Sports

See the story and pictures at the top of the page about the Apopka High School football players who signed college football scholarships this week. Most of the attention was on Apopka s Martez Ivey, the top offensive tackle in the nation. Before a live national television audience, Ivey chose to stay in-state and attend the University of Florida to play for the Gators.

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Ivey stays true to his heart, signs with Florida Gators

By John Peery
Apopka Chief Staff



Shown at the signing-day ceremony on Wednesday, February 4, are, seated, (l-r), players Jason Toussaint, Billy Caughell, Ben Bascom, Johnny Robinson, and Martez Ivey. Standing, Fred Priest, AHS athletic director; Doug Guthrie, AHS principal; Rodney Hodges and Bill Caughell, assistant coaches; players J.J. Simmons, Ray Ray Smith, and Condrey Dennison; head coach Rick Darlington; and assistant coaches Jeff Rolson and James Delgado.

A national television audience, a dozen or more members of the media, scores of Apopka High football coaches, players, faculty members, and students gathered Wednesday, February 4, to hear what the biggest man on campus – 6-foot-6, 270 lb. Martez Ivey –ha d to say.

Ivey, the top-rated offensive tackle in the nation, went with his heart, choosing to sign with the Florida Gators over the Auburn Tigers where his good friend, former Blue Darter Chandler Cox is now attending.

What I thought about was just where I want to be at in the next three or four years, what I want to do with my life, Ivey said to the national television audience watching live on ESPNU. It s not all about football. Football is going to come to an end. It s where I want to be at. I don t want to go and stay in Alabama; I want to stay here in Florida. I feel like I can change the lives of people in Florida and that s what I want to do. I want to stay in Florida.

As much attention as was heaped on Ivey, he wasn t the only Blue Darter signing college scholarship papers that day. Eight other Apopka football seniors signed their names.

The others signing this week are Cox, Ray Ray Smith (Akron), Johnny Robinson (Charleston Southern), Ben Bascom (Eastern Kentucky), Billy Caughell (Richmond), J.J. Simmons (Limestone College of South Carolina), Condrey Dennison (Limestone), and Jason Toussaint (Hutchinson Community College of Kansas).

Cox graduated in December from Apopka High and entered Auburn University in early January, but his signing moves the number to nine Blue Darters from this class who will continue with their education and football in college.

Ivey was recruited by scores of colleges across the nation, but several months ago narrowed his choices to Florida and Auburn. He has long been a Gator fan, but he and Cox are great friends and that made him look harder at the Tigers. In the end, however, he chose to attend Florida, about 100 miles from home.

When I received my offer two years ago, that s where I wanted to play and where I wanted to go, Ivey said about the University of Florida. I grew up a Gator fan. I waited for the process because I wanted to explore my opportunities. I wanted to see what fits me best, but my heart was telling me, Florida Gators. Florida Gators. I prayed about it and I was a little torn because Chandler s at Auburn right now. We wanted to play football together, but at the end, we re still going to be best friends. We re always going to keep in touch. I just always wanted to be a Gator.

The recruiting process can wear down even the toughest football player, but Ivey scooted through it without many scars.

I didn t really let it get to me, he said. I ve been the same person I ve been since I started getting recruited. I didn t change as a person. I didn t let anything catch me by surprise. I expected it to be like this ,but it was kind of overwhelming at some points, the last week.

Apopka head coach

See SIGN Page 9C



Martez Ivey speaks remotely with an interviewer on the national telecast on ESPNU.

Wekiva girls start defense of state title with district crown

By Neal Fisher
Apopka Chief Staff

It was quick, decisive and most importantly, lethal.

Only halfway through the first period, the question was no longer who was going to claim the 2015 District 7A-4 girls basketball championship, the question was by how much.

Buoyed by Kyla Allison s 20-point performance and a double-double by Ciara Cumbie, the answer is the Wekiva Mustangs (22-5) as they rolled to their second consecutive District 7A-4 title by a 54-29 score over the East Ridge Knights. In fact, facing a deficit for the only time during the district championship tournament, the Class 7A defending state champion s strongest and only challenge came after the first period of the semifinal round.

With the district championship checked off the list of goals which are a part of successfully defending the state championship, the FHSAA s Class 7A-4 postseason tournament began in earnest for Wekiva Thursday, February 5, past press time as Neptune Beach Fletcher was the opponent for the first round (regional quarterfinal) match-up. East Ridge traveled to Fleming Island. The champion of each district play at home against a runner-up. The winners from those two playoff games will meet in a regional semifinal contest. If Wekiva defeated Fletcher, the Mustangs will host the winner of the Fleming Island-East Ridge game on Tuesday, February 10.



Players, coaches, and school personnel smile and show off the District 7A-4 trophy won Friday, January 30, by the Wekiva Mustangs girls basketball team.

The coaches are happy for the players and the school, Mustangs coach Tommie Butts said. We love representing the school because of what it means to us. The players have worked so hard to become what we have become and because of that ethic pushing us to keep getting better. We felt going into the contest, we were the better team. We played that way. To win two consecutive district championships and be entering the FHSAA

See CHAMPS Page 9C

Wekiva football has pair sign



Two Wekiva Mustangs football players signed to play college football Wednesday, February 4, on National Signing Day. Shown are, (l-r), Val Miyares, Wekiva athletic director; Khani Rozier, who signed with Reedley (Calif.) College; Wekiva head coach Kenard Lang; Jarvis Scott, who signed with New Mexico Military Institute; and Michele Erickson, Wekiva principal. A story about the signings will be in the February 13 issue.

Mustangs will play for district title in boys basketball

By Neal Fisher
Apopka Chief

The means, the road traveled and the solidness of the play was not always the same, but the end result was a berth in the FHSAA s Class 7A postseason basketball tournament for the third consecutive season. Unlike the two previous teams, which often dominated opponents, it seemed only appropriate the Wekiva Mustangs did what they had done during the 2014-15 regular season against the Winter Springs Bears in the semifinal round of the District 7A-4 championship tournament. The final score was 60-50 in favor of the Mustangs, but it took a blistering second period to turn a deficit into the eventual victory.

The combined totals of 37 points by Malcolm Stevenson (17 total) and K.T. Solomon (20) highlighted the effort, especially during the second period.

Wekiva and Ovie-

See DISTRICT Page 10C

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NASCAR INSIDER

by RICK MINTER / Universal Uclick

Family affair: Racing's Elliott family has a milestone week

For the Elliott family of Dawsonville, Georgia, this past week was about as big as it gets — with two milestone events on back-to-back days.

First, last Thursday, Hendrick Motorsports announced that Chase Elliott, at age 19, has been hired to take over the iconic No. 24 Chevrolet from the retiring Jeff Gordon, beginning with the 2016 season. In the meantime, Chase will defend his Xfinity Series championship and make five Sprint Cup starts.

Then, the next night, Chase's father, Bill Elliott, was inducted into the NASCAR Hall of Fame.

It's a success story that began decades ago, when Bill's late father, George, first urged his sons to chase their dreams of racing in NASCAR, buying them hand-me-down cars and supporting their efforts to put them on the track.

In the beginning, there was little indication that a week like the final one of January 2015 would ever be possible. The Elliotts were successful on the Georgia short tracks, but their NASCAR efforts left a lot to be desired.

Bill Elliott said his dad had a vision for a NASCAR future, and a unique way of motivating his sons Ernie, Dan and Bill.

"He always was leading you that way," he said. "He never said, 'Hey, you need to do this.' The way he proceeded was, he'd go buy a race car and he'd look at me and Ernie, and he'd say, 'Hey, y'all need to go run Charlotte here in a few weeks.'"

Even the boys' most ardent supporters didn't see much hope for the fledgling team operating out of an old elementary school — where the race car was prepared in old classrooms with chalkboards still attached to the walls.

"The car would be a total disaster," Bill recalled. "Some of the things we showed up with were just terrible. But that was his way of nudging you along to try and make you better and better."

What George did preach was the value of hard work. It wasn't uncommon for him to call his boys away from their race car preparation to haul hay or do some other sweaty chore. The end result was that the Elliott sons developed the same work ethic as their father. Even as the team progressed to the point where they were winning races and poles, the brothers still often pulled all-nighters at the shop, then went off to race or test the next day.

"I didn't feel like I was the best race car driver, but I was probably the hardest-working race car driver at the time," Bill recalled. "We never gave up, and I think that ethic took us to the level it took us to.

"Without my dad and the ethic he taught us early on, we would have never achieved the things that we did."

In Chase's career, the financial struggles and lack of top-flight equipment weren't an issue in his first years as a driver.

Chase's early years, particularly in Late Model racing, saw him, in a similar manner to the previous Elliott generation, take advantage of what he'd learned from his father.

Only the things he picked up on had more to do with how to drive cars than how to prepare them. From the beginning, he raced — and still races — more like a veteran than a rookie.



Sprint Cup champion "Awesome" Bill Elliott was inducted into the NASCAR Hall of Fame with the Class of 2015.


2014 Nationwide Series champion Chase Elliott will take over the iconic No. 24 Chevrolet after the 2015 Sprint Cup season.

He's always seemed to instinctively know when to push his car hard and when to preserve his equipment. He also has a veteran's feel for when to be aggressive in racing an opponent and when to wait and fight the battle another time.

Chase is smart enough to acknowledge his shortcomings, although they're few, and he doesn't get too up or too down, no matter how a race or a season is going.

"He's an incredibly good race car driver," Bill says of his son. "I'm not saying it's because he's my kid. I've watched him week in and week out through the short tracks, through all the stuff that the kid has done, and he's a pretty phenomenal race car driver.

"I've said all along he's better than I ever thought about being as far as driving a race car, and the way he processes knowing the things he wants out of the race car. I think he's got a good enough head on his shoulders. He's got some great people around him."

Ray Evernham, who is in the unique position of being Bill Elliott's former car owner and the one-time crew chief of the No. 24 Chevrolet that Chase will take over in 2016, said he has no doubt the youngster will find success in his full-time Cup career.

"I can tell you that I'm not surprised at his success, because I've known Chase since he was 5 years old, and I've seen him do some pretty amazing things behind the scenes coming along, like whipping Bill and I both testing a dirt car one day when he was about 12 years old," Evernham said.

"I know that Chase will do a really good job because I told him all the time he's the luckiest kid in the world — he's got his daddy's talent and his mama's looks."

NOTEBOOK

NCMA honors Mike Helton

NASCAR President Mike Helton, who is usually the one giving out awards, found himself on the receiving end recently, as the North Carolina Motorsports Association awarded him the Achievement in Motorsports Tribute Award. Previous recipients include the late Bill France Jr., Benny Parsons and Dale Earnhardt, along with Bruton Smith, Junior Johnson, H.A. "Humpy" Wheeler and the Jarrett family.

Veteran motorsports journalist Tom Higgins, who for years was the NASCAR beat writer for the Charlotte (North Carolina) Observer, received the Jim Hunter Memorial Media Award.

NUMERICALLY SPEAKING

32 Age at which Fred Lorenzen got his 26th and final NASCAR victory.

34 Age at which Rex White ran his final NASCAR race.

56 Age at which Bill Elliott ran his final NASCAR race.

3 Drivers in the 2015 class of the NASCAR Hall of Fame with fewer than 250 career starts in the series now known as Sprint Cup: Rex White, 233; Joe Weatherly, 230; and Fred Lorenzen, 158.

Brian France discusses the state of NASCAR; says no changes to Chase format in 2015

NASCAR Chairman Brian France met with reporters last week to discuss the state of the sport, and one of the main points he emphasized was that there would be no tweaks to the format of the Chase for the Sprint Cup. He said he and other officials made that decision after looking at the results of the 2014 season — the first under the current format — and after hearing from fans on the matter.

