

Community support sets Miss Apopka pageant apart

Dear Editor:

On behalf of the Miss Apopka Scholarship Competition Committee, we would like to thank our family at *The Apopka Chief* and *The Planter* for their exceptional coverage of our pageant held on December 2, 2023.

The Miss Apopka Competition, one of 16 preliminary competitions held throughout the state for Miss Florida, prides itself for garnering such strong support from the Apopka community. And it's that support that really sets us apart and makes our crown one of the most coveted.

From the moment our candidates step into the City Hall Council Chamber for their private interview, to viewing the candidate pictorial in *The Chief*, to taking the stage at Apopka High School, they feel that community support. It makes for such a special day for everyone involved.

Mr. Matthew Morphey with Apopka High School, along with his production team, Brooke Ripley, Tamairah Marsh, and Leilani Delgado, worked wonders making this one of our most dazzling productions to date. Their hospitality is unmatched and we thank them for sharing their

stage with us. At the end of the night, Reilly Cardella, was crowned Miss Apopka 2024, while Maci Miotto placed First Runner Up and Tori Leto placed Second Runner Up. Each took home an exquisite rose bouquet from Apopka Florist and over \$4,100 in scholarship money was awarded.

As a committee, we are often met with surprise when it is discovered that our Miss Apopka is not necessarily an Apopka resident. Though we most certainly welcome young women from Apopka to compete, we are most focused on the impact that

our titleholders make on our community. Since her coronation, Miss Cardella has helped welcome in the holiday season with the Foliage Sertoma Club of Apopka's annual Christmas Parade, the Apopka Police Department's Shop with Cop program, and Apopka Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association Christmas dinner. She is also looking to expand her Community Service Initia-

tive by working with local schools to send thanks to our local physicians and healing wishes and toys to those families impacted by childhood cancer. As a talented vocalist, Miss Cardella further plans to visit our local assisted living facilities to help spread good cheer throughout the coming year.

If you are interested in having Miss Cardella attend an event or if you are

a local family impacted by childhood cancer, please reach out to us at Miss-ApopkaBoard@gmail.com or message us on Facebook or Instagram.

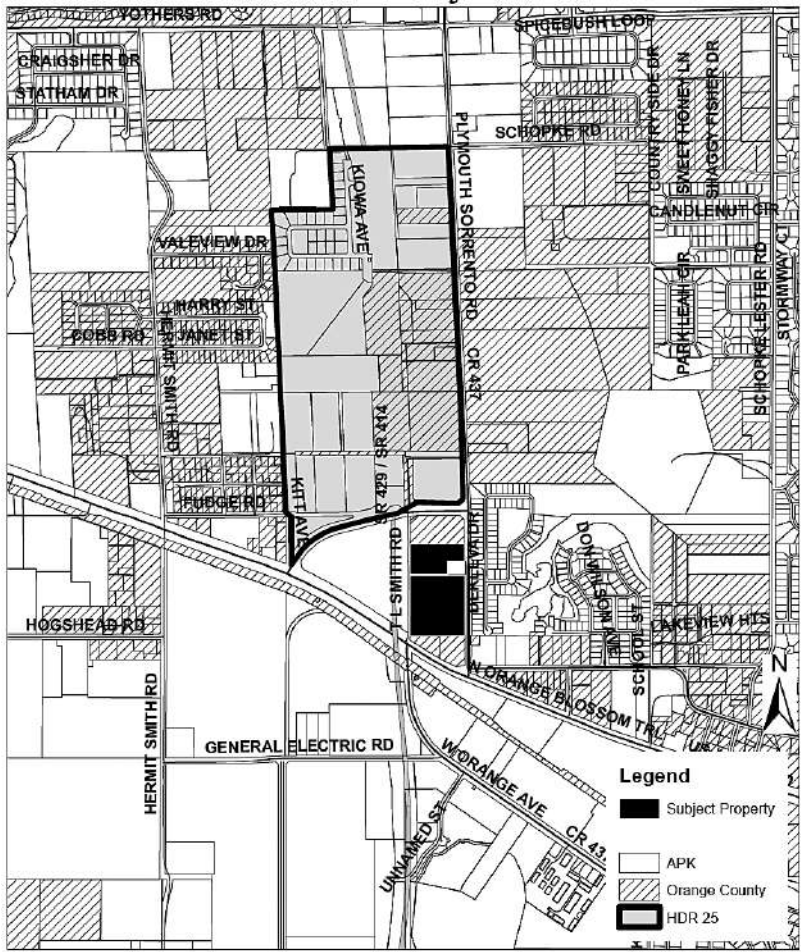
We welcome the opportunity to speak with you.

