

Tradition

Rissers continue their Christmas party tradition  
See page 7A.



Sports

APK Pop Warner shows out at Nationals, 3 teams make globals  
See page 1C.



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Volume 102 Number 50

Friday, December 13, 2024 / 50 cents

City proposes \$28 million Ocoee Apopka Road improvements

By Teresa Sargaent  
Apopka Chief Staff

The city conducted a public input meeting on Monday, December 9, at Fran Carlton Center for the proposed improvements on the northern portion of Ocoee Apopka Road, an estimated \$28 million project that would improve the safety and capacity for current and future users.

The Ocoee-Apopka Road Safety Widening Project proposes widening the 1.8-mile northern stretch of Ocoee-Apopka Road from a two-lane undivided road to a four-

lane divided corridor. The enhancement would have medians wide enough to allow for left-turn lanes and locations that would allow left turn lanes.

Along one side of the upgraded Ocoee-Apopka Road would be a multi-use trail connection that might connect with the statewide Shared-Use Non-motorized (SUN) Trail network. The project intends to also rehabilitate the road's existing sidewalks.

At the December 9 meeting, Mike Woodward of Kimley-Horn and Associates discussed details about the project itself in-



The intersection of Ocoee-Apopka Road and Harmon Road, where the proposed improvements are to begin and go up to Hawthorne Avenue. Seen in the background is AdventHealth Apopka.

cluding the proposed enhancements, safety and traffic, as well as schedule and funding. Questions and

comments were taken after the presentation. Kimley-Horn and Associates is the project consultant; city

planner Jean Sanchez is the project manager.

Ocoee-Apopka Road is currently a two-lane un-

divided roadway with no bicycle facilities or bike

See ROAD Page 7A

City Council adopts ordinance limiting public access to city buildings

By Teresa Sargeant  
Apopka Chief Staff

The Apopka City Council voted 4-1 at its November 20 meeting on the second reading and adoption of an ordinance that limits public access to city buildings, with Commissioner Nick Nesta voting 'nay'.

The adopted Ordinance No. 3081 authorizes the city administrator or designees to manage public access to city buildings by

classifying forum areas and implementing measures to separate forum areas, regulate access, and ensure security and privacy.

City attorney Cliff Shepard clarified to the City Council that the ordinance is different from a security policy that the council members previously adopted and was subsequently implemented.

"That's why you've seen signs on the doors and various other places designated what is accessible and what is not. It was

made necessary so that all staff would know how to react in the situation of someone coming in and wanting access and knowing what was appropriate under that policy and not," Shepard said. "What this does as an ordinance, it codifies some of the things that are in our policy and specifically gives the city administrator or designee or designees the ability to, upon viewing or observing a violation of the rules that are set forth in the ordinance, the

opportunity to ask for a trespass notice be given or trespass warning be given by the PD (police department). Now, this ordinance doesn't cover that, but what happens is once a trespass warning is given, then it becomes a police matter."

Shepard further explained that a repeat violation could lead to an arrest, and that Police Chief Michael McKinley could further explain that matter to the City Council. The ordinance's purpose

is to "de-escalate and just get the person to stop doing whatever it is that they're doing," Shepard said.

Resident Leroy Bell spoke about not being in favor of the new policy. He doesn't feel like this security policy is needed and that employees are safe regardless of a security policy or not, according to meeting minutes.

"I don't think that you got

See ACCESS Page 3A

Christmas tree lights up park



Photo courtesy of city of Apopka

The city hosted its Apopka Tree Lighting on Friday, December 6, at Kit Land Nelson Park as the community comes together to celebrate the holiday season. The family-friendly event featured holiday music, local vendors, and fun activities for kids. Craft vendors will be stationed around the park, offering a variety of unique holiday gifts. Pictured in front of the Christmas tree at Kit Land Nelson Park are (l to r) City Commissioner Alexander H. Smith, Mayor Bryan Nelson, City Commissioner Nadia Anderson, City Commissioner Diane Velazquez, and City Commissioner Nick Nesta.

Plat approved for possible affordable housing, public park

By Teresa Sargeant  
Apopka Chief Staff

On Tuesday, December 10, the Apopka Planning Commission recommended approval of a plat, which proposes creating four single-family lots and a community park on a city-owned land located on the northeast corner of the East Eighth Street/South Highland Avenue intersection.

