

# It will take some time for Blue Darters to get up to speed

It's about that time as football season is getting cranked up at all levels.

High school football has its preseason games here in Florida this week with the regular season beginning next week.

As a reminder, I am now mostly retired from my position at *The Apopka Chief*, but will continue to cover some community events, mostly Apopka High sports and this column will concentrate on the Blue Darters.

While I expect a solid season from the Apopka High football team this season, the first part of the season may be a little rougher than most Apopka fans are used to seeing.

I base that on a couple of things, including the offense, which has several inexperienced players and is learning a new offense from a new offensive coordinator. The upside to the situation is that the offense in the middle and latter parts of the season should be much better as the players not only gain game experience but learn the new offense as it becomes more ingrained through reps in practice and games.

In addition to the offense that should improve



**PEERY'S EXTRA POINTS**  
John Peery

throughout the season, Apopka's defense must deal with replacing three four-year starters. However, I would expect the Blue Darters to be able to have a better start to the season on defense with incremental improvement through the season.

The kicking game seems to be in good shape, especially on placements and kickoffs. Punting may be a different animal, but, hopefully, the Blue Darters will be able to get that in shape quickly.

As I mentioned last week, I'm thinking we'll have a low-scoring game in the Kickoff Classic when the Blue Darters host the Osceola Kowboys from Kissimmee.

The Kowboys are expected to be a really good

team this season and while the Blue Darters will not take a back seat to anyone, it may be later in the season before we see a typical Apopka team.

The one thing to remember from these preseason games is that it's a rare team that is ready to go full steam this early in the season. In fact, I would bet that most coaches wouldn't want to see a great performance from their team in its Kickoff Classic because that might give the players a false sense of accomplishment, which is the worst thing players on a high school football team could have in August. You want that only after the season is complete.

While Apopka's first three games of Ocoee, West Orange, and Dr. Phillips are not pushovers, the toughness of the 2022 schedule ramps up only after Apopka's open date of September 16.

The Blue Darters visit Edgewater on September 23 and then host Seminole on September 30. I'm not sure there is a tougher back-to-back stretch on any Florida high school team's schedule.

Fortunately for the

Blue Darters, the game against Edgewater comes after four games, including the preseason game this week, and an open date. That should give Apopka's offense time to improve before the Darters visit the Eagles.

## Osceola at Apopka

Facing a powerful team like Osceola for the preseason game is both good and bad for the Blue Darters. Hopefully, Apopka can move the ball enough against the Kowboys to

keep the Osceola offense on the sideline. The guys up front on defense who have some game experience can hold their own against the Kowboys and keep the Osceola running game from gaining any momentum.

I would be surprised if the Blue Darters are able to score enough to come out with a victory against Osceola but a strong effort combined with a break or two could be the difference in the outcome of the game, which is important

for both teams even though the game doesn't count on the regular-season record.

The Blue Darters and Kowboys both want to have a good taste in their mouths as they head into the regular season next week and this game can provide it.

Here's hoping Apopka's offense will put up a few points and take some time off the clock while the defense is not giving up big scoring plays to the Kowboys.

**Osceola by 4.**

# State has grants available for high school fishing teams

## Hello Folks,

Back-to-school season is under way.

Florida parents, teachers, and school staff can now apply for funding to support school fishin' clubs for students. The previously named High School Fishing Program is now called School Fishing Club Program. For the year 2022-23, the FWC is taking applications for funding through Florida R3 Fishing Grant. The application period is open now until September 16. The grant will award 40 high school clubs or teams \$500 to assist with club expenses. You can go to MyFWC.com/SFC and find the application under Florida's R3 Grant Program. You can complete the form online or download the application to submit by mail or email. The School Fishing Club program is an important program for teaching the next generation of anglers about ethical angling and conservation in Florida. I hope your school will be involved in this program for your students.