With gratitude,
Kristi Funke, Rosali Morris and the Miss Apopka Scholarship Competition Committee

CITY OF APOPKA PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE CHANGE OF ZONING

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Parcel Identification Number(s): 06-21-28-7172-08-050 and 06-21-28-7172-08-040
Contains: 13.04 +/- Acres

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Affected parties and the public may appear at the above listed hearing to speak. The proposed zoning ordinance and Master Plan 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.

December 22, 2023

Apopka City Council
Community Development Department

Publish: The Apopka Chief

175435

Everybody has an opinion. Why not share yours?

Send a letter to the Editor online www.theapokkachief.com

ACT: FDE is to answer questions

Continued from page 2A

lished reports.

The Broward County school system is the first in the state to be sanctioned under the law. The governor's office deferred questions on the sanctions to the Florida Department of Ed-

ucation.

Broward County Chief Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer John J. Sullivan released a statement saying the district had received a letter from the Florida High School Athletic Association that the matter is part of an ongoing

investigation.

According to published reports, the student has identified as female since before elementary school and has been using a girl's name since second grade, according to court documents in a case challenging Florida's law.

Hayden: Men should be providers

Continued from page 2A

having to put any effort into supporting a household.

Marriage has become meaningless. Why go to the trouble when all you are looking for is a non-committal relationship that you can walk away from if it gets tedious?

Oh, he might have to take trash out to the curb, but nothing too strenuous because he hurt his back, neck, leg, or whatever it took to convince his concubine he was not able to work a real job.

I have worked with men who, having true disabilities, considered it nothing more than a chal-

lenge they could face knowing their responsibilities for their commitments outweighed any hindrance a mere handicap provided. I have little sympathy for a person who claims to have a disability to escape working for a living.

Childish thinking leads to men who depend on others to provide their basic needs so they can enjoy the freedom from grown-up decisions to make someone else's life better, and to sink deeper into thinking their presence is what the world is willing to pay for.

It is time to put away childish things and start acting like men! My daughter-in-law, thinking of

her own father, (who has passed), posted something on Facebook that states, "A truly rich man is one whose children run into his arms when his hands are empty." How true!

Men, we need to be aware of our position in our Creator's world as providers, leaders, examples, FATHERS, and then fill that place that GOD has prepared for you and me.

Our Christmas prayer should be for our heavenly Father to give us the wisdom to see the childish things that need to be put out of the way, and then the fortitude to do it! Remember the "Reason for the Season!!!"

Moore: Leaders are appreciated

Continued from page 2A

ber of *The People of Wekiwa Springs*, not only works with the Mills family to clean up Thompson Road, she has also recruited the Apopka Running Club to adopt the western end of Votaw Road for quarterly clean-ups. Thank you, Jean Ford, for your leadership. Thompson and Votaw Roads have never looked better. They also have the best-looking sidewalks around.

Larry Branan, a strong member of *The People of Lockhart*, works very hard on Rose Ave. This street is vitally important to the vision of a rebuilt downtown Lockhart and hosting cyclists traversing from the West Orange Trail to the Wekiwa Trail. Larry not only picks up the trash but has recruited businesses and property owners to do so, as well. The amount of debris Larry has carted off the road is astounding. It would be nice if folks would simply keep trash in their cars and dispose of it once they reach their destination. Thank you, Larry Branan, for your dedication. Rose Ave has never

looked so good, and next year we will be painting a long stretch of fencing and adding roses for greater interest.

