

**FFA**  
 Future Farmers of America is more than farming. See page 6A.



  
 God Bless America

**Wrestling**  
 WHS wrestler wins conference championship. See page 1B.



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# The Apopka Chief

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Volume 103 Number 7

Friday, February 14, 2025 / 50 cents

## Mayor addresses long-term plan for S.R. 436 flooding

By Teresa Sargeant  
 Apopka Chief Staff

Enactment of the city's long-term flood mitigation solution for the S.R. 436/Piedmont-Wekiwa Road area has been "progressing," but won't be set up in time for this year's Atlantic hurricane season, said Mayor Bryan Nelson.

That long-term solution is to build out a pipe system from the area to the Cleveland Street water treatment plant, using a \$2.5 million grant from the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The city is in the middle of applying for another \$2-million state grant.

The city already has an easement from Utilities Inc. and the city of Altamonte Springs that runs their excess reclaimed water to the city of Apopka's Cleveland Street water treatment plant.

"It just would make logical sense if we could either use one of their pipes, combine their two, or at least we've got the easement to run an additional pipe to take that excess water off of Border Lake, take

it to our plant to process it, and turn that into reclaimed water as well," Nelson said in a Monday, Feb. 10, interview with The Apopka Chief.

Nelson explained that of all the lakes in the S.R. 436 area, Bear Lake has the highest elevation, meaning that the excess water begins in that body, then floods down to Border Lake, flowing to Lake Cortez and then Lake Ruden, the lake at the Piedmont Plaza shopping center, and finally into Lake Page and Lake Pleasant.

Devising a long-term plan to mitigate flooding is a matter of getting the DEP and the St. Johns River Water Management District on board with the concept of the plan, especially since "we can't wait till Border Lake is at flooding levels to start to take it down. We've got to start much earlier," Nelson said.

The timeline for constructing the actual pipe system is yet to be determined, Nelson said. He acknowledged that the long-term solution can't be established in time for this

See FLOOD Page 8A

## City reviews next steps in Golden Gem pond's restoration after sinkhole

By Teresa Sargeant  
 Apopka Chief Staff

The Apopka City Council received an update on the city's restoration plan for making the 250-million-gallon Golden Gem reclaimed water pond functional again following the formation of a sinkhole last year.

At the City Council's Wednesday, Feb. 5, meeting, Da Huo, utility design manager at the city's public service department, walked the City Council through an overview of the Golden Gem reclaimed water pond, including its history, the sinkhole formation, and the recommended next steps.

The Golden Gem reclaimed water pond is a 102.79-acre pond located at 3513 Golden Gem Road, Apopka, off S.R. 429. The pond is 4.3 miles from Rock Springs at Kelly Park; all the groundwater in the Golden Gem area ends up in Rock Springs, where the city has conducted most of its water testing.

The reclaimed water pond is divided into three sections – northern, central and southern – and was de-

See POND Page 8A



Dated August 2024, this photo shows the process of filling the sinkhole that formed early last year in the northern section of the Golden Gem reclaimed water pond. The photo was part of the slideshow presentation about the Golden Gem pond's restoration at the Feb. 5 Apopka City Council meeting.



The completely filled sinkhole in the Golden Gem reclaimed water pond, finished in September 2024, was also part of the above slideshow presentation about the pond.

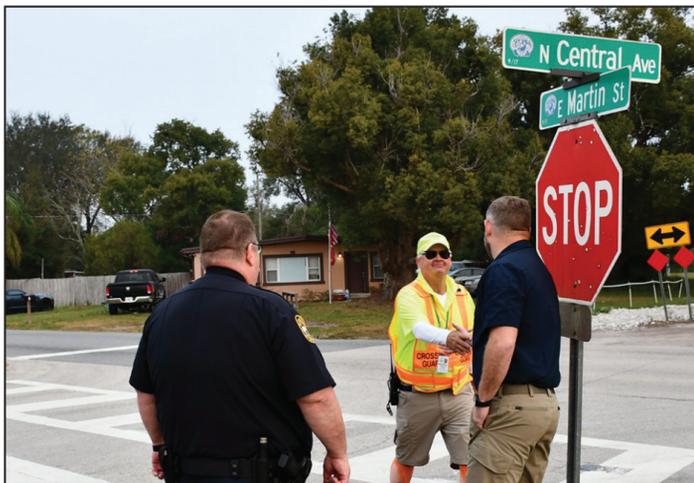
## City shows appreciation for crossing guards

From Staff Reports

The city of Apopka celebrated Crossing Guard Appreciation Day in Florida on Friday, Feb. 7, with elected officials and city police meeting on-duty crossing guards and later awarding them with certificates for their contributions.

"We are honoring the men and women who ensure students have a safe journey to and from school. Crossing guards are out there every day during the week to get us safely across the street. They keep our children safe from traffic throughout the year—

See GUARDS Page 7A



Apopka police officers talked with and thanked city crossing guards on Crossing Guard Appreciation Day on Friday, Feb. 7. Photo courtesy of Apopka Police Department/Facebook.

## Council revisits development moratorium topic

By Teresa Sargeant  
 Apopka Chief Staff

The topic of imposing a moratorium on upcoming developments was brought up again at the Wednesday, Feb. 5, City Council meeting, this time pertaining to restoring the Golden Gem reclaimed water pond following a sinkhole formation there in January 2024.

During his city attorney report, Cliff Shepa-

rd reminded the commissioners and Mayor Bryan Nelson about the moratorium process.

According to Shepard, a moratorium can only be created with a valid purpose, something the City Council can workshop for feedback; the city must have a timeline for when the moratorium will end, recommended at most after one full

See CITY Page 12A

## Apopka Fair will raise money for community



This 2021 file photo shows children enjoying the swings at the Apopka Fair.

From Staff Reports

Organized by the Rotary Club of Apopka Foundation, Inc. and supported by the city of Apopka, the 24th Apopka Fair will take place Feb. 27 through March 2 at Kit Land Nelson Park.

Proceeds raised from the fair directly benefit the Apopka Rotary Club and Apopka Rotary Foundation, a 501(c)3 organization supporting over 40 local and international charities. Youth-oriented clubs are included.

There will be carnival rides, live music, merchandise, vendors, food, and craft beer, cider and wine.

Fair hours are Thurs-

## Agencies investigate lake fish kill

State agencies are investigating the cause of a mass fish kill that was discovered in Lake Apopka early this month.

"The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is the lead investigator on this matter and will provide their findings once their analysis is complete," said Ashley Evitt, spokeswoman for the St. Johns River Water Management District, in a Thursday, Feb. 6, email.

See LAKE Page 3A

### This week

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 OR  
[FloridaPublicNotices.com](http://FloridaPublicNotices.com)



Apopka Event of the Week

Tea Social Hour for adults will be held in the meeting room of the North Orange Branch Library, 1211 E Semoran Blvd., on Wed., Feb. 19, from 5-6 p.m., for those who need to unwind. Listen to music, snag a sweet treat with your cup of tea, relax, and chat while the library provides a creative art activity.

Quotable

John started this process in 2022 when he met with J.C. Derrick of Mainstreet Daily News, an Apopka resident who is the incoming publisher.

Editorial is about the continued publication of The Apopka Chief and introduction of its new publisher.

Opinion

The Apopka Chief

A weekly newspaper founded in 1923

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

Publisher T. Jerrod Ricketson

Marketing Director Jackie Trefcer

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

The Apopka Chief will continue to have birthdays

The 2011 book "Tales of the Big Potato" includes a two-page history of The Apopka Chief. It recounts the current Chief's founding in 1923 and the six owners who have published the paper over the last century, including the late John Ricketson.

"The local newspaper belongs to the people it serves, and we, the current owners/management, are temporarily in charge," Ricketson said in the book. "If we do our job right, then long after we are gone, local newspapers will be here as a viable product that has been and is important to the growth of the greater Apopka area."

As you know, John finished his race as caretaker last July. Today marks the formal end for the rest of the Ricketson family, Eileen, Joe and Jerry, who have sold the business to Mainstreet Daily News, a subsidiary of Orlando-based MARC Media.

John and Eileen Ricketson purchased The Apopka Chief in 1980, and it quickly rose to statewide prominence in the following years. Led by editor John (JP) Peery, who served at The Apopka Chief for 45 years until his passing in 2023, Apopka's newspaper won numerous Florida Press Association sweepstakes titles for best overall weekly newspaper performance—honors still memorialized by trophies in our office on Park Avenue.

Eileen was a faithful partner to John for 44 years at the Chief and has valiantly carried on as the leader of this operation during John's illness and in the seven months since his passing. At 83, she has more than earned her retirement, af-

ter working seven days a week for many years.

Joe, Jerry and their younger brother Jamey (a Leesburg Fire Department Battalion Chief) grew up in the newspaper business and can remember addressing papers as children in the back of the family van. Joe has worked in a full-time capacity for more than 20 years, designing ads, managing the website, and generally doing whatever needed to be done.

Jerry, who is retired from the Air Force, has jumped in to play a key role in the months since John's passing.

John would be proud of the way his family has carried on in his absence. The Ricketson name is and always will be synonymous with The Apopka Chief.

Now, it's time to pass it on to a new caretaker. John started this process in 2022 when he met with J.C. Derrick of Mainstreet Daily News, an Apopka resident who is the incoming publisher. The Ricketsons renewed those conversations in the wake of John's death last year, and the transition has been under way for weeks.

