

See the stories and pictures at the top of the page about the Apopka High School boy's basketball

team's matchups with Dr. Phillips, Mount Dora, and Discovery this week.



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# APK boys basketball passes quarter point of the season at 4-3

By Marshall Tempest  
Apopka Chief Staff

Last week the Apopka Blue Darter boy's basketball team went 1-2 beating West Orange 56-42 and falling to Evans (58-40) and Lake Mary (47-44). The boys were 4-3 on the season and ranked 161 in Florida before their matchup with Dr. Phillips, Mount Dora, and Discovery this week. Apopka still sits atop Class 7A District 3 with Lake Brantley just a step behind as of Wednesday, December 11.

We are about a quarter of the way through the basketball season and the team now has a gauntlet of matches before the end of the year. Including their games this week against Dr. Phillips and Mount Dora, the Blue Darters have eight planned matchups before the end of December. In two weeks Apopka will have played 15 of their 27 games of the regular season. When January comes around this team will begin shaping into the team they hope to be come playoff time.

Evans vs. Apopka (58-40)



TEMPEST'S  
TIMEOUT  
Marshall Tempest

**Loss**  
Last week in Apopka's loss to Evans, the Blue Darters were simply not enough to stop the high-flying blitzkrieg offense of the Evans Trojans. Evans is one of the best programs in the nation at rank 90 and ranked number five in the state according to Max-Preps on Wednesday, December 11.

"They are a championship-level basketball team, and they play incredibly well together. Nothing they do is individual and everything they do, they do as a collective. It's a pleasure to watch them play but not as fun to compete against. I take full responsibility for this loss. It is absolutely my

fault that we are not doing a lot of the things that attribute to winning and that hurt us tonight," said head coach of the Blue Darters Scott Williams after the game.

Evans is 4-1 with their only loss to Oak Ridge 85-80. The Trojans are also averaging 75.2 points in five games and allowing an average of 64.6 points.

The Trojans were seemingly unstoppable on offense, especially on the fastbreak. Evans had 20 points come from transition. But even worse than their pure offensive ability it was their stout defense that turned Apopka's mistakes into scoring opportunities.

The Trojans were able to secure 21 points from Apopka's 21 turnovers, 14 of those turnovers were steals from Evans.

These steals and massive amount of turnovers from Apopka allowed Evans to shoot 73 shots from the field compared to Apopka who was only able to take 48 shots.

To get a better look at the Evans' offense, they outscored the Blue Darters in three of the four quarters, but it was the first quarter that set them up for success. In the first quarter, Evans outscored Apopka 21-7 effectively setting up their lead. Now for the rest

of the game, Evans just leaned on their athleticism to stay ahead.

The next three quarters were not nearly as bad for Apopka as they kept it close. Evans outscored Apopka 10-9 in the second quarter and 16-13 in the third. In the fourth quarter, Apopka was able to break even with Evans at 11 points, but even with marked improvement on defense throughout the game from Apopka, the lead created in the first quarter was too much to get over.

Lake Mary vs. Apopka (47-44) Loss

Apopka's loss to Lake Mary last week on Satur-

day, December 7, was unlike the loss to Evans in the fact that Apopka outplayed Lake Mary and should've won. The game was back and forth with each team taking a quarter here and there.

"We are continuing to put ourselves into some difficult spots by not being better at doing the little things. It was a ball game in which we were in control in the first half up seven. Then we allowed the ball game to come back to them. We are just making too many mistakes to win games against good clubs, which Lake Mary

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The Apopka boy's basketball team stand together with arms interlocked before their game against Lake Brantley on Friday, November 22.

# WHS girls basketball finds new game plan due to injuries

By Neal Fisher  
Apopka Chief

Like most teams, the Wekiva Mustangs spent the offseason integrating new players into the program and acclimating to playing together.

Then in the blink of an eye the best laid plans for the 2024-25 season were irrelevant as Jasmine Pooler suffered a season-ending torn ACL on Saturday, November 30. Of the production returning, Pooler represented about 40 percent and by far the most on

the team. Ja'Niyah Poole also suffered a concussion during the contest against the DME Lakers and has missed several contests.

"Makeup of the team is different now," Middleton said. "Albeit different and the time needed could be long term during the regular season, growth remains reachable. Now a different makeup, realizing the strengths possessed, how to win using the strengths is being acclimated to and always a work in progress. Playing without two of the players counted on to contribute in all areas make for a rough patch. We not only have to learn how to win all over. We have to get past the unexpected and sudden dynamic first and just as much as adjusting and learning. The injury was also a kick to the gut after playing the best quarter and quality of play during the previous handful had steadily improved.

"Teams suffering injuries unfortunately don't get spotted points or any

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Head coach of the Wekiva Mustangs, Jerry Middleton, talks with his team during a timeout in their 57-40 loss to Bishop Moore on Wednesday, December 11.

# APK girls basketball faces Minneola and Horizon

By Marshall Tempest  
Apopka Chief Staff

The Apopka girl's basketball team is 2-4 so far this season but still sits atop the Class 7A District 3 leaderboard. The girls had two games this week against Lake Minneola and Horizon.

