

Housing

Orange County's Ready Set Orange initiative aims to further address affordable housing crisis. See page 6A.



Sports

Water polo season off to a good start. See page 1B.



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The Apopka Chief

Your trusted local news source

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Volume 103 Number 6

Friday, February 7, 2025 / 50 cents



Christine Moore (l), Orange County District 2 commissioner, watches Dawn McCranie (r), Silvestri Investments property manager (Florida division), speak at the Tuesday, February 4, press conference in the parking lot of Piedmont Plaza. Behind them is Lake Ruden, one of several lakes in the Piedmont-Wekiwa Road area that floods storm.



In this October 2024 file photo, the parking lot outside Chick-fil-A on S.R. 436 is flooded post-Hurricane Milton. Chick-fil-A shares a parking lot with Piedmont Plaza but is not part of the shopping center. Photo by Tammy Keaton

Moore reveals temporary flood control plan for S.R. 436 area

By Teresa Sargeant
Apopka Chief Staff

Ahead of this year's hurricane season, Orange County District 2 Commissioner Christine

Moore will present a short-term mitigation solution to control the post-storm floods in the S.R. 436/ Piedmont-Wekiwa Road area, which is to draw water out of Border Lake and transfer that wa-

ter into an existing drain well at Lake Page. Moore is scheduled to present the proposal at the Wednesday, February 19, Apopka City Council meeting. The meeting

begins at 7 p.m. in the city hall council chamber. Posing as a severe problem since 2017, the Border Lake post-storm flooding issue was front and center once again in Octo-

ber 2024 when the S.R. 436/Piedmont-Wekiwa Road area was underwater due to Hurricane Milton including the Piedmont Plaza

See FLOOD Page 7A

Main Street Apopka's Showcase of Cars draws crowd



Sixty-two classic, vintage, and antique cars were on display at the Sunday, February 2, Showcase of Cars on East Fifth Street in Apopka. Photo courtesy of Main Street Apopka

From Staff Reports

The streets of historic downtown Apopka came alive this past Sunday, February 2, as Main Street Apopka hosted its highly anticipated Showcase of Cars event on East Fifth Street. With 62 classic, vintage, and antique cars on display, car enthusiasts and community members gathered to admire a stunning lineup of automotive history.

Expert judges awarded winners in several categories, including Best of

Show, Best Motor, Best Interior, Best Display, and Best Paint, and a secret committee voted for the Fan Favorite. The event provided a vibrant atmosphere where car owners proudly showcased their meticulously restored and preserved vehicles, engaging with spectators and fellow collectors alike.

Main Street Apopka, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to revitalizing downtown Apopka through historic preservation, en-

See CARS Page 3A

City Council approves board appointment

By Teresa Sargeant
Apopka Chief Staff

At its Wednesday, February 5, meeting, the City

Council approved Mayor Bryan Nelson's appointment of David R. Woods to a three-year term on the Planning Commission.

Woods replaces Kirk Dickson, who resigned from the Planning Commission on January 27. Since Dickson re-

signed last month, there have been six members on the Planning Commission.

See CITY Page 5A

Black History Month event is Feb. 25

The Apopka Youth Council will honor twenty-eight legends that paved the way for so many in the community at the 2025

Celebrating Legends Event in Honor of Black History Month on Tuesday, February 25, at the Apopka Community Center/VFW Build-

ing, 519 S. Central Ave., Apopka.

The event will include a presentation from the Apopka Youth Council

to honor the 2025 Legends and their families, a special proclamation by May-

See EVENT Page 10A

CRA seeks public input in updating redevelopment plan

The Apopka Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) is looking for input from residents and community stakeholders to learn what they want to see in the updated redevelopment plan and how they want to see the CRA area continue to redevelop.

The CRA redevelopment plan update community meeting will take place on Wednesday, February

See PLAN Page 8A

Cabin project aims to bring ghost town back to life

By Don Philpott
Special to the Chief

Work will start shortly on two 19th century homesteaders log cabins as part of a project to recreate Ethel, a long-forgotten ghost town in Central Florida.

The 10-feet by 12-feet cabins will be replicas of one built by Finley Click in Ethel in 1888 and based on historic photographs taken at the time. Click, his wife and their three children all lived in that small space. When completed, one of the cabins will be used as a small museum and the other will be sparsely fur-

nished as it would have been back then.

The story of Ethel, which sprang up after the Civil War and disappeared almost without trace in the 1920s, will be featured at this year's East Lake Heritage Festival at Rock Springs Run State Reserve in Sorrento on March 22 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The annual Heritage Festival, now in its 11th year, is organized by the East Lake Historical Society. This is the second year the Friends of Ethel and the Wekiva Wilderness Trust



Pictured is the 1888 Click cabin, which will serve as the basis for the construction of two replica cabins as a means of recreating the lost town of Ethel. Photo courtesy of Wekiva Wilderness Trust.

