus**  
John Peery  
Mar. 28 1956 - Oct. 12, 2023

**Reporters**  
Teresa Sargeant  
Marshall Tempest  
Neal Fisher

**Marketing Director**  
Jackie Trefcer  
**General Mgr Emeritus**  
Neoma Knox  
Feb. 12, 1929 - Sept. 18, 2021

Our position

Strike Team in Florida mobilized to combat human trafficking

The Center Square –

A new multi-agency human trafficking strike team has been cre-ated in Florida to target border-re-lated crime. As the result of a recent months-long operation, 10 victims were rescued, and several alleged perpetrators were arrested.

Attorney General Ashley Moody announced the creation of the new strike team with law en-forcement leaders on Thursday.

“Human trafficking is a chal-lenge for every state,” AG Moody said, “because, under this president, we have absolutely no enforcement at the southwest border. People are ... giving monies to transnation-al criminal organizations to bring them straight into this country; then they find themselves at the mercy of the same organization.

“Because we have our own government pushing as many peo-ple as they can into the interior,” en-forcing the law “falls on the shoul-ders of these folks standing behind me to make sure that we are rescu-ing those that are being taken ad-vantage of,” she said.

The investigation began in Oc-tober 2023 in Manatee County after the sheriff’s office acted on a search warrant and turned over informa-tion to Homeland Security Investi-gations and the strike team, FDLE Special Agent in Charge Mark Brutnell said.

Investigators identified busi-nesses that were commercial fronts for sex trafficking operations in Manatee and Hillsborough coun-ties, where alleged ringleader Lina Payne recruited women from Co-lumbia and allegedly held them hostage in Florida. She then alleg-edly forced them to have sex to pay off their debt to bring them into the country under threat of violence.

“What we found was a fully functional, highly organized inter-national human trafficking opera-tion” based in Hillsborough and Manatee counties, Brutnell said. Payne was allegedly making fre-quent international trips to Latin American countries where the vic-tims were living and were later traf-

ficked through the border into Flor-ida, he said.

The victims had no accessible modes of transportation, their iden-tification documents were taken from them, their food was delivered to them, they were forced to live in-side massage parlors, barber shops and other businesses, where they could not leave, he said.

Payne’s alleged accomplic-es, her boyfriend, Sebastian Ju-rado, and her son, Andres Payne, were involved in recruiting women from Venezuela and Colombia who agreed to pay between \$40,000 and \$50,000 to be smuggled across the southwest border into the U.S., ac-cording to the investigation. Lina Payne allegedly promised them leg-itimate work, but once they ar-rived, they were held hostage.

At one point during the investi-gation, it appeared Lina Payne was attempting to flee the country and was arrested at the Fort Lauderdale International Airport. Not soon af-ter, her boyfriend and son were ar-rested in Tampa. Another alleged trafficker remains at large. Each defendant faces multiple felony charges and is being prosecuted by AG Moody’s Office of Statewide Prosecution.

Through the course of the in-vestigation, the strike team rescued 10 victims. They also believe they identified more than 117 victims of Payne’s trafficking operation over years.

Pasco County Sheriff Chris Nocco said the victims “were brought here to Florida and had no idea what hell they were be-ing brought into. We’re talking about human lives. If someone was drowning, we’d go out and save them. These are people who are lost out at sea, in hell, living in captivi-ty. We are going to rescue them.”

While he said he was glad they caught the traffickers, he said, “there are a lot of evil people who pay to have forced sex, rape, with these women.”

One way to break the cycle

See **TRAFFICKING** Page 6A

NOW CONSIDERED A “THREAT TO DEMOCRACY”



KIRK

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Solving homeless problem is difficult

Many of my articles are types of book reports or information related to my research. This column on homelessness will be an example of this. I re-cently met Martha Are of the Homeless Services Network (HSN) of Cen-tral Florida to discuss ideas of how to open a shelter in the Apopka area with a large tranche of federal dol-lars the county received as mitigation dollars for re-cent hurricanes. I will share some statistics from her or-ganization and an insight-ful review of an article en-titled, “A Tale of Two Tent Cities; the Critical Role of Housing Engagement in Addressing Homeless En-campments,” published in the Georgetown Journal on Poverty Law and Policy from Spring of 2023.

The Homeless Servic-

County Commissioner  
District 2



Christine Moore

es Network leads Central Florida’s efforts to house people experiencing home-lessness and to help them remain housed. They run a centralized intake system through the region and help draw down millions of dol-lars in federal funding for homeless housing. They partner with dozens of non-profit agencies and local government partners to co-ordinate outreach, emer-gency shelters, transitional housing, and other resourc-es. Martha is assisting me

with the shelter grant op-portunity. It will be chal-lenging, and I ask for your prayers for success.

In 2023, the HSN launched an \$8.4 mil-lion initiative to help pre-vent and end homelessness among 1 to 24-year-olds. The effort included hous-ing, educational support, career training, and men-tal and physical health care. They also coordinated shel-ter and transportation dur-ing freeze warnings and distributed cooling sup-plies during summer heat. Ninety-nine percent of their funding goes to help people get stabilized housing.

Many of you have been reading about a bill in the legislature to force municipalities without any funding to create homeless

See **MOORE** Page 6A

Working for new schools pays off

Last week I shared the great news that I have been reelected, without op-position, as School Board Member for District 7. When I started my cam-paign for reelection in Feb-ruary, I took some time to look back at what had been accomplished over the last six years as well as look forward to what still needs to be done. I’d like to share some of these thoughts with you, as well.

My tenure on the school board began with a very clear mandate from our community in Apop-

Orange County School  
Board, District 7



Melissa Byrd

ka: do something about the overcrowded Wolf Lake Schools.

I held several town hall meetings around my district soon after getting elected, and the one I held

in Apopka was full of com-munity members who were beyond frustrated with the massively overcrowd-ed elementary and middle school.

They each had very large numbers of portables on campus, traffic was a nightmare, and there was not a relief school in sight until 2026. This was 2018.

So, I immediately got to work meeting with different departments in OCPS and learning every-thing I could about how

See **BYRD** Page 6A

This Week In God’s Word

In their hearts humans plan their course,  
but the Lord establishes their steps.  
Proverbs 16:9

Mema Says

It’s about what you have  
and can do, not what you  
don’t have or cannot do.