Words fall short of expressing the Ricketson family's deep gratitude to the Apopka community for its friendship, care and support over the last 45 years.

They are passing the baton with no regrets and great hope for the future. It is the family's hope that the community will continue to give the Chief the strong support it has afforded the newspaper for the last 102 years.

Exciting days lay ahead.



Ideas are for community creativity

I will soon be publishing a manual on my Neighborhood Leader Program. However, as fast as I incorporate ideas, I read a new book. I'm currently reading Charles Landry's 2006 book entitled The Art of City Making. There might have to be another chapter in my manual. Landry's ideas on how to better engage the entire community's creativity are aspirational.

Landry states that a city is a "multifaceted entity." He goes on to say "culture" gives a city its distinctiveness—it's "flavor, tone, and patina." He believes "if there is no conscious overarching sense of city or placemaking, we go by default patterns and core

County Commissioner District 2



Christine Moore

assumptions of each profession—technical codes, standards, and guidelines."

Although infrastructure improvements must be handled by a municipality, I believe government leaders do not do enough to engage citizens. We need a great culture with "flavor, tone, and patina."

For years while serving on the school board, I knew who to ask while cre-

ating something for students. In Lockhart I asked Lena Isaacson; in Zellwood, it was the late Marjorie Grinnell; in Tangerine, it was their 100-year-old community association; in Wekiwa Springs, Bob Samson for septic-2-sewer information, and in Pine Hills, the Pine Hills Council.

These creative people had a great impact on my efforts to write a book, create historic exhibits in school lobbies and lead 2,000 people to septic-to-sewer conversions. It shouldn't be enough engagement for citizens to solely complain about community issues on social me-

See MOORE Page 4A

Area growth needs plans

Hello Mayor, Commissioners and City Administrator,

Given the current development already approved and given the operational, infrastructure and growth challenges that Apopka faces we should IMMEDIATELY implement a development moratorium. To secure a moratorium, it is my understanding that we must establish quantifiable rational and time limits. The following items should support a moratorium at least through September 30, 2025.

IMMEDIATELY engage Engineer/Consultant/Environmental(s) to evaluate, assess and make recommendations related to the current condition, preventive maintenance, and ability to meet the needs of future projected growth for the City of Apopka: 1) potable water systems; 2) septic and sewer treatment systems; 3) address areas of flooding; 4) storm water drainage; 5) retention ponds—to avert another Golden Gem Pond (wrong location, failure to monitor and failure to address timely); 6) impact of the

City of Apopka's growth to the aquifer, St. Johns Water District and Wekiwa River Basin; 7) correct all non-working water meters; 8) blue algae on Lake Apopka; 9) transportation needs—walk, skate, bike, vehicle, bus, train, and other transit; 10) staffing and/or contracted service needs—Emergency Responders, general and administrative; 11) park and recreational facilities; and 12) restaurants, shops, gas stations, etc.

As the fastest growing

See LETTER Page 4A

Everybody has an opinion. Why not share yours?

Send, bring or email your signed letters of approximately 250 words to the Editor,

The Apopka Chief

400 N. Park Ave., Apopka 32712

For info: 407-886-2777 • Fax: 407-889-4121 • Email: news@theapopkachief.com

Submit your letter online at www.theapopkachief.com

This Week In God's Word

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. John 10:11

Mema Says

Give me 6 hours to chop down a tree and I will spend 4 hours sharpening my axe... Abraham Lincoln

The Apopka Chief is published every Friday and has been entered as Periodicals, postage paid at Apopka Post Office, under the Act of Congress of March 23, 1879. The Apopka Chief newspaper is published by Foliage Enterprises, Inc., every Friday at 400 N. 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, PO Box 880, Apopka, Fla., 32704-0880.



Just because we ask for it does not mean it will be free

Every once in a while, we ought to thank GOD that all we wish for isn't given to us. How many times have I wished for the Lotto to be mine, only to have my dreams dashed against the rocks of "tough luck." Then, I think back a few years to when I received a Worker's Comp settlement for a goodly amount, and I had kinfolk I didn't know I had, crawling out from the distant past, and ... everyone needed money! Needless to say, it



Ike Hayden

wasn't long before I had to go back to work or starve! My needy kinfolk had gone the way of the Dodo Bird (disappeared, without a trace!). Don't get me wrong, I was glad to be able to share, but I would have

loved to have been able to fill some of my Family Tree's branches with names!

Maybe I'll win the Lotto someday and this time I'll take names and ask pertinent questions! Very doubtful; you have to buy a ticket. All of this, just to remind me I should be thankful for unanswered wishes!

We all have dreams for better lives, a bigger house, bunches of money, prestige, wealthy lifestyles, and we can have it all! Not

through pipedreams, or wishing for it, but by putting feet to our dreams, and taking part in life's labor pool.

You may not end up with bigger, better anything, but the satisfaction and peace with what you have, comes from knowing your life had a purpose, and that purpose was fulfilled in the striving to fill your dreams. I can't imagine having "things" without sacrifice.

What makes "things" so rewarding is what was

needed to acquire them.

Immediately my mind turns to the warriors returning from the battlefields, maimed, handicapped in body, but not in spirit. They deserve the homes, and all their necessities for daily living for the sacrifices they have given. The man who gets up every morning, dresses, goes to work, gets home in time to take care of the "Honey do's," lets his wife know she is the love of his life, kisses the kids goodnight, goes to bed with the knowledge

that in the morning it will start all over again. He deserves the satisfaction of knowing his daily sacrifice is worth all that he has, and all that is yet to come.

I remember a time when it took only one bread winner to pay all the expenses of raising a family, keeping up a home, and the other unexpected costs. Now it almost takes two people to conquer those needs.

My heart goes out to

See HAYDEN Page 4A

# Lake: DOH warned public of blue-green algae in Lake Apopka

Continued from page 1A

“The St. Johns River Water Management District has also collected additional water quality samples in the area. On Monday, the District collected two samples for harmful algal bloom (HAB) evaluation, one sample at the south end of the lake near the Oakland Nature Preserve,

and a second in the northwest portion of the lake, near the inlet canal for the Marsh Flow-Way. These samples were sent to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s lab for algal identification and toxin evaluation. Those results, along with FWC’s findings, will be analyzed to better understand the cause.”

On Monday, Feb. 4, the Florida Department of Health (DOH) in Orange County cautioned the public of the presence of blue-green algae in Lake Apopka (near Oakland Nature Preserve), Lake Roberts (South Dock), Lake Butler (West Shore), and Lake Hancock (John Hancock Drive Boat Ramp). According to its news release, wa-

ter sample testing was underway.

“The Florida Department of Health in Orange County (DOH-Orange) can provide information regarding the public’s health when consuming fish from blue-green algae waters,” wrote Kent Donahue, spokesman for DOH-Orange, in a Thursday, Feb. 6, email. “Fish tested from

water with blue-green algae show that cyanotoxins do not significantly accumulate in the edible parts (muscle or fillet) of fish but can in other organs. Prior to consuming, rinse fish filets with tap or bottled water, throw out the guts, and cook fish to the appropriate temperature. Do not eat shellfish in waters with blue-green algae blooms.”

As the state’s fourth largest lake, Lake Apopka is the headwaters of the Ocklawaha Chain of Lakes, located in northwest Orange and southeast Lake counties. St. Johns River Water Management District spent decades restoring Lake Apopka and improving its water quality.

# Fair: Free admission is all weekend, parking is \$5 cash

Continued from page 1A

day, Feb. 27, 5-10 p.m.; Friday, Feb. 28, 5-11 p.m.; Saturday, March 1, 2-11

p.m.; and Sunday, March 2, noon-8 p.m. Free admission is all weekend, with arm band specials on Thursday and

Sunday only. Thursday is family night with \$25 per ride with arm bands. Parking is \$5, cash only.

Sponsoring companies are *The Apopka Chief/The Planter*, Lake Apopka Natural Gas District, Waste Management, Primerica, DB DeClue Brothers Insurance Solutions, Williams

Construction and Management, AdventHealth, and First Card Merchant Services.

For more information about the fair, visit [ApopkaFair.com](http://ApopkaFair.com).

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# Florida Legislature convenes special session focused on illegal immigration

Bryan Griffin,  
Director of Communications,  
Governor Ron DeSantis  
TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—

Please see below a statement from the governor on the proclamation calling for a special session of the Florida Legislature on illegal immigration enforcement to convene this week.

"Florida always leads. We have a responsibility to enact policies that will help end the illegal immigration crisis once and for all, and our Republican leaders have

been working tirelessly to do just that," said Governor Ron DeSantis.

"The bills to be considered this week in special session take ideas from the various proposals and brings them together to enact the strongest legislation to enhance interior enforcement and to combat illegal immigration amongst the fifty states.

The proposed legislation requires the full participation of state and local law enforcement with the Federal government in its enforcement of immigration law, prevents the 'catch and release' of illegal

aliens, and ensures that illegal aliens who enter Florida are held accountable. It also provides significant resources to bolster these efforts.

I want to thank the Florida Legislature for convening in special session on this important topic. In working together on this bill, Senate President Ben Albritton and Speaker Danny Perez have been great partners, and we have produced an aggressive bill that we can stand fully behind.