"[Fans] like the fact that it tightened up competition," France said. "They liked the drama down the stretch. They liked the emphasis on winning. And one of the things they told us is that they really liked the idea that we weren't going to change anything, and they strongly suggested that we didn't — and we're not going to."

France also answered questions about how the sanctioning body might react if the accusations of domestic violence on the part of driver Kurt Busch are found to be true.

"We've got to let the facts come in," he said. "There would be no reason for me or NASCAR or anybody else to get ahead of those facts, given that they may change. Let's let the facts come in, and if there's something for us to react to, you can appreciate that we will be very careful and very aware of what the circumstances are."

France said he wasn't inclined to allow team owners to field more than four cars apiece, even in an environment where there are just 43 cars entered for many races of late. He also said he'd like to see new owners come in to the sport, and hopes the new rules packages could be a step in that direction.

"We want to have an open sport where if you've got the will to compete, we're going to make it as easy as reasonably possible for us to compete in this sport," he said.


NASCAR Chairman Brian France told reporters that there will be no change to the format of the Chase for the Sprint Cup.

Class of 2015's Hall of Fame induction brings heartwarming stories

The induction ceremonies for the sixth class of the NASCAR Hall of Fame brought some heartwarming stories and a tinge of sadness that two of the inductees — Wendell Scott and Joe Weatherly — didn't live to experience the moment, and another, Fred Lorenzen, couldn't fully appreciate the honor. Then there was one anxious moment when inductee Rex White, NASCAR's oldest living champion at 85, suffered a nasty fall midway through his acceptance speech.

White, whose walking is hampered by polio from childhood and a broken leg a couple of years ago, slipped and landed flat on his back — on live TV.

Although he wasn't seriously injured, it did put something of a damper on what he described as the biggest night of his life.

But the fall, coupled with his charming way of dealing with a stumble in his speech, endeared him to many a fan who before then likely knew very little about him.

The reality of that hit home for him on Saturday morning when he walked into a Charlotte, North Carolina, restaurant for breakfast, and was welcomed by nearly all of his fellow diners.

Wendell Scott's career as the first African-American to regularly compete in the NASCAR series now known as Sprint Cup has been thoroughly documented, as have his financial struggles throughout his career.

But a story told by fellow Hall of Famer Glen Wood goes a long way toward showing another side of Scott that didn't often shine through in the garages of his time in the sport.

Wood recalled that Scott had put a lot of time and money into preparing a car for a race at Talladega. Yet, when the Scotts arrived at Talladega, the car didn't perform as expected.

The famed Wood Brothers crew, led by another Hall of Famer, Leonard Wood, went to work on the car's engine, and provided a few more tweaks, all of which paid off handsomely in lap speeds.

Several weeks later, Scott and his wife, Mary, traveled from their home in Danville, Virginia, to the Woods' place in Stuart, Virginia, and presented them with a crystal vase as a token of gratitude for the assistance at Talladega.

Joe Weatherly was represented at the induction by his niece, Joy Barbee, who was only 2 years old when her uncle — the reigning Sprint Cup champion at the time — died in a crash at Riverside, California, in 1964.

For Barbee and her family, photos are the only real link to her uncle and his racing legacy. That and the memory of visiting his grave as a child, accompanying her mother, who was especially close to her brother the racer, on her weekly trips to Forest Lawn Cemetery in Norfolk, Virginia.

"His tombstone is shaped like the race track there out in Riverside," Barbee said. "You definitely look at that and just have to stop and think back."

Fred Lorenzen, NASCAR's one-time Golden Boy, had movie-star good looks in his racing days. He was one of the first Midwesterners to be a major player in a mostly Southern sport. His career was relatively brief — just 158 races — but he won 26 of them and sat on 32 poles.

Despite his dementia, he did seem to light up at the sight of friends and former competitors, like Richard Petty and Junior Johnson.

"We weren't really sure what was going to happen when he came in," said Lorenzen's daughter, Amanda Gardstrom. "Was he going to recognize everybody?


Rex White's induction into NASCAR's Hall of Fame endeared him to many.


Fred Lorenzen is surrounded by Bill Elliott (left) and Chase Elliott at the Hall of Fame induction ceremony.

"When we brought him in to the reception, it was fantastic. He saw Junior [Johnson], his eyes were lighting up.

"As a child of someone that is struggling with dementia, to see him have these connections is … fantastic.

"There's something special in his eyes this weekend, so that's a big thank-you to everybody that was a part of it."

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Wolf Lake teams continue success

This week, the Wolf Lake Middle School Wolf Pack basketball team took the show on the road and made a stop at Piedmont Lakes Middle School.

The WLMS boys team continued the defense of their cluster championship by scoring a victory over the Chiefs.

This was a hard-fought battle in which the boys had to overcome a slow start and a late rally by Piedmont.

The WLMS girls were in an all out war going back and forth into the fourth quarter. In the end, however, the Lady Chiefs picked up the victory.

WLMS will host Ocoee Middle and Renaissance charter Wednesday, February 11, and Thursday, February 12, respectively

On February 11, WLMS will also be having its Future of the Pack night during which all of WLMS-area elementary school students may come out to get a glimpse of the school s program and facilities during the game.

On February 25, Apopka High School will be the site of what some are calling the Future Darter Showcase, as Wolf Lake will battle it out with Apopka Memorial Middle School.

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For more information on sponsoring Apopka High School Special Olympics, contact Apopka High School Special Olympics Coordinator Steve Schwarze at steven.schwarze@ocps.net or 407-222-7947.



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Apopka baseball looks to replace top four pitchers

By John Peery
Apopka Chief Staff

Eric Lassiter knows the score. The Apopka Blue Darters baseball coach sees what others see: His team lost its top four pitchers from last season.

But, unlike those outside his program, Lassiter, who is entering his fourth season as coach at his alma mater, thinks those who will compete on the mound this season will be better than expected.

Last year, the Blue Darters relied on then-senior pitchers Ronnie May, Shawn Feltner, Brandon Stratton and Josh Wicker as they claimed the runner-up spot in the District 8A-3 tournament, falling to Olympia, and a berth in the regional tournament. Those same seniors, as well as other seniors on the team such as Jeffrey Crisan and Jordan Hicks, upset Olympia in a regional semifinal game before falling to DeLand in the regional final, one game shy of the state tournament.



Eric Lassiter enters his fourth season as head baseball coach at Apopka High, his alma mater.

Underdog again

Even with the year we had (in 2014), I think we re right back to being the underdog again pretty quickly with what Olympia and West Orange has. Everybody is saying we don t have pitching but I think we have a bunch of guys who can compete and give us a chance to win, Lassiter said.

We have six seniors, one of them Hunter Herr, who we hope is going to be the anchor of our staff this year. He pitched really well for us in about 20-25 innings last year. We re really looking for him to be the anchor. After Hunter Herr, we ve got Nick Barber, Jonathan Elicier, Hunter Rotarius, who throws a knuckle ball, does some things a little differently. We think he s going to be a really strong bullpen guy and a starting guy for us in the non-district games.

Joining Herr, Barber, Elicier and Rotarius as pitchers this season will be several players, some of them who are also position players. Those who may see time on the mound for the Blue Darters this season are Roman Waln, Carter Brown, Zack Sopher, Jake Ratledge, Julian Nunez, Austin Keslar, and Cade Davenport.

Hunter Herr has electric stuff when he s on and I think he s going to be on a whole lot, Lassiter said. Coming off injury from the fall. We ll probably slow him up a little bit in the beginning just because it s a marathon, not a sprint. We don t want to try to do anything crazy to sneak away a win in the first two weeks of the season and hurt the possibility of us winning later in the season. Once district play gets started, I think he ll be ready to go full throttle and go deep into games, which is what we re hoping for.

Solid defense, offense

While only time will tell about the effectiveness of the pitching staff, Lassiter already knows that his team is strong up the middle defensively, which is one of the cornerstones for having a good baseball team. From catcher to second base and shortstop to center field, the Blue Darters have solid players ready to perform.

We have some guys returning straight up the middle in Evan Harold in centerfield, (second baseman) Hunter Rotarius and (shortstop) Nick Barber in the middle infield and (catcher) Jacob Southern, who we think is going

See APOPKA Page 9C

Building on last year's good season is goal of Apopka softball squad

By Neal Fisher
Apopka Chief Staff

In the words of coach Mike MacWithey, the 2015 Apopka Blue Darters softball team is a better squad than last season. And last season s team not only compiled a 22-6 record, but lost in the regional finals of the FHSAA s Class 8A postseason tournament by one unearned run to Hagerty.

Six players return from the 2014 regional finalist squad and while that is usually enough firepower to make a team one of the favorites to contend for a berth in the final four as the season begins, perhaps the seven freshmen playing varsity will be the difference between what is expected of this team on paper and it coming to fruition.

We lost three starters from last season s team due to graduation, MacWithey said. But the incoming freshmen class as a whole, is as good as those seniors. The class is deep and every position is represented. There is some lack in seasoning as far as the inexperience of playing at the varsity level, but they have fit in well and are on the team because they have shown they are ahead of where a freshman is supposed to be. We can put any of them into a contest at any time in any position and not worry about what they will do because they are freshmen.

With the large freshmen class, we now have 14 players on the team and the most we have ever had, which is why we can change the line-up without a drop in quality of play. We have the kind of depth now to include four pitchers and four catchers on this team. We also have a Division I shortstop and third baseman.

Although the team s depth is so strong that MacWithey is entering the season without guaranteeing any player will be a starter or role, it is hard to imagine the line-up without at least a couple of them who have become the faces of the program.

In fact, the only infielder who does not return is the second baseman.

Shortstop Analyse Petree and third baseman Cassady Brewer were finalists for the 2014 Class 8A player of the year. Two seasons ago, Selena Nunez took over the starting role behind the plate as a freshmen. She is now a junior.

Also a junior, Alexina Mora became a starter during her freshmen season as the team s number-one pitcher.

All four players hit over .300 last season and were among the District 8A-3 as well as Metro Conference leaders in every major offensive category.

With her strikeout-to-walk ratio as high as it is, Mora is clearly a pitcher who wins with location and by out-thinking the batter. In 127 innings last season, Mora put together an ERA of 1.15 as she struck out 63 while walking only 28.

The other returners are centerfielder Julia Wright and first baseman Emily Pelletier.

The number two pitcher as well, Pelletier did not give up a run in seven contests last season. Two of the freshmen, Gabi Cirilo and Emma Miller, are also pitchers. Two other catchers in the form of freshmen Ashley Dixon and Hannah Collins are also on the team.

In the infield Jayden Lindroth and McKenzie Tracy join the returners. The outfield includes Faith Musselwhite and Sami Crim.

We are well balanced with the depth, MacWithey said. Seven of our nine players have the ability to hit the long ball and we can also play small ball. But even with the athleticism, talent and balance, they are willing to dive for balls and get dirty.

Of course, the first step in turning what is on paper into fruition is getting into the Class 8A postseason tournament. The two finalists or champion and runner-up from each of the 16 districts across the state advance to the FHSAA s postseason tournament.

Perhaps the most important reason for Apopka taking that step from being good and a contender for postseason tournament participation to regional finalist with everything it takes to go further is finally defeating age-old nemesis West Orange.

But the Blue Darters didn't just finally defeat the Warriors after several seasons of falling just short for the purpose of finally getting the monkey off the back. The four contests which were played between the two teams last season were won by the Blue Darters, each by one run. Every victory was important toward the Blue Darters positioning themselves for the run to the regional finals, including the District 8A-3 championship final and then the regional semifinals of the Class 8A FHSAA postseason tournament.