To be developed as a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) project, the intent is to sell the four lots to an affordable housing building and then preserve a community park, according to city planner Bobby Howell.

The 0.83-acre community park will be located in the northern portion of the parcel, and the four lots—each 0.22 to 0.17 acres in size—are adjacent to East Eighth Street. Access to the lots is provided via South Highland Avenue and East Eighth Street.

Located downtown, the Apopka Community Redevelopment Area is comprised of 633 acres and has a mix of residences, businesses, and historic properties. The area is bound on the south by 10th and 11th Streets, Hawthorne

See PLAT Page 5A

First responders host Reading Heroes Book Fair



Photos courtesy of Apopka Fire Department

The Apopka Fire Department and Apopka Police Department, in partnership with Re-Imagine Communities, hosted the Apopka Reading Heroes Scholastic Book Fair on December 7, at Apopka Fire Station No. 5. The online shop was also available from December 1 through December 8.

This week Section A Opinion..... 2A Business Rev. .... 4,8A Worship ..... 9A Section B Christmas Story.... 1B Section C Sports ..... 1C Wildlife Photos..... 8C Section D Dining & Ent. .... 1D Kapers ..... 2D Worship ..... 3D Legal ads.....5-6D Classified.....6-8D Service Dir. .... 8D Find Public Notices Online at: TheApopkaChief.com/public-notices OR FloridaPublicNotices.com

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Apopka Event of the Week

The Apopka Area Chamber of Commerce will host Business After Hours on Thursday, December 19, from 5:30-7 p.m., at the Hilton Garden Inn Apopka, 580 E. Main Street. This is a free event, but patrons must register. Business After Hours features live music, appetizers and a cash s bar. Call 407-886-1441 for additional information.

Quotable

In this case, Congress stipulated in federal law “that non-qualified aliens are prohibited from receiving any federal public benefit,” he said.

Florida is one of 19 states to ask for federal law to be followed

Opinion

The Apopka Chief  
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Our position

Federal court rules against DACA, this time related to health care

By Bethany Blankley  
The Center Square

Another federal court has ruled against the federal program, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), arguing a Biden administration plan to provide free health care to DACA recipients is illegal.

It’s the fourth time a federal judge has recently ruled against a program created by former President Barack Obama through executive order in 2012.

DACA shielded children from deportation who were brought into the country illegally by their parents. The program has been in litigation for 12 years. A federal judge has twice ruled that DACA is illegal. The most recent ruling was in a multi-state lawsuit led by Texas to end DACA once and for all, The Center Square reported. The U.S. Supreme Court is ultimately expected to decide that case.

Under the Biden administration, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services issued a rule authorizing CMS to provide free health care through the taxpayer-funded Affordable Care Act, otherwise known as Obamacare, to DACA recipients. Federal law generally prohibits illegal foreign nationals from receiving federal benefits. The ACA explicitly states “that an alien has to be lawfully present in the United States to receive subsidized health insurance.”

The CMS rule redefined the legal term for lawfully present to include DACA recipients, prompting 15 states to sue in August, led by Kansas Attorney General Kris Kobach.

Kobach filed the lawsuit in U.S. District Court for the District of North Dakota Western Division. He was initially joined by 14 attorneys general, which later expanded to 19.

In October, he made his case before the court, arguing, “Illegal aliens shouldn’t get a free pass into our country. They shouldn’t receive taxpayer benefits when they arrive, and the Biden-Harris administration

shouldn’t get a free pass to violate federal law.”

On Monday, Judge Daniel Traynor agreed, granting the coalition’s request for a preliminary injunction.

In his 18-page ruling, he said the coalition had “shown likelihood of success on the merits because CMS acted contrary to law. Plaintiffs are likely to suffer irreparable harm from the expenses associated with carrying out the rule.”

“As it currently stands, the ACA does not allow federal healthcare subsidies or coverage for aliens who are unlawfully present in the United States,” he pointed out. He also reiterated what the Fifth Circuit has maintained: “it is for Congress to determine who qualifies for lawful presence status, not agencies.”

In this case, Congress stipulated in federal law “that non-qualified aliens are prohibited from receiving any federal public benefit,” he said. CMS’s action circumvented congressional authority, Traynor said. “CMS only has authority to determine if aliens fit into one of those established categories, not create a new one.”