Apopka vs. Lake Minneola (58-20) Win

Their first game was against Lake Minneola on Wednesday, December 11. Lake Minneola was 2-3 coming into the game. With both teams coming into the matchup on a losing streak so early in the season it was

an important win for both squads but especially for Apopka who needs to turn it around before the end of the year.

Apopka has allowed 224 points and scored 187 in five games for an average of 37.4 points scored a game and 44.8 points allowed a game. Lake Minneola has allowed 190 points and scored 146 in five games for an average of 29.2 points scored a game and 38 points allowed a game.

Apopka started out slow against Minneola. In the first quarter both teams struggled to get their foot-

ing. But by the end of the first Apopka was in a groove and only getting better leading 15-7 going into the second quarter.

The second quarter was a huge one for the Blue Darters. Apopka came out swinging and just never really stopped, The Blue Darters outscored Minneola 21-5 in the second quarter to end the first half up 36-12.

The third quarter was once again belonged to the Blue Darters where they outscored Minneola 16-7. This is where Apopka be-

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On Wednesday, December 11, Apopka's Asia Jones finds an open lane to the basket and gets an open look.

# APK Pop Warner shows out at Nationals, 3 teams make globals

By Marshall Tempest  
Apopka Chief Staff

The Apopka Pop Warner Organization had a great showing this past week at the Pop Warner Superbowl and Cheer and Dance Championships. Their showing this year could be a great milestone for the future of this organization on both the football and cheer side.

12U Football

To start, the Apopka 12U Pop Warner football team fell in the quarterfinal round of the Pop Warner Super Bowl to the Hartford Hurricanes from Connecticut on Sunday, December 8. Apopka fell 25-22 in heartbreaking loss but their tale wasn't over. After the loss, the Blue Darters were put into a consolation bracket where they

still had a chance to prove themselves.

Apopka's first game in the consolation bracket was against the Enon Eagles from Pennsylvania. The Eagles fell to the Fort Myers Falcons 25-0. The Fort Myers Falcons went on to face the Hurricanes in the next round and fell 25-7. With this logic, Apopka

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Pictured above is the Apopka Pop Warner's Tiny Mites who placed first at the Pop Warner National Cheer and Dance Championships to earn a spot at globals.



# Police Beat

If a law enforcement agency charges you with a crime and this paper reports that information, please notify us within 90 days if the charge is dropped, or if you are found not guilty by the court. After verifying the information, we will

be happy to publish it. Please send notification to *The Apopka Chief, P.O. Box 880, Apopka, 32704-0880.*

In the period from December 7-12, the Apopka Police Department received 1,432 calls for ser-

vice, responded to 35 crashes, issued 29 citations, and made 10 arrests. No juveniles were charged. The following adults were arrested and charged: Andrea Catherine Barboza, 42, 2153 Cozy Cove Cir., Lot 5, Orlando, Larceny-other theft. Samuel Disla, 36, 2106 Athens Ct., Apopka, trespassing-failure to leave property on order of own-

er. Priscilla Ann Fernandez, 38, confidential, Winter Garden, neglect child without great bodily harm. Derontay Keshoun Hill, 29, 5653 Terrell Rd., Mt. Dora, Flee/elude police-failure to obey law enforcement office order to stop, resist officer-obstruct without violence. Brandon Jamal Paul, 68, confidential,

Johnson, 29, 1031 Eagles Forrest Dr., Apopka, burglary of occupied dwelling unarmed. Rodney Ladonn Joseph, 61, 7014 Blue Earth Ct., Orlando, other agency warrant X2. Newton Mann, 69, confidential, Apopka, battery on person 65 years of age or older. Cyd Chetram Paul, 68, confidential,

Apopka, aggravated battery-cause bodily harm or disability. Wilfredo Rosario Ortiz, 42, 213 S. Aurora Dr., Apopka, other agency warrant. Melvin Rutledge, 58, 809 Lake Doe Blvd., Apopka, crash-driving under influence-serious bodily injury.

## Specks are starting to bite on Lake Monroe, Lake Jesup

Hello Folks,

Just when the weather got real nice, we have another cold front comin' to town. We got rain this week and the temperature has really dropped down again. Lows in the 40s and highs in the 70s.

This weekend should be a good time to be fishin'. The water temperature is in the 50s and 60s and folks are reportin' some bass goin' on the beds.

My buddy Rich fished his club tournament on the Harris Chain over the weekend. It only took a little over



Jim Keck  
Goin' Fishin'

9 pounds to win. Rich reports that he only caught 3 little bass all day. With the water temperatures in the 50s and 60s, Rich reports that he saw one bass on the beds durin' his tournament. Rich reports that as soon as he got close to the bed,

those bass took off like they had some place to go.

Kyle at Bitter's Bait & Tackle reports that his club fished the Harris Chain on Sunday and it took 13.26 pounds to win his club tournament. Kyle finished in second place with 13.24 pounds, and only missed winnin' by .02 pounds. That, folks, is as close as you can be from winnin'.

Kyle also reports that the specks are startin' to bite. Most of the specks are bein' caught in Lake Monroe and Lake Jesup. The specks that are bitin' in Je-

sup are bein' caught under the 417 bridge on minners. The specks that are bein' caught in Lake Monroe are bein' caught in open water on minners. We have a full moon this weekend on Sunday so that may help get the specks and the bass to bitin'.