This season, the two regular-season contests are scheduled for February 27 and March 17.

District 8A-3 also consists of Olympia, Ocoee and Evans.

With the team we had, we wanted competition and to be pushed, MacWithey said. Obviously, we have what it takes to go past the regional finals, but we have to also gain the experience of playing teams who have the same potential. So the schedule is loaded.

Perennial state powers Boone (February 13), Winter Springs (March 6), East River (February 12), Mt. Dora (March 6, April 9), Lake Mary (April 2), Lake Brantley (February 5), Winter Park (February 24) and Timber Creek (April 10) are on the 2015 schedule.

Again, it is about turning what we have on paper into fruition, MacWithey said. We have everything needed to go past the regional finals on paper from the balance to the athleticism to the freshmen class being taken under the wing of our returners. But having what we need on paper and actually doing it are two different things. We are also in a tough region. And there is always the Warriors. We beat them four times last season by one run. They are going to be looking to return the favor.

Having what we do is a great position to be in and what every team wants entering the season, but there is work to be done to turn what we have and the expectations on paper into going past the regional finals. We can t just expect to do at least what we did last season because on paper we are better. We have to earn it and do what it takes to win on the field in both the regular season and postseason.



McKenzie Tracy (6) congratulates Sami Crim after Crim scored in a 15-0 win over Edgewater.



Emily Pelletier fires the ball toward home plate Tuesday, February 3, in the victory over Edgewater.



Hannah Collins lunges toward first base as she beats a throw during Apopka's 15-0 victory over the Edgewater Eagles.



Beat a throw from the outfield to second base is Apopka's Sami Crim as she slides safely into second.

Wekiva baseball will rely on strong pitching staff

By Neal Fisher
Apopka Chief Staff

Pitching, pitching and more pitching will be the theme for the Wekiva Mustangs baseball team as the 2015 season begins.

As the season progresses, there is the possibility it could become less, but for now, the old cliche of the team will go as far as the pitchers take us applies," Mustangs coach Jason Sanders said. "The hitting and defense will be a work in progress throughout the season.

"We have some good talent but after 12 seniors graduated last season, most of our players are cutting their teeth, so to speak. We are junior-heavy, but with most of them playing varsity for the first time. The line-up will have a lot of moving parts as far as the players learning their positions and roles and making the adjustment to varsity. Right now, as the season begins, we have most of the line-up decided, but there are no guarantees that we won't make changes depending on who makes the adjustment best," Sanders said.

Not only will the team go as far as the pitching staff of Logan Gilbert, Walfrank Pineiro, Jacob Talbert and Juan Carlos Morales take it, but the staff makes up the majority of the seniors and presents a diversity in styles. All four have been on varsity for at least all three of the seasons Sanders has been the coach and are college signees.



Jason Sanders
. . . WHS baseball coach

"We already have a strong staff which can overcome a lot of the inexperience and cutting the teeth, but having the diversity in styles among four seniors is something we can use to further what we can do against an opponent," Sanders said. "We didn't plan it this way, but we need to use the diversity in styles to our advantage now that we have it."

Gilbert and Pineiro use power and speed in the form of the fastball to get outs.

The other style of location and movement while out-thinking the batter is the M.O. for Talbert and Morales.

The rotation is yet to be finalized, but Gilbert and Pineiro will be two of the three starters entering the season.

"We feel good about them and their experience on the mound, "Sanders said. "We aren't sure who will be the third starter. But regardless of who it is, all four will be equally important to what we do and how we develop gameplans."

Cam Miele is the only other returning regular starter. The second baseman last season, Miele is moving to shortstop.

"Having an experienced shortstop is as valuable as the pitchers," Sanders said. "Shortstop is a middle-of-the-field position and his experience will help whomever he is paired with at second base. Cam has done everything we have asked of him and shown good improvement. He is a much-needed leader defensively and at the plate. We have at least one position without a question mark outside of the pitching staff. We know exactly what we get with Cam, both his strengths and areas he needs to continue to improve."

The rest of the defensive line-up for the infield is catcher-Mike Brown/Antoine Wynne; first base-Gilbert/Cameron Fish; second base-Morales/Brown; and third base-Pineiro/Wynne/Brown.

While the infield positions are set at least for the time being, who will play the outfield positions is up in the air. James Meeks is slated to be one of the starters. However, who else will take the outfield and where has yet to be decided. Jacob Wakefield, Alan McDonald and Hector Sanchez are the other outfielders competing for the two other positions.

"Small-ball, blue-collar will be the style of this team," Sanders said. "We will win a lot of close, low- scoring contests. Score a couple of runs and then turn the lead over to the pitchers. That makes speed and running the bases important for us because we will have to manufacture runs to begin with. There are two ways speed is created: The team as a whole, runs the bases well and moves from station-to-station or a player himself has speed and can out-run the ball. We have a good mix and balance of both.

"When a team understands how to gain an advantage with speed, it can allow a team to overcome not having an explosive offense. But we will have to play our best and as well as we can every contest for the speed to be a wild card for us."

Wekiva is a member of District 7A-3 with Oviedo, East Ridge, Winter Springs and Lake Howell. Winter Springs took last year's district championship, but in the Class 7A FHSAA postseason tournament, Winter Springs and Oviedo met for the fourth time. That's where Oviedo defeated the district champion in the weightiest of the four contests to advance to the regional finals (round of eight). It was also the third time during the last four seasons Oviedo has earned a berth in the FHSAA postseason tournament as one of the two district championship tournament finalists.

Each district member plays the others twice in a home-and-home series. Both of the contests are played during the same week. Wekiva plays Winter Springs (February 17 and 20), East Ridge (March 3 and 6), Lake Howell (March 10 and 12) and Oviedo (March 31 and April 2). The first two home-and-home series will be played on Tuesday and Friday. The last two series are scheduled to be played on a Tuesday and then Thursday.

The rest of the teams on the schedule are Mt. Dora (twice), Olympia, Ocoee, West Orange, Chaminade Madonna, Eustis, Apopka, Edgewater, Celebration and Dr. Phillips. Participation in the Ocoee first week tournament (played next week) and Ocoee Spring Break Tournament are also on the schedule.

"It is fall ball, but the record is encouraging and shows we can compete," Sanders said. "The record and what we did was a pleasant surprise. The pitching staff is good enough to keep us in and give us an opportunity to win every contest. With that said, the question isn't even with our youth outside of the pitching staff can we compete. The question is can and will we do the little things that provides those few extra plays which score runs."

Mustangs continue building softball program with youth

By Neal Fisher
Apopka Chief Staff

As the new season begins, the Wekiva Mustangs field a softball team with potential and also a lot of questions. While the core from which to build is strong, it is small and the players will be trying to fill the void left by several two season starters while learning on the fly.

The 2015 Mustangs will be very young, but competitive," coach Bryan Gary said.

That has come about by the inherent nature of the players coming and going as there is only a four-year window of eligibility.

Most of the key players on last season's team were in that position for the second season. While those players made a significant improvement and jump in their play from the previous season as they went through the trials and tribulations of starting for the first time in 2013, most of them graduated before taking the next step which is supposed to occur between a second and third season.

Only five players on the 2015 team are juniors or seniors. Or out of the 17 players on the roster, 12 are underclassmen and nine are freshmen. That leaves one in the position of being a key player for at least three seasons. That leaves every combination of starting players with a total of five freshmen and sophomores.

Consequently, the core of the team's make-up as well as how it plays the game is not a position or area of the field. Instead, a mix of specific returners and newcomers are the starting point for the 2015 Mustangs.

For four seasons, Courtney Lalonde and her sister Brooke have been key players on the varsity team. Two of only five players on the team for more than two seasons and with it taking the next step of development, Courtney is the first baseman while Brooke lines up as catcher and in right field.

Offensively, junior catcher/shortstop Michelle Boyer and sophomore third baseman Hannah Rivera will be expected to put up the big numbers and as such, have a huge say in the team's production.

A sophomore transfer from West Orange, shortstop/catcher Torey Bayles and freshmen Courtney Chisolm join the team this season. Bayles also pitches.

Boyer, senior left fielder Ariel Valis and junior infielder Darien Horton are the other players who have been on the varsity team for three seasons.

"Torey's arrival is important because she will provide some defensive stability behind the plate," Gary said. "Centerfield is important because it is an up-the-field position and the speed teams need there comes with Courtney."

The rest of the roster consists of outfielder Kylie Lewis, pitcher Alex Wissinger, second baseman Alexus Sanchez, right fielder Taylor Czerniejewski, left fielder Sarah Daniel, center fielder/second baseman Courtney Chisolm, pitcher Katie Dean, and first baseman/pitcher Sarah McDermott. All of those players are freshmen.

"The team's strength lies with its diversity," Gary said. "We have a small group of upperclassmen who are very good leaders and teachers. They will be mentoring the large group of talented newcomers.

"We also have to overcome and develop pitching, which is our biggest weakness. All our pitchers are freshmen and have not been battle-tested. But with their biggest asset right now being hard-working and coachable, they have shown the characteristics and understanding of what it takes to get better as the season progresses."



Wekiva's Sarah Daniel slides in safely as the ball gets by an Ocoee player Saturday, January 31, during a 10-4 preseason game loss to the Knights.

With that dichotomy, the offense will be carrying the team while the youth is learning and the potential continues to be developed. And furthermore, the dichotomy makes the offense most suited to achieve that success by relying on the traditional National League style of play.

"In order to have a successful season, we must be able to pitch ahead in the count," Gary said. "If we can do that on a consistent basis, our pitchers will be able to expand the zone and allow our defense to work. Offensively, we must play ABC softball to be successful. Our kids need to realize that we cannot depend on the three-run home run; we simply do not possess that type of power. We have to do the little things, like moving runners into scoring position and hitting behind them when we get them there."

The district schedule begins with Oviedo Tuesday, February 10, at home. Winter Springs faces Wekiva on February 13 and 27. The home-and-home series with Lake Howell will take place on February 20 and March 3. Contests against East Ridge are scheduled for February 24 and March 10.

Lake Minneola (two contests), Celebration, Ocoee, Dr. Phillips, Olympia, Edgewater (two), Jones, West Orange, Apopka, Colonial, Oak Ridge (two), Lyman and Mt. Dora make up the non-district schedule.



Hannah Rivera makes contact with the ball Saturday, January 31, during the preseason game against Ocoee.



Torey Bayles lifts her right leg to avoid getting hit while batting against Ocoee.



Alexus Sanchez slides in safely at second base during the game against ocoee.

Staff photos by Tammy Keaton

Signing day at Apopka High attracts lots of attention



Enjoying a conversation prior to the signing ceremony are (l-r) running back Condrey Dennison, defensive coordinator Jeff Rolson, and offensive tackle Martez Ivey.



As others applaud his decision, Martez Ivey looks into the ESPNU cameras while being interviewed from the studio.



Cameras were the order of the day as members of the national and local media, along with family members and friends took pictures of the events.



Apopka head football coach Rick Darlington talks about each player prior to the national telecast.

Sanders signs with Campbell



Apopka High girls soccer player Riley Sanders (c, seated) also signed college scholarship papers Wednesday, February 4, at the school. She signed with Campbell University of Buies Creek, North Carolina. Seated with her are her parents, Angie and Eddie Sanders. Standing are, (l-r), Fred Priest, AHS athletic director; Doug Matthews, AHS girls soccer coach; and Doug Guthrie, AHS principal.