I thank the members of the Florida House and Senate for delivering on be-

half of the people who sent us here. I also thank Agricultural Commissioner Wilton Simpson for his support of this revised product to help combat illegal immigration.

With the enactment of these policies, Florida will help the Trump Administration to deliver on the President's historic mandate to end illegal immigration. This is a big win for the people of Florida and demonstrates that we will continue to lead."

## CITY OF APOPKA PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE SMALL-SCALE FUTURE LAND USE AMENDMENT AND CHANGE OF ZONING

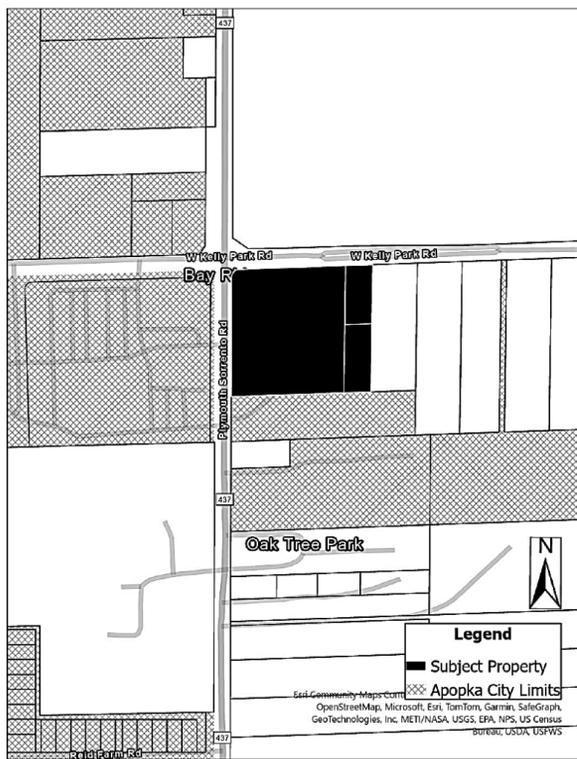
NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to Secs. 163.3184 and 166.041(3)(a), Florida Statutes and the Apopka Code of Ordinances, Part III, Land Development Code, Article II, Section 2.4.7.B, that **Nathan Milch** has made application, on behalf of the property owner, relating to the following described property.

### ORDINANCE NO. 3095

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF APOPKA, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT OF THE APOPKA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF THE CITY OF APOPKA; CHANGING THE FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATION FROM RESIDENTIAL VERY LOW SUBURBAN TO MIXED-USE FOR CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY OWNED BY ADVENTIST HEALTH SYSTEM/SUNBELT, INC.; GENERALLY LOCATED ON THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF KELLY PARK ROAD AND PLYMOUTH SORRENTO ROAD; COMPRISING 5.56 ACRES, MORE OR LESS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, CONFLICTS, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

### ORDINANCE NO. 3096

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF APOPKA, FLORIDA, CHANGING THE ZONING FROM T (TRANSITION) TO KPI-MU (KELLY PARK INTERCHANGE - MIXED-USE) FOR CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY OWNED BY ADVENTIST HEALTH SYSTEM/SUNBELT, INC.; GENERALLY LOCATED ON THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF KELLY PARK ROAD AND PLYMOUTH SORRENTO ROAD; COMPRISING 5.56 ACRES, MORE OR LESS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, CONFLICTS, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.



Parcel Identification Number(s): 18-20-28-0000-00-101, 18-20-28-0000-00-107 and 18-20-28-0000-00-120  
Contains: 5.56 +/- Acres

NOTICE is given that a public hearing for Ordinance Numbers 3095 and 3096 will be held by the **City of Apopka City Council** at its regularly scheduled meeting in the City Council Chambers of the Apopka City Hall, 120 E. Main Street, Apopka, Florida on **Wednesday, March 5, 2025 at 1:30 P.M. and Wednesday, March 19, 2025 at 7:00 P.M.**

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

Apopka City Council  
Apopka Planning Commission  
Community Development Department

February 14, 2025  
Publish: The Apopka Chief

177953

## Letter: Smart growth is needed

Continued from page 2A

county in Florida, we must work in a TRUE JOINT EFFORT with Orange County Public Schools and Orange County to appeal to the State of Florida to address the City of Apopka's and Orange County's school overcrowding.

Orange County Public Schools is the fourth largest school district in Florida and yet Orange County Public School children "enjoy" the most portable

classrooms. You must add the three largest school districts' number of portable classrooms to barely outnumber Orange County's. Portable classrooms are NOT AS SAFE and they cost more to heat, cool and maintain.

Apopka children continue to suffer with school overcrowding today. The fact that Apopka children attending Wolf Lake Middle and Elementary Schools endured 16 years of overcrowding from

2006-2022, until the Kelly Park K-8 opened in 2022 is disgraceful.

As we work through this moratorium, we should amend our Charter to ensure SMART FUTURE GROWTH. We MUST get in front of our growth. The burden of services needed to support a developer's project should fall to the developer.

NOW is the time to act.

Rod Olsen  
Apopka

## Moore: Trails need creative options

Continued from page 2A

dia. Everyone should seek to find ways to contribute in more meaningful and positive ways.

Neighborhood Leaders regularly pick up trash and trim up trees. Many have come out to paint murals, fix fencing, improve entranceways, or erect fence art. They are committed to making their community safer. Others have been inspired to create "third places" replete with gardens, resting places, and artistic pallet furniture. This is just a sample of neighborhood leaders who are already contributing. However, I believe we can do even more.

The author describes the "City as a Living Work of Art." He delves into concepts which might appeal to your interests: recycling and greening, renewing leadership capacities, reconceiving a city, remapping a city, reigniting a passion for learning, revaluing and reinvesting in people and home-grown talent, repairing health through the built environment, and reversing decline (blight).

Creativity implies applying new and fresh ideas to every aspect of a community. Creativity can be applied to the challenge of

solving homelessness, environmental preservation, better parks and recreation, improved social climate, and myriad other things.

I'll share one of my ideas about Dream Lake. The ideas came after producing a laminated key to the Dream Lake mural at Dream Lake Elementary School. I couldn't have written the mural key without the help of Janice Blackwelder and Jennifer Ryan. Their stories of life on Dream Lake inspired me to dream about building a dock and boardwalk along the shoreline. Additionally, I thought about constructing a large pavilion with available rentals for school use during the day and reunions and birthday parties on the weekend. It is invigorating to dream about creating better spaces in District 2.

Another concept the author explores in his book is how democracy can be renewed. Too often, citizens are content to sit back and rely on a handful of elected officials. I believe all citizens have creative ideas about how our cities could grow and thrive. I want everyone to be empowered. Local government should foster opportunities for citizen's ideas to be put into action.

District 2 will soon have three new trails – the Pine Hills Trail, Lake Apopka Loop Trail, and Coast-2-Coast Trail. It is time for citizens to brainstorm about creating great spaces along these trails. I'm not content to let Winter Garden and Oakland be the only creative trail towns. I will need the help of residents in these communities to collaborate with Orange County Parks & Recreation.

Lastly, I must recognize Ella Duke and the Downtown Barbers. On a regular basis, their creativity is reinvigorating the 5th Street area in Downtown Apopka. People now want to bike to 5th Street as a destination. Recently, Caitlyn Kasheta and Main Street Apopka offered a Walk with Mom Event on the West Orange Trail to 5th Street.

Thus, I believe strongly that community and mass creativity must be developed. While local government should operate a few structures for safety and better organization, we should just let people go create. I encourage you to read Charles Landry's seminal work entitled *The Art of City Making*. He will certainly stimulate ideas and creativity.

## Hayden: Earn answers to your dreams

Continued from page 2A

the mother, and wife, who, after working an outside job, comes home to fix supper, get laundry started, clean the house, help with the kid's homework, and after all that, loves on her husband to make him feel important, and necessary!

She also deserves the kind of satisfaction and peace of knowing that she is the one gear that makes

the machine run smoothly and makes the dream and wishes possible!

What is your wish? What are you willing to sacrifice for it? Remember, if it doesn't hurt, it is not a sacrifice!

There is no American Dream without your part of giving.

Too many people today think they deserve all their dreams and wishes fulfilled, without the work

involved, because of equity.

Equity is not equality. Equity is getting the prize for first place, even if you finished last, just because you entered the race.

Just because you are a part of the human race doesn't mean you get your wishes or dreams granted; it means you have the opportunity to EARN them, just like everyone else, (That's equality)!

## 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.theapokchief.com, news@theapokchief.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

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

## Horne, Seitz named to dean's list

Hannah Horne and Colin Seitz, both of Apopka, are among the 2,300 students who were named to the dean's list for the fall 2024 semester at the University of Tampa, at university news release announced.

Students must maintain a GPA of 3.75 or higher

to be eligible for the dean's list.

Horne is a freshman majoring in communication and media studies studying for a Bachelor of Arts.

Seitz is freshman majoring in advertising and public relations studying for a Bachelor of Arts.

The University of

Tampa is a private university located on 110 acres on the riverfront in downtown Tampa offering about 200 programs of study and serves more than 11,000 students from 50 states and most of the world's countries.

## Goodwin earns spot on dean's list

Christopher Goodwin of Apopka has earned a spot on the fall 2024 dean's list at Valdosta State University (VSU), according to a news release from the university.

