

Contest

Two students win an art and essay contest focused on antisemitism. See page 6A.



Sports

Former AHS Football player heads to Super Bowl 59. See page 1B.



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Dreamers protest bill proposing end of their in-state tuition

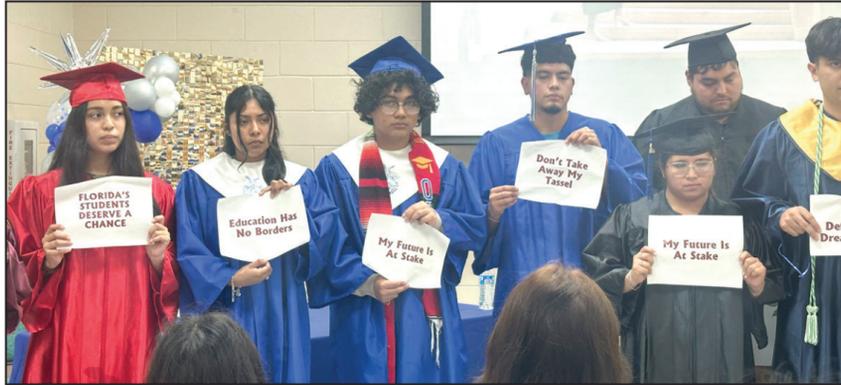
By Teresa Sargeant
Apopka Chief Staff

On the heels of a special legislative session targeting immigrants, Hope Community Center (HCC) hosted a mock graduation led by Dreamers to highlight the impact that a proposed legislation to end in-state tuition for them will have on hundreds of young Central Floridians.

The event was held Tuesday, January 28, at the Hope Community Center south campus on South Hawthorne Avenue in Apopka.

The event aimed to humanize the issue of in-state tuition repeal, showcasing the aspirations and hard work of students who could be affected by the proposed policy changes.

"The claim that Dreamers



Dreamers -- immigrant youths who came to the United States as minors and who remain undocumented -- hold up signs with statements such as "Education has no borders" and "My future is at stake" at the Tuesday, January 29, mock graduation protesting proposed legislation that would end in-state tuition for them.

are burdens on taxpayers is simply false," said Sal Rosas, HCC youth organizer. "Their source of strength for our state (is) not a

dream. This is more than a policy issue. It's a hate-driven agenda that seeks to divide us and justify cruelty. It's rooted in a dangerous

belief that some lives are worth more than others. We've seen this story before here at home and across the world, but we're here

to say not again."

The Dreamers ended the event by opening their "diplomas" revealed to bear statements such as "Florida's students deserve a chance," "Education has no borders," "My future is at stake," and "Don't take away my tassel."

A "Dreamer" refers to an immigrant youth who was brought to the U.S. as a minor and who remains undocumented. "Dreamer" originally referred to the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, a piece of legislation that would have given immigrant youth legal status and a path to citizenship. Some Dreamers today have Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status.

See DREAMERS Page 11A

City breaks ground on its new all-inclusive playground

The city held a groundbreaking ceremony for the new inclusive playground at the Northwest Recreation Complex on Friday, January 24.

The playground will include a Zip-Krooz, GoRounds, multiple types of swings, accessible pathways, and a sensory garden to name a few. These features will provide an inclusive environment for children of all abilities to play and grow together.

This project is made possible with funding from the city's recreation impact fees as well as a donation from Unlimited Capabilities and the Douglas G Halliday Foundation. The playground will be designed and built by REP Services, Inc. and Landscape Structures.



Pictured at the January 24 all-inclusive playground groundbreaking are (l to r) Nick Nesta, Apopka city commissioner; Chris Halliday, Douglas G. Halliday Foundation; Terri Whittaker, Unlimited Capabilities; Bryan Nelson, Apopka mayor; Nadia Anderson, Apopka city commissioner; Radley Williams, Apopka parks and recreation director; and Mary Langley, Rep Services, Inc. Photo courtesy of city of Apopka/Facebook.

Apopka Police swears in new officer



Officer Davin Keitt (l) takes his oath administered by Apopka Police Chief Michael McKinley. Photo courtesy of city of Apopka/Facebook.

Apopka Police Chief Mike McKinley officially swore in Davin Keitt as the newest police officer at Apopka City Hall on January 14.

Officer Keitt was raised in Apopka and graduated from Apopka High School. He completed his police academy at Lake Technical College in 2024. Outside of his duties, he enjoys staying active at the gym, participating in team sports, and studying Norse mythology.

When asked why he chose law enforcement as a career, Officer Keitt said that he wanted to give back to his community.

City seeks public input on updating comprehensive plan

The city is currently rewriting the comprehensive plan which plans for Apopka's growth over the next 20 years, and is inviting community feedback through an online feedback form, now available on the city's website Apopka.gov through February 28.

The comprehensive plan is evaluated and updated from time to time to ensure adopted policies meet changing development

trends, needs, and goals of the city.

In addition to the online feedback form, there will also be a public input meeting for the comprehensive plan. The Apopka City Council and Planning Commission will host one together on Tuesday, February 11, at 6:15 p.m., at Apopka City Hall council chambers.

See PLAN Page 3A

2024 bids farewell with community events, Milton

By Teresa Sargeant
Apopka Chief Staff

Note: This is the final of a four-part series reviewing the news in Apopka in 2024 as written in the pages of The Apopka Chief. This week covers October, November, and December.

October

The Apopka City Council approved, 5-0 as a consent agenda item on Wednesday, October 2, to transfer ownership of a portion of Binion Road from Orange County to the city of Apopka and authorize the mayor to sign and ex-

ecute the interlocal agreement. ... The city of Apopka announced that Sawyer Brown has made the difficult decision to cancel their performance at the upcoming Apopka Proud Concert on Saturday, October 5, due to unexpected health concerns. Sawyer Brown's performance will not be rescheduled. ... The third annual Apopka Hispanic Heritage Celebration marked Hispanic Heritage Month on Saturday, September 28, at Kit Land Nelson Park. ... On Wednesday, October 2, The Apopka City Council voted 5-0, as a consent agenda item, to award a

\$5.1 million contract to a contractor for a water reclamation facility expansion project at the Northwest Recreation Center. ... The St. Paul AME Church Social Action Committee, under Senior Pastor Gerard Moss, Sr., held a Voter Education Forum for Central Florida voters seeking information about the issues and proposed six amendments in preparation for the November 5 general election. ... On Friday, September 27, Kelly Park School amped up learning with the annual Rock Your School pep rally and innovative classroom lessons.

... A developer closed on a \$3.75-million loan for a mixed-use development project that will offer direct access to S.R. 429 in the northwestern corner of the Apopka area.

On Tuesday morning, October 8, Hurricane Milton was expected to cause damaging hurricane-force winds and a life-threatening storm surge with destructive waves across portions of the northern coast of the Yucatan Peninsula, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Ahead of Milton, a local state of emergency was issued for

Orange County, as well as a state and federal state of emergency. ... The Apopka Historical Society dedicated a mural to Mead's Bottom, the prominent black settlement located south of U.S. Highway 441 and S.R. 436. ... The city of Apopka Economic Development Department announced on Thursday, October 3, the launch of its Business Retention and Expansion Program, designed to support and enhance the growth of local businesses while fostering a thriving economic environment for the com-

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This week

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Apopka Event of the Week

STEREO FM will perform on Saturday, February 1, from 5-7 p.m. in the amphitheatre at Northwest Recreation Complex, 3710 Jason Dweley Parkway. The performers create perfect harmony when they sing together, but are vocal weapons individually. This is a free family event.

Quotable

Shootings, stabbings, fist fights, domestic abuse, drug abuse, you are called to fix it, to help, to stabilize an uncertain issue at all times of the day.

Editorial explains why it is necessary to support our first responders so help is available.

Opinion

The Apopka Chief

A weekly newspaper founded in 1923

Publisher Emeritus John Ricketson Mar. 5, 1940 - July 16, 2024

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Consultant Emeritus John Peery Mar. 28 1956 - Oct. 12, 2023

Reporters Teresa Sargeant Marshall Tempest

General Mgr Emeritus Neoma Knox Feb. 12, 1929 - Sept. 18, 2021

Our position

Why we need to support and fund our first responders

In today's world with the fires out west and the snowfalls all over the country, have you ever wondered what it's like to be a first responder, to put your life on the line trying to save someone else's life?