In response, Kobach said, “This decision is a big win for the rule of law. Congress never intended that illegal aliens should receive Obamacare benefits. Indeed, two laws prohibit them from receiving such benefits. The Biden administration tried to break those laws. But we fought back and defeated the Biden Justice Department.”

The regulation would have made more than 200,000 DACA recipients eligible for ACA coverage at the taxpayers’ expense.

Numerous reports suggest between 700,000 and 800,000 DACA recipients live in the U.S. The Los Angeles Times reports there are 578,680 on record with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services as of March 2023.

In June, President Joe Biden announced he was expanding deporta-

See DACA Page 6A



Hopefully, one more group will join

This is the third column reflecting on the 2024 Corridor of the Year Contest and Neighborhood Leader Program. The program currently has four functioning groups in Lockhart, Pine Hills, Southern Apopka, and Northeastern Apopka. My hope for my final full year as a county commissioner is that I will be able to stand up one more “people group”.

Time will tell if it is PODA – People of DOWntown Apopka or PONA – People of North Apopka.

Members of the Orange County Public Works staff were recognized at the awards night as they were an integral part of the program. I received this e-mail

County Commissioner  
District 2



Christine Moore

from a top manager in the department the morning after the award presentation. The writer was noticing the atmosphere and collaboration with members of the District 2 Leaders Group. “While I sat and listened, I was unaware of how much Commissioner Moore involves herself and her staff and inspires pride in her District community. I’m blown away to see how

much community spirit and the support they give each other. If you have never been (to a meeting), it’s a must see. The energy in the room was remarkable, and it was a great experience for me. I truly have a new respect for Commissioner Moore and her staff. This is the stuff that needs to be on the news as they all deserve recognition for what they do.”

I was equally blown away by the content of this e-mail. There was much love and support between neighbors in the room. How did this come about? Was it part of the program design? Was it something I or my staff did? This e-mail

See MOORE Page 6A

Filed bill cuts \$45M for illegal immigrants

Tallahassee, FL. –

Today, (December 9, 2024) Senator Randy Fine (R-Melbourne Beach) filed SB 90 to repeal a 2014 state law offering illegal immigrants heavily subsidized in-state tuition rates at Florida’s 12 state universities and 28 state colleges. In 2021, the State of Florida reported the subsidy cost taxpayers \$45 million.

“President Trump has made clear it is time to close the border and stop giving illegal immigrants rewards for breaking the law,” said Fine. “While blue-collar Floridians are struggling to make ends meet, it is not fair to require them to pay \$45 million a year to subsidize sweetheart deals for col-

lege degrees to those who should not even be here.”

Students from the other 49 states and Puerto Rico pay full price to attend Florida’s top-rated colleges and universities, nearly three times the subsidized Florida resident rates. The average cost for in-state tuition for the 2024-2025 school year is \$6,143, according to the State University System of Florida.

The University of Florida, for example, charges \$6,381 for in-state tuition versus \$28,658 for out-of-state, according to US News & World Report.

“This is a no-brainer way to reduce the size of government and free up resources to help Florid-

ians in need. We must put Floridians first, and I am proud to do my part to rebalance the scales for our citizens,” said Fine.

A 2021 American Community Survey assessed by the American Immigration Council revealed that 408,000 illegal immigrants attend college in the United States. Florida is ranked third behind Texas and New Jersey for the number of illegal aliens attending colleges or universities here.

SB 90 would not modify the admission policies of Florida’s state colleges and universities; it would simply eliminate the subsidized rate that was written into state law in 2014.

This Week In God’s Word

Truly he is my rock and my salvation;  
he is my fortress, I will not be shaken.  
Psalm 62:6

Mema Says

Don't mock a pain you haven't endured.

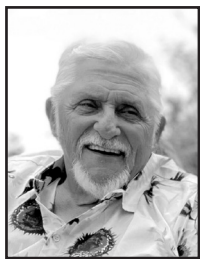
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The school of hard knocks becomes the best teaching experience

Previously written and published. With our incoming president making decisions about fellow leaders, this column reminds readers about changes.

The older I get, the more understanding I have about my lack of knowledge. It was told to me, “The older you get the more wisdom you gain.” Somewhere I must have lost my way, as I do not feel any wiser, just older! I am not complaining though, it beats the alternative. Some



Ike Hayden

of my youthful exuberance has led me into many learning experiences that almost have to be learned by “hands on.”