Most of the ramps on the St. John's River are open again. For all those folks that like to fish the Butler Chain, R.D. Keene ramp is now open. I knw everyone has been waitin' for a while to go out there and fish, but I'm happy to

report that the ramps are open as of last week. So, the good news for everyone is all the ramps are open and the fishin' should be improvin' each and every week, at least for the rest of the year.

I wanted to let everyone know that the FWC's TrophyCatch program has enhanced their website. The new design features easy access to the multiple program components. You will see they have improved the gallery graphics, and it's now more streamlined than before. You will

have more options for uploadin' photographs and videos. You can go check it out for yourself, and make sure you submit your recent catches at [TrophyCatch.com](https://www.trophycatch.com).

Well folks, that's it for this week. I hope you get a chance to do some fishin' over the weekend or durin' next week.

See ya next week.

Tip of the week: Full Moon

Save a few and good luck!

## WHS: There is still time to adjust to circumstances for the Mustangs

*Continued from page 1C*

leeway in the score during the regular season. The season has now taken on the direction of having to adjust and learn for a second time, which is also a challenge in itself. With most of the regular season still to be played though, we have time to adjust and learn. Reaching play consistently of the best quality as the postseason begins is no less achievable than two weeks ago."

Thus, the victory over cross-town rival the Apopka Blue Darters had far more value than getting the first after the injuries out of the way

"For all intent and pur-

poses, we are starting over as far as the makeup and learning how to win," Middleton said. "The victory over the Blue Darters was the second with the value of getting the first victory out of the way."

Played on Monday, December 2 at Wekiva, the victory by a score of 53-30 was also of the come-from-behind nature. The overall record for the Mustangs was upped to 3-5.

Apopka scored on the first possession of the contest and led for all of the first 13:58. At 10-4 and 15-9, the Blue Darters' largest lead was six points. Not only was the lead then taken via a 17-4 run by Wekiva, when the run was over

Wekiva had created a commanding, in-control lead at 29-19. The score was 22-17 at halftime and 35-27 after three quarters. A 10-1 run began the fourth quarter and secured the victory.

"The difference was we played with a sense of urgency," Middleton said. "As far as what specific to basketball changed, we played downhill, in the paint. When field goal attempts are consistently taken from inside the paint, the opponent is also playing on its heels emotionally and mentally. Opponents are trying to avoid mistakes instead of executing decisive plays."

See WHS Page 3C



Wekiva's Makayla Bell takes the ball down court as the Mustangs start a new possession on Wednesday, December 11.

## Warner: Football falls in quarterfinal, cheer heads to globals

*Continued from page 1C*

should've dominated the Eagles. But sadly Apopka

fell 12-8 to the Eagles and ended their Pop Warner Super Bowl run. But im sure that this is only a glimpse at

the bright future of Apopka Pop Warner football.

### Cheer and Dance

The Apopka Pop Warner Cheer teams had an outstanding performance at the Championships. Two of the three age groups the Apopka Pop Warner Cheer Association sent to Nationals won first place, the Mighty Mites and the Tiny Mites. The Jr. Pee wee team took home second place but that is nothing to be ashamed about at a national level. The most impressive piece of this feat is that the Apopka organization is all first-time head coaches and a first-year Cheer Coordinator. Imagine what these girls and this organization could be capable of in just a short amount of time.

The Mitey Mites had a 92.53 score putting them first above second place by just .50. The Jr. Pee wee team got second place with a score of 89.07 behind the

first-place victors who had a score of 94.03. The Tiny Mites had a score of 95.07 nearly five points over the second place team.

Now with the girls' placements, all of the teams should be able to head to the next stage – global.

The global level of the Pop Warner Dance competition is just a few months away in February of 2025 and will be held in New Jersey. The key thing that the girls will need is funding as it will be a very expensive trip. So they will need us – the Apopka community – to help them out in any way we can. Whether or not that is spreading the word or donating what you can, these girls deserve to jump into this opportunity without having to worry about the financial burden.

Make sure to stay updated as in the coming weeks we'll have more in-

depth stories on the teams, interviews with their coaches, and information on fund-raising for these

girls to head to the global stage and represent Apopka and the Blue Darters.



On Saturday, December 7, The Apopka Pop Warner 12U quarterback throws a pass while practicing before the quarterfinal game they lost 25-22.

### Weekly SUDOKU

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

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

**DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦**  
♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging  
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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SUDOKU ANSWERS: PAGE 1D

### CLUES ACROSS

- Unsheared sheep
- Rock TV channel
- Streetcar
- Concerning
- Exclamation
- Greek goddess of youth
- Popular type of device
- Alcoholic beverage
- Ancient Olympic Site
- Sharpshoots
- Tyrion Lannister was characterized as one
- Pointed ends of pens
- Measuring instruments
- Midsection body part
- Made a mistake
- Adjusted
- "Partridge" actress Susan
- Yell

### CLUES DOWN

- Works of body art
- Israeli politician Abba
- Renowned desert
- Eat greedily
- She didn't make it through the Fr. Revolution
- Beat
- Bloodsucker
- From a place already noted
- Counted on
- Alberta Assn. of Baccalaureate World Schools
- Something one can make
- One who abstains
- Wild ox
- Type of student
- Bacterial infection of the skin
- Expresses surprise
- What engaged couples ultimately say

- Crony
- Where one begins (abbr.)
- Architectural designation
- "Matt Houston" actor Horsley
- More (Spanish)
- Autonomic nervous system
- Indigenous peoples
- Deflections
- Circulating life force
- Executes with a rope
- Natives of an island nation
- Girls
- Logician and philosopher
- Nocturnal hoofed animal
- Relaxing spaces
- From a distance
- Form of Persian language
- Amounts of time
- Mathematical designation

Solutions can be found on page 1D of this newspaper.