The Apopka Chief is published every Friday and entered as Periodicals, post-age 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.



The lottery was sold as a good idea to raise funding for education

“Throw another log on the fire!” As the house burns down around him, the man hollers at his wife to feed the fireplace.

I look around our house (The United States of America) and I see tur-moil, indecision, and a fire-storm of political deceit-fulness that tends to erode our moral, ethical, Judean-Christian foundation upon which our Constitutional Republic stands. We have replaced Jesus Christ with drag queens that boast of their ungodly lifestyle in



Ike Hayden

our K-12 classrooms. We will not allow the Bible to be read or even allowed in some of our school librar-ies, and yet our children can read books teaching how Johnny can become Jenny, and visa-versa.

For the last fifty years, there has been a coordi-nated effort to tear down the traditional western way of life with an emphasis on families. When Lyndon Johnson set his great soci-ety into action, he encour-aged the breakdown of the family, for one purpose: to create dependence on the state to provide all the ne-cessities of life by pass-ing legislation like welfare laws that required fathers to be out of the house in order to be eligible for benefits. Laws, such as no-fault di-

vorice, normalization of in-fidelity, promotion of promiscuity, and legalization of drugs have been demor-alizing, and devastating to our kids, and families.

Our society is totter-ing on the brink of demise. Now we have a bill that would allow Marijuana to become a legal, adult-only, recreational drug that will be severely restricted, reg-ulated, and the one thing that lights up everybody’s thinking cap is that it will bring in billions for our schools, our local govern-

ment, and all that money will benefit everyone!

Does anyone remem-ber the toll promise? After the tolls collected would pay off the cost of turn-pike construction, the tolls would go away. Remember how much money would be given to the schools and our educational system if we would just allow the lot-tery in Florida? The mon-ey has been given, but for every dollar donated, that much would be withheld by the counties, from the percentage that had been

budgeted for education by the county government for other pet projects.

Now we have “ordi-nary” people appearing on TV to persuade us that allowing Marijuana is a “freedom” thing and will allow users to be free from persecution by the law. (By the way, I do not agree that someone who must take a hit in the morning to face the day is ordinary.)

When are we go-ing to come to our senses

See **HAYDEN** Page 6A



# Roads: Transfers were needed so city could upgrade infrastructures to accommodate traffic

Continued from page 1A

Marden Road, and a traffic signal at Keene Road is under design. The Marden Road signal was done under Orange County's permitting and review, took two extra years and cost between \$400,000-\$600,000, Richmond explained.

"We all use the same standards. It's just things always come up with Orange County. They keep changing their mind about what they want. Too many spoons in the pot, in my opinion. If we just had the road, we would just go out there and do it to our standards, Orange County standards and DOT (Department of Transportation) standards," Richmond said.

Ocoee-Apopka Road, from south of Keene Road to 13th Street will be widened to four lanes. New signals will be installed at Keene Road, Boy Scout Road, and Marden Road. A condition of taking ownership of this road is that the

county will mill and resurface the existing four-lane segment between Alston Bay Boulevard and Harmon Road, according to the staff report.

Also, the county will give the city a 14.6-acre parcel located at 1102 Ocoee-Apopka Road where AdventHealth would like to partner with the city and potentially other civic groups, to develop a park, according to the same staff report.

## Binion Road

Binion Road from Area Palm Drive to Hayden Valley Street (south of Harmon Road to north of Lust Road) is a segment that has been heavily impacted by new developments in the City.

Central Florida Expressway and the city of Apopka have partnered to install a new half-interchange at Boy Scout Road. Because of the complexity of the project, it was decided that limiting the project coordination and permitting

to one agency, the city, is beneficial to the project to keep the schedule and costs under control. The county supports the interchange project and the city's acquisition of the road.

To better regulate traffic and make it safer, the city is designing roundabouts at Harmon Road and Lust Road, in its plans for that area.

## Golden Gem Road

Having discussed Golden Gem Road several times at City Council meetings, Richmond announced that the city came to an agreement with Orange County regarding Gold-

en Gem Road: the county would take the southern half of it, and the city would take ownership and upgrade the northern half, the more expensive portion. Golden Gem Road's northern half runs from Capital Reef Way to Kelly Park Road. According to Richmond, it would take \$13 million to bring all of Golden Gem Road up to city standard.

"The county is comfortable with us taking the northern half, which is actually the most expensive half. That's already under design. We're probably at 60 percent and we actually do have the funding through

the Kelly Park (Road) Pioneering Agreement to get that piece done. There will be a signal at Golden Gem and Kelly Park," Richmond said.

Orange County has invited the city to partner with them in the Northwest Orange County Area Wide Transportation Network Study, Richmond said, adding that the county won't make any roadway improvements in the Apopka area until the study is complete, which could take about one year. Roadway improvements from that study may not be seen for two to three years.

**REGAL**

Fri., June 28, 2024 thru Sun., June 30, 2024

3D SHOWINGS

INSIDE OUT 2 (PG) 5:00; 10:00

**HORIZON: AN AMERICAN SAGA CHAPTER 1 (R)** 10:10A; 2:10; 6:10; 10:10

**INSIDE OUT 2 (PG)** 10:20A; 11:00A; 11:50A; 12:50; 1:30; 2:30; 3:20; 4:00; 6:30; 7:20; 9:10

**A QUIET PLACE: DAY ONE (PG-13)** 10:30A; 11:30A; 1:10; 2:20; 4:10; 5:10; 6:00; 7:00; 8:00; 9:00; 9:50; 10:40

**BAD BOYS: RIDE OR DIE (R)** 10:40A; 1:40; 4:30; 7:30; 10:20

**KINGDOM OF THE PLANET OF THE APES (PG-13)** 12:10; 3:30; 6:50; 10:30

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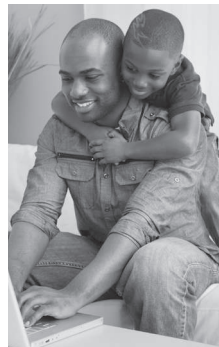
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# 1776 was the birth of a great nation

The Declaration of Independence is a formal document that served as the signatory colonies' statement that they were now "free and independent States." It is a vital document in American history.