Prior to announcing his choice of the Florida Gators, Martez Ivey listens as Apopka head coach Rick Darlington speaks.

Apopka High Special Olympics teams win state gold medals



On Friday, January 30, and Saturday, January 31, the Apopka High School Special Olympics basketball program participated in the Special Olympics Florida Southeast Regional State Basketball Tournament at the Big House in Tavares.



The AHS Special Olympics program had two basketball teams participate in the event. The Apopka High School Special Olympics basketball teams the Ospreys and the Hawks both won the gold medals in their divisions.

Mustangs coast to district title with win over Knights



Kyla Allison tries to avoid an East Ridge player during the Mustangs' 54-29 victory over the Knights in the District 7A-4 championship game.



While dribbling the ball, Kyla Allison keeps her eyes up the court as the Mustangs defeated East Ridge for the district title



Ariel Colon keeps her eyes on the basket as she dribbles the ball past a defender.



Yolizma Cupidan passes the ball to a teammate during Wekiva's 54-29 victory over East Ridge.



Ciara Cumbie shoots over the outstretched arm of an East Ridge defender.

Wekiva downs Apopka on senior night for Mustangs



Surrounded by family, friends, coaches, and school officials, Wekiva boys basketball seniors were honored Thursday, January 29, prior to their victory over Apopka. Seniors shown are, (l-r), front, K.T. Solomon, Bryan Acosta, Marc Ingram, Jayson Hughes, and Malcolm Stevenson.



K. T. Solomon, who led Wekiva with 14 points, drives the lane against Donnell Huey.



Bryan Acosta battles Apopka's Alex Goins-Williams for a rebound.



Jayson Hughes lays it up off the glass for Wekiva's first bucket over Alex Goins-Williams.

Mustangs down Blue Darters at end of basketball season

By Neal Fisher
Apopka Chief Staff

Low-scoring play and defense was the overriding texture of the latest installment in the battle for Apopka. However, in a boys basketball contest in which no one player stood out statistically, the most basic of fundamentals carried the day.

Good decision-making and execution spurred the creation of the two decisive runs which were the turning point, putting and keeping the Wekiva Mustangs ahead of the Apopka Blue Darters as the final score was 48-39.

Both teams ended the regular season with just below .500 records, Wekiva at 12-13 and Apopka at 9-16. The postseason began with Wekiva facing Winter Springs (District 7A-3) and Apopka taking on Olympia (District 8A-3) this week in their respective district championship tournament.

After losing the last two contests, it is refreshing to pull one out, especially on senior night and against the Blue Darters, Mustangs coach Gersino Lubin said. "The Blue Darters and Mustangs are like family. We play and coach together. We keep in touch with each other and spend time together. Everyone knows everyone. We root for each other and try to help each other out. But when we play each other, we compete as hard as possible because, like a family, no member wants to lose to another. The fans always and once again got their money's worth. The coaches are also happy for the seniors and to see them finish their regular-season careers with a victory.

But more importantly and tangibly, we needed a win heading into the postseason. Winning gives us some confidence and a high going into the postseason. We have something to jump on and try to ride for as long as possible, instead of having to create it during the intensity and in the moment-of-the-postseason.

In the end, it was Wekiva s creating two runs which proved to have the biggest impact, changing the direction of how the contest was played.

The Blue Darters struck first surging ahead by an 8-1 score on the strength of good decisions and following the game plan.

Then the turnovers changed the direction and flow of the contest permanently to put Wekiva ahead to stay. Although the turnovers weren t a constant in that sense, they occurred on a majority of the possessions.

They were damaging because the majority of turnovers were committed in the nature of a series. The assertive, lead-changing 14-4 run began about halfway through the first. During the run, the five possessions in which Apopka didn t score the ball was turned over.

The run propelled the Mustangs into a 15-12 lead with 5:10 left in the second.

We really struggled to score, especially in the second half, Apopka coach Mark Griseck said. I thought we got open looks, but just could not knock down shots. Eventually, that puts too much pressure on you to get stops on every possession. But give Wekiva credit, I felt like they competed harder than we did.

We were playing off adrenaline at the beginning of the contest, Lubin said. Apopka was making the adjustments which needed to be made and doing it well. Our first option was taken away from us on every possession and then we weren t following through on what to do next. We failed to go to our second and third options. Perhaps it was because of the nerves of playing on senior night and in the rivalry, but we were doing things out of character for us. We were forcing the issue and taking low percentage and long-range shots.

But once we settled down, the shots we were taking were much better and a higher percentage. It had been a boxing match up until that point. Both teams were jabbing and feeling the other out. The Blue Darters were setting us up for the big punch and we weren t doing anything to fight our way off the ropes. When the contest turned, we were playing like we practice. It felt good to see our practice come to a contest.

A couple more treys by the Mustangs gradually extended the lead to 28-22 at halftime. The inability to hold onto the ball after creating an opportunity to score points also contributed to a void in the Blue Darters game, a response which never came because without the ball there is no opportunity for such.

Perhaps the most significant turnover was at the end of the first half. With less than a minute left, Apopka stopped Wekiva and quickly came down the court. However, Donell Huey threw the ball out of bounds without Apopka taking a field goal attempt. Wekiva's K.T. Solomon, who transferred from Apopka, received the inbound pass and just before the buzzer, drained a three-pointer. The turn of events was a swing of at least five points and possibly six which would have cut the lead to one possession at halftime.

With the lead for the majority of the contest and doing just enough to hold the Blue Darters at bay, the Mustangs found the right chemistry to up its game and created the second key stretch of time during the contest as well as overcame losing the third period by a 10-7 margin.

A trey, the first points of the fourth were set up by a pass through the lane to Solomon from Jayson Hughes. The field goal from beyond the arc upped Wekiva's lead to 38-32 and began a run of eight consecutive points.

At the 6:26 mark of the final period, the lead had been increased to 43-32 and the Mustangs answered every point scored by the Blue Darters the rest of the way to close out the victory.

Apopka actually had a higher percentage for two-point field goal attempts and scored more at the free throw line. But Wekiva won the contest with the trey as they came at that moment when the points turned a couple of possessions into those two key runs. Wekiva converted 8-of-17 attempts (47 percent) from behind the arc. Struggling, Apopka s totals were a clip of 20 percent as only 2-of-10 went through the net.

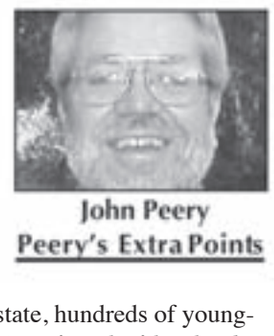
From the charity stripe, the Blue Darters were 11-of-12. Still the combined 17 points scored from the free throw line and three-point field goals were seven fewer than what the Mustangs accumulated on the three-point field goal attempts alone (24). Six of the treys came from Solomon (four) and Hughes (two).

"Tonight, we got away with poor free throw shooting, Lubin said. We had one of those nights where we were shooting the trey very well. We are a good team from behind the three-point field goal line. But it was better than good tonight. We were shooting the trey at that highest of levels tonight, saving us from the poor free throw shooting.

Shooting 50 percent isn t going to happen in every contest though. With that said, no coach wants his team to be in the position of hanging its hat on the trey. It s the free throw shooting we want to and should hang our hat on.

Solomon led the Mustangs with 14 points and another 11 came from Hughes for a total of 25. Huey led Apopka with 14 while Trey Hall had 10.

First week of February means signing day for football players



John Peery
Peery's Extra Points

It may be the first week of February, but football dominated the talk this week.

And, no, I m not even going to bring up the Super Bowl, although that was a pretty darn good game.

The football I'm talking about was National Signing Day on Wednesday, February 4, as thousands of high school football players around the nation cast their lot with hundreds of colleges to continue not only playing football but their education as well.

Across this talent-rich state, hundreds of youngsters signed with schools that play football at various levels. That could even be seen at Apopka High School where nine young men signed to play football at institutions ranging from community college to the upper echelon of college football.

A full story about the Apopka signings is on page 1C.

Wekiva High School had a pair of young men, Khani Rozier and Jarvis Scott, sign.

Rozier will attend Reedley (Calif.) College while Scott will head to New Mexico Military Institute. Both are junior colleges.

Rozier and Scott helped lead the Mustangs to the team's first playoff appearance in school history.

There was also a non-football signing at Apopka High as Riley Sanders, part of coach Doug Matthews outstanding girls soccer program, signed with Campbell University of Buies Creek, North Carolina. She may hear more than her share of hump-day jokes as Campbell s mascot is the Camels.

But, no matter whether a high school student is signing to play football for the Florida Gators or girls soccer for the Campbell Camels, it s such an outstanding accomplishment for a youngster to be able to receive a college education and continue to play the sport he or she loves at the collegiate level.

History tells me that some of those who signed this week won t even make it to college for various reasons. Others will get there and then decide that it s really not for them either academically or athletically. Some will stay all four years and do just fine both on the field and in the classroom. A few will do really well academically and athletically while even fewer still will excel beyond even their own wildest dreams and may play in the NFL or become a top scientist thanks to their athletic scholarship.

The bottom line is that these young people have been able to pay for their college by playing sports and that is a testament to their hard work in all areas of their lives, but it s also a privilege and one that shouldn t be taken for granted.

Continuing to give their best efforts in the classroom and on the field or court is a trait that will take each of them a long way in life, no matter where it takes them.

Weather always plays a big role in how well the fish are bitin'

Hello Folks,



Jim Keck
Goin' Fishin'

This week's full moon brought in some cooler weather and it looks to get a little cooler by the time you read this. I know a lot of folks are goin' fishin' for specks in most of the lakes in our area and they are catchin some good numbers. Of course, the weather and the wind plays a key role while you're fishin'. If it s too windy, you ll have a tough time driftin the lake and keepin your jigs in the strike zone.

If you want to catch some specks, you need to fish in Lake Harney, Lake Jesup, or Lake Woodruff. These three lakes have been producin some nice stringers of specks. You need to drift open water with jigs tipped with a minners at various depths until you locate the specks. Once you catch a few specks in a certain area and the depth they are holdin in, drift back and forth over that area until they quit bitin . You need to use brightly colored jigs like pink, chartreuse, and lemon-orange. The gold ice jig has been catchin some specks as well. You can catch some specks in Lake Dora and Lake Beauclair around Deer Island. Most folks are driftin mid-lake with jigs tipped with a minner.

Folks are catchin some specks in the Kissimmee Chain in most all the lakes. Folks are driftin open water with jigs tipped with a minner. Again, you will have to cover a lot of water until you locate em and then keep driftin back and forth over the area where you caught your specks.

I also got a report from Captain Paul Solomon that folks are catchin some specks in Lake Cherry in the Clermont Chain. You will have plenty of company but if you can endure the boat traffic, you should be able to catch some specks.

The bass fishin' has been pretty good in most of the big chains in our area. Folks are catchin some nice bass on shiners and swim-baits in the Butler Chain, the Kissimmee Chain, and the Harris Chain. You need to fish the mouth of the canals, the residential canals, or in open water around the submerged hydrilla beds. You can also catch some bass by fishin' a shiner around the pepper grass and eel grass beds you find in the lakes.

Rick and I got on the water over the weekend, and decided to fish the Butler Chain. We caught 15 bass up to 4.5 lbs. We caught most of our bass on plastic worms.

We fished around the pepper grass beds and the hydrilla beds with watermelon seed red glitter plastic worms to catch our bass. We also checked to see if any bass were on the beds, and where we fished, we didn t see any bass on the beds. The big bass we caught was just startin to show some development of roe. We did notice that the water temperature had dropped to 62 degrees and a couple of weeks before that the water temperature was around 67 degrees. With another cold front this week, will keep the water temperature down and that will keep the bass off the beds for a while.