Every time we hear of a fire or a shooting, we are thankful that it is someone else counting on the response of our first responders.

The following has been written by a firefighter.

... been hesitant to post this ... but wrote it the other night after a bad call.

You will never understand what we do, what we see, what we deal with on a daily basis: To hold a dying elderly person's hand and to tell them they are okay and that you are going to do everything you can for them, after they have fallen and are naked on the floor, too weak to stand with no pride left in them ...

To have to tell a loved one that their spouse of a lifetime has passed and to pray that you aren't going to have to work them as they find out the horrible news as you stand there awkwardly wanting to help, to hold or comfort them, not fully knowing what to do, or what to say ...

Or God forbid, you have to tell a parent that their child is critical and you are doing all you can, while you can't get your mind off of your own children!

To pick up a child that has been hit by a car as they lay lifeless and bleeding, wanting to fix it, to help, but all the while knowing this child is dead before you even get there...

To do CPR on someone that is just a stranger to you, but the absolute world for someone else ...

To respond to a suicide call where a lifeless body hangs with the bluish-grey skin color that seems to be more out of a horror story than real life ...

To cut bodies out of a car that have been burned up so bad that a forensic scientist has to identify them ...

To jolt out of bed at all hours of the night, while you try and focus and get your eyes to work as you

speed towards a structure fire with a family of five inside, rehearsing the jobs to be done before you get there so when the time comes you can react with confidence and rely on what you have been trained on. Suddenly you find parents screaming in the yard that their baby is in there and what took you so long ...

To arrive on a vehicle accident with an active arterial bleed, where you literally jump on the body and put all your body weight down on the femoral artery trying to stop his life from flowing out at an alarming rate ...

Then to be called to an active shooter situation where you don your body armor and nervously wait to go into a hostile situation with the unknown looming from every possible angle ...

To arrive on a scene to a car submerged in the water and a police officer climbing out dripping wet. You ask, Is there anyone in there? As he replies, I don't know. I couldn't get in. You don't miss a beat as you kick off your boots, belt and wallet, dive in the murky water, unable to see anything, reach the car, frantically trying to access the doors. You finally get a hand on the handle and open it, all while holding your breath. You swim inside and search, relieved to find nothing. You ask your crew member to confirm your findings, then realize that there could be someone in the trunk. Back down you go searching for the trunk release, miraculously you find it and open the trunk. once again, nothing, thankfully!

Shootings, stabbings, fist fights, domestic abuse, drug abuse, you are called to fix it, to help, to stabilize an uncertain issue at all times of the day.

To work all these calls and more while the public stands or sits there and holds out their phones to capture it all on film, to post it all on social media so they get the credit for it going viral, not understanding the pressure that their actions alone

See RESPONDER Page 4A



Enjoyable performances are available

Last week, I had the honor of attending the OCPS All-County Chorus concert and what a treat it was! This is a combined chorus concert made up of singers from all over the county, and they come together to perform an amazing concert for the public.

The students are chosen through an audition and typically two to five students are selected from a school. This concert was for middle and high schools. The middle school choir performed first and then the high school choir performed before they combined to sing a song to-

Orange County School Board, District 7



Melissa Byrd

gether.

The students spent the prior afternoon and all day the day of the performance practicing together. The way these students came together in perfect harmony you would have thought they had been singing together for years.

Of course, I'm biased as my daughter was one of the singers selected to participate, but as I sat there watching all of these young people perform, I couldn't help but think about how lucky we are to be in a school district that values and prioritizes arts education. You could tell that these students loved performing, and the talent that was present was awe-inspiring.

The benefits of arts education are well documented. Studying the arts not only improves academ-

See BYRD Page 4A

Affordable housing is necessary

We all know the shortage of housing affects many people, and, due to the issues we are facing, Orange County is here to make it easier than ever to build an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) on your property. The home can serve as the right fit for a mother-in-law suite or to provide long-term rental income.

With the county's program Ready Set Orange, property owners in unincorporated Orange County can select from four pre-designed ADU floor plan models. Ready Set Orange provides step-by-step instructions on how to receive the floor plans free of charge and how to get the final construction permits.

The goal is to make the

County Commissioner District 2



Christine Moore

permitting process easier by providing the pre-designed plans and step-by-step instructions. People who choose one of the four plans may be able to cut costs and time associated with the permitting process.

The hope is that the program encourages more residents and builders to explore these low-cost options amid a housing affordability crisis. The pro-

gram aligns with the County's Housing for All initiative and its goal of creating lasting, community-based solutions for expanding housing options, improving affordability, and providing access to all residents.

Thinking of building an ADU and renting it? You can rent out your ADU to long-term renters. Transient rental or leasing, however, a period of one hundred eighty (180) days or less, is not allowed under Ready Set Orange, except as provided in section 38-77 related to the R-3 zoning district.

According to Olan Hill, assistant manager of the County's Planning Di-

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This Week In God's Word

Before a downfall the heart is haughty, but humility comes before honor. — Proverbs 18:12

Mema Says

The worst lies are the ones you tell yourself.

Abiding by Constitution should always be answer to deliberation

Here's a thought: If the progressives and the Democrats had spent as much energy satisfying the needs of the people, we would've had a super four years with Joe Biden. Unfortunately, they spent the majority of their time trying to remake our nation, rewrite our Constitution, and remove our God-given rights!

Now that we have an administration that loves the people, loves the Constitution, loves the rule of law, and is striving to make America great again, they



Ike Hayden

are doing everything they can to keep up the ruination of the United States of America!

When a so-called Bishop can stand in the pulpit and spew lies about the meaning of mercy and

compassion, we've almost gone too far. If I were President Trump, that Church would not be on my list for visitation. She wasn't preaching; she was politicking! I was disgusted with not only her preaching (politicking) but her defending of it on a TV show later on.

Christianity is suffering ignorance from people such as she. If you are going to stand in a pulpit, your message should be one of encouragement, faithfulness, thankful-

ness, with the knowledge of whom the Author, and the Creator of the governments of the world is. (Romans 13). Bishop Marianne Budde needs to go back to a biblical seminary and learn what it is to be an Ambassador for Christ! (2 Corinthians 5:20)!

I'm encouraged by the choices President Trump has made for his cabinet because all the naysayers are so against them, proving the past administration (and its cronies!) are embedded in government of-

fices to derail, and destroy anything or anyone that would diminish the deep, dark state. President Donald J. Trump has thrown a monkey wrench into the gears of the socialist movement which eventually would have resulted in a communist takeover from the inside.

I'm so thankful that Americans have spoken and have seen the light of the truth of our Constitution of the United States of America even though it is still being challenged

by those who do not read the Constitution for what it says, but rather, for what they want it to say.

Birthright citizenship is now the subject that is at the center of controversy. We are the only nation in the world that has held that position.

The 14th amendment does not specifically say that someone born in the United States is automatically considered a citizen. The wording is such that it

See HAYDEN Page 4A

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Master Gardener Volunteers can help choose right plant

Do you know how to choose the right plant for the right place? This is a key focus of UF/IFAS Extension Orange County, a division of Orange County's Community and Family Services Department, and the Master Gardener Volunteer Program.

Master Gardener Volunteers ensure that all residents know what plant will flourish in the local landscape. On a larger scale, this benefits local ecosystems because people use less water, less fertilizer and less pesticides when they choose and

maintain the appropriate plants.

With so many new people moving to Central Florida, understanding the horticultural nuances of the region is critical to maintaining healthy landscapes, and having well-trained volunteers who can assist them in this regard ultimately serves the entire community.

Participants engage in 12 weeks of intensive educational training on soil science,

See GARDENER Page 5A

Plan: Citizens can visit city website to view comp plan

Continued from page 1A

At this meeting, there will be a presentation from the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council and a discussion time with City Council members and the public on the changes. The city is looking for items and priorities that citizens would like to

see in the new comprehensive plan.

The comprehensive plan is a map for the city's future growth, and helps the city make better decisions about how to grow. While the comprehensive plan outlines the long-term visions and goals, it is different from a land development code, which provides

specific rules for development like building and lot sizes.