The fishin' this week hasn't improved much since last week. The bass fishin' is still somewhat slow but folks are still catchin' some



Jim Keck  
**Goin' Fishin'**

nice stringers of bass, especially on the Kissimmee Chain. The Xtreme Bass Series finished up the eighth divisional event of the season on the Kissimmee Chain. Congrats to the team of George Short and Santos Solis for their first-place finish. They weighed in five bass that tipped the scales at 30.97 lbs. They also had big bass of the tournament which hit the scales at 9.25 lbs.

The bass fishin' on John's Lake is still a little slow. The Xtreme Bass Series held its tournament there on August 7 and it took only 14.09 lbs. to win. Congrats to Chase Morgan and Ethan Shelton on the winnin' stringer. As you can see, there's a big difference between chains.

Folks are catchin' a few panfish in the Harris Chain but it's really slow. You will do best with red

worms, crickets, or grasshopper. The specks are in deep water holes for the summer. You will need jigs tipped with a minner to get the bait down in the deep holes in order to catch some specks. The bass fishin' has been a little slow on the Harris Chain. It's been hot but you can get on the water early and catch a few bass feedin' at first light. You can also catch a few bass late in the day as well. You will just have to dodge the afternoon thunderstorms. Look for runnin' water from the creeks that feed into the chain. You will find some bass feedin' in those type of areas in the chain.

The Butler Chain is still good for numbers. Folks aren't catchin' too many big bass but they are catchin' plenty of schoolers and small bass. Most of the bass are bein' caught on plastic worms, jigs, and slow-sinkin' Senko-type baits.

Well, that's it for this week. I hope you have a great week, and hopefully get on the water and do some fishin'.

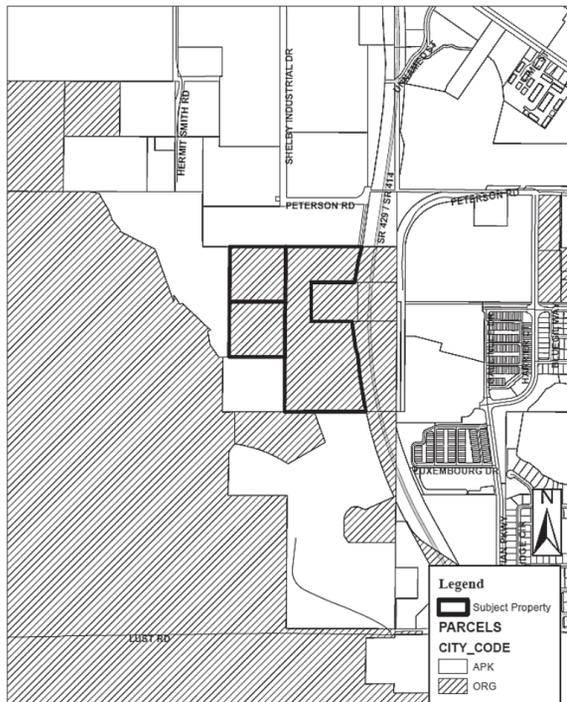
Tip of the week: early or late. Save a few and good luck!

## PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE ANNEXATION CITY OF APOPKA

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to Florida Statutes 171.044, the Apopka Code of Ordinances, Part III, Land Development Code, Article II, Section 2.5.1.A, that **ARCO NATIONAL CONSTRUCTION C/O TRENTON SQUIERS** has made an application to the City of Apopka City Council for an **ANNEXATION** of a property located on the southwest corner of Peterson and SR 429, approximately 54.05 +/- acres. This application relates to the following described property:

### ORDINANCE NO. 2956

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF APOPKA, FLORIDA, TO EXTEND ITS TERRITORIAL AND MUNICIPAL LIMITS TO ANNEX PURSUANT TO FLORIDA STATUTE 171.044 THE HERINAFTER DESCRIBED LANDS SITUATED AND BEING IN ORANGE COUNTY, FLORIDA, OWNED BY SIMPSON D WAYNE 50% INT, SIMPSON SUSIE F 50% INT, LAXMI LAND INVESTMENT LLC AND SESSIONS PLYMOUTH LLC; LOCATED ON THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF PETERSON ROAD AND SR 429; PROVIDING FOR DIRECTIONS TO THE CITY CLERK, SEVERABILITY, CONFLICTS, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**