On July 1, 1776, delegates from the original 13 colonies, making up the

Second Continental Congress, met in Philadelphia to vote on Richard Henry Lee's motion for independence. After some deliberation, ultimately 12 of the 13 delegates voted in favor. In recognition of those 12 delegates, here are 12 facts regarding the Declaration.

Continued on page 5A



**July 4th**  
**Celebrating our Independence**

Since 1776 the American flag has been more than just cloth and ink. It is a symbol that stands for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. It's the history of our nation, and marked by the blood of those who fought and died for our freedom.

**Bahia Shriners**  
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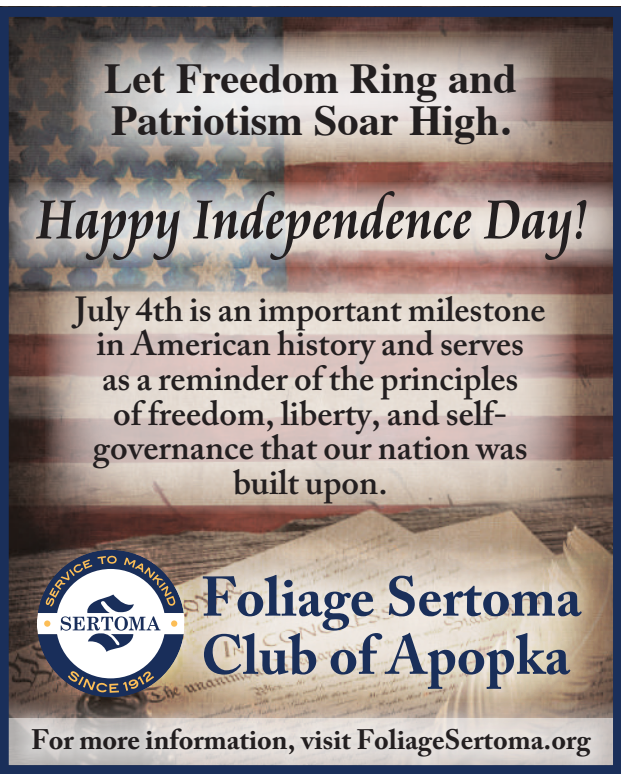
Let Freedom Ring and Patriotism Soar High.

**Happy Independence Day!**

July 4th is an important milestone in American history and serves as a reminder of the principles of freedom, liberty, and self-governance that our nation was built upon.

**Foliage Sertoma Club of Apopka**

For more information, visit [FoliageSertoma.org](http://FoliageSertoma.org)



**Happy Independence Day!**

Since the signing of the Constitution of the United States, we continue to stand for liberty, freedom, and prosperity. These are worth remembering.

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Fourth of July is a day of immense significance for Americans, a time when we celebrate the spirit of independence and the birth of our great nation. As we gather with friends and family, let us remember the sacrifices made by our forefathers. And may these Fourth of July messages serve as heartfelt expressions honoring what our forefathers sacrificed and stood for.

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*This July 4th, let us not forget that the freedoms we enjoy came at a great cost to those that served and sacrificed.*





Continued from page 4A

ration of Independence.

1. The drafted document was officially adopted on July 4, 1776, two days after freedom from Britain was approved. However, most delegates signed the document on August 2, 1776, while others signed on a later date. John Dickinson and Robert R. Livingston never signed the Declaration of Independence.

2. John Dunlap was the official printer of Congress at the time. He worked all night and into the morning of July 5 to produce the large, single-sided sheet, known as a broadside. About 200 copies of Dunlap's broadside were made.

3. The University of Virginia owns two copies of a rare early printing of the Declaration. It is on display in the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library. It is believed the copy once belonged to George Washington.

4. Benjamin Franklin, George Read, Roger Sherman, Robert Morris, George Clymer, and James Wilson signed both the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.

5. The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were hid-

den at Fort Knox during World War II, two weeks after Pearl Harbor was attacked.

6. Despite what the movie "National Treasure" will have one believe, the message on the back of the document is visible and reads "Original Declaration of Independence dated 4th July 1776."

7. Richard Stockton, a lawyer from New Jersey, was a signer of the Declaration who later recanted his support of the American revolution. He subsequently swore his allegiance to King George III after being captured by the British.

8. In 1989, an original Dunlap Broadside was found hidden behind a picture a Philadelphia man bought at a flea market for \$4. It later sold for \$8.1 million. Ultimately, 26 copies of the original prints have been found.

9. The United States celebrates Independence Day on July 4th, even though independence was accepted on July 2nd.

10. Early on, not everyone in America was supportive of the Declaration of Independence. Partisan politics led to discord. Federalist John Adams was feuding with Republicans and

Thomas Jefferson. The anniversary date of the signing was not widely celebrated until the Federalists were no longer involved in politics.

11. The one-year anniversary of Independence Day and the celebration of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence slipped the minds of Congress in 1777. When they remembered it was July 3rd, they planned a last-minute celebration on July 4th, and each year thereafter.

12. John Trumbull's painting "Declaration of Independence," which was made into a lithograph replica by Ralph Trembly, hangs in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol. It is a fictional depiction of the five-man drafting committee presenting their draft to Congress, and not the signing.

The painting shows 42 of the 56 signees, since Trumbull couldn't get likenesses of all involved. The men featured in the painting were never all in the room at the same time during the Declaration's debate and signing.

The Declaration of Independence is a key document in American history, and its words are celebrated each Independence Day.

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# Museum: ‘This is what we have to show our children,’ says Velazquez

Continued from page 1A

Bryan Nelson. “We tried a couple of times to get some grants, but haven’t come up with one yet. Hopefully we’ll get a grant that’ll help us to build that dream.”

The Apopka Museum reflects its community’s history that continues to grow because more people are added to the foundation already set by older generations, said City Commissioner

Diane Velazquez.

“Even though we have older Apopkans who have set the foundation for every new family that has come here including myself. We are added to this foundation, so I’m very proud to be a part of that,” she said. “This is what we have to show our children. This is their home and this is their foundation, and we have to keep growing with it.”