Dean's list honors are reserved for the highest achieving students at VSU. Goodwin is one of more than 2,000 distinguished

and accomplished students recognized for exemplifying excellence in the attainment of their educational goals.

To qualify for dean's list at VSU, students must achieve a semester grade point average of 3.50 or higher on nine or more semester hours with an

institutional grade point average of 3.00 or higher. Developmental studies, transient, and graduate students are not eligible for dean's list.

Established in 1906, Valdosta State University boasts nearly 200 academic programs and is located in Valdosta, Ga.



**The Way I See It**  
**Patti Bankson**

### FUN AND GAMES & A GOOD LIFE

When I was in high school, going to football games was more about socializing, which I've always loved, than about football itself, which didn't matter to me much one way or the other. But, when we lived in Denver and we were on tour a lot, my husband would turn on the games in our vehicle and we'd listen Sunday afternoons on our way home. At first, what I liked about that was the roar of the crowd in the background... it would lull me to sleep. Before long, though, I began to be interested in the game and fell in love with it.

We were huge Denver Broncos fans, even though they didn't always perform like we would've liked. The game last Sunday and the way the Kansas City Chiefs played, reminded me of the Broncos. They, like the Chiefs last week, were very often what you'd call lackluster. Their problem was that when you couldn't count on them to win, you *could* count on them to miss catching the ball, fumble the ball, "let" the quarterback get sacked, or any other thing that made you think that they were confused about what the goal of the sport was - like, literally giving the opposing team the win.

Another thing you could count on was the way they "played to lose". In the first two or three quarters, they didn't play like professional athletes, but more like they were in Little League. Then somewhere toward the end of the game, just when you were convinced there was no how, no way, they'd start playing like they suddenly knew why they were out there on the field and what they were supposed to do about it. Of course, by that time, there

really was *no how, no way*, it really was over and you could stop holding your breath.

After leaving Colorado, my loyalty to just one team ended. I still loved the game, but there wasn't a team with my city's name on it, so I just chose one before the game began, and if they started losing, I switched sides. It didn't matter that much any more.

Sunday night, though, I wanted The Chiefs to win and I stuck with them until the bitter end. But, it's not like the end of a football game or tournament meant the end of my life as I knew it. That had already happened when I lost my husband.

I've been struck since then by how, given enough time, I've discovered a resilience I'd forgotten I had, and thought was gone forever. I'm not necessarily talking about sports, of course, but, I am thinking back to all the unexpected changes in my life, things I would never have imagined would happen. Everything from losing my husband to adapting (somewhat) to a life alone. And, now, there's another change. I'm not going to be writing for this newspaper any more.

I can hardly believe I've been doing this as long as I have. It's been educational, challenging, fun, and sobering, but whatever, and all that it's been, I've enjoyed it very much. Not working in the building where the paper is housed, limited my exposure to many of the others, but I've enjoyed those I did get to know, however briefly. I've especially enjoyed and appreciated those I've had the privilege of working for, as well.

I've always looked at life as a book, with each decade of my life as a new and different chapter, closing each one as the years have gone by. So, it is that I'm closing this chapter of my life just as I always have, with a heart full of affection and warm memories.

We'd like to know  
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**PADDINGTON IN PERU** (PG) 9:50A; 12:50; 3:40; 6:40; 9:40

**DOGMAN** (PG) 10:40A;

1:20; 4:10; 7:10  
**LOVE HURTS(R)** 10:50A; 1:30; 4:30; 7:20; 10:10  
**HEART EYES (R)** 11:00A; 1:50; 4:40; 7:40; 10:20

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The Apopka Chief, The Planter & AOS (Apopka Office Supply) would like to thank the generous Apopka area for continuing to donate the gift of sight or hearing for so MANY.



# FFA - helping young people develop career, leadership and life skills.

For more information on The National FFA Organization, visit: [www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org)

## FFA is not just about farming, agriculture has developed into much more than that

What is so special about the celebration of National FFA Week? It all starts with the Nation's largest student-led organization in the country, with over one million members and counting: The National FFA Organization. Why is this organization so large? It has so much to do with what the organization gives to the students who get involved: a sense of belonging, confidence in themselves, and the ability to work well with others being just a few of the benefits this organization provides.

All students who are enrolled in agriculture education classes are eligible to participate in the FFA chapter at their school. Students from the Apopka area have opportunities at Apopka Memorial Middle School, Wolf Lake Middle School, Piedmont Lakes Middle School, Apopka High School, and Wekiva High School by taking an agriculture course at their school.

Governor Ron DeSantis believes in the importance of this program so much that he approved funding to provide every student enrolled in agriculture education the opportunity to participate in the National FFA Organization. This is a testament to the benefits that are seen in the students who become involved in this great student organization.

While in the FFA, students gain hands-on experience in the many fields of agriculture through participation in Career Development Events, which provide a glimpse into a specific career and the general knowledge needed to participate in such a career. Students are also encouraged to participate in leadership events which include public speaking opportunities, debate competitions, and more.

Additionally, students learn within the classroom with hands-on experiences designed to make them well-in-

formed about the science, business, and technology associated with agriculture.

This program is not just about farming! There is so much more to agriculture today, and with a growing population and reduction in the amount of land available, without agriculture, we won't exist!

Every person is able to get involved in this great organization by becoming part of the local Alumni and Friends chapters of Apopka. We have two FFA Alumni and Friends chapters: Triple A Alumni (find information on meeting dates, locations and times on their Facebook page: Triple A FFA Alumni chapter) and Wekiva High FFA Alumni and supporters (find information on meeting dates, locations and times on their Facebook page: Wekiva High FFA Alumni and Supporters).



# FFA VISION

Students whose lives are impacted by FFA and agricultural education will achieve academic and personal growth, strengthen American agriculture and provide leadership to build healthy local communities, a strong nation and a sustainable world.

## FFA MISSION

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

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# Hand & Stone Massage cuts ribbon at Hunt Club Corners

**From Staff Reports**

As one of the newest businesses welcomed into the community this year, Hand & Stone Massage and Facial Spa held its ribbon cutting on Tuesday, Feb. 11, at its location, 600 Hunt Club Blvd., Apopka, in the Hunt Club Corners Plaza.

Ambassadors of the Apopka Area Chamber of Commerce celebrated at the ribbon cutting.

Although the ribbon cutting was this week, Hand & Stone Apopka had opened its doors for business on Jan. 10.

The new spa marks local owner Tara McLain's sixth Hand & Stone location and will have a stronger emphasis on esthetics and facial services.

Having opened her first location in 2012,

McLain continues to be inspired by the role Hand & Stone plays in the health and wellness of every local community, especially as an avid runner and a former Hand & Stone member herself.

"Apopka marks an important milestone in our Florida expansion," McLain was quoted as saying in a press statement. "I was initially drawn to Hand & Stone franchise ownership because of my fantastic experience as a member. It motivated me to share the brand's passion for positively impacting people's lives by providing greater access to self-care solutions. I'm incredibly proud of the Apopka team, and we're looking forward to being part of this thriving community."

Hand & Stone intro-

duces to Apopka professional massage services including Swedish, Himalayan salt, sports, deep tissue, oncology and prenatal. Clients can also enjoy Hand & Stone's hot stone massage and facials, all tailored to each individual's needs and to address specific skin concerns.

Like all Hand & Stone spas nationwide, the new Apopka location offers advanced skincare and spa services that incorporate the latest technologies in the wellness market to enhance each guest's overall experience.

All Hand & Stone services are performed by experienced licensed estheticians and licensed massage therapists. In addition, guests have access to a team of wellness experts who specialize in providing



One month after opening for business, Hand & Stone Massage and Facial Spa cut the ribbon on Tuesday, Feb. 11, at 600 Hunt Club Blvd., Apopka, in the Hunt Club Corners Plaza. The Apopka Area Chamber of Commerce celebrated with the spa's staff.

skincare and massage treatments.

The Apopka location is open Monday to Saturday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; and Sun-

days, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information about Hand & Stone Massage and Facial Spa, services, or to schedule an

appointment, call 689-336-4225 or go online to [HandAndStoneApopka.com](http://HandAndStoneApopka.com).

# Guards: Appreciation Day is a statewide honor by FDOT

**Continued from page 1A**

no matter what the weather conditions may be," the Apopka Police Department said in its Feb. 7 Facebook post.

"Drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians all owe a huge thanks to our un-

sung heroes," the post continues. "Even if you don't normally see crossing guards in your everyday route, there's probably several working near where you live or work. Crossing

Guard Appreciation Day provides a great opportunity to introduce yourself and

say 'thanks' for his or her efforts in keeping our community safe."

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has joined local communities across the state to celebrate the role of the state's school crossing guards in enhancing com-

munity safety and protecting the state's school children and families.

Gov. Ron DeSantis signed a proclamation officially designating Feb. 7, 2025, as School Crossing Guard Appreciation Day in Florida.

"Each school day,

Florida's school crossing guards help ensure the safety of some of our communities' smallest road users and their families through their unwavering commitment to public safety and education of responsible pedestrian behaviors," FDOT Secretary Jared W. Perdue, P.E.

was quoted as saying in a press release. "On School Crossing Guard Appreciation Day, we extend our deepest gratitude to these community heroes who selflessly volunteer their time to keep our schoolchildren safe."