See CABINS Page 8A

This week Section A Opinion..... 2A Public Notice..... 4A Worship 9A Dining & Ent..... 10A Kapers11A Bus. Rev. 12A Section B Sports 1B Legal ads..... 6-10B Classified..... 10-12B Service Dir..... 12B Find Public Notices Online at: TheApopkaChief.com/public-notices OR FloridaPublicNotices.com



Apopka Event of the Week

DIY Valentines will be held in the meeting room of the North Orange Branch Library, 1211 E Semoran Blvd., on Tues., Feb. 11, from 2-3 p.m. Explore art and stories while meeting new friends. Support your child's homeschool curriculum with crafts and stories from around the world.

Quotable

We do not recommend that you drink, swim, wade, use personal watercrafts, or come into contact with waters where there is a visible bloom.

DOH Orlando explains the danger of blue green algae on Lake Apopka

Opinion

The Apopka Chief
A weekly newspaper founded in 1923

Publisher Emeritus

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

Consultant Emeritus

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

Publisher

T. Jerrod Ricketson

Reporters

Teresa Sargeant
Marshall Tempest

Marketing Director

Jackie Trefcer

General Mgr Emeritus

Neoma Knox
Feb. 12, 1929 - Sept. 18, 2021

Our position

Quality of Lake Apopka's
water is always our concern

Editor's Note:

Inasmuch as there is concern about the quality of water in Lake Apopka, the following information from the Department of Health in Orlando explains the Blue Green Algae.

February 4, 2025

Kent Donahue

The DOH-Orange Cautions about Blue Green Algae at Lake Apopka: (Near Oakland Nature Preserve), Lake Roberts (S Dock), Lake Butler (W Shore), and Lake Hancock (John Hancock Drive Boat Ramp)

The Florida Department of Health in Orange County (DOH-Orange) cautions the public of the presence of blue-green algae in Lake Apopka (near Oakland Nature Preserve), Lake Roberts (S Dock), Lake Butler (W Shore), and Lake Hancock (John Hancock Drive Boat Ramp) on February 4, 2025. Water sample testing is underway. Blue-green algae have the potential to produce toxins. Since environmental conditions can change at any time, it is important to exercise caution, even if presence of toxins has not yet been confirmed.

Residents and visitors are advised to take the following precautions:

* We do not recommend that you drink, swim, wade, use personal watercrafts, or come into contact with waters where there is a visible bloom.

* Wash your skin and clothing with soap and water if you have any contact with algae, or discolored or water that smells unpleasant.

* Keep pets and livestock away from the area to avoid any contact with water. Waters where algae blooms are present are not safe for animals. Pets and livestock should use an alternative source of water when algae blooms are present.

* Do not cook or clean dishes with water contaminated by algae blooms. Boiling the water will not eliminate toxins.

* Eating fillets from healthy fish caught in freshwater lakes experiencing blooms is safe. Rinse fish fil-

lets with tap or bottled water, throw out the guts, and cook fish thoroughly.

* Do not eat shellfish in waters with algae blooms.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and partners collect algae samples from reported bloom locations. After samples are analyzed at their laboratory, the toxin results can be viewed on Protecting Florida Together or on DEP's Algal Bloom Dashboard.

What is Blue-Green Algae? Blue-green algae are a type of bacteria that is common in Florida's freshwater environments. A bloom occurs when rapid growth of algae leads to an accumulation of individual cells that discolor water and often produce floating mats that emit unpleasant odors. Blue-green algae blooms can also appear as scum, foam, or paint on the surface of the water in various colors.

To learn more about the appearance of algae blooms, visit Protecting Florida Together. Some environmental factors that contribute to blue-green algae blooms are sunny days, warm water temperatures, still water conditions, and excess nutrients. Blooms can appear year-round but are more frequent in summer and fall. Many types of blue-green algae can produce toxins. Blue-green algae may not always be visible as a bloom, but it can still be present in the water.

Is Blue-Green Algae Harmful? Blue-green algae can produce toxins, which can be harmful to humans and pets as well as ecosystems, including fish and other aquatic animals. Sensitive individuals (e.g., children, the elderly and those who are immunocompromised) may still be at risk even at low concentrations and should avoid any exposure.

For additional information on potential health effects of algae blooms, visit the Florida Department of Health's harmful algae blooms webpage. Where Can I Find

See ALGAE Page 4A



Support county schools by reading

If you have read my columns over the last several years, you should be familiar with Read Around the City. It's one of my favorite initiatives we do because it is so simple, yet so impactful.

The Read Around the City challenge began a few years ago in partnership with an amazing non-profit partner here in Apopka, Reimagine Communities. We began the initiative by inviting elementary students to read books and go to local businesses to collect prizes. The students were given a map of the businesses that were participating to get

Orange County School Board, District 7



Melissa Byrd

stamped at each location.

Once the students completed their map of Apopka, they would bring the map back to their media specialist at their school for a prize. This program became a huge success that the students and schools look forward to each year.