# TTO: This week’s games will test the Apopka Blue Darters

Continued from page 1C

is. I think they have a great chance to win their district in our region so it’s just real disappointing to not execute better against a team like that and we have got to find a way to improve on that,” Williams said during a talk I had with him this week.

Lake Mary took the first quarter outscoring Apopka 15-14, then Apopka took the second quarter doubling Lake Mary’s six points to 12 to take the lead 26-21 going into halftime. Then Lake Mary took the third quarter in a funny turn doubling Apopka’s eight points with 16 to pull ahead 37-34. And the fourth quarter was tied at ten points each for Apopka and Lake Mary each scoring 10 which gave the Rams the win at 47-44. Apopka dominated

the stat box with a better shooting percentage, more transition points, more points from turnovers, more assists, and more points in the paint. So how did they lose if they dominated everywhere? It’s always the little things.

“Being inefficient was our problem. We were up seven and we had a bad possession turn the ball over right before half and now we were only up five. We have the ball coming out of half and the first thing we do is throw it away, the second possession we throw it away. So you know all of a sudden now they are getting their footing.

Basketball is about stacking plays and momentum. Unfortunately, we were stacking a bunch of bad plays and we did that too much.”

Apopka so far this

season is having trouble with two things really: turnovers and free-throw shooting. Apopka gave up 18 turnovers and allowed Lake Mary to secure 12 points from those turnovers. The Blue Darters also shot 5-for-16 from the free-throw line. It was an away game, but it doesn’t matter if it’s home or away the boys have to get better at the line. Fewer turnovers and a few more free throws made this a win for Apopka.

**Apopka vs. Dr. Phillips 12/11**

Moving on to what’s right in front of us, Apopka’s games this week. Apopka faced Dr. Phillips on Wednesday, December 11, and is set to face Mount Dora on Friday, December 13, as well as Discovery on Saturday, December 14.

“Dangerous and very

young,” Williams’ said when I asked him about how he feels about the matchup with Dr. Phillips.

“They are very very young which makes them a little bit unpredictable. So for us, it’s all about which version of them will we face. My concern about tonight is not really about them it’s about us. We’ve got to start to find a way to claw out of the hole we’re in in terms of the level that we are playing at. We have to not be comfortable and not accept the way we have been performing. We need to start collectively doing the little things and make progress that you should expect to see through the season.”

Dr. Phillips was 3-3 coming into their matchup against the Blue Darters with two of their wins coming in overtime. The Panthers had scored 360

and allowed 367 points in their six games coming into their matchup against Apopka. Apopka on the other hand has scored 348 and allowed 358 in their seven games.

These teams were pretty evenly matched on paper but it all came down to who could make it happen on the floor.

**Apopka vs. Mount Dora 12/13 7:30 p.m.**

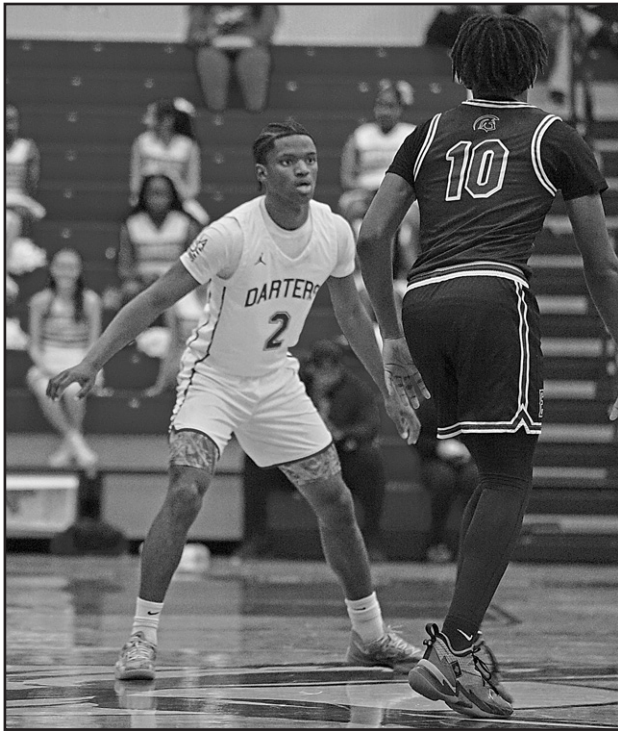
Apopka will host Mount Dora on Friday, December 13. Mount Dora was 3-5 on the season and ranked 475 in the state of Florida according to MaxPreps as of Wednesday, December 11. The Hurricanes have scored 436 points and allowed 424 in their eight matchups. Mount Dora dominates in their wins and losses by an average of 9.2 points.

Mount Dora’s opponents so far this season

have been less than spectacular with an average opponent ranking of 418.33 and two unranked opponents. Apopka has an average opponent ranking of 156.67 so far this season with just one unranked opponent.