I tell my children that a college degree costs a lot of money, and although we

learn a lot faster through the school of hard knocks, the cost requires flesh more than money. Sometimes wisdom is evident by the scars that are carried by a person, and yet there are times when scars are there because the lesson was not fully learned the first time. The secret is, never stop trying. When the trial gets so hard you cannot see your way out, I like the advice given by Tom T. Hall. He said, “Knuckle down, buckle down, do it, do it, do it!” Remember the

Grand Canyon started because of a small stream that persevered.

Our nation is in turmoil, and it seems that every effort we make toward sanity seems futile. When I compare what we are experiencing today with what our Constitution guarantees us as citizens of the greatest nation of the world, I see a vast discrepancy.

For instance, the preamble of our Constitution states: “We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect

Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”

Our “more perfect Union” is to be established by “We the People.” That means all of us, not a chosen few. That Union is to be formed for the securing of the rights given to us by our Creator; not giv-

en by the Union. The government today is dictating to us what rights we have, not defending them. This administration has taken away or distorted our rights to the point our nation almost resembles a Socialist/Marxist regime. Our “common defense” is slowly being bastardized by making it a social experiment, not a fighting, protecting military.

Our police forces are being made to second-

See HAYDEN Page 6A



# Access: Residents say there's no need for security policy

Continued from page 1A

people here in Apopka that want to harm anybody here in the city of Apopka," Bell said. "What you do with this, you got your crackpot police department. Go check their records. How many times had they came up into the city hall and pull somebody off of an employee? How many times have it happened? It's never happened."

Resident Dr. Phyllis Olmstead spoke about an email she sent providing alternatives to protecting City Hall. She spoke about requesting public records and personal information laws regarding such, according to meeting minutes.

"This is supposed to be the people's place. We used to be able to have proclamations in the atrium and Christmas carols, decorations, and people could come in and enjoy the atrium and access the back door of the mayor's office," Olmstead said. "I could walk in and sit down and wait for Uncle John (Land, late former mayor) to come in to see me without an invitation. I could sit down and wait for him to come back in from a meeting and I could walk into (late city administrator) Ed Bass's office and sit down with him. It's unfortunate we can't do that anymore."

Resident Sylvester Hall spoke about City

Hall and public areas and this security policy prevents people having access to a public building that one should be able to walk around freely without limitations. He doesn't feel like there are any threats to employees that require this security policy, according to meeting minutes.

"This is a public building. This is a city hall. Everywhere you go, you walk around, you can walk in," Hall said. "What if I wanted to bring my daughter to city hall? Let's do a tour, see how the city works. So, she comes in and see the city on lockdown and for what reason? None whatsoever."

## Tell them you saw it in The Apopka Chief



The Way I See It  
Patti Bankson

### A Return to Sanity?

Just when I think common sense and sanity may be returning to our country, something or someone comes along to make me question my own grasp on reality. The idea that someone's view of an industry, based on how good or badly they've been treated by someone within that industry, warrants – or excuses – criminal behavior, is insanity.

I was reminded of that warped perspective by some who have sided with the suspected murderer of Brian Thompson, United Health Care CEO.

Police have arrested Luigi Mangione, an Ivy League graduate, showing that criminals can come from any background. He was allegedly in possession of a 3-D-printed "ghost" pistol and what law enforcement called a manifesto, against corporate America. He also has a letter that said, "I do apologize for any strife or trauma but it had to be done. These parasites had it coming. I acted alone. I'm self-funded."

According to CNN, the message declared violence to be the only viable form of protest and showed contempt for nonviolent action. Timesnownews.com and The New York Post

Apparently, the suspect's internet supporters seem to think his (alleged) act was justified because, in his/their view, the medical insurance industry is bad, or wrong.

If you've ever been without medical insurance because you couldn't afford it, or you've had it, but were dealt with unfairly – been charged too much or been denied a claim – you might agree.

Having had my own issues with the industry, I understand, but I also un-

derstand that it doesn't give anyone a license to kill. ... there has to be a line drawn somewhere, whether for an industry that doesn't know how to behave, or for someone with a grievance against an industry, which seems to be the case here.