Visit the Comprehensive Plan page on Apopka.gov to view the draft PDF of the comprehensive plan, watch previous joint City Council and Planning Commission meeting discussions, and to submit feedback.



For over 20 years, Maltby's Tree Service and Landscaping has specialized in all phases of tree service

Winter season is here and we're experiencing colder weather. Leaves are still falling, grass has temporarily stopped growing, and some animals have gone into hibernation. So, is it time for people to hibernate also?

Not at **Maltby's Tree Service and Landscaping**. Winter doesn't mean it's time to shut everything down and wait for spring. Their desks are outdoors. After all, your trees haven't gone anywhere; just because some trees are bare doesn't mean there aren't problems lurking. Trees' needs are there regardless of the time of year.

In fact, now is still a good time to do tree work. When the branches are bare, it's easier to spot problems, and it's easier to prune and trim. And, when **Maltby's Tree Service and Landscaping** goes out for a free assessment, they can better tell the condition of the tree.

Trees are a major investment in your property, and a mature tree can have an appraised value of between \$1,000 and \$10,000. You might not see anything wrong, but they can. They can often foresee damage that can occur as the next season approaches and help deal with it before it's a more serious problem, and taking a proactive approach can avert a possible high-risk condition on your property.



Call the professionals at Maltby's Tree Service and Landscaping at 321-689-5866 to schedule your free estimate.

It's important to have your trees pruned and inspected annually. To have beautiful trees, proper pruning is necessary and important for a tree's health. Pruning can remove safety hazards, discourage the spread of any decay and insect infestations, increase airflow, and allow for more light to shine through.

Trees at risk that need professional service can have:

- Branches that are rubbing each other or rubbing wires on your home or business
- Branches that are touching or laying on your rooftop
- Low hanging branches that obstruct the street or sidewalk
- Branches that appear diseased or insect infested

James Maltby, owner and operator of **Maltby's Tree Service and Landscaping** stated, "If you have a tree that has grown too large for

your property, is damaging your foundation, or is in danger of breaking or falling on the roof of your home, this can be a major cause for concern. Before these things happen, call us. We have trained professionals to evaluate each situation and will provide you with the best customer service. We pride ourselves on a fast response time, and *the best prices guaranteed.*"

If a tree needs to be removed, their employees work quickly and efficiently, while adhering to the highest standards of safety. Their staff is always ready to assist you to make sure your landscaping and tree needs are met to your satisfaction.

Maltby's Tree Service and Landscaping is reachable 24 hours-a-day for any after-hours emergency service. For your convenience and peace of mind, a management team member is always on-site for all

services and property evaluations.

Owner James Maltby was born and raised in Apopka. He's a family man, and his employees have been with his company for many years. They hire the best in the business, and honest and dependable work is their priority. They're fully licensed and insured, including Workers' Compensation on all employees.

Maltby's Tree Service and Landscaping will be happy to quote commercial tree trimming or removal jobs. With over 20 years in business, you can rest assured you're in good hands with a company that prides itself on a job well done.

Call them today at 321-689-5866 to set up an appointment for your free evaluation and see why **Maltby's Tree Service and Landscaping** are the local experts you can count on.

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- Ace Meat & Grocery, 439 S. Central Ave. & 5th St.
- Apopka Chief rack, 400 N. Park Ave.
- Apopka High School
- Apopka Quick Mart (BP), Hwy 436 & Lake Cortez Dr.
- Apopka Vape, N. Park Ave. (across from the old Fla. Hosp. location)
- CenturyLink headquarters, SR 436
- Chevron Diamond Gas - Hwy 441 & Plymouth-Sorrento Rds
- Chevron Market, Hwy 441 & Roger Williams Rd.
- Chuck's Wagon, Main St., (Hwy 441)
- Circle K & BP, Hwy 441 S. of Walmart
- Circle K, Keene Rd / Clarcona
- Citgo, 441 & Boy Scout Blvd (Plymouth)
- Citgo, Rock Springs Rd. (behind store by mail boxes)
- CVS #3748 - corner of Park Av & Hwy 441
- Discount Beverage & Smoke (Across from Checkers, Highway 441)
- Circle K (Shell) #2404, Sheeler Rd at corner of Apopka Blvd.
- Circle K (Marathon) #6157, S. Park Avenue
- Circle K (Shell) #2334, Rock Springs Rd & Kelly Park Rd
- Circle K #1288, Welch Rd & Wekiva Springs Rd.
- Circle K (Marathon) #1063, Zellwood, 2691 Highway 441
- Compare Fresh Market, 436 behind Aaron's
- Crosby's Motor Inn,
- UPS Store (The), Rock Springs & Errol Parkway (Errol Estate)
- Lula Mae's Eatery, Central Ave S.
- Marathon, Main St. (midland downtown)
- McDonald's, Highway 441 (downtown)
- Mobil, (Citgo) Hwy 441 (next to Burger K)
- Orange County Service Center, N. Park Ave.
- Perkins Restaurant Hwy 441, in Victoria Plaza Parking Lot)
- Plymouth Post Office, Plymouth/Sorrento Rd
- Porkies BBQ, Highway 441 (downtown)
- Post Office, N. Park Ave. (Martin St)
- Publix, Park Ave/Rock Springs Rd. & Welch Rd.
- Sam's Discount, Overland & Apopka Blvd.
- Sun Resort, 3000 Clarcona Rd.
- Sunoco Happy Foods, Hwy 441 & Plymouth-Sorrento Rd.
- Trader Mae's, Rock Springs Rd
- UPS Store (The), Rock Springs & Welch Rd. (Publix shopping center)
- Walgreens, corner of Park Ave and Hwy 441
- Walgreens, N. Park Ave/Welch Rd.
- Wawa Store, 449 W. Main St. - corner of Hwy 441 and Bradshaw
- Wawa Store, 441 & Piedmont Wekiva across from Walmart
- Wekiva High School, Hiwassee Rd.
- Winn Dixie #2246 - Hwy 441 (beside Lowe's)
- Zellwood Station (inside MHP)
- Zellwood Truck Stop Diner, Hwy 441
- Zellwood Water Users, Inc., 3262 Robinson St.

Office Location: 400 N. Park Avenue, Apopka

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Clarification of Medicare, IRMAA and MAGI

Dear Rusty:

I am confused by an article in my local newspaper which said that "MAGI" (modified adjusted gross income), on which my Medicare Part B premium is based, is my Adjusted Gross Income, plus any non-taxable interest, plus 50 percent of the social security I received.

The part that is confusing is the 50 percent part. When I look at my tax return my Adjusted Gross Income includes the taxable portion of my Social Security benefit which, in my case, is 85 percent of my total benefits. Why must 50 percent of benefits be added to my AGI if it is already included in my total AGI? Signed: Confused

Dear Confused:

The article you refer to was misleading for stating that the Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) used to determine your Medicare premiums includes your normal Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) from your income tax return, plus any non-taxable

interest you may have had, plus 50 percent of the SS benefits you received during the tax year.

What the article should have said was that the MAGI which determines your Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount (IRMAA) to your Medicare premiums consists of your normal AGI from your tax return (which includes the taxable portion of your Social Security benefits), plus any non-taxable interest you may have had.

For additional clarity, the Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount (IRMAA) is a supplemental amount added to the standard Medicare premium for those with higher incomes. The thresholds at which the IRMAA supplements apply depend on your IRS filing status, and your MAGI determines the amount of supplement which will be added to the standard Medicare premium.

Single filers with MAGI over \$103,000, or married filers with MAGI over \$206,000 will see an

IRMAA supplement added to their Medicare premium. Those whose MAGI is under the first IRMAA threshold pay the standard Medicare premium, but those whose MAGI exceeds the first IRMAA threshold will pay more. How much more depends on how much their MAGI exceeds the first IRMAA threshold by.

The IRMAA supplement (the additional premium amount) could be anywhere from \$69.90 to \$419.30 per month for Medicare Part B (coverage for outpatient services), or an additional \$12.90 to \$81.00 per month to the Medicare Part D (prescription drug plan) premium – again dependent on how much over the initial MAGI threshold the person is for their IRS filing status. You can see the MAGI levels and corresponding IRMAA supplements at this Medicare website: www.cms.gov/newsroom/factsheets/2024-medicare-parts-b-premiums-and-deductibles

IRMAA and MAGI

can be confusing. If you have questions about your Medicare premiums, help is available at SSadvisor@amacfoundation.org, or at 1.888.750.2622.