Well, that s it for this week.

I ll see ya next week.

Tip of the week: watch the weather.

Save a few and good luck!

Olympia run in district game ends AHS boys basketball season

By John Peery
Apopka Chief Staff

An 11-0 run by the Olympia Titans from late in the third quarter to early in the fourth doomed the Apopka Blue Darters boys basketball team, ending the Darters season with a 55-44 Olympia victory Tuesday, February 3, in a first-round District 8A-3 contest.

After five straight points by Apopka's Trey Hall gave the Blue Darters a 35-32 lead with 1:57 left in the third period, the Titans scored 11 straight to take a 43-35 lead until another Hall bucket with 5:04 left in the fourth quarter.

Apopka narrowed the bulge to 43-40, but could get no closer as the Titans, who had shot poorly from the free throw line in the first half, hit 8-of-10 from the charity stripe the rest of the way.

We had trouble scoring, missed some easy shots then gave up some offensive rebounds, said Apopka coach Mark Griseck. We gave up an offensive rebound off a free throw (miss). That was huge. All the little things add up. It s kind of been our bugaboo all year.

I thought we got shots; we just didn t knock them down.

Olympia jumped out in front early, forging a 9-0 lead by holding Apopka scoreless until a pair of free throws by Hall with 3:21 left in the first period. Alex Goins-Williams had the Blue Darters' first field goal and paired it with a free throw 10 seconds later to cut Olympia s lead to 9-5.

With Olympia leading 16-10 early in the second period, the Blue Darters outscored the host Titans 11-2 to take a 21-18 lead with 2:44 left in the second. Much of the damage was done in the lane as Apopka s guard fed senior Darius Diltz in the middle of Olympia s zone defense and he hit three buckets during the run.

Olympia tied the game at 21-21 on a three-pointer but Goins-Williams and Diltz each had a bucket to put the Darters back up 25-21 with 1:32 left in the second. However, the Titans ended the half on a 9-0 spurt to take a 30-25 halftime lead.

Apopka outscored Olympia 10-2 over the first six minutes of the third period to take a 35-32 lead but that's when the Titans went on their 11-0 run to take control of the game.

The Blue Darters had swept the two-game regular-season series between the two teams. Griseck, who came to Apopka from Olympia, figures the Titans had an added reason for wanting to win the game.

It s hard to beat them three times," he said. "They want to beat me. There's added incentive for those guys.

Hall was the only scorer in double figures for the Blue Darters, leading the way with 20 points. Darius Diltz added 9 points while Goins-Williams had 6. Rodney Lubin and Jeremiah Beague had 4 points each and Josh Adlam had 1.

The Darters finished the season with a 9-17 record, losing their last six games after hovering around .500 most of the season. Junior guard Donnell Huey, one of the team s top scorers, did not play in the game due to disciplinary reasons, Griseck said.

In the final game of the regular season on Saturday, January 31, the Blue Darters fell 53-49 to Lakeland Kathleen in the Mosaic Shootout held at Bartow High School.

"The game was close throughout, Griseck said. We had the ball twice down one under two minutes to play and turned the ball over both times. Once again, too many missed opportunities hurt us. We missed two point-blank shots late in the game and we just did not make enough plays to win.

Apopka: Blue Darters will open season at Lake Brantley tourney

Continued from page 4C

to have a huge year. He just committed to Jacksonville University. He s really hitting it and playing really good defense, and taking on a leadership role. I think he's going to do a great job for us, Lassiter said.

In addition to losing Feltner and Crisan s leadership and defensive play from last year, the Darters will also lose the bats from those two who led Apopka offensively in hitting last year.

But, while the Darters won t have those big bats back this season, Lassiter said he expects a better overall offensive approach this season.

"Potentially, I think this could be one of the better offensive teams in my four years here, the coach said.

That might surprise some people with some of the bigger bats we lost last year, but from 1 to 10 or 11, I have real confidence in those guys swinging, so I think this could be our deepest lineup for sure. Maybe not our most potent, but for sure our deepest lineup, so I'm excited about the offense.

We have a mix of speed, but I think we have home-run capability. Elicier has that kind of ability, as does Harold. (Mike) Monson has some pop. Top to bottom, I think we have better hitters in general, but I also think we're going to have more pop than we ve had in years. I think we have the potential to have four or five of those guys generating some juice with the bat.

While things will change depending upon who is pitching for the Blue Darters, fans can expect to see Southern at catcher, Monson at first base, Rotarius at second, Barber at shortstop and Ryan Brewer at third.

In the outfield, from left to right, will be Brown, Harold and Elicier.

Others who will see playing time in the field will be Errol Bannister in the outfield and Bernard Gilot at third.

Gilot is a power-hitting transfer from Montverde Academy who will also see time as the team s designated hitter when he s not playing a position.

Anybody who has seen Nick Barber and Jonathan Elicier play baseball in general know that they hate to lose, Lassiter said. They love to compete. They get after it. That s what they do on the mound. They re going to go after you and they hate to lose. They re not going to give in. I think we're going to surprise some people with it.

Barber will likely be the leadoff batter with Harold as the next hitter in the lineup. Southern, Elicier and Rotarius will hit in the middle of the lineup with Monson, Gilot, Brown and Brewer finishing up the batting order.

Others working their way into playing time are Jerrett Backus, Deven Kirkland and Julian Nunez.

Weightroom work

This year s team may not have the big names, but it is deeper than in years past. Last year, what Lassiter calls "fluke injuries" played a part in keeping starters out of the lineup for several games.

"I love the depth of this team offensively and even defensively, Lassiter said. "I know there are guys who can step up but, again, you plan on going into it 100 percent healthy. You also have to plan on some guys getting nicked up, you just don t know which ones.

To combat potential injuries as much as possible, the players worked hard during the off-season, Lassiter said. The guys really worked their tail off in the weightroom, he said. Going into the season, we re off the power phase. It's more flexibility. We owe a big thanks to coach (Bill) Caughell. He does a great job with our guys. All of our guys numbers have skyrocketed as far as strength goes. He s a huge part of doing that for us.

Tough district, schedule

The Blue Darters will again find themselves in a tough district with powerhouses Olympia and West Orange. Ocoee is improving by leaps and bounds with former Apopka player Bobby Brewer as its head coach and former Apopka coach Sonny Wise as its pitching coach.

Evans is also in the district, but isn t expected to contend.

In addition to a very competitive district, the Blue Darters have not backed away from playing a challenging schedule. For the third year in a row, Apopka will open the regular season by playing in the Big Blue Bonanza at Lake Brantley, which has a new artificial turf infield.

So far, the event hasn t been kind to the Blue Darters, but it has been helpful, Lassiter said.

The reality is we re 0-6 in that tournament since I've been here, he said. We ve played two years and we re 0-6. We re not trying to win the first-week-of-the-season championship. Would it be great if we were capable of doing that and did do that? Of course. It's going to be the top teams that are going to be in the playoffs if we are lucky enough to get there so why not see them now. Whether we win or lose, it s a measuring point to see what we have to improve on.

Going 0-3 last year, really woke up our team. I think we won nine of our next 11 games. I love playing against good competition. Those guys over in Seminole County always have great teams, especially the ones that are in the Big Blue Bonanza.

(Lake Brantley) Coach (Eric) Entrekin makes sure of that. We re happy to be invited back. Hopefully, we can scrape one or a couple wins there.

In the Big Blue Bonanza, Apopka will play host Lake Brantley on Tuesday, February 10, at 7 p.m.; Winter Springs on Thursday, February 12, at 4 p.m.; and Lake Mary on Friday, February 13, at 4 p.m.

Apopka s non-district opponents on the schedule outside of the Big Blue Bonanza include home games against University (Feb. 17), Mt. Dora (Feb. 20), Edgewater (Feb. 24), Montverde Academy (Feb. 27), Timber Creek (March 2), Naples Barron Collier (March 7), Dr. Phillips (March 20) and Winter Park (April 14). Road non-district games will be at Lake Howell (Feb. 18) and Wekiva (March 19).

In addition, the Blue Darters will again play in the Spring Break Slam March 23-26. Apopka will again host some of the tournament games, facing Boone at noon on March 23 and Miami Palmetto March 24 at 1 p.m.

The tournament finals will be at 4 p.m. on March 26 at West Orange High.

West Orange will also host the District 8A-3 tournament.

Lassiter has beefed up the schedule in hopes that it will pay dividends in the postseason.

"I'm not worried about what our record is at the beginning. I want to know what it is at the end. Hopefully, the teams we re playing this year will give us the opportunity to test ourselves every week.

Sign: Cox graduated in December and is now enrolled at Auburn

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Rick Darlington and the rest of the coaching staff, as well as others, provided some guidance for him, Ivey said.

"I give it all to my coaches because they hold us to a higher standard, not just to be like everybody else, he said. They teach us to be different and be humble about everything. They always tell me to be humble, to be the same guy. I haven't changed throughout this process and I'm never going to change. I'm always going to be humble about everything.

While the Gators have struggled lately, new head coach Jim McElwain is looking to get the Florida program back on track and Ivey said he wants to be a part of that.

"I want to be (part of) that class who changes it around to what the program used to be and how they were dominant in the SEC. I want to be in that class that changes Florida around. I know I can do that leadership-wise, he said.

"It's exciting to finally get it over with.

The nine signees were among the main cogs of a senior class that won two state championships and finished as runner-up a third time.

They were 14-1 in the playoffs over the past three seasons.

The Blue Darters defeated Weston Cypress Bay in an epic 53-50 victory in the 2012 Class 8A state title game, then fell 42-28 to Homestead South Dade in the 2013 state championship game.

After a 6-4 regular season in 2014, it didn t appear that the Blue Darters would make a third straight trip to the state championship game. However, the Blue Darters proved everyone wrong, dominating in the playoffs and defeating Miami Christopher Columbus 30-23 in the title game, holding the Explorers to a minus-11 yards rushing to set a state finals record.

More about the signees, including comments from Darlington:

Martez Ivey, 6-foot-6, 270 lbs., offensive tackle, Florida Gators, son of Martineau Ivey: "I'm blessed to have an opportunity to play college football and to be able to get a free education, most of all live out my dreams!

Coach Darlington was effusive in his praise of his highly rated tackle, both as a player and as a person. He s just blessed with talent, with his explosiveness, his ability to run and flex and hit. I've never had a guy like that. Ty (Darlington) was highly recruited but Ty made himself a great player. He was not near the physical person Tez is. Tez took Ty s work ethic and ran with it. Tez worked hard. Plus, he s just a humble dude off the field."

Chandler Cox, 6-foot-1, 230 lbs., fullback, Auburn Tigers, son of Sherri Anderson and Tom Cox: He graduated from Apopka High in December and began classes at Auburn about a month ago. He will participate in spring practice at Auburn.

As with Ivey, Darlington had plenty to say about Cox and his abilities on and off the field. "He is one of the best players to ever play here, maybe Central Florida. He carried us to the state championship on offense. Just a great dude. The same dude every day, humble. He meant so much to this program as a leader and a person for the last four years. Hard to believe he s gone.

Kevin (Ray Ray) Smith, 5-foot-11, 190 lbs., defensive back/wide receiver, Akron Zips, son of Latonya Riley and Kevin Smith: "It's a blessing, and I'm thankful for the opportunity to play college football and have a free college education.

Darlington spoke of Smith s career as a Blue Darter that had its rough spots. Great story. Sophomore year did well. Junior year didn t make it through. Came to an agreement with him on what he had to do to get back, and he did everything and then some. Never had a bad day. He totally fulfilled everything he needed to. He s got a good name in my book.