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# Pond: Complete plugging of sinkhole finished in Sept. 2024

Continued from page 1A

signed as a step-down terrace, with ground elevation the highest in the north and lowest in the south. There are two separate ponds located side by side within the reclaimed pond perimeter. The smaller one holds about 50 million gallons of water, while the large one holds 200 million gallons.

In November 2023, the pond's water elevation reached an all-time high through a combination of rainwater and reclaimed water. In the northern section, the water level reached a depth of 22 feet deep, while it was over 30 feet deep in the southern section, according to Huo. This led to the January 5,

2024, sinkhole in the northern part, which was first discovered when soil erosion appeared in an infrared satellite image. On January 24, 2024, the city noticed the erosion line with a visual inspection; on January 30, 2024, the incident was reported to the state Department of Environmental Protection.

A local geotechnical engineering firm investigated the sinkhole between January and June of 2024.

Construction work for phase one of sinkhole repair took place between July and September 2024, with completion in September. Phase one involved only the plugging of the sinkhole itself. The pond is currently not operational.

After the sinkhole developed, consultants under the city of Apopka's direction conducted water quality tests at three residential drinking walls in the pond's area.

The tests took place on May 15, 2024, and the results came back one week later showing no impact to the aquifer.

To plug the sinkhole, larger rear props were placed on the bottom to give more stability; smaller rocks laid on top of this layer to give more density, and at the top of this, a layer of compacted clays was laid to prevent water from seeping through.

Following this construction, crews added a layer of concrete to the very

top for stability.

The city is currently reviewing a contractor's proposal to investigate liners in both ponds for potential improper material and/or installations.

Discussion between city staff and City Council occurred after Huo's presentation.

## Restoration plan

In order to restore the Golden Gem reclaimed water pond's functionality, Huo laid out a restoration plan.

The first step is to do a complete subsurface geophysical examination of the pond using technology; this scan will help the city know what to do about restoring the pond.

The second step is to remove existing membrane and install compacted clay as the pond's bottom. The membrane/liner essentially serves the same purpose as compacted clay, but clay lasts much longer. Whereas the membrane could last between 20 to 40 years, the clay bottom could last a lifetime.

"Also, by using clay, you can build up the bottom elevation of the pond and give more separation from the pond bottom to the groundwater, which is one of the main causes of the (sinkhole) accident," Huo said.

The third step is to close off the northern cell completely by building a clay dam. City consultants

informed the city that "the most worrisome area" is the northern section because that was where the sinkhole had formed, Huo said.

The fourth step is to incorporate a water circulation plan into the design that would include fountains and pumping systems to keep the pond's water from becoming stationary. Stagnant water in a reclaimed water pond as large as Golden Gem could lead to a degradation of water quality over time, according to Huo. Design of the water circulation plan would have to be outsourced as opposed to being done in house, Huo said.

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# Flood: Responsible organizations must agree

Continued from page 1A

tablished in time for this year's Atlantic hurricane season, which runs from June 1 to Nov. 30. Yet, he said the short-term solution Orange County District 2 Commissioner Christine Moore presented at the Feb. 5 City Council meeting "seems pretty complicated."

Moore will present the short-term solution in further detail at the Wednesday, Feb. 19, City Council

meeting. She is proposing to pump water from Border Lake to the drainage well at Lake Page. Since the drainage well is - what Nelson described as - a draw from the surface water down to the aquifer, untreated water will go into the aquifer.

"Limiting water going into a drainage well is DEP's number one priority. Obviously at the point where flooding becomes an issue they might overlook it, but drainage wells are not DEP's preferred solution to flooding," Nelson said.

Posing as a severe problem since 2017, the Border Lake post-storm

flooding issue was front-and-center again in October 2024 when the S.R. 436/Piedmont-Wekiwa Road area was underwater, including the Piedmont Plaza parking lot, due to Hurricane Milton. The nearby Wekiva Village community needed the installation of a tiger dam - water-filled bladders created to be barriers - to prevent the loss of residential units, and the flooding impacted residents living along Lake Cortez for weeks.

According to Moore in a statement last week, the city's long-term flooding mitigation solution could take three to five years to

execute.

Border Lake is a closed-drainage basin with impacts from S.R. 436, Seminole County, Orange County, and the city of Apopka. The Border Lake watershed responsibilities include the city of Apopka at 45 percent, Seminole County at 35 percent, the Florida Department of Transportation at 19 percent, and Orange County at one percent. Orange County is committed to providing funding for 25 percent of the costs to end this flooding problem. The lakes are located in the city of Apopka's jurisdiction, Moore said.

Prior to the late 1990s widening of S.R. 436, there was a drain well located near S.R. 436 and Lake Ruden. The state DEP has not allowed replacement, according to Moore.

For the past 20 years, the area has received significant summer rains and hurricane impacts, and thus, the lake has continued to rise. In fact, Border Lake is 3-4 feet higher now than at the same time in 2024, Moore said in her statement.

Since the fall 2024 hurricane impacts, Moore has worked with Orange County Public Works staff to research a short-term pumping operation through the Piedmont chain of lakes and under Piedmont Wekiva Road to the Lake Page drain well. The county staff has developed a study and a preliminary cost analysis for the project.

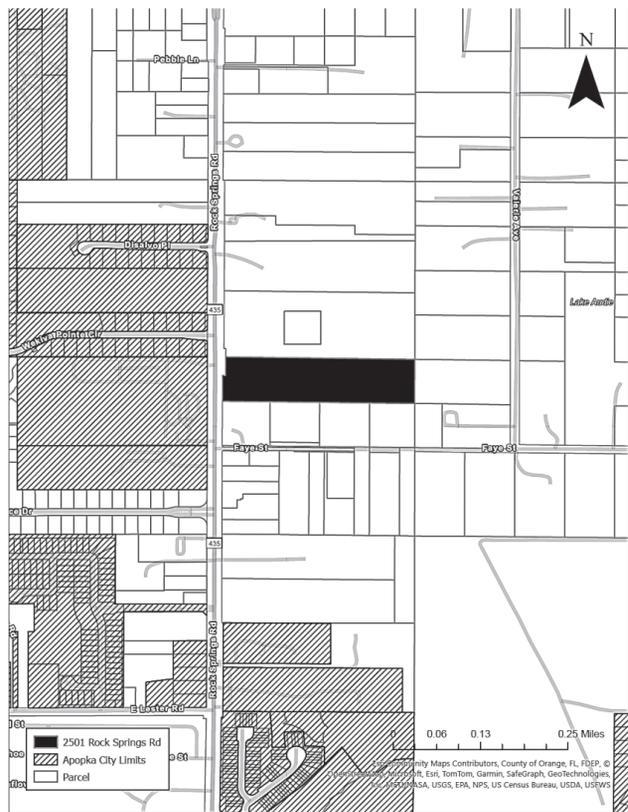
The city has no evacuation plan for residents who live in the S.R. 436/Piedmont-Wekiwa Road area, especially the residents who live near Lake Cortez and in the Wekiva Village community.

## PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE ANNEXATION CITY OF APOPKA

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to Florida Statutes 171.044, the Apopka Code of Ordinances, Part III, Land Development Code, Article II, Section 2.5.1.A, that **Elisabeth Crane** has made an application to the City of Apopka City Council for an **ANNEXATION** of a property located at 2501 Rock Springs Road. This application relates to the following described property:

ORDINANCE NO. 3094

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF APOPKA, FLORIDA, TO EXTEND ITS TERRITORIAL AND MUNICIPAL LIMITS TO ANNEX PURSUANT TO FLORIDA STATUTE 171.044 THE HEREINAFTER DESCRIBED LANDS SITUATED AND BEING IN ORANGE COUNTY, FLORIDA, OWNED BY BDT IRREVOCABLE INCOME ONLY TRUST; LOCATED AT 2501 ROCK SPRINGS ROAD, COMPRISING 9.63 ACRES, MORE OR LESS; PROVIDING FOR DIRECTIONS TO THE CITY CLERK, SEVERABILITY, CONFLICTS, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.



Parcel Identification Number(s): 27-20-28-0000-00-072  
Contains: 9.63 +/- acres

NOTICE is given that public hearings for **Ordinance No. 3094** will be held by the **City of Apopka City Council** at its regularly scheduled meetings in the City Council Chambers of the Apopka City Hall, 120 E. Main Street, Apopka, Florida on **Wednesday, March 5, 2025 beginning at 1:30 P.M.** AND **Wednesday, March 19, 2025 at 7:00 P.M.**

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

Apopka City Council  
Apopka Planning Commission  
Community Development Department

February 14, 2025

Publish: The Apopka Chief

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# Obituaries

**SHARON ANNE WILCOX**, 83, of Apopka, passed away on January 19, 2025. She was born on September 28, 1941 in Caribou, Maine. Mrs. Wilcox is preceded in death by: daughter, Donna M. White; granddaughter, Heather Bauman; siblings, Sally Marlene Wood, John Monroe Wood. She is survived by: children, David (Marcia) White, Paula (Joe) Haddan, Anne (Phillip) Blodgett, Wanda (Jerry) Jernigan; brothers, Michael (Linda) Wood, Scott (Trudy) Wood; five grandchildren; two great grandchildren.