Last year, we expanded the program through all of District 7, which included Ocoee and Winter Garden. We made a couple of changes as we moved to a virtual reading logging app called Beanstack that the schools already used. We also invited all schools including middle and high schools to participate. All students in my district were invited to read and log minutes and compete to be the top reader and top school.

What made last year even more fun was that we opened the challenge up to

See BYRD Page 4A

Volunteers help beautify Orange County

Do you know how to choose the right plant for the right place? What looks great to the eye may not flourish in everyone's yard. The University of Florida/IFAS Extension Orange County focuses directly on plants and flowers that work for your yard, and through the unique Master Gardener Volunteer Program, everyone can learn what plant or foliage purchase is best.

With the expertise of Master Gardener Volunteers, the county benefits local ecosystems because people use less water, less fertilizer and fewer pesticides when they choose and maintain the appropriate Florida-friendly plants. With so many new

County Commissioner District 2



Christine Moore

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 in the volunteer program spend 12 weeks of intensive educational training on soil sci-

ence, entomology (plant insects), plant pathology (bacterial/fungal diagnostics), vegetable gardening, turf grass, palm trees, and more. Once training is complete, 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-

See MOORE Page 4A

This Week In God's Word

Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up.
Romans 15:2

Mema Says

Just because it's a kind or sweet thing to do, doesn't mean it's the will of God for you.

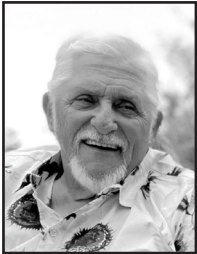
The Apopka Chief is published every Friday and entered as Periodicals, postage paid at Apopka Post Office, under the Act of Congress of March 23, 1879. The Apopka Chief newspaper is published by Foliage Enterprises, Inc., every Friday at 400 N. Park Avenue, Apopka, Fla., 32712-3417. An annual subscription 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.



America's strength is in her unity – together we are one!

"What a difference a day makes," so goes the first line of the song. I would change one thing, and that would be "day" to "administration." We have seen so much change, and promises being kept, it's hard to keep up with it. I love it!

America has spoken, and I believe it has spoken true. I see the spark of hope in every eye, and I see the spirit of patriotism in every action. Guess what? We are all Americans, and that is what matters.



Ike Hayden

I was raised in a time when a man was judged by his character, his work ethics, his word being true, and it had nothing to do with the color of your skin, the religion he practiced, or any of the above. I've

worked many different jobs, alongside many different people, and the thing that struck me was the fact that neither race nor creed made any difference in their ability to do the job assigned them. I thought our divisive days were over, and then came the sport event of the year;

SUPER BOWL LIX!! By this time next week, it will all be over. I won't watch the game because I am a veteran and I believe in one national anthem, for "One Nation Under GOD!"

This division of Americans is what started the deadliest war, in the cost of American lives lost (more than all other wars combined). I have seen black, yellow, red, and white Americans die for our nation, and they all saluted "Old Glory" and marched to the Star Spangled Banner.

I would not move to Somalia, and expect them to adopt my national anthem for any reason. If you want your own race to be separated from all others, buy an island; claim your

sovereignty, set up your own constitution; and isolate yourself from the rest of humanity: Let's see how that works for you!

The strength of America is in our unity, "E Pluribus Unum"... out of many one, and to take your "one" away weakens our nation's unity.

Everyone wants to toot their own horn, and until we learn that we only have one horn to toot, and one people to toot it (Americans), we are going to suffer ridicule from all other

nations of the world.

There is no "something-American!" We are a nation set apart as an example of what a self-governing nation, with a constitutional foundation of law, can do and prosper, because we act as one. It is none of your business what someone thinks about you, so let us concentrate on what we can do to encourage, support, and gender more "Americanism," within our neighbor-

See HAYDEN Page 4A

Citizen honored by appointment

Editor:

To: Mayor, Commissioners and City Administrator:

I have the honor to serve as the District 2 Representative on TransMAC (Transportation Mobility Advisory Commission).

We had our organizational meeting last Thursday, January 30, 2025.

I am making my way

through all the policies, procedures, handbook, ethics, and Sunshine materials in hand at this time as well as Orange County proposed 2025-2026 transportation expenditures.

It is an honor to have the opportunity to serve Orange County. My focus is to ensure that we have the proper infrastructure in place to meet the current and ever-growing needs

to support our growth and the diverse transportation needs of our community.

Please, if there is anything that I can do to better serve the City of Apopka as part of Orange County, please let me know.

Thank you for what you do for the City.