**Museum history**

In May 1968, the Apopka Historical Society was conceived by a group of women from the Apopka Woman’s Club Historical Committee to organize a local historical group. This occurred after Pioneer Day was held in the fall of 1967 in connection with the Central Florida Fall Festival.

The society members took three months to apply to the state to file incorporation papers as a

nonprofit. Then it took three years to open Apopka’s first museum. The beginning artifacts collection was donated by Edward Minor, who collected the beginning artifacts exhibit.

The first museum occupied three rooms on the second floor of this building, City Hall, in 1971.

Since its inception, as the museum continued to outgrow its space, it moved to various venues within the city. The sites were

the Carroll Building, the former school site where the current City Hall is located, the Apopka annex, joining the water, information technology and the finance departments; and finally, to the current location of the log cabin building located at 122 E. Fifth St., across the street from City Hall and behind the current utility building.

## Trafficking: 20 cases being helped

Continued from page 6A

The new strike team is providing intelligence, guidance and support to law enforcement agencies statewide and is also coordinating emergency victim support services. The team works directly with Florida’s new statewide human trafficking tip line, 855-FLA-SAFE.

It’s currently assisting local law enforcement efforts with more than 20 human trafficking cases and making contact with nearly

40 victims—including the 10 victims from this investigation, Moody said.

Also joining Moody in making the announcement were Florida Department of Law Enforcement Commissioner Mark Glass, Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Office Colonel Chris Rule, Manatee County Sheriff’s Office Major Todd Shears and Homeland Security Investigations Tampa Special Agent in Charge John Condon.

## Byrd: Pathways needed for growth

Continued from page 6A

the program has been a magnet, it has received numerous state and national awards and continues to be a beacon of success in OCPS.

Some other highlights include initiating the replacement and installation of new baseball/softball field lights in all high schools in OCPS, collaborating on the Read Around the City program that saw

our community reading over 2 million minutes this past year and funding over \$70,000 in teacher grants for classroom supplies.

In the next four years, I will continue to foster my relationships with developers, the city commission and OCPS facility planning department to closely monitor the coming growth to our area as it relates to our schools. As of now, we have advanced four new schools in the coming de-

cade building plans to relieve future growth.

I am also working on some new programs and opportunities that will provide additional pathways for our high school students after graduation.

Yes, it’s been a busy six years, but it has also been so rewarding to watch our community schools thrive, and I cannot wait to see what the next four years will bring!

# BUSINESS PROFILE

Your Guide to Local Businesses

## Graceworx Community Church will be highlighting religious liberty June 29

**Graceworx Community Church**, like many congregations throughout the United States, sees in the secular festivities surrounding Independence Day a natural springboard for reflecting also on the spiritual blessings we enjoy as a nation—the greatest of which, many would argue, is religious liberty.

Yet religious liberty isn’t readily achieved; it isn’t easily protected and preserved, nor is it always fully understood.

For example, the Pilgrims, who came via the Mayflower to Massachusetts in 1620, sought a safe haven where they could live and worship according to their own beliefs. But their commitment to religious *liberty* was extremely limited.

They wanted religious liberty for themselves. But dissenters were subjected to civil punishments just as severe as the Pilgrims had faced back in England.

In what became the Massachusetts Bay Colony, religion and civil government to a great degree merged. The church played a major role in establishing all rules and laws, and the government played a major role in enforcing them. The results weren’t pretty. People were publicly shamed for religious infractions, locked in stocks and



*Graceworx Community Church conducts an hour-long worship service at 11:30 a.m. each Saturday morning in the sanctuary of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, 9913 Bear Lake Road, Apopka, FL 32703. The public is invited. For more information, phone 321-228-4599; email graceworxccc@gmail.com.*

even flogged. And don’t forget the Salem witch trials. Certain aspects of Puritan history make for bleak reading.

But that began to slowly change with the arrival of a Puritan preacher named Roger Williams, a man of deep conviction, indomitable courage and great insight. Williams began preaching that government and religion should be separate.

His views so raised the ire of both religious and government leaders that he was excommunicated from the church and banished from the colony. But instead of being silenced, he became all the more vocal in his call for true religious liberty.

Some 150+ years later, most of the ratifiers of the United States Constitution were com-

mitted to Roger Williams’s perspective concerning religious liberty.

Article VI of our Constitution guarantees that “no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or Public Trust . . .” And the very first words of the First Amendment in the Bill of Rights, which was added not long after the Constitution’s ratification, says: “Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

In other words, Congress will not make laws that pick winners and losers among our nation’s various faith traditions and denominations within those traditions. And barring truly compelling reasons, Congress will let people live out whatever religious

beliefs they hold.

Religious liberty deserves to be celebrated along with all our other outpourings of gratitude on Independence Day.

### Upcoming at Graceworx

**June 29.** In a sermon titled “**What Religious Liberty Is and Is Not,**” Pastor Jim Coffin will take a nuanced look at how our nation’s founders viewed religious liberty, as well as how their vision is currently in jeopardy.

**July 6.** Pastor Jim Coffin’s sermon will focus on Luke chapter 4 as part of an extended sermon series on the Gospel of Luke, which will run every Saturday for most of the balance of 2024.

## Graceworx Community Church

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**Bible Study 10:00 AM**  
**Worship 11:30 AM**  
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- Apopka Chief rack, 400 N. Park Ave.
- Apopka High School
- Apopka Quick Mart (BP), Hwy 436 & Lake Cortez Dr.
- Apopka Vape, 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.
- Circle K, Ocoee-Apopka Blvd.
- 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
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06/24



# Gas district reviewing \$300K offer of judgment for lawsuit

By Teresa Sargeant  
Apopka Chief Staff

The Lake Apopka Natural Gas District (LANGD) is reviewing a \$300,000 offer of judgment – the district’s maximum liability – in a lawsuit filed over a gas fire explosion that caused a mother of three severe burns and resulted in her death one week later.

The LANGD Board of Directors scheduled a Friday, July 5, shade meeting (non-public) to discuss the matter. The district was given a final response deadline of Monday, July 8.