**MARK RANDALL ("POP-PIE") HOUSTON**, 75, of Apopka, Florida passed away on Monday, January 27, 2025 following a prolonged illness. He was married to Deborah Ann Houston, his wife of

55 years, who preceded him in death in 2024. He is survived by his daughter Shelly Ann Houston of Orlando, and grandsons, Ethan Morgan Tessinari and Trenton Christian Tessinari, both of Apop-

ka, Florida. He is also survived by his sister, Bridgett M. Houston and brother Byron M. Houston, both of Clermont, Florida. The family will hold a private service at a later date.



## Sharon Anne Wilcox

Sharon Anne Wilcox, 83, of Apopka, Florida passed away on January 19, 2025. She was born on September 28, 1941 in Caribou, Maine. Mrs. Wilcox is preceded in death by her daughter Donna M. White; granddaughter Heather Bauman; as well as her siblings Sally Marlene Wood and John Monroe Wood. She is survived by her children David (Marcia) White, Paula (Joe) Haddan, Anne (Phillip) Blodgett and Wanda (Jerry) Jernigan; brothers Michael (Linda) Wood and Scott (Trudy) Wood; grandchildren Rebecca (John) Basmadjian, Patrick (Mari) Stephenson, James Dill, Anna Pagliarulo and Elizabeth Jernigan; as well as her great grandchildren Aiden Bauman and Seeley Basmadjian.

Ms. Wilcox was a natural caregiver. She sacrificed her wants for her family's needs. She demonstrated a strong work ethic and valued education. She led by example. She loved being a Mom and a Grandma, Mema, Nana and Gigi. Ms. Wilcox was a resident of Trailer City in Winter Garden and a devoted member of the choir at First Baptist Church of Winter Garden. She will be missed by her many loved ones and friends.

A graveside service will be held on Saturday, February 22, 2025 at 1:00pm at Ocoee Cemetery.



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With God, the distinction between creation and command seems to dissolve. The Bible often describes God as creating by command, as when God says "Let there be light," and there was light. (Genesis 1:3). Are we to believe that in this case God didn't need to think about the

physical means of creating light, and that His mere command made it so, or should we not rather believe that no human being can conceive of how the divine creative force could bring about light and darkness, to say nothing of existence itself.

The more we think about this distinction between creation and command, as it pertains to existence and the physical world, the more awesome appears the source of existence.

From whence comes all of this? Ponder your own existence for a moment. Why are you here? Is your existence merely the contingent result of an infinite series of causes and effects flowing back in time through all your ancestors, or is it the result of some divine creation and command? If contingent, where does this contingency end? There must be some necessary and non-contingent source of our existence.

- Christopher Simon



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## Creation & Command

(See message above.)

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With help from Apopka Area Chamber of Commerce members, Any Lab Test Now cut the ribbon to its new location on Feb. 12 at 991 W. Orange Blossom Trail, Apopka, in the Victoria Plaza.

### From Staff Reports

The Apopka Area Chamber of Commerce welcomed Any Lab Test Now to the community with a ribbon cutting on Wednesday, Feb. 12, at the

lab's site, 991 W. Orange Blossom Trail, Apopka. The franchise owners are Ravi Nadimpalli and Giridhara Gottumukkala.

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## Goodwill Apopka to be open on Sundays

### From Staff Reports

Goodwill Industries of Central Florida will give shoppers extra time on Sundays at eight additional stores including the Apopka store located at 1312 E.

Semoran Blvd., Apopka. Starting Feb. 16,

Goodwill will extend store hours from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Sundays at the Port Orange, South Orange Blossom Trail, Eustis, Lady Lake, Goldenrod, North

Melbourne, Apopka and Leesburg locations.

Shoppers have been testing the new hours at 10 stores since late last year to determine if the extension should be implemented permanently at all 29 re-

tail stores.

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# Cook eggplant, veggies on stove, then broiler-toast toppings

From Marvin Woods' book titled *The New Low-Country Cooking, we have Country Captain Chicken*. He says, "This dish, my updated version, exemplifies the influence of eastern India on the cuisine of the South. Like many Indian dishes, this chicken dish utilizes yogurt, curry, and mint in the marinade before it is grilled. (I also give directions on how to oven-fry the chicken.) As to how its name came about, there seem to be several theories. One is that it originated with an Indian officer who introduced a sea captain to this dish, who then brought the recipe to the United States."



- 1/2 cup tomato paste
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh mint leaves
- 2 tablespoons minced garlic
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- One 4-1/2 to 5-pound chicken, cut into pieces, rinsed and patted dry
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil (for oven-fry method only)

1) In a large bowl, stir together all of the ingredients except for the chicken and the oil. Add the chicken and toss to lightly coat with the marinade. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 12 hours and up to 48 hours. 2) To grill or broil: Remove the chicken from the marinade, letting the excess run back into the bowl. Grill or broil the chicken for 12 to 15 minutes per side, turning occasionally, until it is cooked through and the juices run clear when pierced with the tip of a sharp knife. 3) To oven-fry: Preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Heat the vegetable oil in a large skillet. Remove the chicken from the marinade, letting the excess run back into the bowl. Add the chicken to the skillet skin side down, one piece at a time. Cook for 5 to 7 minutes. Turn the chicken and brown the second side for 5 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a baking sheet and bake for 12 to 15 minutes, or until it is cooked through and the juices run clear when pierced with the tip of a sharp knife.

## OLD FASHIONED MAC 'N CHEESE FROM MUELLERS

- 8 ounces (1/2 pkg) Mueller's Elbows
- 1/4 cup margarine or butter
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1/8 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1/8 teaspoon salt (optional)
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 cups milk
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- 1 cup croutons

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cook pasta for 3 minutes and drain well. In medium saucepan, melt butter. Blend in flour, mustard, salt, and pep-

per. Gradually add milk and cook until mixture is smooth and bubbly, stirring constantly. Cook and stir over medium heat until mixture boils, stirring constantly. Turn heat to low, and simmer 1 minute, stirring constantly. Gradually mix in cheese and stir until cheese is melted. Add pasta; mix lightly. Pour into 2-quart casserole. Top with croutons. Bake uncovered 25 minutes or until temperature reaches 165-175 degrees.

## SUZIE TURNER'S EGGPLANT SUPREME

Recipe from *Pot Pourri of Zellwood*

- 1 tablespoon bacon drippings
- 1 medium eggplant, cubed small
- 1 medium green pepper, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 can tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

**Dash of Tabasco Sauce**

- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons crumbled bacon
- 2 slices bread, toasted and cubed

Cook first 9 ingredients in large skillet until tender. Top with cheese, bacon, and bread cubes. Brown under broiler.

## EMILY MEGGETT'S OYSTER STEW

Recipe from *Gullah Geechee Home Cooking* by Emily Meggett

- 1/4 cup unsalted butter plus set aside 2 tbsps unsalted butter
- 1-1/2 cups diced celery
- 1/2 onion, diced
- 3 cups whole or 2 percent milk
- 1 cup half-and-half
- Seasoning salt, to taste
- 1 quart shucked oysters
- Worcestershire sauce to taste
- Oyster crackers or saltines, for serving

1) In a large skillet, melt the 1/4 cup butter over medium heat. Add the celery and onion and sauté until tender. 2) Pour the sautéed vegetables into the top of a double boiler. Add the milk and half-and-half, and bring water in the bottom of the double boiler to a boil. 3) Add seasoning salt to taste. Cook for 3 minutes. 4) Drain the oysters and place in a saucepan with the remaining 2 tablespoons butter. Cook the oysters over medium heat until curled. 5) Transfer the oysters to the

top of the double boiler with the milk mixture. Gently stir together. Serve with Worcestershire sauce and crackers.

## BUTTERMILK CORN BREAD (SKILLET CORN BREAD)

From *Hearty Country Cooking*, by Mark S. Sohn

- 2 tablespoons stoneground cornmeal
- 2 cups self-rising cornmeal mix
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg
- 2 cups buttermilk

1) Preheat oven to 450 degrees Fahrenheit. Grease a heavy 10-inch cast-iron skillet. Sprinkle the stone-ground cornmeal on the bottom and place the pan in the oven. 2) In a large mixing bowl, combine the self-rising cornmeal and the salt. Make a well in the center and whisk in the egg and the buttermilk. Pour the batter into the hot skillet. 3) Bake for 30 minutes, and brown the top under the broiler for 1 minute. Remove from the oven and turn the corn bread out of the skillet onto a wire rack to cool. Cut into wedges and serve.

Note: As a healthy choice, omit the salt. The self-rising cornmeal contains salt. In place of bacon grease (if you have chosen to use it on your skillet), use nonstick cooking spray. Notice that the recipe does not have any added oil.

## SKILLET CORN BREAD:

To the above recipe, add 1-1/4 cups cracklings. Bake as muffins, sticks, or a pone\* and adjust the baking time according to your pan size.

\*A pone is "a loaf or oval-shaped cake of any type of bread, especially corn bread."

## SOUR DOUGH STARTER

Recipe from Paragon Products, Inc., *The Original Country Cookbook*

- 2 cups flour
- 1-3/4 cups warm (not hot) water
- 6 teaspoons dry yeast
- 2 tablespoons honey

Combine flour and dry yeast in a bowl. Mix honey in warm water and gradually add to dry ingredients. Store in earthenware pot at room temperature for two days to one week.