Sandy Miller, an engaged resident in Huntley Park off *Clarcona-Ocoee Road* has picked up literally, thousands of snipe signs with her friend Matteo Schulte. The North Pine Hills area suffers from event promoters defacing traffic utility boxes and fake tax preparers leaving signage all up and down Clarcona-Ocoee Road. This dynamic team led the way for the Clarcona-Ocoee Team to win this year's *Corridor of the Year Contest*. I must say, we still struggle with trash thrown on rights-of-way on an almost daily basis. However, all the engaged HOA Board Members are getting out to help pick up the trash and maintain the wonderful walls, entranceways, sidewalks, etc. – improvements wrought over 2023. Thank you, Sandy Miller, for your hard work.

Richard Lippert is our most comical and entertaining Corridor Chief. He represents *The People of Wekiwa Springs* and

services the north end of Wekiwa Springs Road. Richard took my place, for which I am extremely happy. He caught me out in front of my neighborhood and offered to replace me. That was my lucky day. I, however, then moved on to other streets and kept recruiting residents to assist. There is nothing worse than lawn debris left for weeks on the side of the road, rental moveouts filling the curb with unwanted property, and trash left by lazy citizens. I still do not understand why trash cannot be kept in a vehicle until reaching a destination. Richard picks it all up, weighs it, and faithfully calculates his annual amount to my office.

He is on his way to picking up **TWO TONS** of debris for 2023. I cannot thank you enough Mr. Lippert.

If you are a regular walker or cyclist, it is easy to bring along a trash bag and pick up trash.

If you would like to join my *Neighborhood Leader Group*, please contact my office at 407.836.5850 or District2@ocfl.net.

ALL ABOUT APOPKA

The Apopka Chief

Established 1923
(USPS 545-440)

The Apopka Chief is published every Friday and entered as Periodicals, postage paid at Apopka Post Office, under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879. *The Apopka Chief* newspaper is published by Foliage Enterprises, Inc., every Friday at 400 North Park Avenue, Apopka, Fla., 32712-3417. An annual subscription is \$25 in Orange County and \$30 outside Orange County. Phone 407-886-2777. Postmaster: Send address changes to *The Apopka Chief*, P.O. Box 880, Apopka, Fla., 32704-0880.

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

www.theapokkachief.com, news@theapokkachief.com



City of Apopka Telephone Numbers

City Hall 407-703-1700
Mayor's Office 407-703-1701
City Administrator 407-703-1649
City Clerk 407-703-1704
Community Devel. 407-703-1712
Code Enforcement 407-703-1738
Finance Dept. 407-703-1725
Fire (non-emerg.) 407-703-1756
Parks and Rec. Dept. 407-703-1741
Police Chief 407-703-1769
Police (non-emerg.) 407-703-1771
Job Line 407-703-1743
Solid Waste Collect. 407-703-1731
Street Maintenance 407-703-1731
Utility Billing 407-703-1727
Medical, fire emergency 911
The city of Apopka was chartered in 1882. It is located at 28°30' north latitude and is 150 feet above sea level. Its population is about 48,000 and its total area is more than 30 sq. mi. **www.apopka.net**

Orange County Telephone Numbers

Animal Services 407-836-3111
Auto/Boat Tags 850-617-2000
Building Dept. 407-836-8550
County Mayor 407-836-7370
County Commission 407-836-7350
County Attorney 407-836-7320
Clerk of the Court 407-836-2065
Elections Supervisor 407-836-2070
Fire/Rescue 407-836-3111
Solid Waste 407-836-6601
Garbage Collection 407-703-1731
Health Dept. 407-836-2600
Hunting/Fishing Lic 888-347-4356
Parks and Rec. Dept. 407-836-6200
Property Appraiser 407-836-5044
Sheriff Administrative 407-254-7000
Non-Emerg. Complaint 407-836-4357
Utilities 407-836-5515
All other departments 407-836-3111
Medical, fire emergency 911
www.orangecountyfl.net

Other Area Numbers of Note

U.S. Senators
Rick Scott (Rep.) 202-224-5274
Marco Rubio (Rep.) 407-254-2573
U.S. Representative
Daniel Webster (Dist. 11) 352-241-9220
State Representatives
Doug Bankson 407-476-6787
Carolina Amesty (Dist. 45) unknown
State Senators
Geraldine Thompson (Dist. 11) 407-297-2045
Orange County Commissioner
Christine Moore 407-836-7350
Orange County Public Schools
Pupil assignment 407-317-3233
Bus routes 407-317-3800
Superintendent 407-317-3200
School Board 407-317-3200
Miscellaneous
The Apopka Chief 407-886-2777
Museum of the Apopkans 407-703-1707
Chamber of Commerce 407-886-1441