The July 5 meeting will open at 10 a.m. as a special public board meeting, then go into the shade meeting to discuss the litigation and later come out to conclude

the public board meeting. The meeting will take place at the main office, 1320 Winter Garden Vineland Road, Winter Garden.

“With reference to this particular offer of judgment, I do not see how it would benefit the district in any way, shape or form because it’s the maximum liability that we would have,” LANGD attorney Carole Barise told the Board of Directors during the Monday, June 23 meeting at the main

office. “We don’t believe we have any responsibility or any liability for this particular event.”

To accept the \$300,000 would be an admission of liability and therefore set a precedent for potential lawsuits, Barise explained.

Mikeanisha Moore, her husband Raven R. Fondia and their three minor children filed the lawsuit in Orange County on March 8. The lawsuit was seeking a jurisdictional amount of

\$75,000 for filing in circuit court, exclusive of costs and interest, with full extent of the plaintiffs’ monetary damages undetermined at that time.

The lawsuit named as co-defendants SPT WAH Woodhill, the owner of Woodhill Apartments in Orlando, where the family lived at the time; Highmark Residential, the apartment building’s property manager; and LANGD, which owns, operates and main-

tains natural gas distribution services in various municipalities in the state. LANGD’s member municipalities are Apopka, Winter Garden and Clermont, and have representatives from each city sit on the Board of Directors.

According to the lawsuit, at Woodhill Apartments on the morning of March 1, Moore was “catastrophically burned by a

See LAWSUIT Page 13A

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At 14, Alex LeClair has been diagnosed with a rare form of Osteosarcoma Cancer, and is finally under the care of St. Jude's Children's Hospital. His medical bills have climbed in the past two years, and his family, who is part of our family, needs all of our help. His journey is still ongoing ... So, we are hosting an afternoon and night of Live Music, Karaoke, 50/50 draws, Gift Basket draws, Wine Specials, Food Specials, and more! All proceeds to the family. Our goal is \$10,000 ... Cash donations are welcome! Check our facebook page for more info and schedule ... Hope to see you here, my friends.

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## Local support needed for grant proposal to provide cooling shirts for outside workers

Editor:

Temperatures are setting records in 2023 and 2024. Having worked outside in construction and agriculture from childhood through adulthood I cannot fathom how workers can do it now, especially adding in the humidity.

Construction workers, landscapers, yard care workers, nursery workers, grove and farm workers and other employees are subject to working all day in direct sun or superheated and humid locations, or freezing conditions in the winter. Some employers

are willing to accommodate the cooling and heating needs of their employees.

I presented Jeannie Economos, Adam Fiallos, and Dominique O'Connor of the Farmworker Association of Florida, Inc. a grant proposal to provide cooling shirts for members with outside jobs. The association now holds 'Heat Stress Trainings' to reduce heat stress and stay safe in their various jobs after research with Emory University. I discovered that thirty-six workers died in Florida during outdoor work from heat from 2010-20.\*

I suffered from heat while walking on trusses doing roof work in the 1970s, and it was a lot cooler back then. The concrete floor below looked very hard from up there!

The type of cooling shirts being donated have minerals embedded in the fabric reducing the body temperature in the heat and have UPF 50 sun block (99 percent cancer proof).

### The Ask


Would you or your organization help the Farmworker Association of Florida, Inc. provide cooling (or warming) shirts to out-

side workers this year or on an ongoing basis? Think of a one-time donation or regular donations. The Field-Sheer shirts start at \$21, with hoods and gaiters \$28, or skull caps are \$15.

City of Apopka Commissioner Diane Velazquez is the first donor from her commissioner's discretionary funds. How about you?

Farmworker Association of Florida, Inc. EIN 59-2683978 1-407-886-5151 1264 Apopka Blvd, Apopka, FL 32703 USA [FloridaFarmworkers.org](http://FloridaFarmworkers.org)

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[illegible]



# When cooking, if the recipe says ‘Southern’, you know it must be tasty

I have been reading a “new” book (from AbeBooks, of course, my “go-to” place for any book I want other than digital)...



*The Southern Slow Cooker* by Kendra Bailey Morris, Copyright 2013.

The author says, regarding meat, “Turn it to Low, and cook it Slow! I can think of no better function for the slow cooker than for cooking beef, pork, or chicken. Steady, low and slow heat over many hours does wonders for tough cuts of beef or pork, and it can tenderize a whole chicken until it is falling off the bone. Slow cooking breaks down the tough collagen while still preserving the moisture in the meat.

“Preparing meals in the slow cooker allows the home cook to easily create dishes using various cuts of beef, pork, or chicken that cost significantly less per pound than their quick-grilling counterparts. Most likely, there will be plenty of leftovers for lunch the next day. Slow cooking tough cuts of meat takes time, often lots of it, so many of the recipes are ideal for overnight cooking or while you’re at work.”

My first recipe from this book is Frito Pie with Chili con Carne. Kendra says, “It’s hard to go wrong when you combine homemade chili, onions, and cheddar cheese with addictively crunchy Fritos corn chips.” She goes on to say, “One theory argues that the first Frito pie was created by Frito-Lay founder Elmer Doolin’s mother in Texas, but New Mexico also stakes claim to the first Frito and bean combo as originating from a lunch counter in Santa Fe.”

The next recipe from *The Southern Slow Cooker* is Shrimp Creole. Kendra Bailey Morris says, “Louisiana Creole cooking has a diverse array of influences, which includes the influence of European settlers who came to New Orleans, specifically those from Spain, France, and Germany. Today, Creole cooking is an amalgamation of various cultures and culinary styles.”

This particular slow-cooker version of Shrimp Creole involves simmering the sauce for up to 8 hours and adding the shrimp at the very end so they

don’t overcook. Serve this spicy Creole dish over steamed rice garnished with green onions.

Emily Meggett in *Gullah Geechee Home Cooking* says you can usually find good broccoli year-round. Her Broccoli with Cheese Sauce looks wonderful.

Molasses Popcorn Balls from *The Original Country Cookbook* should be a lot of fun for both kids and grown folks.