It's not surprising that people on the internet are supporting him ... never mind that when he was found he had things all innocent people carry around with them (she says, sarcastically): several fake IDs, the homemade pistol listed above, and a silencer. Some of his supporters are encouraging a boycott of all McDonalds in that Pennsylvania area. There have even been threats against the worker there whose recognition of him helped in his capture, one saying, "you will be dealt with"; others calling that person a "snitch" and a "rat". Those names are a far cry from a childish "tattle tale", and are more commonly used in a place that's a far cry from a playground.

Of course, this is not the first time the "masses", if you will, have shown up and lifted their voices to protest, basically, the rules that we, as a supposed civilized society, have said we support. Somewhere along the line, Americans weren't taught and helped to realize what it means to live in a country where a Constitution gives all its citizens freedom to make their own decisions, choose their own destiny. Commit a crime, or not. Is it perfect? Not at all. But, is it better than living in some third world country, where we have NO say in anything? Yes, it is. Why else do people from all over the globe, risking life and limb, come here in droves?

I'll say it again ... we are supposed to be a civilized society, but, unfortunately, all too often, you'd be hard put to find any evidence to support that view, but ... Support criminal behavior? Oh, sure! Support civilized and lawful behavior? No way!

We'd like to know  
What YOU think?  
barefootwahine1@yahoo.com  
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Fri., Dec. 13, 2024 thru  
Sun., Dec. 15, 2024

**KRAVEN THE HUNTER (R)** 12:10; 3:30; 4:10; 7:00; 9:40; 10:20

**THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE WAR OF THE ROHIRRIM (PG-13)** 12:30; 1:00; 3:50; 6:20; 7:10; 10:30  
**MOANA 2 (PG)** 12:20; 1:10; 3:40; 4:20; 6:40; 7:20; 9:50

**GLADIATOR II (R)** 11:40A; 3:10; 6:50; 10:10

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# Construction will start on Lake Apopka Connector Trail

This week, Orange County Public Works issued a Notice to Proceed on the Lake Apopka Connector Trail project in the northern portion of the county, paving the way for a new section of trail that connects two existing trails, the county announced on Tuesday, December 10.

Construction should be complete, and the Connector Trail open to the public by March 2026.

Crews will construct a 3.23-mile multi-use trail connecting the existing West Orange Trail along McCormick Road to the Lake Apopka Loop Trail at

Magnolia Park in Apopka. The asphalt pavement/concrete trail will vary from 10 to 14-feet wide, allowing pedestrians and bicyclists alike to safely and comfortably use the trail.

The project also includes a 100-foot boardwalk section in the Northwest Orange Water Reclamation Facility segment.

There will also be two rest areas provided with this project, along with new pedestrian/bicycle picket railing, fences and gates.

Other improvements associated with the project include drainage improvements, curb and gutter reconstruction along Ocoee

Apopka Road, resurfacing of S.R. 429 entrance and exit ramps, and new inlets and storm pipes.

Two segments of the Trail were completed as part of the Wynwood and Oak Pointe North developments and are already open to the public.

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## Over 1,000 students participate in STEM event at Apopka High School

More than 1,000 students showcased their science, technology, engineering and math expertise at the annual OPCS Super STEM event last Saturday, December 7, at Apopka High School.

The two newest competitions are a high school forensics challenge and a VEX IQ robotics (grades 3-8). In the forensics challenge, participants used

their scientific skills to identify and analyze evidence.

Participants will conduct a fingerprint match, poison test, shoe print test, and type a blood sample.

To complete the challenge, teams will conduct the tests and answer questions related to the evidence. The team with the most points wins.

In the VEX IQ com-

petition, teams of students design and build a robot to compete against other teams in a game-based engineering challenge. Students will use their STEM skills, such as teamwork, communication, critical thinking, and creativity to create and operate their robot.

More than 60 schools competed for titles in 14 different events. In addition to forensics and VEX IQ, additional competitions include VEX V5 robotics (high school), drone maker challenge, LEGO SPIKE challenge, water bottle rocket, balsa wood bridge competition, egg drop, mousetrap car, STEAM essay and posters, energy-inspired art, energy-transfer machine, junior solar spring, and STEM fair.

**BUSINESS PROFILE**

*Your Guide to Local Businesses*

## Looking Ahead: Embracing Sustainable Energy with Direct-Use Natural Gas

As 2024 comes to a close, sustainability will continue to be a major point of emphasis when it comes to shaping the future of energy in the United States. At Lake Apopka Natural Gas District (LANGD), we're proud to deliver not only a reliable and affordable energy source but also one of great efficiency for the communities we serve.