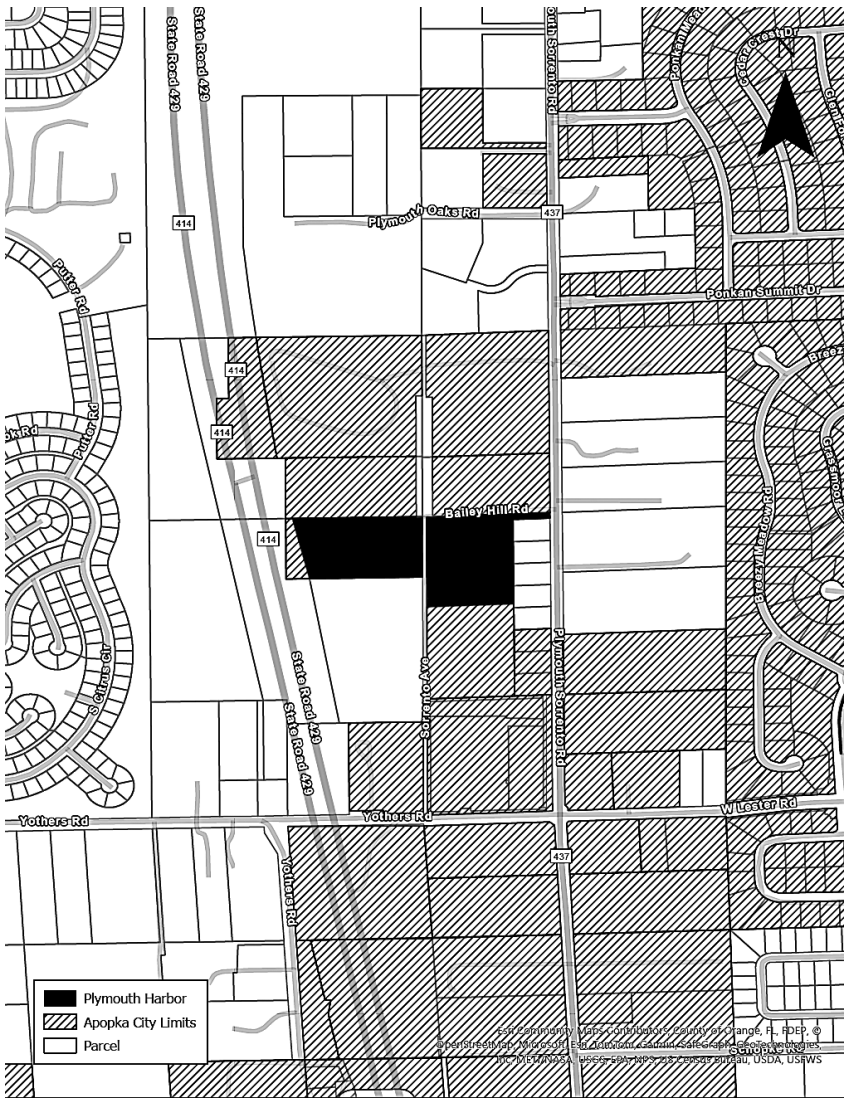
Stay safe and God's Speed.

Rod Olsen
Apopka

CITY OF APOPKA PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE 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 **Geoff Summitt** has made application relating to the following described property.

ORDINANCE NO. 3091
AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF APOPKA, FLORIDA, CHANGING THE ZONING FROM RSF-1A (RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-FAMILY ESTATE DISTRICT) TO RSF-1B (RESIDENTIAL SINGLE FAMILY-LARGE LOT), FOR CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY LOCATED 2260 PLYMOUTH SORRENTO ROAD; OWNED BY PARMANI FARMS LLC; AND 2244 SORRENTO AVENUE; OWNED BY MACAULAY GEORGE, COMPRISING 9.51 ACRES, MORE OR LESS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, CONFLICTS, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.



Parcel Identification Number(s): 30-20-28-0484-00-085, 25-20-27-0000-00-022

Contains: 9.51 +/- Acres

Notice is given that a public hearing for **Ordinance Number 3091** 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, February 19, 2025 beginning at 7:00 P.M.**

Affected parties and the public may appear at the above listed hearings to speak. The proposed Rezoning Application 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 7, 2025

Publish: The Apopka Chief

177925

EVERYBODY HAS AN OPINION. WHY NOT SHARE YOURS?
Send a letter to the Editor online: [TheApopkaChief.com](https://www.theapopkachief.com)

Algae: Contact information given

Continued from page 2A

Current Water Status Information?

Current information about Florida's water quality status and public health notifications for harmful algae blooms and beach conditions is available at Protecting Florida Together. You can subscribe to receive notifications when water quality changes in your area.

Where Can I Report Issues Related to Algae Blooms?

* Algae Blooms: DEP monitors algae blooms and collects samples for analysis. Blooms can be reported to DEP online or by calling toll-free at 1-855-305-3903.

* Human Health: Report symptoms from exposure to a harmful algae bloom or any aquatic toxin

to the Florida Poison Information Center by calling 800-222-1222 to speak to a poison specialist.

* Animal Health: Contact your veterinarian if you believe your pet has become ill after consuming or having contact with blue-green algae contaminated water.

* Fish Kills: Dead, diseased, or abnormally behaving fish or wildlife should be reported to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission online or at 800-636-0511.

If you have other health questions or concerns about blue-green algae, please call DOH-Orange at 407-723-5004.

kent.donahue@flhealth.gov
407-858-1418 Orlando, Fla.