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org.

APD has volunteer program

The Citizens Police Academy is a program designed to acquaint community residents, who are not sworn Police Officers, with the activities of the agency and to foster public education and service at community-related events. Participants will learn about the Apopka Police Department, Central Florida Metro SWAT, crime scene tech services, drug recognition, drones, DUI/DRE investigations, K-9, investigations, traffic unit and more. Classes are all taught by Apopka Police Department Officers and civilian employees.

In order to become a member of the Apopka Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association (ACPAAA) members must be graduates of a course sponsored by the Apopka Police Dept to foster public education and service to the community related to public safety. Volunteers must attend the 14-week Citizens Police Academy, hosted by the Apopka Police Department. The next academy begins February 20, 2025.

There is no cost for the Citizens Police Academy, but there are certain requirements in order to attend. Participants must be 18 years and older.

2025 class Information: The first Class will be held at the Apopka Police Department, 112 E. 6th Street. Additional classes will be held from 6-8 p.m. at the Gilliam Training Center, 321 E Cleveland St, Apopka, FL 32703.

Complete the online application and submit electronically. Printed copies of the application are available for pickup at the Apopka Police Department located at 175 E. 5th Street, Apopka, FL from 8 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Friday. If you have additional questions, please contact Sgt. Mark Creaser by emailing Community Policing or by calling 407-703-1771.

Responder: They work to save

Continued from page 2A

are adding to the situation,

Every day, any day, this is what we do.

The life of a firefighter, EMS, and police officer ... my brothers and sisters in the service. I salute each of you for what we do each

and every day.

We pray to God to keep us safe.

As a community, we must work with and pray for our leaders to have wisdom to plan ahead with sufficient funding and procedural preparation to handle unexpected disasters.

Byrd: Concerts, etc. are worthy

Continued from page 2A

ic and cognitive abilities like reading, writing, math, concentration, critical thinking and problem solving, but it also improves social skills and emotional skills like motivation and confidence. The College Board found that students who took four years of arts and music classes in high school scored higher on their SAT's.

For me, there is something really special about how performing makes a child feel. When a child steps onto a stage for the first time and takes part in a performance, something magical happens. They dis-

cover their voice. They discover who they are. And most of all, they learn how to work with others in such a delicate way. Those lessons last a lifetime.

If you have not seen a school performance lately, I encourage you to do so. Our high schools have chorus concerts, dance shows, orchestra concerts and spectacular theater performances. These high school performances are top-notch because they are the culmination of years of a strong and succinct art education program that begins in kindergarten. OCPS has been named nationally as one of the best places for arts education for a reason.

When you sit and listen or watch these young performers, it's hard to believe they are teenagers. Their talent is surprising and enchanting. So, if you are looking for a nice night out this spring, catch a local performance at one of our community schools. You won't be disappointed.

All the local visual and performing arts performances are easy to find on the OCPS Visual and Performing Arts page on ocps.net.

Just click "Take Me to the Show" to access the calendar of performances happening throughout Orange County.

Moore: Pre-designed plans available

Continued from page 2A

vision, "The intent of this program is to provide more housing opportunities. Our current residential market is heavy on the single-family detached, and heavy on multi-family attached, with very little supply of everything in between."

However, Ready Set Orange does not apply to ADUs solely. Four pre-designed floor plans are available for small single-family houses. This offers newlyweds or couples looking to downsize viable options in the housing market.

Start exploring now. "Go to our website:

www.ocfl.net. Type in *Ready Set Orange* in the search bar on the front page to see all the floor plans available. You can also submit a request form online to determine if your parcel of property qualifies for the program. Reach out to planning@ocfl.net as well for any questions.

Hayden: We are rulers of our nation

Continued from page 2A

needs to be clarified by the Supreme Court.

If they find that it *does* pertain to those born in the United States, by anyone *even visiting* the United States, then it needs to be changed in our Constitution by Constitutional protocols.

It would be much faster if the Supreme Court would rule in favor of no

birthright citizenship. The diplomats from other nations do not have that privilege, because when *their* children are born here in the United States – while they are in service here – their children *are not* considered citizens of the United States.

That specific mandate was given *for those who, having been emancipated,* would have peace, knowing their children would be

protected under the Constitution of the USA.

Our nation is so much more than just a government.

We are THE PEOPLE, without division, and WE are the rulers of our nation, and – without apology – we are one nation under GOD!!

Now, let's act like it and support America's choice, President Donald J. Trump!!

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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

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County Attorney	407-836-7320
Clerk of the Court	407-836-2065
Elections Supervisor	407-836-2070
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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
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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

Gardener: Volunteers organize the March 1 Garden Festival

Continued from page 3A

entomology (plant insects), plant pathology (bacterial/fungal diagnostics), vegetable gardening, turf grass, palm trees, and more. Once training is completed, they log 75 hours of volunteering before earning the Master Gardener Volunteer designation.

"It's more than a training course," explained Clarissa Chairez, Master Gardener Volunteer program coordinator. "It's an ongoing, community-based volunteer program. Ongoing participants must donate at least 35 volunteer hours and complete 10 hours of continuing education every year."

Most of this volun-

teering takes place at free plant clinics, during which people receive help with their plant problems at the Extension facility at 6021 S. Conway Road, Orlando. Master Gardener Volunteers also engage in free consultations by phone or email for those who cannot make it in person, as well as in "pop ups" at local libraries throughout the month.

"Everyone wants a beautiful landscape, but some people buy plants that don't survive in this region, so they're wasting money on flora that aren't going to survive," asserted Chairez. "In this regard, Master Gardener Volunteers help residents save money and also save plants that need treatment against bacteria and

fungi." A citizen-driven initiative, the program relies on dedicated volunteers passionate about gardening and committed to serving their communities ... and the title is most certainly earned.

UF/IFAS Extension Orange County will host its annual Garden Festival and Plant Sale on Saturday, March 1. The event – a full day filled with educational activities and an array of local vendors that any gardening enthusiast will adore – is organized entirely by the Master Gardener Volunteers.

Visit shorturl.at/UV56y for more information about the Master Gardener Volunteer Program.



The Way I See It
Patti Bankson

FACTS MATTER

On October 26, 2023, the Homeland Security House Committee released a Stats fact sheet featuring U.S. Customs and Border Protection's September and Fiscal Year 2023 data on border encounters.

Another unprecedented milestone was reached under Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas and President Joe Biden's open-borders policies, with 269,735 encounters recorded in the last month of FY 2023. That number also represents an increase of 86 percent from June 2023 when Title 42 ended, and the Biden administration touted a drop in illegal crossings. Short-lived, but, in their minds, worth celebrating.

The annual numbers weren't celebration-worthy, either. That year, FY 23, there were more than 3.2 million encounters with law enforcement nationwide, with more than 2.4 million encounters at that Southwest border. As we were being told that those crossing illegally were "just" poor families looking for a better life, there were, in fact, 169 individuals on the Terrorist Watch List who were apprehended while attempting to enter the U.S. illegally.

Additionally, since FY 2021, at least 1.7 million "got-aways" have still not been apprehended.

Big picture – there have been 7.5 million encounters since President Biden took office. On top of that, his administration doesn't know how many dangerous illegal aliens have, and are, entering our country undetected.

Making the situation even worse is that Border Patrol agents have been taken off the front lines because they're needed to help process, and release, the huge and historic numbers of illegals overtaking the border. What I find to be unbelievable is that, as monthly encounters and apprehensions continue to climb, Mayorkas' "solution" is to double down on their mass-parole programs which not only "invites" in aliens who would otherwise be inadmissible but also helps make it easy for them to do so. WHAT are they

thinking?

Well, let's make that *WHAT WERE* they thinking? Just since President Trump was sworn in only four days ago, no moss has grown under his feet, with 1,000 arrests made of illegal criminals on last Sunday alone!