On paper, this should be an easy win for the Blue Darters but in an away game, you never know how your opponent will play so they need to come ready because this Mount Dora team has the ability to score a lot even with their average points a game being 54.5. Apopka’s average points a game is 49.7 but has been playing higher caliber players and teams than Mount Dora. Apopka’s highest-scoring game was a 65-59 loss to Sanford Seminole while Mount Dora’s highest-

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On the left, Apopka’s Jahi Bowden defends an Evans’ player at full court looking to slow down their offense. In the center Jermichael Johnson motions toward his teammates for some off-ball movement. On the right, Rafael Betancourt looks for an open Blue Darter to pass the ball to.

## AHS: The girls prepare for very strong Sanford and Leesburg squads

Continued from page 1C

gan sitting some of their better players to let the younger and more inexperienced girls get some in-game looks.

The rest of the game was a slow march to a most certain end. Apopka deci-

sively won the game 58-20.

“I think we need to get better. We have a lot of growing to do, we have a lot of development to do, and i’ll take the win,” said head coach of the girl’s basketball team Brittany Hardy.

“The season right now ... It’s bumpy. But we will

get the girls to where they need to be.”

**Apopka vs. Horizon**

On Thursday, December 12, after press time, Apopka traveled to Winter Garden to face off against Horizon. Horizon was 4-1 coming into the game and on a three-game win streak.

Horizon’s only loss this season has been to Wekiva 50-46. Apopka also fell to Wekiva but it was 53-30. Horizon also has one of the most impressive wins I’ve ever seen this season beating Lakeland 86-2.

Horizon is an offensive powerhouse outscoring

their last three opponents by 146 points with a 60-16 win over Olympia, a 62-20 win over West Orange, and an 83-23 win over Innovation.

**Apopka vs. Seminole & Leesburg**

The girls have just two more games before the end

of the year. The girls will host Sanford Seminole on Monday, December 16, the game is slated for a 7:30 p.m. tipoff.

Sanford was 6-2 and ranked 61st in the state as of Wednesday, December

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On the left, Apopka’s Asia Jones takes a wide open shot from beyond the three-point line during the Darters’ game against Lake Minneola. In the center, Jhenelle Francis takes a jumper just outside of the key. On the right, Asia Jones takes a shot from beyond the three point line with a defender closing in.

## WHS: Bell, Johnson, Asanya combine for 45 points in win over AHS

Continued from page 2C

During the last 16:02, the Mustangs’ field goal attempts increased from eight before to 20. Half or 50 percent of the two-point field goal attempts were converted during the 16:02. However, the run also included two of the three successful three-point field goal attempts converted.

Makayla Bell scored 22 points and was a high-scorer along with a career-high nine assists. Another 23 points were tallied by Jakayla Johnson and Senaia Asanya. Reaching double-digits in the scoring column was a first for Johnson as well.

“Perhaps the most important change will be a bigger lineup,” Middleton said. “We have more play-

ers over six feet tall seeing significant time now. Size was definitely an advantage over Apopka and used well. Ability to use the size well was demonstrated, but consistency is needed.”

“Grit, trust and commitment to each other began to develop and had an impact on the outcome for the first time since the injury. Grit, trust and commitment

to each other is as necessary to win as talent and skill. Some solid steps forward in particular were taken towards developing the level needed to reach the end goal. More work is needed but some steps were also taken towards taking care of the ball.”

Haines City Hornets, Bloomingdale Bulls, Dr. Phillips Panthers (Metro

Conference Championship Tournament) and Edgewater Eagles ((Metro Conference Championship Tournament) have also claimed victories this season.

The contest against the Blue Darters was the first of five consecutive at home for the Mustangs. The 2024 calendar ends with contests against the Bishop Moore Hornets (Dec. 11-past press

time), Colonial Grenadiers (Dec. 12-past press time), Oak Ridge Pioneers (Dec. 17), Ocoee Knights (Dec. 18) and the Florida Prospects Christmas Tournament at Dr. Phillips (Dec. 27-29).