## FRITO PIE WITH CHILI CON CARNE

Recipe from

*The Southern Slow Cooker* by Kendra Bailey Morris

- 1 teaspoon bacon grease or vegetable oil
- 2 pounds extra-lean ground beef
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 tablespoons chili powder
- 1-1/2 teaspoons cumin
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano, preferably Mexican
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)

- 2 (8-ounce) cans tomato sauce
- 1 (10-ounce) can diced tomatoes with green chiles (such as Rotel brand) with its juice
- 2 (14-ounce) cans kidney beans, rinsed and drained

For serving:

- 8 ounces sharp cheddar cheese, grated
- 1/2 cup minced sweet onion

Sliced pickled jalapenos

Sour cream

Large (14-ounce) bag Fritos brand corn chips, or 8 (1- or 2-ounce) individual serving-size bags

1) Spray the inside of the slow cooker with cooking spray. 2) Heat a large skillet or cast-iron pan on the stovetop over medium-high heat and add the bacon grease. Crumble in the ground beef and cook until the meat is no longer pink, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for another minute. 3) Pour the beef mixture into the slow cooker and add the tomato sauce, tomatoes and chiles, and kidney beans. Stir well. Cover and cook on low for at least 8 hours and up to 9 hours. 4) To serve, spread the chips in a 9 by 13-inch casserole dish or di-

vide among eight smaller bowls. Pour in the chili, then top with the cheddar cheese, sweet onion, jalapenos, and sour cream and serve. Alternatively, cut open eight individual serving size bags of chips, divide the chili and toppings evenly among the bags, and eat straight from the bags with a fork.

## SHRIMP CREOLE

Recipe from

*The Southern Slow Cooker* by Kendra Bailey Morris

- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 4 small cloves garlic, minced
- 1 (16-ounce) can diced tomatoes with its juice
- 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/4teaspoon salt, plus more to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper, or more to taste

2 bay leaves

1/2 cup diced green bell pepper

1 pound medium-size shrimp, peeled and deveined

Salt and black pepper

Steamed long-grain rice, for serving

Minced chives or green onions, for garnish

Hot sauce, for serving

1) Spray the inside of the slow cooker with cooking spray. 2) Heat the butter and olive oil in a cast-iron pan over medium-high heat. Add the onion and celery and sauté for 3 to 4 minutes, or until translucent. Add the garlic and sauté for another minute. Transfer the onion, celery, and garlic to the slow cooker and add the tomatoes, tomato sauce, thyme, sugar, Worcestershire sauce, chili powder, salt, cayenne, and bay leaves. Cover and cook on low for at least 6 hours and up to 8 hours. 3) One hour before serving, add the bell pepper and continue to cook on low. Finally, during the last 10 minutes, add the shrimp and cook until they are pink and slightly curled (be careful not to overcook). Season with salt and pepper. Remove the bay leaf and spoon over rice. Garnish with a sprinkling of fresh chives. Serve with hot sauce on the side.

## EMILY MEGGETT’S BROCCOLI WITH CHEESE SAUCE

Recipe from

*Gullah Geechee Home Cooking* by Emily Meggett

3 stalks broccoli, or 1 pound frozen broccoli

1/4 cup (1/2 stick) unsalted butter

2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

1 cup milk, whole or 2-percent

1/2 cup grated cheddar cheese, mild, medium or sharp

Pinch of salt

Paprika

Wash the broccoli and cut into florets. In an 8-quart pot, bring 4 quarts water to a boil over high heat. Once boiling, add the broccoli, and cook for 3 minutes. Drain and set the broccoli aside. Make the cheese sauce in a 2-quart saucepan, melt the butter over low heat. Be very careful not to burn the butter. Once the butter is melted, stir in the flour, then slowly pour in the milk. Stir the mixture constantly until it’s smooth and thickened. Add the cheese and salt and stir until melted and smooth. Pour the cheese sauce over the broccoli and garnish with paprika. Serve immediately.

## MOLASSES POPCORN BALLS

Recipe from

Paragon Products, Inc.,

*The Original Country Cookbook*

3 quarts popped corn

(3/4 cup unpopped)

1 cup sugar

1/3 cup water

3/4 teaspoon salt

1/3 cup molasses

1/4 cup butter

3/4 teaspoon vanilla

Pop the corn, and set aside. Place all of the ingredients, except vanilla, in a saucepan and cook, stirring until sugar is dissolved. Continue cooking without stirring until syrup forms a brittle ball in cold water (270 degrees). Add vanilla and stir only enough to mix in through hot syrup. Put popped corn in a large bowl. Pour cooked syrup slowly over popped corn and mix well. Wet hands slightly and shape corn into balls.

View Kitchen Kapers by Nancy online at [www.theapopkachief.com/recipes](http://www.theapopkachief.com/recipes)

## JUNE / JULY 2024



## EVENTS

## WEEKLY

## UPCOMING



## ONGOING



**ACHOO! IS OUT** Traffic patterns changed. Stormy weather comes and goes! Be careful with your umbrellas. And always watch out for those pedestrians... and ducks. DONT TEXT WHILE DRIVING - Please! YOU WILL PAY A FINE.

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

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

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

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

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

FRAN CARLTON CENTER OPEN,

for seniors - senior activities at Fran Carlton Center. CALL 407-703-1642 FOR INFORMATION .

### FRIDAY, JUNE 28

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

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

### SATURDAY, JUNE 29

**VFW POST 10147** continues to have its fund raising breakfast on the the third Saturday of the month, from 8-10 a.m. at 519 S. Central Avenue. Cost is only \$7.

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

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

### SUNDAY, JUNE 30

### MONDAY, JULY 1

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

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

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

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

### TUESDAY, JULY 2

THE SERTOMA CLUB meets the

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

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

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

### WEDNESDAY, JULY 3

The Altamonte Springs / Apopka VFW POST 10147, is NOW OPEN Wednesday and Saturday Mornings from (TIME CHANGE) 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. for coffee and doughnuts. (other hours by appointment only). 3rd Saturday of the month is VFW’s fundraising breakfast. Also, evenings of Tribute music are planned. Call 407-889-8266, or email [info@vfwpost10147.com](mailto:info@vfwpost10147.com) for information. The VFW Auxiliary has been formed and is active as well. Don’t forget to visit its excellent Military Museum.