Most people are familiar with natural gas and may have even used it in their homes or businesses, but lesser known is its role in minimizing our carbon footprint. At the District, we are committed to educating our customers and communities about natural gas' eco-friendly benefits.

If you didn't know, natural gas is a naturally odorless, combustible mixture of simple hydrocarbon compounds, usually found in underground reservoirs. It is the cleanest burning fossil fuel and accounts for about 43 percent of the energy use in the United States (U.S. Energy Information Administration).

According to Natural Gas Intelligence, natural gas releases 45 percent less carbon dioxide than coal and 30 percent less than oil. It plays an im-



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portant role in reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Natural gas appliances like ovens, water heaters, clothes dryers, and more can help you be more energy efficient while also saving you money.

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# Plat: CRA properties undergo different legal process of transfer

Continued from page 1A

Avenue to the west, Oak Street to the north, and sections of multiple streets to the east, including, but not limited to, Highland Avenue, Monroe Avenue, and Alabama Avenue.

The local government created the Apopka CRA Board to direct the agency. This board comprises Apopka City Council members, an Orange County Board of County Commissioners representative, and other individuals appointed by the local government.

Planning Commissioner Robert Ryan asked Howell about accessibility to the community park as well as

whether the land would be auctioned off or sold.

Howell explained that the Community Redevelopment Agency and the Apopka City Council would have to deem the property as surplus property before it could be sold.

"Well, my concern is there's been a couple of properties that were sold at 50 percent of market value," Ryan replied to Howell. "Another one was almost sold at 50 percent market value. How do we prevent this? How do we get market value out of this, out of our tax money property?"

Howell said he didn't think he was prepared to

answer Ryan's question about the property's market, but the Planning Commission meeting was focused on the plat.

"But as far as market value, I mean, appraisals are done on properties when they're sold," Howell said. "So that would be how that would be done, based on our appraisal. We, the city, have appraisals of properties done, and then when they're sold off, they would use the appraised value to help base the sale price off of it."

Ryan brought up a previous problem the city had with one property, which was appraised at \$2.5 million only for an interested

buyer to offer between \$5 million and \$6 million for the parcel when the land was sold to someone else for \$2 million. However, the deal fell through. Howell said that situation won't apply to the Eighth Street plat because it only has four lots.

There is a specific legal process CRAs must follow regarding the alienation of properties considered for redevelopment, city attorney Anthony Hand explained to the Planning Commission. In property law, alienation is the voluntary act of a property owner to dispose of or transfer the property.

Particularly, the pro-

cess that requires solicitation of proposals, and properties can only be sold at less than market value unless a governing body says

otherwise through reviewing a set of procedures for the transaction, according to Hand.

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Bain working to make the transition to former State Attorney occur smoothly

ORANGE COUNTY— State Attorney for the Ninth Judicial Circuit Andrew Bain committed to a smooth transition of his seat back to former State Attorney Monique Worrell, who was suspended by Gov. Ron DeSantis in 2023.

“I want to provide clarity that Monique Worrell will take office on January 7, 2025, and that my term will end January 6, 2025,” Bain wrote in an email to his employees Monday.

“It is my intention to provide any assistance I can

to ensure the office continues to operate smoothly for the benefit of our community during this transition,” he said. “It is also my expectation that every member of the office will do the same.”

The Monday email followed a separate email Bain, an independent, sent to his employees Sunday night, titled “The Future is Uncertain,” which led to reports claiming Bain would not support Worrell, a Democrat, in taking back the Ninth Judicial Circuit seat.

“While I accept the re-

sults of the election and wish to do everything I can to ensure the Office is successful going forward, I do not yet feel I can assist her in that transition because of the clear [suspension of] Ms. Worrell pursuant to Article IV, Section 7 of the Florida Constitution,” Bain wrote.

Bain wrote in the Sunday email that the executive order does not provide a time limit on Worrell’s suspension and neither does the Florida Constitution.

However, he said he is

“guided” by the Florida Supreme Court’s opinion in Jackson v. Desantis from 2019, and “particularly Justice Logoa’s concurrence directly stating that a Governor’s order of suspension is only resolved by an order rescinding the suspension or a hearing and decision from the Florida Senate.”