## Apopka Pop Warner 12U falls to Hartford Hurricanes in quarterfinal

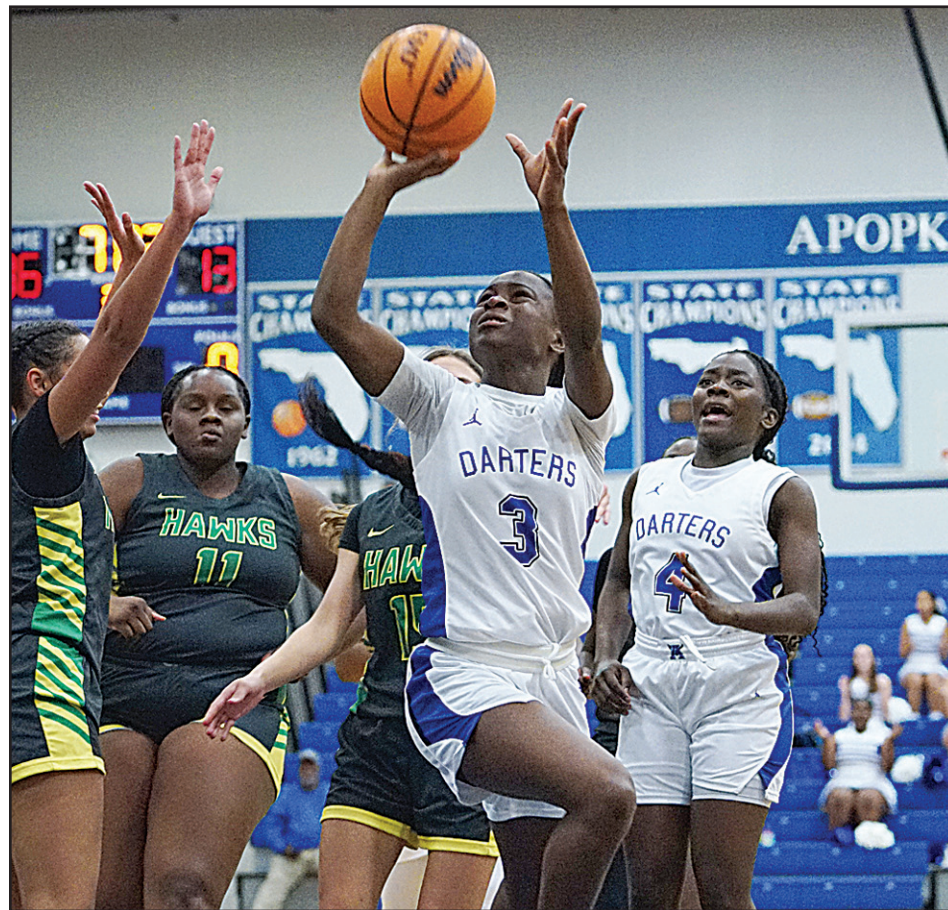


On Saturday, December 7, an Apopka Pop Warner Football coach stands with the team's wide receivers during a practice before their quarterfinal game.



An Apopka Pop Warner wide receiver moments before catching a pass at a practice held the day before the quarterfinal game.

## AHS girls basketball dominates Lake Minneola 58-20



On Wednesday, December 11, Apopka's Jhenelle Francis weaves through the lane and through contact to finish a layup and get the foul.



Apopka head coach Brittany Hardy (r) stands on the sidelines watching her girls defend against Lake Minneola on Wednesday, December 11.

## Two APK Pop Warner cheer teams take home first place at Nationals



Ellie Gillis holds the trophy that her Jr. PeeWee team won by finishing second at the Pop Warner National Cheer and Dance Championships.



Above is the Jr. PeeWee Pop Warner cheer team that placed second at the Pop Warner National Cheer and Dance Championships



Harper Gillis and her cheer team, the Mighty Mites, finished first in their division at the Pop Warner National Cheer and Dance Championships.



# TTO: Discovery are a very strong team

Continued from page 3C

scoring game was a 77-57 victory over East Ridge. Confidence could be a huge factor in this game as well. Mount Dora is coming off two wins with a combined 43 points over the last two opponents. Apopka is coming off two losses with a combined 21 points behind the last two opponents. I think a game like this is a perfect opportunity for the boys to go all out, get their confidence up with a huge win, and solidify their mindset going forward. **Apopka vs. Discovery** 12/14 5 p.m. "They are extremely

athletic, they will be physical, they will be very aggressive defensively, and they will cause an awful lot of problems." Apopka will host the Discovery Spartans on Saturday, December 14, set for a 5 p.m. tipoff. This is going to be a very tough game. The Discovery Spartans are 6-1 and ranked 70th in the state as of Wednesday, December 11. The Spartans have scored 542 points and allowed just 361 in their seven matchups. They are averaging 77.42 points a game and allowing an average of 51.57. Discovery is a defensive and offensive juggernaut when you look at their wins (102-46, 88-43, 76-66, 70-33, 81-26, 61-56). But what's hiding under those wins is a very high average opponent rank of 262.66. That is with an outlier in their opponents with facing Evans who is ranked fifth in the state of Florida. Speaking of their matchup with Evans, that's the Spartans' only loss this season. Discovery fell 91-64 to the Evans Trojans. Now if we compare this to Apopka's loss to Evans (58-40) we can predict a lot. We can see that they are not a defensive team or at least not at the same caliber as Apopka when

it came to slowing Evans down. We can also see that they are a very gifted offensive team as they put up 64 points on a team that Apopka struggled to put up 40 on. This will be a defensive game for Apopka. If they can keep the Spartan offense corralled, then they have the offensive firepower to pull ahead. But if they let them explode in a quarter they might find themselves in the same predicament they were in against Evans – fighting against an early and large lead for three more quarters after the first.

Everybody has an opinion. Why not share yours? Send a letter to the Editor online [www.theapopkachief.com](http://www.theapopkachief.com)

## Wekiva Mustangs fall to Bishop Moore



The Wekiva Mustangs girl's basketball team hosted the Bishop Moore Hornets on Wednesday, December 11. Bishop Moore found themselves ahead to start the game and outscored the mustangs in every quarter except the fourth which Wekiva outscored the Hornets (12-11, 20-7, 18-10, 7-12). Bishop Moore took home the victory 57-40 to improve to 2-6 on the season as Wekiva drops to 3-6.