I'm going back to something I briefly mentioned above ... illegals being described as "poor people," and the criminal human-traffickers, better known as "coyotes." My limited knowledge of "coyotes" tells me they're even less caring and kind-hearted than the left accuses conservatives of being!

That leads me to the big question I have that has yet to be answered (that I'm aware of): If these are "poor" people, how do they manage to accumulate the \$10K they give the coyotes to get them here? Part (b) of that question: Is that \$10K per person? I don't see human traffickers giving anyone a "special" fee for the whole family, do you? And, who, exactly, are the real "poor people"? The ones in America? Or those from foreign countries?

A new Bankrate report from January 23, 2025, surveyed more than 1,000 U.S. adults about their ability to handle unexpected costs... whether it's a refrigerator that no longer cools; a car that no longer runs; or, worse, medical problems, any one of which could mean serious financial trouble for too many Americans. Although our unemployment rate is low currently, the study showed that 59 percent of Americans in 2025 don't have enough savings to cover an unexpected \$1,000-emergency expense.

All things considered, how can Americans think that "America First" is bad policy? Americans have truly needed someone to look out for us, so I think it's way past time for our public "servants" to drop their "Me First" ideology and start doing what they were elected to do!

The good news, in my opinion, is that we finally have someone in the White House who gives a rip about *Our economy, Our education, Our families (poor or otherwise), Our needs, Our military, Our police and first responders* ... on down to our dog-catchers. And further, if need be.

It's good to see Hope and Possibilities on American faces and in our futures.

We'd like to know what YOU think?
barefootwahine1@yahoo.com
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COMPANION (R) 1:20; 4:20; 7:10; 10:00
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 3 (PG) 1:40; 4:30; 7:20; 10:10
FLIGHT RISK (R) 1:50; 4:40; 7:30; 10:20
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DEN OF THIEVES 2: PANTERA (R) 9:30

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Winners of art and essay contest announced

By Sasha Wallace
Special to the Chief

On January 16, an award ceremony was held in the Apopka High School Media Center to recognize youth winners of an art and essay contest focused on combating antisemitism.

The event featured a welcome from local rabbi Mendy Bronstein of Chabad of Altamonte Springs, a keynote from second-generation Holocaust survivor Gale Sussman, and refreshments from Sabbaba Kosher Market. The mood was electric, made more so by the day's political happenings and the breathless hope that a ceasefire deal would be reached and hostages would be returned to their loved ones.

The winners were Emma Garcia, who wrote an essay "The Prevalence of Cyber Hate & the Importance of Confronting Antisemitism on Social Media," and Wonder Covington, who created the incredible artwork "Infinite Hope." Both were formally recognized and awarded \$500 each. Our hope is for Wonder's painting to be on display at a museum by the end of the school year.



First place essay winner Emma Garcia (second from left), with her family, wrote the essay "The Prevalence of Cyber Hate & the Importance of Confronting Antisemitism on Social Media."



First place art winner Wonder Covington (second from left), with her family, created the artwork "Infinite Hope."

Photos courtesy of Sasha Wallace

On behalf of the Jewish community, we were touched and humbled by the outpouring of support and creativity these students demonstrated. Emma is currently penning her next essay for the Holocaust Museum's White Rose es-

say contest, and Wonder is accepting commissions for her next big piece.

Last May, to address instances of antisemitism in the wake of the Israeli-Hamas conflict, ninth grade English teacher Sasha Wallace created the first an-

nual Antisemitism Awareness Art & Essay Scholarship Contest at Apopka High School. Mrs. Wallace and donors from across the country were able to raise enough money to create

See CONTEST Page 12A

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www.floridapublicnotices.com

Both Websites have searchable capabilities.

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Lovell awards staff, Wolf Lake creates snowmen, PLMS goes to state



A Message from Mrs. Sarasty

New Quarter, Same Expectations, Happy New Year! As we step into January, it's the perfect time to set new academic goals and make a plan to achieve them. Your support and involvement are crucial in helping our students succeed. Encourage your children to set specific, achievable goals for this semester. Help them create a study schedule that balances schoolwork with extracurricular activities and rest. Success requires hard work, practice, and determination. Remind your children that staying focused on their studies and putting in consistent effort will pay off in the long run. Let's inspire our students to "Lovell UP" their efforts this year. With your guidance and their dedication, we can achieve great things together.

Literacy Week Dress Up

Fun:

Monday 1/27 - Lorax day, dress in orange and white.

Tuesday 1/28 - Thing day Dress as a thing or as a twin

Wednesday 1/29 - 100th day of school, dress like you're 100.

Thursday 1/30 Seuss day, wear red and white or dress as cat in the hat.

Friday 1/31 - I can read with my eyes shut day-wear a shirt you can read

Thursday 1/30 - 5:30 p.m. - Literacy Night, 6:30 p.m. Drama Performance Seussical the Musical.

Coming Up:
Feb. 3-7 - National School Counseling Week
Feb. 3 - Lovell Up Monday

Feb. 4 - Meeting @ 5:00 p.m.

Feb. 7 - Spring Individual Pictures and Class Photos

Feb. 9-14 - Random Acts of Kindness Week

Feb. 11 - 5th Grade Science PMA 3

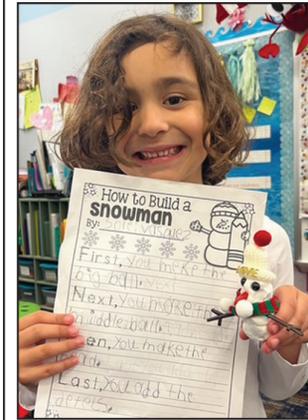
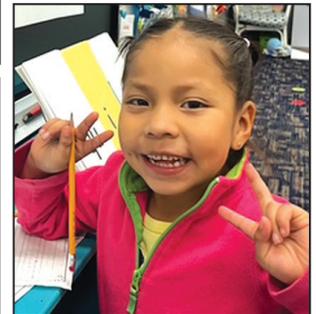
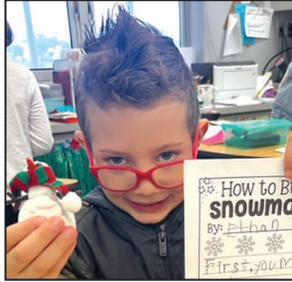
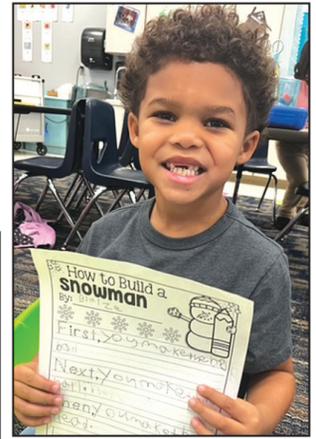
Feb. 11 - Resilience Day

Feb. 12 - Apopka Middle School visits Lovell

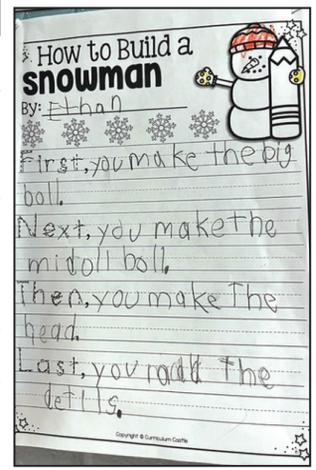


Lovell Elementary staff awarded.

Students make snowmen



Mrs. Donohoe's Kindergarten class at Wolf Lake Elementary uses cross-curricular activities to keep students engaged and make learning fun!! The students were utilizing their narrative writing skills and their science lesson on changes in matter. Story sequencing and model building gave the students a multi-sensory approach to make the lesson meaningful and memorable. The result: a how-to writing assignment that produced a snowman!! Florida kids can build snowmen, too!!



Celebrating Excellence at Piedmont Lakes Middle School! The new year is off to an in-

credible start at Piedmont Lakes Middle School, with plenty of reasons to celebrate! Our talented performing arts students are making their mark on a statewide level.

We are thrilled to announce that six members of the PLMS Chorus and one student from our band program recently participated in the prestigious All-State Concerts at the Florida Music Ed-

ucation Association Conference. Congratulations to Ti'Riyah Williams, Jordyn Stroman, Leila Herard, Trinity Fluker, Giselle Talkovic, and Gabriella Hairston for their outstanding performances with the All-State Chorus. A special shout-out to Sophia Villegas for her remarkable clarinet performance with the All-State Band!