Byrd: Your minutes will add up

Continued from page 2A

the community and adults, as well. Anyone could log their minutes and donate their minutes to the school of their choice. Not only was this a great community builder, but it sent the message to the students that everyone enjoys reading - even the adults in their lives.

Well, the program last year was a huge success. Our goal was for the entire district to read one million minutes in the two months of the challenge. We surpassed that goal and read over two million minutes! But more importantly, the schools had a great time.

I was particularly pleased that the winning school out of all 26 schools in District 7 was a middle school! Our own Wolf Lake Middle School. Any time you can get middle school-

aged children to read, I consider that a win for sure.

The reason I give the background of the reading challenge is that this year we have big news! Our little reading challenge that started right here in Apopka has now been adopted by OCPS to run district-wide!

Every school in OCPS is participating currently in Let's Read OCPS. The district was so impressed with our success last year in my district that they enthusiastically wanted to expand the program for everyone in Orange County.

Let's Read OCPS kicked off on January 27 and will run through April 30. Everyone in Orange County is invited and encouraged to participate. Anyone can download the Beanstack app and join the challenge, then read and log your minutes each day.

We have the City of Or-

lando and Orange County Government participating as well, with Mayors Buddy Dyer and Jerry Demmings providing video encouragement!

The goal is 20 million minutes, and I think we will do it! The competition is already getting exciting what with the different school board member districts as well as between the schools. This is going to be fun, and I'm so proud of our school district for embracing this initiative as we find creative ways to encourage reading and community.

I encourage all *The Apopka Chief* readers to join in the challenge! You can log your minutes reading this column! Go to your app store and download the Beanstack app, then join the Let's Read OCPS challenge. It's very easy to set up an account. Join in the fun!

Moore: Plant information is shared

Continued from page 2A

teering takes place at free plant clinics, during which people receive help with their plant problems at the Extension facility at 6021 S. Conway Rd., 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 Orange County libraries.

"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 initia-

tive, the program relies on dedicated volunteers passionate about gardening and committed to serving their communities... and the title is most certainly earned.

"Master Gardener Volunteers do this out of passion and the goodness of their hearts, which is nice to see in any community," said Chairez. "They're here to educate the community on sustainable gardening methods, so take advantage of their extensive knowledge."

You can meet our county Master Gardeners at the 2025 Garden Festival and Plant Sale on Sat., Mar. 1, 2025 from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the UF/IFAS Extension Orange County, 6021 Conway Rd., 32812.

Key festival highlights include:

· Vendor Marketplace:

Discover a wide variety of plant species and unique gardening crafts from our diverse group of vendors.

· Educational Speakers: Gain insights from experts who will share tips and techniques on gardening and plant care, with a focus on embracing diversity in your garden.

· Food Trucks: Enjoy delicious offerings from local food trucks, with a selection of dishes that celebrate the culinary diversity of our community.

· Youth Activities: Hosted by both our Master Gardener Volunteers and Orange County 4-H, we will have a series of youth garden crafts and activities - fun for the whole family!

This is the place to speak with experienced gardeners and get fresh, Florida-friendly inspiration for your yard!

Hayden: Share your love with others

Continued from page 2A

hoods, cities, and our state. The only way to have good

neighbors, is to be a good neighbor!

Let's not waste the opportunity this new ad-

ministration is providing. As the Bible says, "Love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:37-40).

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.theapopkachief.com, news@theapopkachief.com



City of Apopka Telephone Numbers

City Hall407-703-1700
Mayor's Office407-703-1701
City Administrator407-703-1649
City Clerk407-703-1704
Community Devel.407-703-1712
Code Enforcement407-703-1738
Finance Dept.407-703-1725
Fire (non-emerg.).....407-703-1756
Parks and Rec. Dept.407-703-1741
Police Chief407-703-1769
Police (non-emerg.).....407-703-1771
Job Line407-703-1743
Solid Waste Collect.....407-703-1731
Street Maintenance407-703-1731
Utility Billing407-703-1727
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 Mayor407-836-7370
County Commission.....407-836-7350
County Attorney407-836-7320
Clerk of the Court.....407-836-2065
Elections Supervisor.....407-836-2070
Fire/Rescue407-836-3111
Solid Waste407-836-6601
Garbage Collection.....407-703-1731
Health Dept.407-836-2600
Hunting/Fishing Lic888-347-4356
Parks and Rec. Dept.407-836-6200
Property Appraiser407-836-5044
Sheriff Administrative407-254-7000
Non-Emerg. Complaint.....407-836-4357
Utilities407-836-5515
All other departments407-836-3111
Medical, fire emergency..... 911
www.orangecountyfl.net

Other Area Numbers of Note

U.S. Senators
Rick Scott (Rep.) 202-224-5274
Marco Rubio (Rep.).....407-254-2573
U.S. Representative
Daniel Webster (Dist. 11)..... 352-241-9220
State Representatives
Doug Bankson407-476-6787
Carolina Amesty (Dist. 45).....unknown
State Senators
Geraldine Thompson (Dist.11) 407-297-2045
Orange County Commissioner
Christine Moore407-836-7350
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 Chief407-886-2777
Museum of the Apopkans.....407-703-1707
Chamber of Commerce.....407-886-1441

City: Planning Commission is city's local planning agency

Continued from page 1A

A new member must be appointed to ensure the board has seven members.