Apopka Boys Basketball splits games against Warriors, Pioneers

By Marshall Tempest
Apopka Chief Staff

The Apopka Boys’ basketball team split their two games after press time last week, beating the West Orange Warriors 67-37, who are now 1-8, on Wednesday, December 13, and falling to the Oak Ridge Pioneers 65-55, who are now 6-2, on Friday, December 15. The Darters were 5-5 after their loss to the Pioneers and sat at fourth in the 7A District 3 standings on Monday, December 18, under Evans (5-3), Lake Brantley (5-4), and Ocoee (5-4), respectively.

Apopka vs. West Orange

Apopka shot great from the field all night, as a team they shot an impressive 50 percent from the field. Apopka had 54 shots and drained 27 of them with six of those shots coming from beyond the three-point line. Thirty-eight of Apopka’s points came from inside the paint, and the Darters also had 20 points coming from turn-



TEMPEST’S TIMEOUT

Marshall Tempest

overs and 22 transition points coming from the help of Apopka’s 10 steals and West Orange’s 20 turnovers.

Apopka had another amazing night on the glass bringing in 31 rebounds with 10 of them coming from the offensive glass. It was also a night of assists for Apopka as their offense was moving the ball beautifully resulting in 17 assists. The Darters had four players with eight or more points, starting with Apopka’s leading scorer: Jahi Bowden who had 15 points, six rebounds, one assist, and one steal; Larson Taylor had 14 points,

five rebounds, two assists, and one block; Jermichael Johnson who had eight points, two rebounds, three assists, two steals, and one block; and Daren Leath who had eight points, two rebounds, and one steal.

West Orange is going through their own trials and tribulations this season with a less-than-spectacular record, but we got to see the Darters stretch their wings a bit offensively and got to see some of the Darters who don’t get much playing time work on their game. Apopka shot great from the field and played great on both sides of the ball, but got off to a rocky start.

While Apopka was ahead the entire game and ended the first quarter up 16-13 it seemed that they were playing down to their opponent.

The Darters were up 9-2 with 3:56 left in the first quarter and started to play differently. The rest of the first quarter was the Warriors’ show. West Orange went on an 11-7 run to end the quarter and

showed that they aren’t a team you can beat by just showing up. Apopka started to struggle on defense on the interior and on the glass both offensively and defensively.

Coach Scott Williams was disappointed in the way the boys were playing at the end of that first quarter. Talking to the boys on the bench Williams said that they were “playing the score” and not their game plan.

The second quarter was a clinic from the Darters as they kept the Warriors to just five points while scoring 16. Apopka shot 6-for-14 from the field in the second quarter and brought in two three-pointers. Apopka kept West Orange to just 1-for-14 shooting in the second quarter. The Darters’ went on a 9-2 run in the last 3:30 of the first half.

Williams talked with the boys about keeping their foot on the gas and not getting complacent with the score during half-time.

“The talk was about

finishing what we started, about not letting them off the mat.”

The third quarter was another great showing from the Darters as they followed William’s advice and kept their game at an elite level regardless of the competition. The third quarter was the best for the Blue Darters as they brought in a healthy 24 points and kept the Warriors to just nine.

Coach Williams praised Samuel Bell’s performance in the opening minutes of the second half, saying he set the tone on both sides of the ball early coming out of the locker room and took his game to “another level”.

“Sam Bell was magnificent in that first five-minute stretch in the third quarter, and he just set the tone offensively and defensively and got everybody involved. When your lead guards are just in total control of the basketball game it makes a big difference.”

Apopka would continue their great play into the fourth quarter when

Williams brought in some Darters who don’t get much playing time onto the floor to work on their skills. Even with the starters and main players on the bench, Apopka continued to play at the same level on the glass, with their ball movement, and their interior and perimeter defense.