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# AHS: Seminoles ranked 61st in the state of Florida

Continued from page 3C

11. Their two losses are to Ocoee (51-34) who is ranked 56th in the state and is 8-1 and Central Florida Christian Academy (46-28) who is ranked 44th in the state and is 7-2. The Seminoles are going to be a very tough team to beat, so Apopka will have to be perfect on defense to win this game.

Sanford has scored 402 points and allowed 296 for

an average of 50.25 points scored a game and 37 points allowed a game. And like I said before, Apopka has allowed 224 points and scored 187 in five games for an average of 37.4 points scored per game and 44.8 points allowed per game.

Leesburg was 3-4 and ranked 80th in the state as of Wednesday, December 11. Their four losses come at the hands of Wildwood twice (55-52, 52-50), Ocoee (52-44), and Lake

Highland Prep (53-41). Wildwood is one of the best teams in the state ranked 12th in Florida, they are also undefeated at 5-0. We know how good Ocoee is, but Lake Highland is also a strong program ranked 54th in the state with a 5-3 record.

Leesburg has scored 374 points and allowed 345 in seven games for an average of 53.4 points scored a game and 49.2 points allowed a game.

## Mighty Mites take first place!



The Apopka Pop Warner Mighty Mites secured first place at the 2024 Pop Warner National Cheer and Dance Championships. They along with the Tiny Mites, and Jr. Pee wee teams earned a spot in the global competition.

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## Physicals and Vision Screenings available for students up to age 18

The Department of Health-Orange County offers physicals and vision screenings to Orange County students up to 18 years of age by appointment. Appointments must be made for Wednesdays only, from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Neighborhood Center for Families (NCF) for Apopka/Zellwood, 6565 Willow St., Zellwood, phone number: 407-254-9430.

Neighborhood Centers for Families (NCF) are one-stop centers that provide residents with a multitude of valuable services within their communities. Funded by the Orange County Citizens' Commission for Children (4C), services are offered at 13 different locations throughout the County. They offer counseling programs, tutoring, employment skills, case management, senior activities, limited health services, and so much more.

Each NCF is made up of non-profit organizations, government agencies, churches and community groups working together to address the specific needs of the surrounding community. These organizations collaborate to provide intergenerational programs, services and activities that address the needs of the entire family. Most services are offered free of charge.

Each NCF is uniquely designed to address the needs of its surrounding community and offers flexible hours of service in a family-friendly and accessible location. Child care stipends, through 4C, are also available for clients who are actively enrolled in services.

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...homes for the holidays this year!



Kids: color stuff in!




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I have *such* a busy schedule for the holidays. This week I made little doughnuts and honey-covered puffs to take to my classmate's Hanukkah celebration. Next week, one of our teachers is going to tell us about the holiday season of Kwanzaa and some of his traditions. Then, I'm going to help Forest and Glade decorate their home with greens for Christmas. Chatter will bake cookies, breads and a Bûche de Noël – a delicious Christmas log cake – and I'll help! What are **you** and your family doing to celebrate the holidays?

## Holiday Fun & Feasts



Santa Claus

I've been very good this year.

Dear Santa, I've been good all year long!

Kwanzaa 12

Christmas 9

feast

menorah

latkes






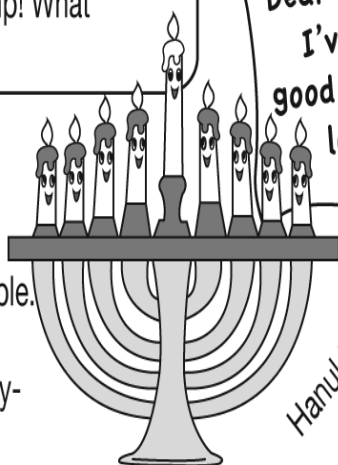
Posadas

decorate 8

tamales

candles

I'm so tired!




**Read the clues to fill in the crossword with holiday fun:**


- Festival of Lights, an 8-day Jewish holiday, honoring the Maccabees' victory over their enemies and the miracle of a small amount of oil that kept burning for 8 days in their temple.
- Jewish families use this to arrange candles.
- Families find their recipes for sugared jelly doughnuts, honey-covered puffs and these delicious potato pancakes.
- Las \_\_\_\_\_ is a celebration in Mexico for 9 days before Christmas. People act out the journey of Joseph and Mary trying to find shelter.
- Families make these special treats from a corn dough and a spicy pork or beef filling, all wrapped in corn husks for cooking.
- Families set up these scenes in their homes: a stable for shelter, the figure of the Christ child in the center with Joseph and Mary looking on, three kings (the Magi), angels, shepherds and townspeople, and some animals.
- Christian holiday celebrating the birth of Jesus.
- On Christmas Eve, delivers gifts to good children; fills their stockings too!
- Families \_\_\_\_\_ their houses, mantels and halls with lights, greens and a tree.
- A 7-day festival celebrated by African-Americans; a time to think about their lives and families; how they can help to create strong communities.
- People decorate, set a nice table for a dinner, light \_\_\_\_\_ and give gifts.
- Peanut soup, sweet potatoes, rice or chicken dishes are made for a \_\_\_\_\_.

## Favorite Family Films and Fun!

It's that time of year when there are many choices for family holiday fun and entertainment: movies, plays, television shows, cartoons, books, poetry, stories, and music. Here is a list of some family favorites.