These students' hard work,

talent, and dedication represents Piedmont Lakes with pride. Their success is guided by the expertise and leadership of Chorus Director Julie Simmons and Band Directors Timothy Nemzin and Tashiana Torres.

Additionally, we are proud to share that Jennifer Wright Horton, a social studies teacher at Piedmont Lakes, has been recognized by the local VFW with the

National Citizenship Education Teacher Post Recognition Award. Mrs. Horton was named Middle School Teacher of the Year at both the post and district levels. This honor highlights her unwavering commitment to her students and our school community.

We are proud of all these achievements and look forward to more success throughout the year.



Obituaries

HIRAM MORALES VAZQUEZ, 79, of Apopka, passed away on January 26, 2025. Mr. Morales Vazquez was born on September 8, 1945 in Juana Diaz, Puerto Rico. Mr. Morales Vazquez is preceded in death by: mother, Nicolasa Maldonado; two brothers. He is survived by: wife, Marilyn Morales; children, Madeline Padilla, Hecmari Bretz, Irene Morales, Hiram Morales Jr., Timothy Morales; siblings, Griselle Maldonado, Angel Morales, Betty Davila; eight grandchildren, three great grandchildren.



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Three Foundations of Faith

The great religions of the world rarely demand that we accept everything on faith and that we leave our intellects behind. Rather, they frequently present rational arguments and invite us to reflect on these issues.

Three foundations of faith in God and the spiritual realm are the cosmos, the human self, and history. The German philosopher Kant mentioned two of these foundations when he said "Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the more often and steadily we reflect upon them: the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me."

Who can contemplate the vastness of our universe and not be spiritually awestruck? Kant believed that the moral law within us (our conscience) was another

proof of divine providence, echoing the wisdom of Ecclesiastes: "He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end." (Ecclesiastes 3:11 NIV)

The Buddha advised his followers to reflect deeply in their own hearts and minds and to only accept what made patent sense to them.

The Koran advises "Let there be no compulsion in religion, for the truth stands out clearly from falsehood." (Surah 2:256)

Finally, when we consider the historical context of religion, we realize that Jesus, Buddha, Mohammed, and all the prophets were actual historical figures with actual followers and this gives our faith a historical foundation. — Christopher Simon

But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint. Isaiah 40:31

In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.
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ON THE GO

How the president runs U.S. through the Executive Branch

Article II, Executive Branch

Article II of the U.S. Constitution establishes the Executive Branch of the federal government.

The Executive Vesting Clause, in Section 1, Clause 1, provides that the federal executive power is vested in the President. Section 3 of Article II further requires the President to Take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed.¹

The executive power thus consists of the authority to enforce laws and to appoint the agents charged with the duty of such enforcement.²

The President also has distinct authority over foreign affairs, and alone has the power to speak or listen as a representative of the nation.³

As a general matter, the Supreme Court has recognized that the Constitution vests the President not only with the authorities expressly delineated therein, but also with certain implied authorities,⁴ such as the ability to supervise (and generally to remove) executive officials⁵ and the power to recognize foreign governments.⁶

At the same time, the Court has said that by granting the President the power of faithfully executing the laws, the Constitution refutes the idea that the President was intended to be a lawmaker.⁷

Nonetheless, the Court has recognized that officials appointed by the

President—even those located within the Executive Branch—may exercise regulatory or adjudicative powers that are quasi-legislative or quasi-judicial.⁸

Broadly, the Court has recognized that Executive Officers exercise authority to enforce and administer the laws, including rule-making, administrative determinations, and the filing of lawsuits.⁹

The remaining provisions of Article II's Section 1 primarily outline the election of the President, including the establishment of the electoral college. Relatedly, Section 1 sets out the qualifications of the President, the oath of office, and compensation. Section 1 also creates succession provisions in the event of a President's removal or other inability to act, although the relatively sparse language in Clause 6 was later supplemented by the Twenty-Fifth Amendment and the Presidential Succession Act.¹⁰

Sections 2 and 3 define specific presidential powers and duties.

Section 2, Clause 1 describes exclusive presidential powers: namely, the Commander in Chief authority, the power to require written opinions from the heads of executive departments, and the pardon power.

Clause 2 defines the powers that the President shares with Congress, outlining the treaty-making power and the appointment power.

Clause 3 expands on appointments by granting the President the power to unilaterally make temporary appointments during Senate recess.

Section 3 requires the President to give Congress information on the state of the union. It also authorizes the President to recommend legislative measures and in extraordinary circumstances convene or adjourn Congress.

Section 3 further grants the President the power to receive ambassadors and other public ministers. And as previously mentioned, Section 3 contains the Take Care Clause, requiring the President to ensure that the laws are faithfully executed.

Section 4 provides that the President—and all other civil Officers of the United States—may be removed from office if impeached and convicted on charges of Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors.¹¹

Article I contains further provisions bearing on impeachment procedures and judgments.¹²

As discussed elsewhere, Article I also contains some provisions bearing on presidential authority, perhaps most notably the President's authority to approve or veto legislation.¹³

The President of the United States manages the operations of the Executive branch of Government through Executive orders. After the President signs an Executive order, the White House sends it to the Office of the Federal Register (OFR).

The OFR numbers each order consecutively as part of a series and publishes it in the daily Federal Register shortly after receipt. For a table of Executive orders that are specific to federal agency rulemaking, see the ACUS (Administrative Conference of the United States) website. This page contains documents that have been published in the Federal Register.*

Because the White House cannot deliver a document to the Office of the Federal Register (OFR) until after the President signs a document, there is

always a delay (of at least one day, typically of several days) between when the President signs a document and when it is published. Once received, OFR gives presidential documents priority processing and documents will appear on public inspection the business day before publication.

If you are looking for a recently-signed Presidential document, you may wish to check the White House website.

An incoming president signing a flurry of executive orders is standard practice. Executive orders allow a president to wield power without action from Congress. But there are also limits to what orders can achieve.

How common are executive orders?

Throughout U.S. history, there have been several thousand executive orders, according to data collected by the American Presidency Project at the University of California, Santa Barbara. George Washington signed eight executive orders, while Franklin Delano Roosevelt did 3,721.

The following is a primer on how the presidential power works and its often fleeting impact.

What are executive orders?

Basically, they are signed statements about how the president wants the federal government to be managed. They can be instructions to federal agencies or requests for reports.

Many orders can be unobjectionable, such as giving federal employees the day after Christmas off.

They can also lay out major policies. For example, President Joe Biden signed an order to create a structure for establishing regulations on artificial intelligence. But executive orders — and their policy sausage-making siblings, the proclamation and political memorandum — also are used by presidents to pursue agendas they can't get through Congress.

New presidents can — and often do — issue orders to cancel the orders of their predecessors.

As the American Bar Association notes, the orders do not require congressional approval and

can't be directly overturned by lawmakers. Still, Congress could block an order from being fulfilled by removing funding or creating other hurdles.

During his first term, Donald Trump, a Republican, signed 220.

Biden, a Democrat, signed 160 as of Dec. 20.

Executive orders are often about political messaging. Trump forecasted signing as many as 100 executive orders on his first day, possibly covering deportations, the U.S.-Mexico border, domestic energy, Schedule F rules for federal workers, school gender policies and vaccine mandates, among other Day 1 promises made during his campaign. He's also promised an executive order to give more time for the sale of TikTok.

There are limits to the power of executive orders. Both Congress and the courts can potentially block executive orders.

For example, Congress in 1992 revoked an executive order by then-President George H.W. Bush that would establish a human fetal tissue bank for scientific research by passing a measure that the order "shall not have any legal effect." Congress can also deny funding to agencies and hamstringing the enforcement of an order.

There are also legal challenges based on the argument that a president exceeded his legal authorities. When President Harry Truman tried to seize steel mills during the Korean War, the U.S. Supreme Court said he lacked the authority to take private property without authorization from Congress.

Executive Orders and Proclamations.

What is the difference between an executive order and proclamation?