Apopka ended the fourth quarter up 67-37 after scoring 11 in the fourth and keeping West Orange to just 10 points.

Apopka vs. Oak Ridge

The Blue Darters’ home bout against the Pioneers ended with Apopka trailing 65-54. The Darters fell behind early in the first quarter and couldn’t come back from the deficit. The Pioneers outscored the Darters 16-3 in the first quarter, a deficit Apopka would spend all night fighting their way back from.

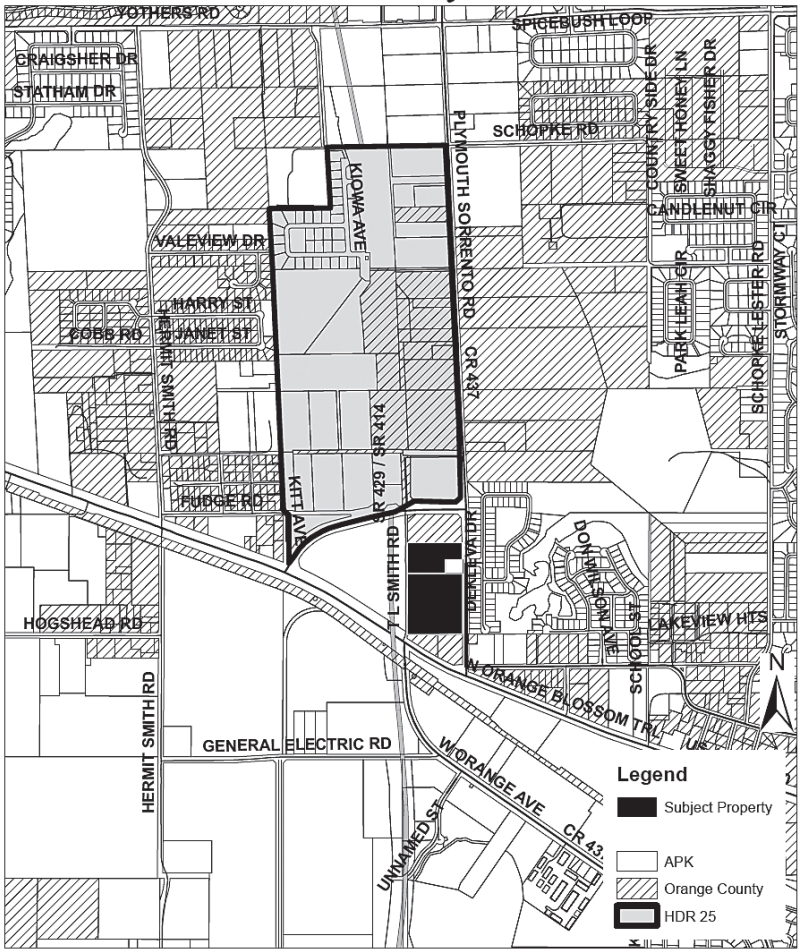
Apopka did show their determination in the following quarters and even outscored the Pioneers in

See HOOPS Page 4B

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Apopka City Council
Community Development Department

175435

Police Beat

If a law enforcement agency charges you with a crime and this paper reports that information, please notify us within 90 days if the charge is dropped, or if you are found not guilty by the court. After verifying the information, we will be happy to publish it. Please send notification to *The Apopka Chief*, P.O. Box 880, Apopka, 32704-0880.

In the period from December 10-16, the Apopka Police Department received 1,639 calls for service, responded to 39 crashes, issued 104 citations, and made 14 arrests. Juveniles were charged with burglary-dwelling/structure/conveyance armed; burglary-unoccupied conveyance unarmed (X3); larceny-grand theft of firearm; resist officer-obstruction without violence; burglary tools-possession of burglary tools with intent to use; damage property-criminal mischief \$1000 dollars or more (X2); trespassing-occupied structure or conveyance.

The following adults were arrested and charged:

Shulzggar Bonhomme, 26, confidential, Orlando, aggravated battery on pregnant victim; battery-commit domestic battery by strangulation.

Isaiah Mekel Hicks, 22, 478 Booker Ave SE, Palm Bay, burglary-dwelling/structure/conveyance armed; burglary-unoccupied conveyance unarmed (X2); larceny-grand theft of firearm; resist officer-obstruction without violence.