**Match each title to its description:**





1. **Lights:** *The Miracle of Chanukah*

2. **Just Enough is Plenty**

3. **The Legend of the Poinsettia**

4. **Miracle on 34th Street**

5. **The Nutcracker Ballet**

6. **A Charlie Brown Christmas**

7. **A Christmas Story**

8. **Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer**

9. **'Twas the Night Before Christmas**

10. **It's Kwanzaa Time!**

A. folktale by Tomie dePaola about a girl in Mexico whose gift to Baby Jesus turns into beautiful poinsettias

B. dance and musical performance based on storybook; music was written by a famous composer-Tchaikovsky; first shown in Russia

C. money is tight for the family in this Hanukkah tale; but when a stranger visits they share what little they have

D. movie that makes everyone want to write to Santa Claus

E. cartoon that shows the story of Hanukkah (Chanukah) and the family traditions of this holiday

F. story, song, TV show about reindeer whose bright red nose helps Santa find his way through bad weather to deliver gifts

G. TV special based on the comic strip *Peanuts*; Charlie Brown, Lucy, Linus and other characters talk about the meaning of Christmas

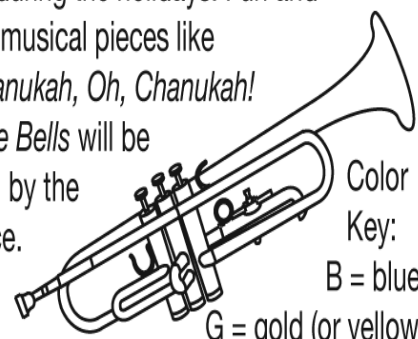
H. poem by Clement Clarke Moore describing Santa Claus' trip to deliver gifts; "Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!"

I. movie about 9-year-old Ralphie who can only think about the Red Ryder air rifle he wants for Christmas

J. book by Linda and Clay Goss full of stories, songs, recipes, games and crafts for celebrating Kwanzaa

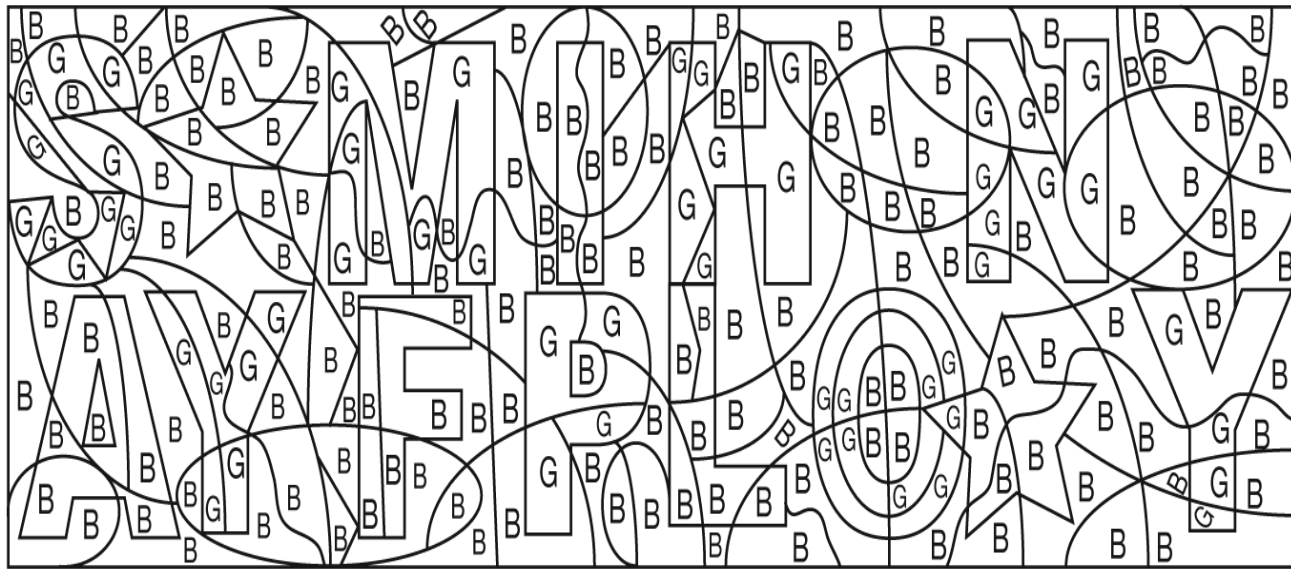
## A Musical Note!

Holiday Pops! This is a concert of beautiful pieces of music like *The Nutcracker Suite* played during the holidays. Fun and sparkly musical pieces like *Oh, Chanukah, Oh, Chanukah!* or *Jingle Bells* will be enjoyed by the audience.



Color Key:  
B = blue  
G = gold (or yellow)

If you can hear the musical, magical sounds of the holidays in person, you may be at the...



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# Apopka Wildlife Drive provides a fun holiday excersion



This winter with may of us having time off to spend with friends and family don't forget about the Apopka Wild Life Drive and all it has to offer. The Lake Apopka Wildlife Drive entrance gate is open for vehicular traffic between 7 a.m. and 3 p.m. on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and federal holidays including Christmas and New Years Eve. All vehicles must exit the drive by 5 p.m.