Billy Caughell, 6-foot-2, 230 lbs., linebacker, Richmond Spiders, son of Bill and Mary Caughell: "It's a great academic school that I fell in love with from the moment I stepped on campus. It's a school that will give me great opportunities on and off the field. I thank God every day that he put this offer in my life. SpiderNation!

Darlington was happy for the son of one of his assistant coaches. A coach s son. Awesome for him to get to go to a Division I place. They re really excited about him. Good academics.

Ben Bascom, 5-foot-9, 160 lbs., defensive back, Eastern Kentucky Colonels, son of Alvondra Lewis: "I think I fit well in this school and this school made me feel like I was at home. I am proud of myself for doing what I do and making my family proud.

Darlington praised Bascom for coming back from a broken bone in his leg in the middle of the season to help shore up the defensive backfield and help lead the team to a state championship. Four-year starter. Broken leg, comes back, helps us win. Eastern Kentucky, another 11th-hour deal, Division I."

Johnny Robinson, 6-foot-1, 260 lbs., defensive lineman, Charleston Southern Buccaneers, son of Zanta and Johnny Robinson: "I'm proud of myself for making my family proud. I dreamt of this day for a long time and I can't believe I actually did it.

Darlington mentioned how Robinson will be able to play next to his cousin, Anthony Ellis, who signed last year with Charleston Southern and also plays defensive line. Solid dude all the way through. A good d-lineman. He gets to go play with his cousin (Anthony Ellis), which is so cool.

J.J. Simmons, 5-foot-8, 165 lbs., running back, Limestone College Saints, son of Costella Justice: "I think that this college is going to continue making me a better man and is going to give me a great opportunity to major in business and is going to give me a great opportunity to play on their football team.

Darlington talked about Simmons ability to play not only running back but defensive back, as well. He didn t have the senior year we wanted him to have, but his first three years he did a lot of good things and played a lot of positions. Again, exciting to see him go do it.

Condrey Dennison Jr., 5-foot-10, 170 lbs., running back, Limestone College Saints, son of Condrey Dennison Sr. and Nacretia Howard: "I'm happy I made it and I'm proud of myself.

Darlington spoke of how Dennison was able to get to college despite not ever starting for the Blue Darters. Had a lot of talent in front of him. Had some injuries and stuff. When he got in, he did great. He probably should have played more.

Jason Toussaint, 6-foot-3, 270 lbs., defensive lineman, Hutchinson Community College Blue Dragons, son of Anoi Toussaint, Saintalia Benjamin: "It's a blessing to be able to go to college and expand my knowledge.

Darlington praised Toussaint for his efforts in his senior year. Great young man, one-year starter. Got him into Hutchinson Junior College, which is one of the best in the country. That was an 11th-hour deal. I'm very excited for him.

Champs: Mustangs lead entire game except for first minute or so

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postseason tournament as the defending state champion and playing at the level we are after never having any success is so special.

We played well enough to win and earn another 32 minutes and that is probably going to beat most teams, but there is still room to grow. Championship teams keep growing, even when they are playing well because they don t leave room for the possibility of losing.

Wekiva led East Ridge for all but about 15 seconds. A trey off the hands of Jasmine Click put East Ridge ahead by a 3-2 count about a minute into the contest. But as quickly as the ball left Click s hands and found the bottom of the net, Kyla Allison was at the other end of the court rising up for a lay-up. The two points put Wekiva ahead by a score of 4-3 and the lead was never relinquished.

The lead was, for all intents and purposes, methodically and steadily in a business-like way increased throughout the contest, as the Knights didn t have to contend with the Mustangs shooting a damaging percentage.

Shooting 19-of-41 from inside the arc and dominating the boards, Wekiva grew its lead to 17-5, 27-10 and 40-18 at the end of each period, respectively. With the rebounding difference, East Ridge's total number of field goal attempts was only one more than Wekiva s.

One of the better three-point field goal shooting teams in the area, East Ridge was held to only three more attempts than Wekiva because of the Mustangs rebounding advantage.

The rebounds were 41-27 in favor of the Mustangs. The difference was about 20 midway through the fourth period when the coaches put in the non-starters. The Knights didn t have possession of the ball long enough to shoot a significantly larger amount of treys than the Mustangs. East Ridge shot 19 3-point field goal attempts, while Wekiva took 16 from that range. From inside the arc, the Knights attempted 18 fewer field goal shots. In fact, the Knights made more field goals from behind the arc than from two-point range, 6-5.

In the meantime, Allison was dropping in points by way of the spot-up field goals and to finish off transition opportunities as both accounted for half her total. Another 15 points came by way of her six assists.

"Kyla is a great floor general and is a luxury to have on the floor," Butts said. "Tonight, the team was getting her open and in transition and her natural tendency is not to shoot; it is to pass first. But we got her thinking shoot first because she was getting the opportunities and when she is in that position she will score. Ciara is as important because we get a lot of extra possessions when she grabs rebounds and she was on tonight. East Ridge couldn t prevent us from getting those second-chance opportunities and they were the result of Ciara grabbing all those rebounds.

Cumbie spearheaded the numbers, grabbing 16 rebounds to go along with her 17 points. But four other players snagged at least four rebounds. Six assists were also credited to Allison.

While the Mustangs made only four free throws in six attempts, even that total was still four times more than the Knights.

While we still need to clean up a few areas, we feel good heading into the FHSAA postseason tournament, Butts said. We are playing Wekiva basketball and executing on both ends. East Ridge was having trouble establishing a consistency in shooting the ball in under a minute.

All season and, in particular, this week, the coaches have been stressing the need to try to reach that level of perfection. Of course, there is no such thing as the perfect contest, but making the attempt is where the execution starts. The players knew they had to play well tonight as the defending state champion. There is more to do and the players know that. We took care of the first step, but the players are ready to get on to the next.

District: Mustangs spent much of fourth quarter at the free throw line

Continued from page 1C

do will now play for the District 7A-4 championship, which will take place today, Friday, February 6, at Oviedo High. A perennial state power under Ed Kershner s coaching, Oviedo is the defending Class 7A state champion and defeated East Ridge to advance to the district championship tournament finals. Tip-off is scheduled for 7 p.m. The contest is a rematch of last season's final won by Oviedo on the strength of an 11-1 run as halftime approached. While bragging rights are on the line and the two teams have developed an intense, supposed-to-play-each-other-for-championships rivalry, the outcome of the contest does have tangible consequences.

We are extremely happy and excited about playing Friday, Wekiva coach Gersino Lubin said. Last season, the Mustangs were the number one team in the state for most of the season. Then we lost a lot of players to graduation. The word was we lost our big guns and wouldn t do anything this season. It has been an up-and-down season. We haven t always played our best or consistently, but the bottom line is we are still good enough to get back to the playoffs and it is for a third consecutive season. We didn t go from number one to nothing. We are still capable of winning and making noise in the postseason.

It is a testament to Malcolm (Stevenson) and Jayson (Hughes), their tenacity and pride to keep Wekiva at the same level. Despite all the up-and-down and the inconsistent play during certain times of the season, when it mattered most, we played like a championship team. And now because of it, we have made an opportunity to do something no Wekiva team has done in the school s eight years, win a district championship.

The Bears actually scored the first points of the second period to extend the lead to 16-6. Then the manifestation of the Mustangs settling down and playing their game took place. A 12-0 run forged the Mustangs into the lead and it was Stevenson playing the role of catalyst.

Only 2:16 into the second period, Da Jon Patterson muscled his way onto the blocks and snagged a rebound off a missed free throw. He then created enough space for himself to bank in a lay-up and give Wekiva its first lead at 18-16.

But it was Stevenson who brought life to Wekiva and a sense of its game. He slashed to the basket to bank in a lay-up and then drew two consecutive fouls, converting them into five points at the free throw line.

The other points which came between Stevenson s and Patterson's was the first of Solomon's three treys during the period.

I have said it all season, Lubin said. We do so well in practice guarding the ball, but it doesn t always translate to when we are playing contests and it amazes me. Tonight, that was the case for the first period. But then, everything changed after the first period. Simply put, we settled down and got over our nerves and when we did, the level at which we guarded the ball was the same as practice. During the first period, the team as a whole was trying to do everything at once. It wanted to win the contest during one period. We were overplaying everything we were trying to do on both ends of the court and the result was making mistakes we don t normally make.

"At the end of the first period, I sat Malcolm and K.T. The couple of minutes on the bench settled them down and they were different players, which got us into our game. Malcolm was looking to do what he does best, slashing and driving to the basket when he got back into the contest. He was reluctant during the first. He was attacking hard during the final three periods. K.T. gave us the instant offense we need from him when he came back into the contest. The motion offense worked because he always put himself in the right position and created good looks for himself. His pl ay w as a lso a ggressive.

In a contest in which only four lead changes took place, the Mustangs played almost entirely from ahead once they found their game and settled down.

Winter Springs answered the challenge which Wekiva presented for a couple of minutes but ultimately couldn t do it long term. Two treys put Winter Springs ahead by counts of 19-18 and 22-19.

Those leads lasted for a total of one minute, eight seconds. (The contest was tied at 19-19 for 15 seconds.)

The Winter Springs leads were short-lived as Stevenson struck again on what has become his signature drive to the basket, shake-and-bake combined with muscle. At that point, the score was 22-21.

Then it was Solomon's turn as Hughes and Stevenson rotated the ball to the weak side. Solomon in one motion received the pass and drained the trey. The first trey was launched from the right wing. The second three-point field goal came from the left corner and the Mustangs had rallied from a 10-point deficit to a lead with some maneuverability at 27-22. During the final 2:50, the Mustangs maintained the lead at two possessions as the teams went to the locker room at halftime with Wekiva leading 31-27.

For the period, Solomon put up 11 and Stevenson added another nine.

The third period was nip-and-tuck until the final minute when Wekiva once again turned turnovers into points, four to be exact, which gave Wekiva a 14-10 advantage for the period and a three-possession lead of 45-37.

Unable to break the Mustangs first maintaining the lead and then gradually extending the margin, the Bears began fouling during the fourth period. The Mustangs were sent to the line for 14 free throw attempts, converting nine and while it left room for improvement, the percentage of 64.3 was good enough to close out the victory as the lead grew.

Wekiva was fouled during about 75 percent of its possessions during the final period, resulting in only three field attempts and six points. However, Wekiva did make all three attempts, further solidifying the lead and push to close out the victory.

"The Bears' guards have an attacking style and move up and down the court, Lubin said. We wanted to keep them guessing and off-balance because the offense flows through them. During the first period, our defense wasn t affecting them. We went to a 1-3-1 three-quarters defense after the first and went away from it just enough to cause confusion and a lot of turnovers among the Bears guards.

"Then during the fourth, when the free throws were the most important, we made enough to win. We made the free throws which extended the lead to another possession. It wasn t always pretty, but we got the job done when we had the opportunity to close out the victory.

With both teams shooting a respectable, but nothing out of the ordinary, percentage in the low 40s, Winter Springs 44 points was one more than Wekiva's. But at the free throw line, the final totals were 14-of-27 for Wekiva while only 10 attempts were taken by Winter Springs, which converted only six.

Another difference between the two teams was the support. Winter Springs Akeem Laurie and Brandon White accounted for 33 points, only four less than the Mustangs' top two scorers. But no one else added more than four points. Three Mustangs scored between four and eight points, just enough for the 10-point difference.