“I have not yet received an order from the Governor rescinding [the executive order], and Ms. Worrell never requested a Senate hearing,” Bain wrote. “Without one of these things, I do not

feel I can lawfully assist in a transition to an individual whose lawful suspension was affirmed by the Florida Supreme Court.”

“We are living through an unprecedented legal event without clear answers,” he wrote. “While I will immediately comply with an order of the Governor rescinding his prior executive order, I do not know if or when that will come.”

The governor’s office previously said that the main factors that played into the suspension of Wor-

rell included Worrell avoiding minimum mandatory sentencing for gun crimes and drug trafficking offenses, while limiting charges for child pornography and ignoring “valid and applicable” sentencing enhancements.

Since taking over, Bain targeted repeat offenders, enacted a new violent crimes unit and made other sweeping changes.

The Ninth Judicial Circuit primarily centers around Orange County.

DACA: Biden’s plan struck down

*Continued from page 2A*

tion protections for DACA recipients and streamlining request waivers to make it easier for them to obtain temporary visas, The Center Square reported.

Last month, a federal judge struck down Biden’s amnesty plan, squashing his attempt to expand DACA provisions, The Center Square reported.

DACA supporters argue recipients should be granted citizenship, claiming they contribute to the U.S. economy and are constructive members of society.

Others argue those with crimi-

nal records, at a minimum, should be deported. Within the first five years of the program, nearly 80,000 DACA recipients were released into the U.S. with arrest records, The Center Square reported.

Attorneys general in the coalition represent the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Florida, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

With weeks left in the administration, CMS is unlikely to appeal the case.

Moore: Comaraderie is necessary

*Continued from page 2A*

has inspired me to consider how the collaborative atmosphere in District 2 came about.

The answer given to me by most of those I asked is that I show up and contribute to their events. While the groups are growing and building out their talent and a strong board of directors, my staff and I fill in with completing tasks and duties. My goal is always for them to be successful and eventually fully interdependent on one another. And yes, I did take several leadership classes, one from Harvard and another from the Florida Association of Counties to learn how to lead such wonderful people.

Yes, I plan clean-ups for the younger teams and often recruit auxiliary organizations to assist. My staff, particularly Linda and Roy, make hundreds of phone calls, send thousands of texts and emails, and routinely post graphics on social media inclusively inviting people to join the effort. And obviously, we honor and reward participation.

But I truly don’t think this is the whole story. Many organizations use similar models and develop comradery amongst their members. I’m still researching the “why” we are so supportive of one another and our respective communities in District 2.

Also, included in my analysis is consideration that there are certain sections of the district that don’t enjoy this same comaraderie as Lockhart, Wekiwa Springs, Clarcona-Ocoee, or parts of Southern Apopka.

Some areas don’t have groups as I just haven’t had the time to manage too many new groups simultaneously. Others because their cities are doing a good job without the county involvement. Some wealthier areas simply have enough personal funding and leisure time to engage in their own activities. Other areas seemingly do not believe that improving a community requires a partnership between residents and local government. And others are only involved with the requirements of pure survival. There are many good reasons people do not en-

gage with us.

My thoughts remain focused on why those residents and neighbors that do engage with the Neighborhood Leader Program have become so interested in their local community. They are helpful, engaged, and concerned about one another.

The context of the program does matter. We offer monthly meetings for those interested in activities other than just community clean-ups.

The people groups engage in local historical events, historical markers, art, advocacy, partnerships with law enforcement, transportation, and learning more about local government services.

They communicate the happenings in their area through social media. And they are strong partners with local schools and nonprofits.

The monthly meetings are concerned with every aspect of community building.

However, I think there is more to it . . . stay tuned for the 4th column on the Neighborhood Leader Program.

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Hayden: Trusting God is the answer

*Continued from page 2A*

guess every move they make to the detriment of their life or limb. They have been ridiculed, harassed by those who have an ideology that does away with police presence. Our policemen and all first responders need to know we support them, and we do not want to live in a community without them. I was pleasantly surprised to see an individual jump in to help protect an Officer of the Law when she was being over-powered by a criminal.

Where are the men that used to be the protectors of justice? Have we given up the privilege of being the daddy (a little girl’s first love, and a boy’s first hero), the provider, the family unit, and the example of leadership for daily living?

It is time to promote the general Welfare by standing up to those who will disparage our police and our first responders and therefore we will insure domestic tranquility.” Let all of us be lovers of the “... provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our posterity.”