**View Kitchen Kapers by Nancy online at [www.theapokkachief.com/recipes](http://www.theapokkachief.com/recipes)**

A recipe loved by everyone is Old Fashioned Mac 'n Cheese from Muelers. I've used this very same recipe for years.

From *Pot Pourri of Zellwood*, we have Suzie Turner's Eggplant Supreme. It looks wonderful with the crumbled bacon on top for that extra flavor bounce.

We have Oyster Stew from Emily Meggett's *Gullah Geechee Home Cooking*, that will serve 10 to 12 people. You can use frozen oysters if you don't have access to fresh.

From *Hearty Country Cooking*, by Mark S. Sohn, here is Buttermilk Corn Bread (Skillet Corn Bread). He rates this recipe as easy, with only five ingredients. This corn bread tastes of buttermilk, a constant favorite of mountain cooks. We either bake skillet corn bread in the oven, as I direct below, or fry it on the stovetop. If you fry it on the stove, divide the recipe between two skillets so it won't be too thick.

How about Sour Dough Starter from *The Original Country Cookbook*? Many of us have visions of using starter to make our own sour-dough bread. If you don't have a friend who has starter for you to get a bit in order to get started, the following instructions will get you going. I believe the flour needs to be plain all-purpose flour, not self-rising flour.

**COUNTRY CAPTAIN CHICKEN**  
*The New Low-Country Cooking*  
by Marvin Woods  
1 cup plain yogurt

## FEBRUARY 2025 ★★ EVENTS ★ WEEKLY ★ UPCOMING ★ ONGOING ★★

**SCHOOL BEGAN AUGUST 12** - Traffic patterns will change. Stormy weather comes and goes! Be careful with your umbrellas. And always watch out for those school children ... and ducks. DON'T TEXT WHILE DRIVING - Please! YOU WILL PAY A FINE.

Children must be five years old on or before September 1 to start kindergarten. To enter first grade, a child must be six years old on or before September 1 and must have successfully completed kindergarten (Florida Statute 1003.21). Immunizations must be current.

UNLESS CHANGED: School Start Times for Elementary School & K-8: 8:45 a.m., Middle School: 9:30 a.m., High school: 7:20 a.m.

City of Apopka's Northwest Recreation Complex, 3710 Jason Dwellie Parkway, Apopka 32712, 407-703-1784. On any given weekend, you can see many, many families in attendance at the beautiful complex setting participating in various organized sport programs.

Amenities at the complex include: Soccer Fields, Softball Fields, Baseball Fields, Multi-Purpose Fields, Sand Volleyball Courts, Outdoor Basketball Courts, Tennis Courts, **Walking Trail**, Amphitheater, Playground, Concession Stands.

11-mile wildlife drive (complete with directional signs) (opened in 2015) on Lake Apopka shores, by entering from Lust Road off Binion Road, about a mile south of Camp Wewa in the Plymouth area, for one-way drive, 10 miles per hour, with possible wildlife spotting stops. **DO NOT FEED THE GATORS - IT MAY CAUSE CLOSING OF THE TRAIL.** If you are stopping, drive will take more than 1 hour. Drive runs by canals used in muck-farming days. The one-way drive exits on Jones Road in Zellwood. You will see a freshwater marsh system and wildlife dependent on that type of system. The drive is open on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays and federal holidays and is controlled by the county. Open during daylight hours only (one hour after sunrise and one hour before sunset). Official sunrise and sunset hours can be found online.

The road is closed on other days due to ongoing restoration work. The trail is 11 miles long.

**WEKIWA SPRINGS STATE PARK** is a 7,000-acre Florida State Park in Apopka, Florida. It is located 20 minutes north of Orlando, off Interstate 4 at exit 94, near Altamonte Springs and Longwood. The park also contains the head water of the Wekiva River. Address: 1800 Weki-

va Circle, Apopka 32712, open from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. For information, call 407-884-4311

**FRAN CARLTON CENTER** for seniors - senior activities at Fran Carlton Center. CALL 407-703-1642 FOR INFORMATION.

### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14 HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!

**ZUMBA FITNESS CLASS, FRIDAYS** at 9:00 a.m. at 11 N. Forest Ave., at the Fran Carlton Center.. Call 407-703-1642 for information.

**CENTRAL FL CHRISTIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**, 1806 S Bay St., Eustis, has Fellowship Friday meetings. For complete details of all chamber events, visit [christianchamber.com/events-chamber](http://christianchamber.com/events-chamber). Contact: [latrondra@cfchristianchamber.com](mailto:latrondra@cfchristianchamber.com)

### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15

VFW POST 10147 continues to have its fund raising breakfast on the **third Saturday each month**. Next one is Feb. 15, 2025 from 8-10 a.m. at 519 S. Central Avenue. Cost is only \$7.

**MUSEUM OF APOPKANS**, Saturday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 122 E. FIFTH STREET, APOPKA. Managed by Apopka Historical Society. Call 407-703-1624 for info.

**AVIAN RECONDITIONING CENTER**, for birds of prey, 323 Lester Rd., Apopka, hours: 9:30-1:30 p.m., The center is open on Saturdays to the public, weather permitting. Call 407-461-1056 for information.

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17 PRESIDENTS' DAY FEDERAL BANKING HOLIDAY

**FITNESS CLASS, MONDAYS** 9-10 a.m. 11 N. Forest Ave at Fran Carlton Center. Pre-register. Call 407-703-1642 for info.

**CRAFTS & CHATTER**: 9:30-12 noon. Fran Carlton Center, 11 N Forest Ave. Masks not required. Pre-register. Call 407-703-1642 for info.

**OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS** meets **Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m.**, Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit, 601 S. Highland Avenue. If you have a problem with food - overeating, anorexia, bulimia - there is a solution for you. For more information, visit [OA.org](http://OA.org) or call Carrie 781-867-1071.

**TOASTMASTERS**: Apopka Foli-

age Toastmasters #840, meets Wednesdays promptly at 7 p.m.-8:30 p.m., in person and zoom at the Museum of Apopkans, 122 E. 5th St., Apopka, 32703. Call 407-765-2629 for information.

### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18

**THE SERTOMA CLUB** meets the first and third Tuesday of each month, beginning at 11:30-noon, at Beef 'O' Brady's in The Back Room, 1410 Rock Springs Rd., Apopka. Interested community members are encouraged to attend and get acquainted. Meetings have resumed on first and third Tuesdays. Masks are encouraged.

**SENIOR CHAIR EXERCISE**, 9-10 a.m., 11 N. Forest Ave. at Fran Carlton Center. Masks no longer required. Pre-register. Call 407-703-1642 for info

**ART CLASS**. 9:30-12 noon. Fran Carlton Center, 11 N Forest Ave. Masks required. Temperature taken. Pre-register. Call 407-703-1642 for info

### WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19

The Altamonte Springs / Apopka VFW POST 10147, is NOW OPEN Wednesday and Saturday Mornings from (TIME CHANGE) 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. for coffee and doughnuts. (other hours by appointment only). 3rd Saturday of the month is VFW's fundraising breakfast. Also, evenings of Tribute music are planned. Call 407-889-8266, or email [info@vfwpost10147.com](mailto:info@vfwpost10147.com) for information. The VFW Auxiliary has been formed and is active as well. Don't forget to visit its excellent Military Museum.

**ZUMBA FITNESS CLASS**, 9-10 a.m., 11 N. Forest Ave., at the Fran Carlton Center. Masks no longer required. Pre-register. Call 407-703-1642 for info..

**SENIOR CHAIR EXERCISE**, 10-11 a.m., Billie Dean Community Center, 225 M.A. Board St., Masks are no longer required/ Pre-register. Call 407-703-1642 for info

**CITY OF APOPKA DRC** (Development Review Committee) meets every Wednesday at 9 a.m.-10 a.m. (or as long as necessary) at City Hall, 120 E. Main Street, Apopka. Check for the online version.

**BRIDGE CLASS**. 10:15 a.m.-1 p.m. (approximately) at Fran Carlton Center, 11 N Forest Ave. Masks are no longer required. Call 407-703-1642 for info.

**TOPS CHAPTER #646**. (Take Off Pounds Sensibly), TOPS, a non-profit organization, will help you

reach a weight goal with support from friendly, caring members, education, and rewards. Each Thursday weigh-in begins at 9:00 a.m. - meeting ends at 10:15 a.m.. Come to its NEW location 220 W. Horatio Avenue, Maitland, FL 32751 to meet with others who have a like-minded goal to lose weight. No products, no specific diet to follow, no meds. Call 407-580-0897 for more information.

**MUSEUM OF APOPKANS**, Open on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, 12 noon-5 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 122 E Fifth St. 407-703-1642 for info.

**EARLY BIRD BINGO** at Bahia Shrine Center, 3101 E. Semoran Blvd.. Doors open at 5 p.m., and the early bird game starts at 6 p.m. For more information, call 407-660-8811.

**TOASTMASTERS**: still meeting every WEDNESDAY, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m., by zoom. For more information, call 407-765-2629 or visit [www.Apopkatoastmasters.com](http://www.Apopkatoastmasters.com).

### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20

**SENIOR CHAIR EXERCISE**, 9-10 a.m., 11 N. Forest Ave., at the Fran Carlton Center. Masks are no longer required. Pre-register. Call 407-703-1642 for info.