Executive Orders are generally issued by the President to direct and govern the business and activities of government agencies whereas Proclamations are announcements of policy or matters requiring public notice.

The President of the United States communicates information on holidays, commemorations, special observances, trade,

and policy through Proclamations. After the President signs a Proclamation, the White House sends it to the Office of the Federal Register (OFR).

What was the famous presidential proclamation?

George Washington's Proclamation of Neutrality in 1793 and Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 were some of America's most famous presidential proclamations in that regard. The legal weight of presidential proclamations suggests their importance to presidential governance.

The National Thanksgiving Proclamation was the first presidential proclamation of Thanksgiving in the United States. At the request of Congress, President George Washington declared Thursday, November 26, 1789 as a day of public thanksgiving and prayer.

Which president refused to recognize Thanksgiving?

Thomas Jefferson was famously the only Founding Father and early president who refused to declare days of thanksgiving and fasting in the United States. He felt that the government declaring a day for giving thanks was an unconstitutional co-mingling of church and state.

https://www.google.com/search?q=presidential+proclamations&rlz=1C5CHFA_enUS881US882&oq=Presidential+Proclamations&aqs=chrome.69j512j0l10i512j0i10i512l5.6990j0j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

Listed are president's name, first day proclamations, and how many issued with total years in office:

- J. Biden - 77, 160 (5 yrs)
- E. Trump - 55, 220 (4)
- B. Obama - 40, 277 (9)
- G H W Bush - 54, 291 (5)
- W. Clinton - 57, 364 (9)
- G W Bush - 54, 291 (5)
- R. Reagan - 50,381 (9)
- J. Carter - 66, 320 (5)
- G. Ford - 29, 169 (4)
- T. Nixon - 52, 346 (6)
- L. Johnson - 7, 325 (7)
- JFK - 70, 214 (3)
- D. Eisenhower - 90, 484 (9)
- H. Truman - 139, 906 (9)
- F D Roosevelt - 256, 2023 (9)

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Dreamers: Ending in-state tuition could cost state \$15 M

Continued from page 1A

Student organizations and their allies across Florida have been urging lawmakers to rebuff efforts from Governor Ron DeSantis to end in-state tuition for Florida students without a regulated immigration status.

In 2014, Florida enacted in-state tuition for these students with broad bipartisan support, championed by Republican leaders like then-Governor Rick Scott and now Lieutenant Governor Jeanette Nuñez. Ending in-state tuition would cost the state nearly \$15 million, according to Esteban Santis of the Florida Policy Institute.

The legislation that would seek to undo this is Senate Bill 90. Brevard County Republican State Sen. Randy Fine sponsors Senate Bill 90, which would seek to undo this. If passed, the bill would take effect this July 1.

“Over a decade ago, Florida policymakers understood that

these students are talented, hard-working, motivated, and looking to excel and contribute to our communities,” Santis said. “Today over 6,500 students, dreamers attend post-secondary institutions in Florida, despite the fact that they’re not eligible for Bright Future scholarships, they’re not eligible for federal loans, they’re not eligible for federal grants. That means that they pay for school out of their own pocket, and they count on Florida’s out-of-state tuition waiver to attend.”

In the 2023-24 academic year, Dreamers with an out-of-state fee waiver paid \$26.7 million in state tuition and fees to colleges and universities across Florida, and their contribution to those communities surpasses the increased revenue at the schools, Santis said.

In-state tuition has benefitted DACA recipient Silvia Ruiz, who said that last year, as a student at Seminole State College, she paid about \$300 for one class. Before

her in-state tuition waiver kicked in, she was being charged over \$1,000 as a product of the Florida public education system, she said.

As an HCC youth and family lead, Ruiz works with U.S. citizen youth who automatically qualify for in-state tuition, as well as others who are undergoing asylum processes or have temporary protected status (TPS) get the opportunity for in-state tuition, and undocumented students who dream of pursuing an education. She pointed out that many students pursuing higher education will be the first in their families to graduate high school and set foot into a college or university.

“This legislation to remove in-state tuition is a direct attack on the immigrant community in Florida, and it sends a clear message about legislators and representatives that education is no longer a right for everyone,” Ruiz said.

“I have a message to any undocumented student. If you have

TPS, DACA or nothing at all, do not let this stop you from achieving your dream. Do not, let this, let our parents sacrifice, go to waste. Let us remind ourselves that our parents’ sacrifices matter, and that we will continue to fight to exist,” she said.

The 2025 legislative session begins in March.

Special session

The Florida Legislature responded Monday, January 27, to Gov. Ron DeSantis’ call for a special session by gaveling out of his and convening its own, *The Center Square* reported.

Lawmakers will only take up an immigration-related bill and will not tackle the other issues called for in DeSantis’ proclamation, which included condominium regulations, electoral security reforms and modifying the state’s ballot initiative process.

House Speaker Daniel Perez said in his opening remarks from the floor that the House would de-

bate one bill, House Bill 1B (the corresponding Senate Bill 2B is identical), with three committees on Monday and put it to a possible vote before the chamber on Tuesday. The Miami Republican said he intends for lawmakers to end the special session after voting on the bill.

Called the Tackling and Reforming Unlawful Migration Policy Act, the bill would appropriate \$500 million to assist state and local law enforcement agencies help President Donald Trump’s administration with deportations.

The bill would expand requirements passed in 2022 that a sheriff operating a county detention facility must enter into a written agreement with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to include jails that aren’t operated by a sheriff.

The bill would also end in-state tuition for people living in or entering the country illegally, *The Center Square* reported.

Review: City struggles to get back on feet after hurricanes

Continued from page 1A

community. ... Members of People of Wekiwa Springs (POWS) got together on Saturday, September 28, just behind the CVS at S.R. 436 and Wekiwa Springs Road to begin work on their art entry for the District 2 Artistic Corridor of the Year competition.

In light of having faced hurricanes within the last several weeks, state officials are warning constituents against people attempting to commit fraud, and have established insurance villages for policy holders to seek help face-to-face. ... Several resources are available to assist people in recovering from the effects of Hurricane Milton. ... Organized by the Rotary Club of Apopka and supported by the city of Apopka, the Apopka Fall Family Festival has taken its place among the “institutions” of Apopka. The fair opened last night, Thursday, October 17, and will continue until Sunday, October 20, at Kit Land Nelson Park. ... The Apopka City Council approved 5-0 at its October 2 meeting to declare part of a city-owned property as surplus at the request of Rotary Club of Apopka for the purpose of building a community center there.

Temporary solutions such as installing barriers to keep rising floodwater out of homes and pumping it into trucks may have alleviated the flooding, following Hurricane Milton. However, residents at Wekiwa Village, a subdivision of about 60 units located on Piedmont Wekiwa Road, demand long-term solutions for rising floodwaters. ... The Tuesday, October 15, Foliage Sertoma Luncheon meeting held at the Back Room Steakhouse was a special one with the visit of United States Congressman Daniel Webster in attendance. ... After three months of closure over the summer and early fall, the North Orange Branch Library will reopen on Monday, October 28, at its regularly scheduled

time of 10 a.m. ... Local art teacher Faith Lee was announced as the winner of the city of Apopka flag redesign contest at the October 16 Apopka City Council meeting. ... Two new police officers, Katherine Almazan and Samantha Moraes, took oaths on Friday, October 18, in the Apopka City Hall Council Chamber.

November

The Apopka City Council approved 5-0 on October 16 to move forward with an assessment project that will help the Emerson Park subdivision with its request to have its roadways, curbs, gutters, and street signs transferred from private to public ownership and to create a Municipal Service Business Unit funding source to bring this infrastructure up to city standards. ... Rotary members in Apopka took action in honor of World Polio Day, on Thursday, October 24, to raise awareness, funds, and support to end polio, a vaccine-preventable disease that still threatens children in parts of the world today. ... Forgoing a keynote speaker this year, the John Land Apopka Community Trust will host its sixth annual John Land Apopka Community Trust Legacy Gala. ... Daylight saving time will officially end on Sunday, November 3, when clocks will fall back by one hour. ... Halloween in the Park took place on Saturday, October 26, at Kit Land Nelson Park in downtown Apopka.