Love is not the tinging that comes from an emotional encounter, but a solid, unconditional commitment that is a choice we make. Once made, that commitment may waiver, but never fails.

Are our emotions involved with our commitment? Ask me when I see “Old Glory” being raised to the “Star Spangled Banner” and the tears start when I think of the men and women who have sacrificed their lives in defense of what that banner stands for.

Is our love of nation being tried? You bet it is! Look at today’s headlines and listen to the newscasts that promote progressive ideals and woke attitudes to bring our nation to its knees.

We must be ready to stand in the gap and not

back down when we are faced with the forces of the left.

The Marine motto, “Semper Fidelis” (Always Faithful), should be the beat of our hearts. Our national motto, “In GOD we trust” should sustain us when we feel we cannot do this by ourselves. As I said in the beginning, it is not the “flash in the pan” that makes a difference, but the one who, when being tested, holds his or her head up and stands solid in the freedoms given to us by our Creator.

Keep on keepin’ on. Start with your neighbors.

Let them know you are concerned for them and you are willing to defend them and your neighborhood because we are all in this boat together. Race has nothing to do with it if we stand together as Americans, blessed to be together in the greatest nation the world has ever experienced, the United States of America.

ALL ABOUT APOPKA



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

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# BUSINESS PROFILE

## Your Guide to Local Businesses

### Public Invited to Hear Dickens Carolers at Graceworx Community Church Dec. 21

The Dickens Carolers—who’ve been inspiring Central Florida audiences for the past 30 plus years with their performances of the music of Christmas — will present a concert at **Graceworx Community Church** on Saturday, December 21, at 11:30 a.m. The public is invited.

This free event will feature a mixed a cappella quartet, which will sing a wide variety of Christmas carols for some 50 minutes of **Graceworx’s** hour-long worship service — ensuring that nearly everyone’s favorite will be included.

The ambiance for their performance will be enhanced by their Victorian-era attire — bonnets and top hats included.

“To sum it up,” say the organizers, “the quartet will be wearing clothing styles from 150 years ago, while singing carols that describe events from 2,000 years ago, as they share a message that’s timeless in its inspiration.”

Church services and other religious events aren’t the only beneficiaries of the exceptional musical talent and inspiration that are the hallmarks of a Dickens Carolers performance. Walt Disney World, Universal Studios, Sea World, Busch Gardens, Cypress Gar-



An a cappella mixed quartet from the Dickens Carolers will provide a free 50-minute Christmas carol concert at Graceworx Community Church on Saturday, December 21, at 11:30 a.m. The public is invited. Photo courtesy of the Dickens Carolers.

dens and Silver Springs are just some of the venues that have chosen to feature them in their holiday lineup.

“Whether it’s an intimate house party or a concert hall,” says the organization’s website, “the Dickens Carolers are prepared with more than 50 sacred and secular Christmas carols, all memorized in glorious four-part harmony.”

Typically, the Carolers sing in mixed quartets, as will be the case in their performance at **Graceworx**. But they have more than 60 professionals in their troupe, all of whom are ready, willing and able to perform in any setting, indoors or out, throughout the holiday season and beyond.

The Dickens Carolers (407-578-7496; [vocalsinc@mac.com](mailto:vocalsinc@mac.com))

are available for performances not only locally but anywhere in the world.

Carol Becker, the group’s director, says one of their most memorable performances was while eight singers were traveling by plane to an event in Pittsburgh. We got permission from the flight crew to have the eight of us perform in the aisle as a flash mob.

The group’s performance at **Graceworx Community Church** on December 21, won’t take the form of a flash mob, but it will provide a truly memorable experience — musically, visually, and spiritually.

“**Graceworx** first had the Dickens Carolers perform in 2021,” say **Graceworx’s** leaders.

“The Carolers are being invited back for what will be their fourth

annual performance. As always, the public is invited to enjoy this Christmas-music extravaganza — a concert hall-caliber presentation that’s totally free, with no reservation required, and plenty of seating.”

**Graceworx** is a non-denominational congregation that conducts its worship services each Saturday morning at 11:30 a.m. at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, 9913 Bear Lake Road, Apopka, FL 32703. An Adult Bible Study meets in the church’s boardroom at 10:00 a.m.

For more information about **Graceworx** and/or this event, phone 321-228-4599 or email [graceworxcc@gmail.com](mailto:graceworxcc@gmail.com).

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