Woods is a retired resident and a board member of his homeowners association, according to paperwork included in the February 5 City Council meeting agenda packet.

"I would bring to the Planning Commission a non-bias view as to applying the Apopka land development code," Woods wrote on the appointment application. "As Apopka continues to grow, it is important to have individuals on the Planning Commission who are realizing landowners have a right to develop their property, pro-

vided it meets the city's land development code. It's the commission's responsibility to evaluate each project from the view of the land development code not on personal preference. I believe I can bring that to the commission."

The Apopka Planning Commission is established as a citizen board to review and recommend to the City Council, approval or denial of development plans, amendments to the zoning map, amendments to the Land Development Code, proposed subdivision plats, proposed site plans, and future land use map amendments. In accordance with Florida Statutes, the Planning Commission serves as the city's local planning

agency when reviewing and recommending to the City Council, any future land use amendments to the comprehensive plan and future land use map.

There are seven members that are appointed by the mayor and approved by the City Council. Members are appointed to three-year terms and must live within the city limits.

The Planning Commission normally meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. Additional meetings are scheduled depending on the subject or volume of applications.

*Tell them
you saw it in
The Apopka Chief*



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

WHAT'S HAPPENING SO FAR

Surprise! It's easier this time around to find one or two in D.C. who think that President Trump has lots of good plans for our country. Outside of D.C., of course, it's not that surprising. After far too many years of our Constitutional Rights and Freedoms being denied us by one-party, left-leaning policies and programs, the 49.9 percent of Americans who voted for Donald Trump in the 2024 election are breathing sighs of relief, and feeling hopeful about the future.

I feel better just seeing political leaders with smiles on their faces after seeing press coverage that's been so dark and depressing, with former leaders throwing doom and gloom at us, as well as their hateful attitudes toward anyone who doesn't agree with their liberal, and often un-Godly, beliefs.

There are still confirmation hearings to be held, but as of last Friday, January 31, 8 Cabinet Members have been confirmed. My deadline being Monday, when you read this, there will have been more hearings held, some of which I expect to be pretty interesting. So far, what I've seen saw of those already held hearings, were... hmmm. I don't use the words most accurately describing them, so I'll go for Rude, Crude, and Socially Unacceptable.

Remember how I described above the general attitudes of the Democrat questioners? They'd also apply here. The ugliness, hatefulness, and smug superiority were enough to make me ill, but I grabbed an Alka-Seltzer and soldiered on... refusing to be part of the uninformed voters. Maybe what bothered me most was the complete and utter lack of respect they showed the nominees... respect that *they* would, and do, demand. I guess they haven't done any self-evaluations since losing the election, because they still don't know their job descriptions. They're

still on their snooty high horses, acting like they're Kings of the Hill, looking down their noses at the peons they think are supposed to fawn all over them. Not A Good Look! I wonder at their inability to recognize the irony in their attitudes and questions. The things they seemed to see as negatives in some of these nominees are ... gasp ... things they have done themselves for decades but have never been called on for their behavior.

For example: There seemed to be "concern" about Pam Bondi's "allegiance" to Donald Trump. That question strikes me as beyond ridiculous. How would they answer that question if asked about their loyalty to Joe Biden, or themselves? If his Attorney General didn't feel loyal toward him, why would the president want her working for him? My goodness, even the manager of a grocery store would think employee loyalty is important and would probably fire someone who spread disloyalty among the other workers.

The question of allegiance, or loyalty, is part of the equation when applied to our leader's allegiance to We the People, their loyalty to those of us they (supposedly) represent and serve. Oh, politicians on the left, and some on the other side, too, unfortunately, love to talk about "We're doing this for the American people." They can't keep pulling the wool over our eyes on that one, because legislation passed, and money spent has not been to the benefit of Americans as much as to people who have started their lives in our country by committing a crime - crossing the border illegally. The list, too often, continues after that.

Am I against Immigration? No. Am I against *illegal* immigration? Yes! And, as an American citizen who is required to follow and obey our laws, or suffer the consequences, I see no reason to apologize for expecting others to do the same and suffer the consequences.

As for "Separating Families" ... well, if I'm expected to be responsible for the consequences I - or my children - suffer because of my decisions, then so should everyone.

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New county program will make it easier to add extra housing

Looking to build a Mother-in-Law suite in your backyard for an aging family member? Or maybe you want to put a long-term rental unit behind your house for an extra source of income?

A new Orange County program called Ready Set Orange is here to make it easier than ever to construct an Accessory Dwelling

Unit on your property.