Sabastian Dominick Mattei, 27, 564 N. Central Ave., Apopka, DUI-unlawful blood alcohol, DUI-influence of alcohol or drugs.

Donnell Varuael McClain, 44, 1642 Lucy Terry Ave., Apopka, trespassing-occupied structure or conveyance.

Stephanie Marie Molina, 23, confidential, Apopka, aggravated battery on pregnant victim.

Ernesto Naveja-Campos, 39, 6816 Hampshire Dr., Tucker, GA, moving traffic violation-operate motor vehicle without valid

license.

Francisco Javier Padron-Romero, 30, confidential, Apopka, battery-cause bodily harm.

Jay Andrew Rodriguez-Garcia, 19, transient, Apopka, drug equipment-possession and/or use; drugs-possession methamphetamine within 1000 ft worship/business; drugs-possession synthetic cannabinoids within 1000 ft worship/business.

Yenifer Yamillex Samorafflores, 25, confidential, Apopka, battery-touch or strike.

Dilan Ganesh Singh, 28, 948 Southern Oak Ln., Apopka, DUI-unlawful blood alcohol 0.15 or higher or with person under 18 in vehicle.

Patrick Vance Walker, 40, 1138 Spinning Wheel Dr., Apopka, DUI-unlawful blood alcohol, refusal submit DUI testing.

Quintin Prescott Woods, 20, 1961 Lune Ct., West Melbourne, burglary-dwelling/structure/conveyance armed; burglary-unoccupied conveyance unarmed (X2); larceny-grand theft of firearm; resist officer-obstruction without violence.

Last week’s weather meant the fish would be hard to catch

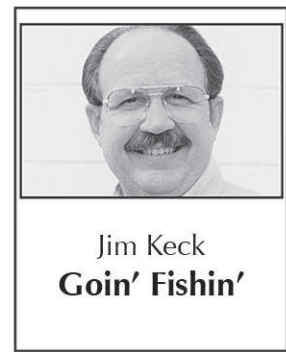
Hello Folks,

I wish I could tell you that the fishin’ is fantastic, but I cannot tell a lie.

As you all know, last weekend we had lots of rain and a bunch of wind. Lots of folks didn’t get on the water due to the weather last weekend. We had that front come to town and it’s been windy and bluebird skies, since then. Hopefully, the weather is gonna get better real soon. If the wind settles down, I’m sure those ole specks are gonna start bitin’ again.

Lake Monroe and Lake Jesup should be producing some nice stringers of specks again real soon. Kyle at Bitter’s B&T reports that the folks in his area didn’t go fishin’ due to the bad weather we had over the weekend.

There were a lot of tournaments that were canceled last weekend due to the weather. It’s always better to be safe and cautious when those types of conditions are present. The last thing anyone wants to do is



put people’s lives in jeopardy when the weather is bad. If you have ever been fishin’ on a Florida Lake and a thunder storm comes up real quick, you know how rough that lake can get in just a short period of time. I have spent plenty of time under a dock or in a Marina waitin’ out a storm. As everyone knows, we do live in the lightin’ capital of the world, and the last place you want to be is on the water while it’s lightin’ and thunderin’. It can be pretty scary to say the least.

On Monday, December 11, the FWC announced that they were goin’ to hold an open house and invite the public to a Harris Chain

Open House. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn about fish, wildlife, and habitat information on the Harris Chain. The event will be held on Wednesday, January 24, 2024 from 3 till 8 p.m. at the Venetian Center, located at 1 Dozier Circle, Leesburg, 34748. This is an informal open house-style event, and attendees are welcome anytime between 3-8 p.m.

The bass fishin’ is still doin’ good on the Butler Chain. I mentioned last week my buddy Rich winnin’ his club tournament on Sunday. Well, before the rain came in this past Saturday, Rich took his neighbor out to the Butler Chain, and they caught and released over 30 bass while fishin’ with swimmin’ jigs over the submerged hydrilla and eelgrass beds. Rich’s neighbor had never had a day like that on the water.

Folks, if the weather gets settled and the wind lays down just a little, the

See KECK Page 4B

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