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

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

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

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

**TOPS CHAPTER #646.** (Take Off Pounds Sensibly), TOPS, a non-profit organization, will help you reach a weight goal with support from friendly, caring members, education, and rewards. Each Thursday weigh-in begins at 9:00 a.m. – meeting ends at 10:15 a.m.. Come to its

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

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

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

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

**THURSDAY, JULY 4 INDEPENDENCE DAY JULY 4, 1777**

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

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

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

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

### UPCOMING EVENTS

July 4th - Apopka Amphitheater, 3710 Jason Dwellley Parkway, featuring David J and Emily Henline, two emerging young talents of Nashville. This celebration is set for Thursday, July 4, from 6-9 p.m., with fireworks at 9 p.m.

### ONGOING EVENTS

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

**CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS** are public and will also be broadcast on this shortened link: <https://bit.ly/2ABrmbS>, and are normally held the first Wednesday at 1:30 p.m.,

and third Wednesday at 7 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 120 E. Main St., Apopka. Subject to change with notice. For info., call City Clerk 407-703-1704. Agenda and minutes of meeting can be found online. Once posted, check for any revisions by Tuesday at 5 p.m. before the meeting

**FOLIAGE GARDEN CLUB OF APOPKA**, meets the first Thursday of each month, September through May, at 9:45 a.m. at the Alonza William Park / Billie Dean Community Center, 225 M.A. Board St., Apopka. Contact: [apopkafgca@gmail.com](mailto:apopkafgca@gmail.com). NO MEETINGS JUNE-AUGUST.

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

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

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

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

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

**MUSEUM OF APOPKANS**, 122 E 5th Street, Hours open: Wednesday to Friday, from noon-5 p.m., and Saturdays from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.... Admission is free. Contains displays and information about Apopka’s history, and has history books for sale. Monthly meetings of Apopka Historical Society are normally held on a Sunday afternoon. For more information, go to [www.theapopka-museum.com](http://www.theapopka-museum.com).

THE APOPKA ELKS LODGE 2422 meets first and third Tuesdays of month, 201 W. Orange. For more information, call 407-886-1600 or email [apopkaelks@aol.com](mailto:apopkaelks@aol.com) Bar Bingo every Monday night at 7 p.m. promptly.

**GFWC APOPKA WOMAN’S CLUB**, meets at First United Methodist Church, 201 N. Park Avenue. Call 407-880-2111 for more information.

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

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

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

**HABITAT VOLUNTEERS:** Go to [www.habitatseminoleapopka.org](http://www.habitatseminoleapopka.org), click on volunteers. There are a number of opportunities available at the Restores. Call 407-696-5855 or 407-880-8881 to sign up for information.

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

\*Apopka Area Chamber of Commerce, 180 E. Main St., Apopka. For more info, call 407-886-1441 **COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR INFORMATION** Events, fund raisers, and non-profit organizations info: fax 407-889-4121, or email [ads@theapopkachief.com](mailto:ads@theapopkachief.com) Subscribe to The Apopka Chief E-Edition or Home Delivery Call 407-886-2777 or Visit [www.theapopkachief.com](http://www.theapopkachief.com) In County: \$30 with E-edition, or \$25 for just postal delivery. Out-of-County: \$35 with E-Edition or \$30 for postal delivery



# Thorns and more grew from the ground after Adam and Eve’s sin

1. Is the book of 2 Thesalonians (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. From Song of Solomon 8, what is so powerful that many waters cannot quench it? Hope, Love, Salvation, Peace
3. Which book begins, “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past”? Philipians, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews
4. Thorns and what else grew from the ground that



God cursed after Adam and Eve’s sin? Vines, Ivy, Thistles, Weeds

5. According to Paul, in hardships, Christians are more than \_\_\_\_\_. Friends, Conquerors, Warriors, Innkeepers

6. From Luke 19, what town was home to Zacchaeus?

Jericho, Tarsus, Thessalonica, Corinth

ANSWERS: 1) New, 2) Love, 3) Hebrews, 4) Thistles, 5) Conquerors, 6) Jericho

Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson’s Casey’s latest book, “Test Your Bible Knowledge,” available in bookstores and online.

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## OBEY

The history of Judeo Christo-Islamic religion can be read as the story of humanity’s struggle with obedience. The early Israelites worshipped the “local gods” but were led to worship Jehovah (or Yahweh) through the intercession of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The intervening years between the patriarchs of Israel and the prophets was one long saga of disobedience followed by repentance and brief periods of obedience. The prophets keep coming to tell Israel to return to the Lord their God. Finally, God sends his son in the person of Jesus to bring his people back from perdition, and indeed, Jesus’s message is a universal one. All mankind can obey

the will of God and be saved; salvation is not just for the Jews. Jesus scolds the Jews for their disobedience and rebellion against God when he says just prior to his trial and death “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing” (Luke 13:34 NIV). We are told repeatedly, both in the Bible and the Koran, to submit to God, to obey Him in all things, and yet, we remain estranged from God by our disobedience.

Consider how you might better submit to the will of God.

– 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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WOMEN’S BIBLE STUDY Wednesdays, 10 a.m. Holy Tabernacle Church 2501 Apopka Blvd. Call for more info: 407-928-8617

407-886-3388 “Attend your place of worship this week” MARVIN C. ZANDERS FUNERAL HOME 232 W. Michael Gladden Blvd. Apopka, Florida 32703

In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge.

Proverbs 14:26

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“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14

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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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- Trinity Baptist Church 407-886-2966 Wekiwa Springs Baptist Church 407-886-7864
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- 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
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# Lawsuit: Mother of 3 died one week after gas line explosion

Continued from page 8A

gas fire explosion ... (and) suffered horrifically painful 3rd and 4th degree burns on over 40 percent of her body causing her to be placed in hospital critical care, immobilized and unable to speak. Mikeanisha Moore will require multiple surgeries for the next several years of her life for the catastrophic burns caused by the gas explosion.