Mayor Bryan Nelson delivered the 2024 State of the City, which highlighted the city’s accomplishments and milestones over the past year and spotlighted what’s in store for the community. ... Republican incumbent Doug Bankson won his second term as State House of Representatives District 39, defeating Democrat challenger Marsha Summersill in the November 5 general election. ... The Apopka City Council voted 5-0 to approve a

\$1.7-million budget for fiscal year 2024-2025 roadway resurfacing program pavement improvements to cover about 9.4 miles of roadway in three subdivisions: Meadows of Maude Helene, Pines of Wekiwa, and Spring Ridge. ... The Apopka Fire Department, in partnership with the 2650 Foundation, hosted a special ceremony at Apopka Fire Station One on Friday, November 1, to award six Apopka firefighters with scholarships to attend a certification course in Vehicle and Machinery Rescue. ... In a collaborative effort, 21 of Central Florida’s CEOs and business leaders gathered on Monday, November 4, to address affordable housing in the region for CEO Build 2024.

The city of Apopka and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10147 honored Veterans Day with a ceremony in Kit Land Nelson Park on Veterans Day, Monday, November 11. ... The Apopka City Council adopted a resolution, Resolution No. 2024-38, at the Wednesday, November 6, meeting to officially declare the city’s intent in repaying a debt not expected to go over \$3 million on the Emerson Park subdivision roadway project. ... This week, over 200 new and repurposed devices got deployed to nonprofit staff, students and others in need through Hope Community Center for various uses. ... With 175 people in attendance, the John Land Apopka Community Trust Legacy Gala showed a video highlighting the Trust’s accomplishments in serving the community, as well as posthumously named *The Apopka Chief/The Planter* publisher John “J.R.” Ricketson Humanitarian of the Year.

The community held a rededication ceremony on Friday, November 15, on the grounds of Apopka Memorial Middle School for the veteran stone memorial honoring four veterans who were alumni. ... The city of Apopka has announced the next steps in bringing a brand-new all-inclusive

playground to the Northwest Recreation Complex. ... On Wednesday, November 20, the Apopka City Council unanimously confirmed Commissioner Diane Velazquez to represent the city on the Lake Apopka Natural Gas District (LANGD) Board of Directors. ... Beginning December 2 and continuing until January 10, 2025, roadway resurfacing will take place at three different subdivisions, Meadows of Maudehelen, Pines of Wekiwa, and Spring Ridge. ... An 18-year-old Apopka man died following a car collision into a utility pole on Rock Springs Road, Florida Highway Patrol reports. ... Four Orange County School Board members – two new and two re-elected including District 7 School Board Member Melissa Byrd – took their Oath of Office.

This week, a Debary woman was arrested and charged with five felonies related to a vehicular crash on S.R. 429 in Apopka, which killed her four-year-old daughter and seriously injured another child in the vehicle, Apopka police say. ... The city of Apopka released a notice of tree removal for Piedmont Lakes Phase 2, which will take place from December 2 to December 20. ... Winn-Dixie and Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida teamed up to distribute 600 turkeys and sides for a traditional Thanksgiving meal for families facing hunger ahead of the holiday.

December

After over 28 years of service with the Apopka Police Department, including the last three years serving as the first African-American deputy police chief in the department’s history, Deputy Chief Jerome Miller is retiring. ... Students of the Magnet Academy of Culinary Arts at Wekiwa High School are making delectable cookies of various flavors for the Great Christmas Cookie Gift Box Sale. ... Or-

ange County School Board members will discuss the use of school guardians on campuses located in the municipalities of Apopka, Ocoee, Winter Garden, Winter Park and Windermere. ... Orange County voted to approve \$11 million for a 300-unit affordable rental housing project, planned for construction on Spring Lane in Apopka, as part of the county’s ongoing mission to address its affordable housing crisis. ... A total of 150 kids are participating in this year’s Apopka Police Department Shop With a Cop, which kicked off its 10-night run on Monday, December 2, and will end on December 13. ... Three new police officers were sworn in on Tuesday, December 3, at Apopka City Hall Council Chamber.

The city conducted a public input meeting on Monday, December 9, at Fran Carlton Center for the proposed improvements on the northern portion of Ocoee Apopka Road, an estimated \$28 million project that would improve the safety and capacity for current and future users. ... The Apopka City Council voted 4-1 at its November 20 meeting on the second reading and adoption of an ordinance that limits public access to city buildings, with Commissioner Nick Nesta voting ‘nay’. ... On Tuesday, December 10, the Apopka Planning Commission recommended approval of a plat, which proposes creating four single-family lots and a community park on a city-owned land located on the northeast corner of the East Eighth Street/South Highland Avenue intersection. ... The city hosted its Apopka Tree Lighting on Friday, December 6, at Kit Land Nelson Park as the community comes together to celebrate the holiday season. ... The Apopka Fire Department and Apopka Police Department, in partnership with Re-Imagine Communities, hosted the Apopka Reading Heroes Scholastic Book Fair on December 7, at Apopka

Fire Station No. 5.

Voting 5-0, the Apopka City Council appointed interim Fire Chief Wilfredo Rivera-Sanchez as permanent fire chief on Wednesday, December 18. ... The community remembered and honored veterans by laying remembrance wreaths on the graves of the nation’s fallen heroes during National Wreaths Across America Day on Saturday, December 14, at Edgewood-Greenwood Cemetery and Bay Ridge Cemetery. ... Apopka city offices will be closed on Wednesday, December 25 and Thursday, December 26 for Christmas. Normal operations will resume on Friday, December 27 at 8 a.m. ... Organized by the Foliage Sertoma Club and cosponsored by the city of Apopka, the 48th annual Apopka Christmas Parade filled Park Avenue with seasonal joy on the morning of Saturday, December 14.

Cadets from the Wekiwa High School Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps program and Apopka High School Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps programs had their Military Ball 2024 at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2093 on Edgewater Drive in Orlando on Friday, December 20. ... Following the December 16 Wisconsin school shooting tragedy, the city of Apopka is asking Orange County Public Schools to reconsider its pending negotiation for School Resource Officers on several OCPS campuses in municipalities, including Apopka. ... The city of Apopka extended the last date of the roadway resurfacing project from January 10 to January 24, 2025, for three subdivisions: Meadows of Maudehelen, Pines of Wekiwa, and Spring Ridge. ... The city of Apopka will be utilizing Aqua Water to help provide maintenance on the city’s reuse and potable meters in designated subdivisions.

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40+ Double Dutch Club wins award



The Orlando 40+ Double Dutch Club are honored to win the best performance award at the January 20 Martin Luther King Jr. Parade in Apopka, organized by the South Apopka Ministerial Alliance. The 40-Plus Double Dutch Club's website states that the group "envisions a world where aging is celebrated through prioritizing health, serving communities, and empowering women." For more information, visit 40plusdoubledutchclub.org/.

Photo courtesy of Orlando 40+ Double Dutch Club.

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Contest: Over a dozen judges deliberated

Continued from page 6A

an opportunity for students to personally combat antisemitism. With guidance from the local Holocaust museum in Maitland, essay prompts and art themes were selected and prize amounts were put aside for worthy recipients.

Open to all grade levels, the contest sought to raise awareness of this dire issue, by focusing on anti-semitism in social media,

how to combat misinformation with history, and what it means to be Jewish in 2024. There were set rubrics for the art and essay portions, and students had several months to submit well-researched essays or original paintings by the December 1 deadline.

More than a dozen judges deliberated to select the winners, including teachers, spiritual leaders, attorneys, professors, entrepreneurs, and more.



Wonder Covington's winning artwork "Infinite Hope"

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SUDOKU ANSWERS
PUZZLE CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 2B

3	4	6	8	7	2	9	5	1
9	5	8	1	6	4	3	2	7
2	7	1	5	9	3	8	4	6
8	3	4	7	2	9	1	6	5
1	6	2	4	5	8	7	9	3
7	9	5	6	3	1	2	8	4
6	8	3	2	4	7	5	1	9
4	2	7	9	1	5	6	3	8
5	1	9	3	8	6	4	7	2

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Puzzle Solution

C	P	U					C	A	B									
A	R	M					C	U	R	I	A							
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C	H	E	E	S	E	B	U	R	G	E	R	S						
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The Crossword Puzzle is found on page 2B