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ROYAL DOULTON china. Old Country Roses. Eight-piece placesettings & more. Four piece antique bedroom suite. 407-889-8444.
CC0130-0220 CLA 20

21. HEALTH AND NUTRITION

YOUR COMPLETE family dentistry. New patients welcome. Most insurance accepted. MC, VISA, Disc & Amex accepted. 1706 E. Semoran Boulevard, Suite 106, Apopka. 407-886-8817.
JT N0206-0227 TFN APO 21

31. EMPLOYMENT WANTED-LOOKING FOR

32. HELP WANTED

CLEANERS: Residential, full time. Earn up to $11/hour + paid travel time and mileage. Must apply in person Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:30 at The Cleaning Authority, 1150 E. Plant Street, Winter Garden, Florida 34787.
CC0109--0227 SOL 32

BOBCAT OPERATOR grade experience required, clean DL needed. Apply in person 2191 N.Rock Springs Rd.
CC0206-0227 LAN 32

LANDSCAPE foreman-commercial landscape company. Experienced, valid Florida drivers license. Apply in person: 2191 N.Rock Springs Rd., Apopka.
CC0206-0227 LAN 32

LANDSCAPE Laborer-commercial landscape company. Experience helpful. Apply in person: 2191 N.Rock Springs Rd., Apopka
CC0206-0227 LAN 32

32. HELP WANTED

CDL-A DRIVER - commercial landscape company. Transport sod, plants, and equiptment. Apply in person: 2191 N.Rock Springs Rd.,Apopka
CC0206-0227 LAN 32

YARD MAN NEEDED Background check. No felons. Must have driver's license. $8 per hour. 407-490-7306.
W0206-0227 CAS 32

MAIDPRO IS HIRING housekeepers. Up to $15 with tips. Paid travel & benefits. No nights. No experience needed. Call 407-767-5758.
CC0116-0206 MAI 32

INSURANCE company now hiring customer sales rep. Personable with good customer relations, bi-lingual, computer savvy. 440 license required and 220 license is a plus. Please call 407-434-1145 or 407-921-8742.
B0123-0213 GFI 32

MECHANIC NEEDED. ASE certified preferred. Must have own tools. Apply in person. Rick's Neighborhood Garage, 918 S. Orange Blossom Trail, Apopka.
B0130-0220 RNG 32

LIFE AGENTS: Offer pre-paid funerals and cremations. Learn how. Call 844-614-7526.
CC0206-0227 HUM 32

FUNERAL & cremation sales. Training offered at no charge to right candidates. Full/part time. Orientation class forming. Call 844-614-7526.
CC0206-0227 HUM 32

LAWN MAINTENANCE tech. Experienced. Must have transportation, be willing to work hard and hustle. Call 407-889-3070.
CC0206-0227 STR 32

DRIVERS: $5,000 sign-on bonus! Great pay! Consistent freight. Great miles on this regional account. Werner Enterprises. 1-855-517-2507.
CC0206-0227 ACC 32

33. PART-TIME HELP WANTED

40. FINANCIAL

Are you starting a new business?
If so, you can **publish your Fictitious Name in The Apopka Chief for only $25**.
Your Fictitious Name must be advertised one time before you make application with the Florida Department of Revenue.
Call The Apopka Chief at 407-886-2777 for information, or for a copy of the form.
The deadline is Tuesday at 5 p.m. for Friday's publication.
A copy of an affidavit with clipping from the paper will be sent to the applicant after publication.

40. FINANCIAL

41. BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

44. FINANCIAL-MISC.

51. HORSES

HORSE/PET SITTER for hire. Offering experienced care for your well-behaved animals. Feed/stalls/cat litter pans. Extra for horse grooming/dog walking. I love animals. Call Cindy 407-886-3684.
E0116-0206 DAV 51

SORRENTO AREA: Horse care. Three beautiful horses. 30 minutes a.m. and 30 minutes p.m. Call 321-262-2186. Leave message.
C0123-0213 DAO 51

52. PETS

AFRICAN GREY parrot for sale to good home. 12 years old. Talks, whistles. Has cages. Moving. Need to sell. 321-231-4645.
E0206-0227 COF 52

53. ANIMALS AND LIVESTOCK - MISC.

PET CARE CENTER of Apopka wants to help keep your pet healthy. Call 407-884-8924.
JT N0206-0227 PET 53

60. MERCHANDISE FOR SALE

61. APPLIANCES, LARGE

63. FARM SUPPLIES & EQUIPMENT

65. FURNITURE

66. GARAGE SALES

LOOK for the Ads Below in the Clip and Save box!

67. MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

68. NURSERY SUPPLIES

69. SPORTING GOODS

70. MERCHANDISE MISC.

ORNAMENTAL IRON Wholesale to the public. Iron Age Architectural Metals, division of Surplus Steel & Supply, Inc. Visit our new showroom & design center. 407-293-5788. Apopka.
B0206-0227 SUR 70

ESTATE SALE: Barbie Doll collection. Most in original boxes. Serious people only. 407-335-3598.
CC0206-0227 PAT 70

POOL TABLE with balls, $200. You move. 407-884-9306.
C0206 DUR 70

8:00 A.M. TO 1:30 P.M. Buy, sell, trade. Baby Lady. 407-731-4248.
C0206-0213 KIN 70

25 CENT children's clothes. Highchair, $19.95. Preemie clothes. Baby Lady. 407-731-4248.
C0206-0213 KIN 70

NEW CRIB SHEET, $3.75. New playpen sheet, $2.75. Baby Lady. 407-731-4248.
C0206-0213 KIN 70

SAUCER/LOTTA TOYS $9.95. Chicco infant car seat, $19.95. Baby Lady. 407-731-4248.
C0206-0213 KIN 70

SPONGE BOB toddler car seat, $39.95. Pink swing, $19.95. Toys. Baby Lady. 407-731-4248.
C0206-0213 KIN 70

3-STAR FLEA Market, $16 per space. Saturday & Sunday. Apopka. 407-921-6172.
C0206-0213 KIN 70

TOTE/LIDS, $2.95. Ikea highchair, $14.95. Walker, $14.95. Baby Lady. 407-731-4248.
C0206-0213 KIN 70

UMBRELLA stroller, $2.95. Travel system, $24.95. Wagon, $19.95. Baby Lady. 407-731-4248.
C0206-0213 KIN 70

PRECIOUS MOMENTS toy box, $19.95. Crib with mattress, $39.95. Baby Lady. 407-731-4248.
C0206-0213 KIN 70

TODDLER BED with mattress, $19.95. Pooh swing, $29.95. Baby Lady. 407-731-4248.
C0206-0213 KIN 70

71. JEWELRY

72. COMPUTERS/ ELECTRONICS

NEED A CELL PHONE Visit Royal Wireless at 803 S. OBT or call 407-814-8433.
JT N0206-0227 BEE 72

80. TRANSPORTATION

81. AUTOS FOR SALE

82. BOATS FOR SALE

83. MOTORCYCLES FOR SALE

84. RECREATIONAL VEHICLES FOR SALE

86. TRUCKS FOR SALE

2005 CHEVROLET Silverado. Black, 220,000 miles, asking $14,500. Leather seats, power mirrors, 5th wheel hitch, etc. Call 352-801-0020.
E0206-0227 MAN 86

87. VANS FOR SALE

88. TRANSPORTATION FOR HIRE

89. TRAILERS FOR SALE

TRIPLE CROWN 5x14 ft. equipment trailer, loading ramp, lockable front storage box and dual axel. $1,100. 407-880-6195.
CC0130-0220 LEH 89

90. AUTOMOTIVE

91. AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR & PARTS

92. AUTO ACCESSORIES

93. AUTO DETAILING

94. AUTOMOTIVE-MISC.

Advertise Here Call 407.886.2777

$CASH$ PAID FOR JUNK CARS
$200 & UP
FREE PICK-UP
352-771-6191

110. SERVICES

111. CHILD CARE

$20 A DAY, 7 a.m.-6 p.m. No weekends or nights. Food provided including snacks. Clean home. References and loving atmosphere. Please email or call CJ. 321-948-3588. C4Everett@hotmail.com.
CC0130-0220 EVE 111

112. HOME

113. LANDSCAPING

ADVANTAGE Lawncare. Cut, trim & edge, $20 & up. Licensed & insured. Free estimates. No contracts required. 407-880-7948.
CC0206-0227 TFN ADV 113

114. PROFESSIONAL

SLH GRAPHICS, INC. Screen printing. T-shirts, banners, signs, advertisements. Call today for quote! 407-864-5566.
E0206-0227 LEO 114

ROMAN'S LAWN Service. Weed, mow, blow. Licensed & insured. Good service at good rates. 407-298-3185.
CC0130-0220 ROM 114

115. ELDERLY CARE

116. SERVICES, MISC.

117. CEMETERY PROPERTY

HIGHLAND MEMORY Gardens. Garden of Peace, 2 plots with vault. $3,500. 352-753-3962.
CC0130-0220 HAT 117

HIGHLAND MEMORY Gardens. Everlasting Life. One space, $900. 407-252-4718.
C0116-0206 FER 117

HIGHLAND MEMORY Garden Apopka. Double cremation. Plot with granite base and double marker. $2,800 OBO. 407-299-2178.
W0130-0220 CRA 117

121. PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS

TRAFFIC SCHOOL First time classes & traffic ticket classes. All ages. Call City Driving School. 407-880-6003.
JT N0206-0227 TFN CIT 121

130. REAL ESTATE

130. REAL ESTATE

All real estate advertised herein is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation, or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or intention to make any such preference, limitation, or discrimination. We will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.

131. VACANT LAND

UNIQUE waterfront property. 2.5 acre lot with 109 ft. frontage on Alexander Springs creek. Deep within the Ocala National Forest between Paisley and Deland near highway 42. $100,000. 407-293-2426.
CC0123-0213 REE 131

132. CONDOMINIUMS FOR SALE

133. HOMES FOR SALE

APOPKA foreclosures. Great bargains. Free list of Apopka & NW Orange foreclosures & corporate houses for sale. George LaPierre, Central Florida Real Estate Connection, Inc. 407-592-8096 or www.cfreci.webs.com.
E0206-0227 LAP 133

FIRST TIME HOME buyer. Many programs available. Call for details. George LaPierre, Central Florida Real Estate Connection, Inc. 407-592-8096 or www.cfreci.webs.com.
E0206-0227 LAP 133

APOPKA AREA NEW homes. Use our services and receive a rebate at closing. Call today! George LaPierre, Central Florida Real Estate Connection, Inc. 407-592-8096 or www.cfreci.webs.com.
E0206-0227 LAP 133

TANGERINE, N.W. Orange County. 4BR/2BA, 1.46 acres. No HOA. 2183 sq. ft. Great for RV, boat, business vehicles. Built in 2000. Block & stucco, 24x12 screened porch. $295,000. Owner financing available. George LaPierre, Central Florida Real Estate Connection, Inc. 407-592-8096 or www.cfreci.webs.com.
E0206-0227 LAP 133

APOPKA: "BEAR Lake." Seminole County lake front 2BR/2BA cottage on pristine Bear Lake with dock & beach. Great for skiing, fishing and swimming/pets. Close to Maitland Boulevard & business district and new Highway 429. Located in Lake Brantley school district. Great price, $415,000. George LaPierre, Central Florida Real Estate Connection, Inc. 407-592-8096 or www.cfreci.webs.com.
E0206-0227 LAP 133

133. HOMES FOR SALE

Place your ad here! 407-886-2777

MT. DORA, Tangerine, FL. Orange County. $169,000. 4BR/2BA log home. 2,500 sq. ft. Double car garage. Large bedrooms. Large walk-in closets. Swimming pool with gazebo, hot tub & fenced yard. Screened front & back porches. George LaPierre, Central Florida Real Estate Connection, Inc. 407-952-8096 or www.cfreci.webs.com.
E0116-0206 LAP 133