As part of the County's ongoing effort to address the housing affordability crisis, Ready Set Orange allows homeowners in unincorporated Orange County to choose from four pre-designed ADU floorplan models. Customers are provided with step-by-step instructions on how to receive the floorplans free of charge

and how to obtain final construction permits.

The program is designed to help homeowners save time and money.

Orange County's Chief Planner Carter Gresham said there has been tremendous interest and momentum behind ADUs since the county began allowing them in 2019. However, since they are a fairly new concept, there has also been confusion surrounding how they work.

"There have been a lot of questions regarding where to start, how the process of building one begins," Gresham said. "Ready Set Orange is here to really kick this process into high gear."

An ADU is a smaller, independent residential dwelling unit located on the same lot as a stand-alone, detached single-family home. ADUs provide living space for family members of homeowners or can be rented out by tenants for a period of more than 180 days.

However, the program



This is a rendering of the Seville, one of several Ready Set Orange accessory dwelling unit (ADU) plans offered. Ready Set Orange is an Orange County initiative addressing the housing affordability crisis. The program allows homeowners in unincorporated areas of the county to choose from pre-designed ADU and single-family home floorplans for construction.

is not just for ADUs. The program also offers four pre-designed floorplans for small single-family homes, perfect for newlywed couples looking to build a starter home.

Orange County needs more housing products like these.

"The intent of this program is to provide greater attainable housing op-

portunities for residents by eliminating barriers in the process," said Olan Hill, Assistant Manager of the County's Planning Division. "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."

Four of the "Ready Set

Orange" floorplans available are for ADUs, ranging in size from 531 square feet to 708 square feet. The other four floorplans are for single-family homes, ranging in size from 1,150 square feet to 1,483 square feet

Visit [OCFL.net/PlanningDevelopment/Ready-SetOrange.aspx](https://ocfl.net/PlanningDevelopment/Ready-SetOrange.aspx) for more information.

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- Circle K & BP, Hwy 441 S. of Walmart
- Circle K, Keene Rd / Clarcona

- Citgo, 441 & Boy Scout Blvd (Plymouth)
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Flood: Moore spoke briefly at Feb. 5 City Council meeting, but gave no presentation

Continued from page 1A

parking lot. Nearby Wekiwa 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 that has impacted residents living along Lake Cortez for weeks.

At a Tuesday, February 4, press conference in the parking lot outside Piedmont Plaza, Moore said she wants to collaborate with the city of Apopka on resolving the flooding problem, especially since the S.R. 436/Piedmont-Wekiwa section is within the city’s jurisdiction.

According to Moore, the city has a long-term flooding mitigation solution that involves building a pipe system to the city’s Cleveland Street facility, but that solution could take three to five years to come to fruition.

“I don’t know what’s being presented tomorrow. I’m assuming it’s the city’s plan and we would like to be able to talk with the Council about both plans,” Moore said at the press conference. “I’m not objecting to the mayor’s plan. It’s

a long-term solution, but right now, I don’t want to see these people go through another year of flooding, so to me, the short-term is really non-negotiable.”

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.

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

Border Lake flooding has been a severe problem since 2017. Multiple joint meetings have taken place. As the major government with responsibility for the watershed, Mayor Nelson has never brought a solution to fruition. Orange County government also approached FDEP on trying to find the aging drain well, replace it and there has not been success.

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 Wekiwa Road to the Lake Page drain well. County staff has developed a study and a preliminary cost analysis for the project.

Flooding from last year’s hurricane season created 78 new potholes in the Piedmont Plaza parking lot, according to Dawn McCranie, Silvestri Investments property manager (Florida division). New ones have formed because the water levels are still so high.

“We really need assistance to prevent flooding,”

McCranie said in a phone interview with *The Apopka Chief* after the February 4 news conference, where she also spoke.

Silvestri Investments purchased Piedmont Plaza in December 2022. She said that in speaking with Piedmont Plaza tenants, she learned that they had never seen flooding as bad as it was before last autumn.

“I’m up for anything right now,” McCranie said about finding a solution to the flooding problem. “We can’t handle any more of these storms.”

Moore said the city denied her the chance to present the temporary flood mitigation plan at the February 5 City Council meeting. At the February 5 meeting, Mayor Bryan Nelson said Moore was scheduled to present on February 19, and that the city never received a phone call or email requesting Moore to get on the February 5 agenda.

The City Council voted to allow Moore to speak briefly about the short-term flood mitigation plan at the beginning of the meeting as opposed to the end during public comment, but no presentation was done.

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Plan: Under Florida Statute, local governments can designate CRAs

Continued from page 1A

12, 5-7 p.m. at the Apopka Community Center, where the public will have an opportunity to hear more about the plan and provide feedback.

The purpose of a redevelopment plan is to address changes in building stock, market conditions, demographics, technolog-

ical advances, and many other challenges in hopes of improving the maintenance and quality of life for enjoyment of all residents, as well as vitality in the downtown area that will spawn additional economic growth and increase property values.