Parcel Identification Number(s): 12-21-27-0000-00-007, 12-21-27-0000-00-011 and 12-21-27-0000-00-012  
Contains: 54.05 +/- acres

NOTICE is given that public hearings for Ordinance No. 2956 will be held by the **City of Apopka City Council** at its regularly scheduled meetings in the City Council Chambers of the Apopka City Hall, 120 E. Main Street, Apopka, Florida on **Wednesday, September 7, 2022 beginning at 1:30 p.m.**, AND on **Wednesday, September 21, 2022 beginning at 7:00 p.m.** or as soon thereafter as possible.

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

Apopka City Council  
Apopka Planning Commission  
Community Development Department

# Towel: Many were targets of jobs

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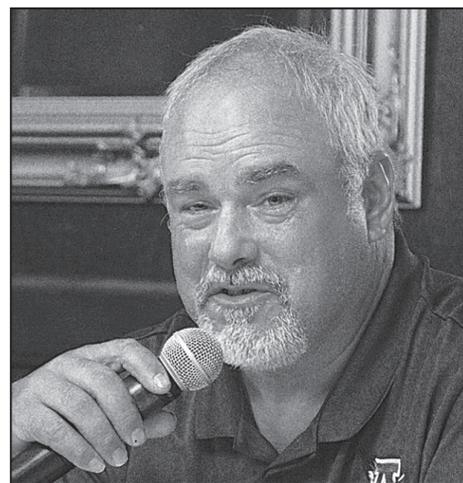
letic director), who is gone (left the dinner). Last year, (then-AD) Eddie Sanders was here and I begged him to fire me. He promised he would. This new guy, he's promised he's going to make it happen. He came and had a meeting and he told us about what we were going to wear and what our logo is going to look like and who was going downtown and what we were going to get fired for. That's where I'm at."

In the nothing-new department, Rolson complained about players transferring out of the Apopka football program, although he took a shot at an upcoming opponent, Ocoee.

"Transfer portal, you heard about that, but it's not working very well for us. It's broken. It's only moving one way," he said. "We got a running back who went to another place that's never been to the playoffs except for the COVID year, but he's over there, enjoying the spoils of, I don't know, a .500 team at best."

Some of Rolson's assistant coaches also took a hit.

"My assistant coaches broke my laundry machine. I had to pay for my own air conditioner. I sent four guys out to paint the practice field, one of them was Ivy League educated.



Apopka football coach Jeff Rolson speaks during the Crying Towel event.

Two hours later, they had painted three lines and then didn't have a square yet. They couldn't figure that out," Rolson said.

"I got a new OC (offensive coordinator). I just call him More. He needs more coaches. He's got six guys on offense and we have two on defense. He needs more headphones. He needs more money. He needs more players from defense to play offense."

In one that I did not see coming, Rolson ended his time with the microphone with a gig toward his former boss and former Apopka High coach Rick Darlington, who is now back in Central Florida at DeLand High.

"The only pleasure I've had since I walked in

the door at Apopka as a head coach was when he called and said, 'I'm going to come watch y'all work out.' So, I said, 'OK.'

"I got up that morning and I said, 'You know what: I don't feel like going in there today. I'm going to let those guys run it.' He (Darlington) went in there. I didn't show up and he looked at the table in the office and there was all kind of paper strewn all over the place, and they said he stood there and stared at it for six minutes. He's OCD and couldn't stand it. I've gotten up and done for you for the last time. That's the only joy I've had all year was thinking about what Rick Darlington was thinking when he looked at that table."