ZELLWOOD. SALES Price: $115,000, B/B: 4/2. Lot size: .69 ac/210'x150, Zoning: R-1AAAA, New: Kitchen, A/C, water heater, R-30 insulation. Home Details: Corner lot, metal roof, outside patio, large storage shed/workshop, partially fenced. Central Florida Real Estate Connection, Inc. 407-592-8096 or www.cfreci.webs.com.
E0206-0227 LAP 133

APOPKA, SOUTH Central Avenue. 4BR/1.5BA single family home. 1,129 sq. ft. Garage. Lease program. Call for details. 855-671-5654.
CC0116-0206 COR 133

3BR/1BA HOUSE. Completely remodeled and move-in ready. New kitchen cabinets, new plumbing & W/H. Fenced yard, shed. 5536 Gaymar Drive, Orlando. $64,000. Call 407-862-6686.
W0116-0206 BRO 133

BEAUTIFUL ROCK Springs Ridge. Motivated seller. 5 bedroom, 3 bath, 3-car garage. $339,900. Call Nancy DiPasqua at Jesse Turner Realty, Inc. at 321-266-7993.
CC0123-0213 DIP 133

134. TOWNHOMES/ DUPLEXES FOR SALE

135. MANUFACTURED HOMES FOR SALE

PALM ISLE, 55+. 2BR/2BA doublewide. Apopka. $9,000 OBO. Qualification required. Must sell. 407-462-9233.
CC0130-0220 ANT 135

APOPKA, NEAR Mt. Dora. 2BR/2BA double. Best of country living in The Valley, off Round Lake. 352-735-3921.
CC0206-0227 SUL 135

136. MOBILE HOMES/ RVS FOR SALE

MINUTES TO historic downtown Mt. Dora. Fully furnished & tastefully decorated 2BR/2BA doublewide. Call Claudia 352-406-6102
CC0130-0220 WIG 136

1999 FLEETWOOD 3BR/2BA. $25,000. Located in Rock Springs Mobile Home Park. Call for more details. 717-386-6101.
C0130-0220 FAI 136

139. APARTMENTS/ CONDOS FOR RENT

ONE BEDROOM, CH/A, tile floors, oak cabinets. $625 monthly, $400 deposit. Background check. 407-490-7306.
W0206-0213

SINGLE PERSON $650/month includes utilities. 1411 S. OBT, Apopka, 407-376-7092.
B0206-0227 SEM 139

Place your ad here! 407-886-2777

139. APARTMENTS/ CONDOS FOR RENT

You're Invited
Come See Our 2 Bedroom 1 Bath Villas today!
Only $730
Quiet Community
POOL · GREAT LOCATION
Walk to Shopping
Easy Access to 429
Call For Details
407-886-3531
Orange North Apartments & Villas
943 W. O.B.T
Apopka, FL
32712

140. HOMES/DUPLEXES FOR RENT

LARGE 2BR/2BA near AHS. Utilities included. No pets inside or outside. No smoking. $950 monthly. $950 security. 407-947-6041, 407-886-4538.
W0123-0213 CLA 140

CLEAN 3BR/2BA duplex for rent. Split floor plan. Yard care included. 2704 W. Highland Avenue, Apopka. $950 monthly, $850 deposit. Application needed. Call 407-862-6686.
W0206 BRO 140

SMALL 2BR/1BA, large front yard, garage. No smoking/pets. First, last, deposit. $800 monthly. 407-886-2796.
W0130-0206 ROB 140

141. MOBILE HOMES/ LOTS FOR RENT

SMALL TRAILER for rent for one or two people. 407-703-4376.
CC0206-0227 NEL 141

VICTORIA GARDENS $599 move in special. Must qualify, no pets, 407-296-6200, 407-782-1007.
B0206-0227 VIC 141

141-A. MANUFACTURED HOMES FOR RENT

2BR/1BA, ADULTS preferred. No pets. No smoking. On nursery property. $425 monthly, first, last and security. 407-886-7880.
CC0109-0206 CRO 141-A

APOPKA: 2BR/1BA Large lot. Small pet welcome. $625 monthly, $625 deposit. 407-230-3941.
C0130-0220 KEI 141-A

142. ROOMS FOR RENT

FURNISHED ROOM Cable, utilities included. In home with pool. Lockhart area. $125 weekly plus deposit. 321-297-5160. References required.
CC0130-0220 GRO 142

FURNISHED ROOM Everything included. Must have steady income. $115 to $125 per week. No drugs. 407-952-5119 or 407-731-9727.
CC0206-0227 HUR 142

ROOMS FOR RENT Zellwood area. 352-383-2699.
W0206-0227 HER 142

APOPKA, PRIVATE entry & bath. Furnished. Refrigerator, cable and Internet. For a quiet single. $125 per week plus deposit pays all. 407-341-4918.
CC0123-0213 COX 142

SWEENEY'S ROOMS for rent. Multiple locations. Furnished, cable, Internet, W/D included. A/C in kitchen. Call to inquire. $135 weekly. 321-271-6773.
CC0130-0220 JAC 142

143. OFFICES FOR RENT

Great Deals!

31. EMPLOYMENT WANTED/FOR HIRE

EMPLOYERS: Do you need one of these job seekers!

PUBLISHED writer in magazines and newspapers. Excellent English skills. Easy to read style. Love writing. Conscientious. Strive toward perfection. No job too small. Call Cindy 407-886-3684.
E0206-0227 DAV 31

HORSE/PET SITTER for hire. Offering experienced care for your well-behaved animals. Feed/stalls/cat litter pans. Extra for horse grooming/dog walking. I love animals. Call Cindy 407-886-3684.
E0116-0206 DAV 31

PHOTO ENHANCER for hire. Experience in digital photo editing. Call Cindy. 407-886-3684.
E0206-0227 DAV 31

I AM AN experinced home health care worker for the elderly. Help with errands & appointments. References available. 407-810-1045.
CC0116-0206 RAM 31

20 words 4 weeks $15

DRIVERS
Monterey Mushrooms Inc. located in Zellwood, FL is seeking **Drivers** with a **CDL type A license**. Benefits include Vacation/Holiday/Medical & Life Insurance. Apply at **5949 Sadler Road, Zellwood**. EOE
Monterey MUSHROOMS, INC.

Garage Sales #66 CLIP & SAVE
Thur. 02/05- Sun. 02/08

SWEETHEART OF a deal at 3-Star Flea Market. $16 a space. Saturday & Sunday. Apopka. 407-921-6172.
C0206-0227 KIN 66

INFANT/TODDLER car seats. 25 cent children's clothes. Highchairs, walkers, preemie clothes, strollers, crib mattresses. 3-Star Flea Market. Baby Lady. 407-731-4248.
C0206-0227 KIN 66

MULTI-FAMILY yard sale Saturday & Sunday, February 7 & 8, 9-4 p.m. Autumn Chase subdivision. 6429 Nightwind Circle.
CC0206 CAR 66

THE HILLS community yard sale. Off 441, behind Trinity Baptist Church. Over 20 homes. Friday & Saturday, February 6 & 7. 8 a.m.-?
CC0206 VAN 66

CLASSIFIEDS WORK

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APOPKA AUTO UPHOLSTERY
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• Classified Deadline • 5 p.m. Monday

Call 407-886-2777
Fax 407-889-4121

143.OFFICES FOR RENT

144. COMMERCIAL PROPERTY FOR RENT

TRACTOR TRAILER parking. Rock Springs Road. 407-886-7653.
CC0206-0227 FRE 144

LARGE STORAGE lot on 441, in Lockhart. 407-299-7809.
B0109--0227 LOC 144

APOPKA, 8X40 FOOT storage container located at 2001 Rock Springs Road. $110 monthly. 407-886-7653.
CC0123-0213 FRE 144

SOBIK'S PLAZA: 235 W. Main. 480 sq. ft. at $635 per month includes some utilities. 407-886-7653.
CC0123-0213 FRE 144

1200 SQ. FT. of retail space/office. Includes utilities. $1,250 monthly. Call 407-889-0002.
B0130-0220 APO 144

Advertise Great Deals Here
407-886-2777

144. COMMERCIAL PROPERTY FOR RENT

Tired of working from home?
We have individual offices for rent here in Apopka.
Call 407-889-0049 and ask for Nia.
•Reasonable rent
•Low moving cost
•Off-street parking •Utilities and WiFi included. Call or come by today:
1676 E. Semoran Blvd., Apopka 32703.
($50 off security deposit with mention of this ad)

145. REAL ESTATE WANTED

147. NURSERIES FOR SALE OR RENT

ORCHID NURSERY- Tangerine. New, Orange County. 3 acres, fully set up with office. $250,000. Owner will train buyer in orchid business. Possible owner financing. 4BR/2BA home also available. George LaPierre, Central Florida Real Estate Connection, Inc. 407-592-8096 or www.cfreci.webs.com.
E0206-0227 LAP 147

GARDEN CENTER
Corner location, Mt.Dora Modern Facilities. $500K
8 Ac w/ Nursery $365K
Apopka 12 Ac mixed use NEAR NEW HOSPITAL SITE Reduced to $495K
Florida Land Brokers
Lic. R.E. Broker
407-323-5552

147. NURSERIES FOR SALE OR RENT

FLORIDA LAND BROKERS
Tired of the City
Country at its best
Lake County: 1-10 acre parcel 3-19 acre parcels. Land ideal for a home, horses ok Agriculture ok. Riding Trail next to property. Must see!
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147. NURSERIES FOR SALE OR RENT

RITCHIE BROS. Auctioneers
Unreserved public equipment auction



Equipment incl.
Excavators, crawler tractors, wheel loaders, motor graders, cranes, trucks, trailers & more.
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Auction Business License #AB303, Auctioneer Patrick J. Hicks # AU2215

Big Bear Lake
Enjoy the benefits of Lakeside Living



Watch the sunset from your 2BR/2BA cottage on beautiful, pristine **Big Bear Lake**, between Altamonte Springs and Apopka. 3542 Holliday Ave, Apopka
Gradual sand beach for swimming, skiing, boating, fishing and a dock for your own boat. Can be permanent home, weekend get-a-way or you can build your dream home. You will love it! Reasonably priced lakefront property.
$415,000.

George LaPierre
Cell: 407-592-8096

CENTRAL FLORIDA REAL ESTATE CONNECTION, INC.

FLORIDA - STATEWIDE

Employment

Driver Trainees Needed NOW! Become a driver for Werner Enterprises.
Earn $800 per week! Local CDL Training
1-877-214-3624

Miscellaneous

Struggling with DRUGS or ALCHOHOL? Addicted to PILLS? Talk to someone who cares. Call The Addiction Hope & Help Line for a free assessment. 855-972-6607

DISH TV Starting at $19.99/ month (for 12 mos.) SAVE! Regular Price $34.99 Call Today and Ask About FREE SAME DAY Installation! CALL Now! 855-588-1161

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1920's thru 1980's Gibson, Martin, Fender, Gretsch, Epiphone,Guild, Mosrite, Rickenbacker, Prairie State, D'Angelico, Stromberg, And Gibson Mandolins/Banjos.
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WELDING CAREERS - Hands on training for career opportunities in aviation, automotive, manufacturing and more. Financial aid for qualified students. Job placement assistance. CALL AIM 877-206-7679

ANF Advertising Networks of Florida

February 2, 2015

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AA Same Day GARAGE DOOR SERVICE
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& much more...
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COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL
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