“During the investigation of the aforementioned gas explosion, the local fire department and agents of the Defendants immediately noticed an uncapped and unplugged gas line in the laundry room of the Plaintiffs’ apartment. It has been determined that the explosion started in the laundry room as a result of gas leaking from this illegally unplugged and uncapped gas line which had remained

hazardous since the Plaintiffs began their lease.” Moore died on March 9, over one week after the explosion occurred. Fondia submitted an amended lawsuit on April 2 as a wrongful death suit. According to Richard Troutman, representing the family’s attorney from Troutman Law Firm in Winter Park, many people had called the firm saying their gas lines were not

plugged in. “Our theory of liability is that from the record we’ve seen and reviewed, there are records that show they (LANGD) were notified over the years of gas smells,” Troutman said. “We feel they had a duty when they got that call, to go into these apartments and see if anything was leaking. We’ve learned that when tenants removed the dryers from their apart-

ments, the custom was not to put a cap on the gas line. If they were accidentally turned on, the gas would leak, and that’s what happened in this case. We feel that this particular defendant had a duty to not just look outside the building, but to go inside the building also and see that there were many unplugged gas lines.” The \$300,000 offer of judgment is only for LANGD and does not in-

clude the other two co-defendants, Troutman said. “This isn’t about the money. We want people who live in apartments to be safe, and the gas company should have same enthusiasm when they go inside to look around and see what the cause is, and when there’s an uncapped gas line, to cap it,” Troutman said.

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## Park Avenue Animal Hospitals notes summer pet safety should include tick and flea protection

Summer is a fun time for exploring and planning outdoor activities with your four-legged friends. Walks on the beach, hikes in the woods, and playing in dog parks are always lots of fun. Unfortunately, for humans and pets alike, spending most of the summer days outside can have a frustrating downside: tick bites and fleas.

Now that the warmer weather is here, it's important to mention flea and tick prevention. It's a common misconception that fleas and ticks only live in the woods. They can live anywhere – including in your backyard and in your home. Fleas and ticks don't just cause your pet discomfort through bites, they can also lead to serious diseases. The cost of prevention is always less than the cost of treatment, so make sure your pet is protected.

Flea and tick preventatives are simple, convenient, and effective at killing parasites that are attracted to your pet. These preventatives should be administered year-round starting at 8 weeks of age. Although ticks and fleas tend to show up in the warmer months when more time is spent outdoors, larvae and adults can hide out in a multitude of places, such as other animals, bushes, and shrubbery, as well as in flooring, carpets, and sofas in your home. Make “tick checks” part of your rou-



Park Avenue Animal Hospital is conveniently located at 847 N. Park Avenue (Rock Springs Road) in Apopka. Call today at 407-880-9446 to schedule an appointment or visit them online at [www.parkavenuevets.com](http://www.parkavenuevets.com). Pictured above are Dr. Rubinstein, Dr. Turgai, Dr. Nelson and Dr. Munoz.

tine. When you settle down with your pet, pay close attention. If you spot a tick, remove it right away with a pair of fine-tipped tweezers. Grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible and pull directly outward with steady force. Don't forget to disinfect the bite area thoroughly after tick removal.

Your pet may not show symptoms of being bitten by a tick or flea right away. In most cases, you will not actually see a tick or flea unless your pet has an allergic reaction to the bite(s). Only a blood test can confirm an illness was transmitted by a tick or flea.

Park Avenue Animal Hospital has been providing a wide variety of services to keep your furry, four-legged friends in the best of health since 2008. With cutting-edge technology and the bedside manner of a small-town doctor, they're equipped to handle almost any ailment your pet may face.

While dogs and cats are the most popular choice for most pet owners, the doctors at Park Avenue Animal Hospital have a special

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You'll find that the staff at Park Avenue Animal Hospital think of their clients and the people of Apopka as part of their family. They are proud of their community and strive to make sure that everyone feels welcome in their clinic.

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# Foliage Sertoma Club inducts new members, installs officers at luncheon

Thirty-two members and guests of the Foliage Sertoma Club of Apopka held their first event of a year-long planned celebration to commemorate the club's 50th anniversary, which is Saturday, June 29.

The club held its luncheon Tuesday, June 25, at the Back Room Steakhouse on Rock Springs Road in Apopka, where awards were given out and new officers were installed.

City Commissioner Alexander Smith issued a formal challenge to the 11 new members who joined since fall 2023. His message was a reminder of the club's purpose of Service to Mankind and the importance of their involvement.

The members being recognized were Nadia Anderson, Vaughn Daly, Adrienne Fuller, Deborah Green, Diann Haubner, Ceil Layfield, Erick Mock, Debbie Nelson, Darryl Richardson, Bob White and Roger Williams.

Mayor Bryan Nelson spoke briefly on the history of the Foliage Sertoma Club of Apopka for the past

50 years and the national organization's commitment to assisting hearing disabled with emphasis for children's needs.

Through research funded by Sertoma, Inc. many of the today's innovative hearing technology and medical treatments have been developed in the 112 years of national sponsorships.

Additionally, most in Apopka know the Sertoma Club from its decades of sponsoring the Christmas Parade on the second Saturday of December every year. The mayor closed his remark by thanking both the outgoing and incoming officers for the 2023 Apopka Christmas Parade, and told the new parade committee that they have a challenge to produce another great one this December.

At the luncheon, Nelson installed new officers who will serve the 2024-25 term commencing July 1: Chairman Lorena Potter, President Wes Dumey, President Elect Eric Mock, Vice President Membership John Cloran, Secretary/Treasurer



Photo courtesy of Foliage Sertoma Club

Lorena Potter, Foliage Sertoma Club past president (l) with Wes Dumey, incoming president for 2024-25, at the Tuesday, June 25, Foliage Sertoma Club luncheon at the Backroom Steakhouse in Apopka.

Bev Winesburgh, Sargeant at Arms John Ricketson and Sertoma Chaplain Patrick McGuffin.

The event concluded honoring John Ricketson with a Foliage Sertoma Lifetime Achievement Award for his decades of service, Lorena Potter for her presidency and Roberta (Bobbie) Dougherty as Sertoman of the Year for her many club contributions

and involvement over the past year. She will ride in the Christmas Parade with other Sertoma dignitaries.

The club's golden anniversary will continue in this fall with a newspaper special historical tabloid, a Service to Mankind celebration and this year's Apopka Christmas Parade theme being "A Golden Christmas in Apopka."

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