**ROTARY CLUB OF APOPKA** - For information, call 407-415-6588. Call for updated information on meetings and location.

**MUSEUM OF APOPKANS**, Open from noon to 5 p.m. on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from 9 a.m.-noon. 120 E Fifth St. Call 407-703-1624 for info.

**ZUMBA FITNESS CLASS**, 9-10 a.m., 11 N. Forest Ave., at the Fran Carlton Center. Masks are no longer required. Pre-register. Call 407-703-1642 for info.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday Sounds, Saturday, April 27, 2024. HAPCO Apopka International Jazz Day with LeNard Rutledge & Friends at Sounds Concert Series. So far, nothing is scheduled for March.

Rotary Club of Apopka is working on their 24th annual fair at Kit Land Nelson Park, February 27-March 2

### ONGOING EVENTS

Florida Railroad Museum, 101 S. Boyd Street, Winter Garden, is open Tuesday-Saturday, 11-3 each week excluding holidays. For info, call 407-656-0559. . Must see.

**CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS** are public and will also be broadcast on this shortened link: <https://bit.ly/2ABrmsb>, and are normally held the first Wednesday at 1:30 p.m., and third Wednesday at 7 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 120 E. Main St., Apopka. Subject to change with notice. For info., call City Clerk 407-703-1704. Agenda and minutes of meeting can be found online. Once posted, check for any revisions by Tuesday at 5 p.m. before the meeting

**FOLIAGE GARDEN CLUB OF APOPKA**, meets the first Thursday of each month, September through May, at 9:45 a.m. at the Alonza William Park / Billie Dean Community Center, 225 M.A. Board St., Apopka. Contact: [apopkafgca@gmail.com](mailto:apopkafgca@gmail.com). NO MEETINGS JUNE-AUGUST.

**FREE PLANT CLINIC** in Apopka is open on Tuesdays. Do you have problems with your plants or lawn? Let a Master Gardener help. Orange County residents can bring their questions and samples to UF/IFAS Extension Master Gardener volunteers at the UF/IFAS Mid-Florida Research Education Center (MREC), 2725 Binion Road, Apopka, 32703; 9 a.m.-12 Tuesdays; 407-254-9200. Questions and photos can be emailed to [orangecounty@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:orangecounty@ifas.ufl.edu). to be answered by Master Gardeners. A free plant clinic for commercial growers is open Tuesdays 1-4 p.m. at the same location.

**KIWANIS CLUB OF APOPKA** IS now meeting MONTHLY on the 3rd Tuesday at 8 a.m. at Seacoast Bank, 345 E Main Street, Apopka. Contact 407-464-4606 for information

**BROWN BAG LUNCH** - Third Saturday of each month, Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit at the corner of Highland and 6th St., Apopka, from 10 a.m.-12 p.m., offer to all who come a brown bag lunch. In addition, men's socks, flip flops, stuffed animals, some clothing, children's books and pet food which is donated by My Pet World, Apopka, may be available. If interested in volunteering, call Debbie at 407-620-5081 for information.

**APOPKA FOLIAGE TOASTMASTER'S CLUB**, Wednesdays, 7 p.m., on Zoom, Apopka. 407-765-2629.

**NWOC FFA Alumni** - Monthly meetings (usually the 4th Monday evening in a month during the school year) are open to anyone. (Looking for more information)

**MUSEUM OF APOPKANS**, 122 E 5th Street, Hours open: Wednesday

to Friday, from noon-5 p.m., and Saturdays from 9 a.m.-1 p.m... Admission is free. Contains displays and information about Apopka's history, and has history books for sale. Monthly meetings of Apopka Historical Society are normally held on a Sunday afternoon. For more information, go to [www.theapokka-museum.com](http://www.theapokka-museum.com).

**THE APOPKA ELKS LODGE 2422** meets first and third Tuesdays of month, 201 W. Orange. For more information, call 407-886-1600 or email [apopkaelks@aol.com](mailto:apopkaelks@aol.com) Bar Bingo every Monday night at 7 p.m. promptly.

**GFWC APOPKA WOMAN'S CLUB**, meets at First Methodist Church, 201 N. Park Avenue. Call 407-880-2111 for more information.

**CITY OF APOPKA PLANNING & ZONING** - usually the second Tuesday of the month. 5:30 p.m. City Council Chambers, City Hall, 120 E. Main St., Apopka. All meetings open to the public. Subject to change with notice. For info., call David Moon, 407-703-1739.

**BRIDGE GAMES AND CLASSES**: Every Monday and Friday morning at 9:15 a.m., at the Lake County Duplicate Bridge Club, 510 W. Key Ave., Eustis. For more information, call 352-315-9934 or visit [lakeduplicate.com](http://lakeduplicate.com).

**NORTH ORANGE BRANCH LIBRARY HAS RE-OPENED**. COMPUTER CLASSES in both English and Spanish: Available daily or weekly at OCLS North Orange Branch. \*Classes are: Computer Basics, Excel, Word Resume Writing, Email for Seniors, ELLIS English Lab, Word, Online Job Searches, Power Point, Internet, Open Lab, How to use a mouse and keyboard, etc. Call OCLS North Orange Branch\* for more details.

**HABITAT VOLUNTEERS**: Go to [www.habitatseminoleapopka.org](http://www.habitatseminoleapopka.org), click on volunteers. There are a number of opportunities available at the Restores. Call 407-696-5855 or 407-880-8881 to sign up for information.

\*\*\*\*\*

(OCLS) Orange County Public Library North Orange Branch Address: 1211 E. Semoran Boulevard, Apopka 436 (Semoran) and Thompson Road. [www.ocls.info](http://www.ocls.info).

\*Apopka Area Chamber of Commerce, 2755 Border Ln., Suite #102-7, Apopka, 32703. For more info, call 407-886-1441

**COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR INFORMATION** Events, fund raisers, and non-profit organizations

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# City: Moratorium must have purpose and timeline of existence, attorney says

Continued from page 1A

year; and the moratorium must specify what developments it's stopping, whether it's all residential, all commercial, or anything else. If it's all types of developments, are they in a specific area, and, if in a specific area, what are the boundaries of that area?

If a moratorium's timeline goes over a year, the court will view this as "suspicious" and perhaps see the moratorium as a stop-work order for everybody who

has property rights. Therefore, the city must be able to justify its reason for the moratorium, Shepard said.

"It's a compounded problem because at this time in our history, not only as a state but as a country, we have probably the most overall conservative judiciary we've ever had," Shepard explained. "Why is that important? It's not a political statement. It's because the more conservative you are, typically the more into property rights you are. The more into property rights you are, the more likely you are to be on the wrong end of that judge. That's why you need to understand that this is not a political statement, it's just a factual statement. But that's why timing matters."

Commissioner Nick Nesta asked whether a moratorium could apply to a specific geographical location such as the Golden Gem pond area. He pointed out that the many infrastructure failures there can't support current or future developments. Shepard said yes if the city has a reason.

Earlier in the Feb. 5

meeting, Da Huo, utility design manager for city public service department, presented updates on restoring the 250-million-gallon Golden Gem pond sinkhole formation. Huo said the sinkhole had been filled in and now the city is exploring ways to strengthen the pond's structure to prevent future sinkholes.

Commissioner Alexander H. Smith discussed with Shepard how, if the city passes a moratorium affecting Golden Gem pond, how would that stop Orange County from developing in the same area if the city is supplying the water to unincorporated Orange County?

In response, Shepard said the moratorium wouldn't stop anybody who isn't building in Apopka. As for the water supply, the city must still do this if it has the duty to do so. Regarding if the water can't be supplied based on the pond's condition, then the city could say they can't continue to supply the water.

"I just want to make sure that we're not stopping growth inside the city, but

we have no control over the growth in unincorporated part, even though they're Apopka residents," Smith said.

"To the extent that not having available reclaimed water would put a damper on growth in the city, you would be doing that," Shepard replied. "If in fact what you are doing is saying we need to study, how water use or reclaimed water use from this specific area is affecting whatever it's affecting because you cannot control growth outside your boundaries. It's a sovereignty issue. Just like Orange County can't stick a road in Apopka without Apopka saying they can, that just doesn't work. So, they don't get to put in a street, a city road and say, here you go. It's just not how that works."

In the end, Shepard was asked to draft a few versions of the moratorium for the City Council's review at a future meeting, to which Shepard said he already has several drafts ready for submitting to the City Council for consideration.

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**SUDOKU ANSWERS**  
PUZZLE CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 2B

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T	A	C	T	I	L	E			I	N	K	B	L	O	T
P	E	S	E	T	A	S			C	O	L	L	A	G	E
			S	I	S	E			E	P	E	E			
D	E	T	E	S	T	S			S	E	S	S	I	L	E
A	L	A											R	A	N
S	I	D	E	C	A	R			P	A	S	S	A	G	E
			A	R	N	E			I	M	A	M			
P	O	U	R	I	N	G			S	A	L	A	A	M	S
P	A	N	A	C	E	A			C	H	A	L	L	I	S
B	R	I	C	K		T	A	I		B	L	O	A	T	
		T	H	E		T	A	N		L	E	I			
		Y	E	T		A	R	E		E	R	N			

**The Crossword Puzzle is found on page 2B**