Those who are unable to attend the meeting or would like to participate

online in addition to attending in person, may visit the online feedback form at apopkafl.form.transform.civicplus.com/47649 to give input on items or priorities for the new plan.

Additional CRA information

What is the city of Apopka's Community Redevelopment Area (CRA)?

CRAs are a specifically focused financing tool for redevelopment. Under Florida Statute, local governments are able to des-

ignate areas as Community Redevelopment Areas (CRAs) when certain conditions exist such as the presence of substandard or inadequate structures, a shortage of affordable housing, inadequate infrastructure, insufficient roadways, and inadequate parking. The city of Apopka and Orange County established the downtown CRA in 1993. Per Florida Statute, the CRA adopted a redevelopment plan in 1993, and an update of the redevelopment plan was ad-

opted in 2017. In 2024, the CRA Board indicated that the 2017 update needs to be updated.

In addition, the CRA offers multiple residential and non-residential assistance programs for properties within the CRA. They include the Residential Fee Assistance Program (RFAP), Residential Renovation Assistance Program (RRAP), Demolition Assistance Program (DAP), Façade Renovation Assistance Program (FRAP), Building Code Assistance

Program (BCAP), Building Permit Refund Assistance Program (BPRP), and the Business Impact Fee Assistance Program (BIFAP).

What does the process look like for updating the redevelopment plan?

The CRA is looking for input from residents and community stakeholders to learn what they want to see in the updated redevelopment plan, and how they want to see the CRA area continue to improve and develop.

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Cabins: Rebuilding brings history alive

Continued from page 1A

have partnered with the Society. Exhibitors, crafters. Exhibitors, arts and crafters and reenactors will demonstrate what life was like back then. Visitors will enjoy live music, entertainment, children's games and more. Festival food will also be available.

Before the Civil War, Rock Springs (now Kelly Park) was the site of the largest plantation in the area. It was owned by William Delk, a Union supporter, who in 1863 freed his slaves and went off to work with the Union army. After the war, he returned to reclaim his property. Some of

his freed slaves and homesteaders moved into the area and Ethel was born.

After more than 15 years of research, historians now know the names of most of the people who lived in Ethel over their years, the location of their homesteads, and much about their daily lives from vintage photos, letters and postcards written at the time. Ethel had a store, post office, a one room school, train station and cemetery. In its heyday, a population of about 250.

Last year the Historic Ethel Trail was opened, a 1.5-mile wheelchair accessible loop through what would have been the cen-

ter of the township. Twelve interpretive panels along the route describe what life was like back then. There are guided walks every month, and a self-guiding brochure at the trailhead for those who want to explore by themselves.

A professional cultural resources survey conducted last spring located the sites of many cabins, found 594 artifacts and identified promising areas for future investigation.

"The Amazing story of Ethel, Anthony Frazier and William S. Delk," based on all the research, is available as a free downloadable eBook from www.wwt-cso.com. The next step is to create

the Ethel Village, a collection of cabins and kitchen gardens as a living history site. The village will feature crops that would have been grown back then, using heirloom seeds. Era-appropriate agricultural tools and methods will be used. The aim is to have crafters use the cabins at weekend and special events to display their crafts such as weaving, spinning, carpentry and more – all the day-to-day activities Ethel residents would have done.

For more information contact Don Philpott, president of Wekiva Wilderness Trust, at 321-277-8442.

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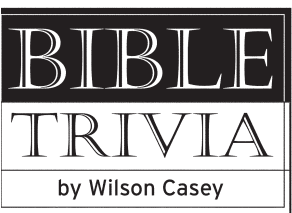
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Miriam was shut out of camp

1. Is the book of 3 Timothy (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. Who said, “Lo, I dwell in a house of cedars but the ark of the covenant ... remaineth under curtains”? David, Nathan, Saul, Solomon
3. From Numbers 12, why was Miriam shut out of camp for seven days? Ungodly act, Leprous, Fasting, Lent
4. Who took David in as his own after the slaying of Goliath? Jonathan, Solomon, Saul, Eliakim
5. About how tall was Goliath in approximate cubits? 3, 4, 5, 6



6. Upon which mountain did Aaron die? Hor, Carmel, Pisgah, Sinai
ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) David, 3) Leprous, 4) Saul, 5) Six, 6) Hor
Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson Casey’s latest book, “Test Your Bible Knowledge,” available in bookstores and online.
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Obituaries

GLENN E. BOETCHER, 95, of Zanesville, Ohio and previously of Zellwood, FL, passed away on February 2. Born on October 19, 1929, daughter of Orville and Mary White Maxwell. Glenna is preceded in death by: husband, Virgil E. Boetcher; brothers, Virgil (Nellie) Maxwell, Chester (Ina Mae) Maxwell; sisters, Violet (Don) Russi, Wilda (Wally) Lautenschleager, Kay (Robert) Montgomery. She is survived by: sons, Randy Boetcher, Steven (Kendra) Boetcher; four grandchildren; five great grandchildren.

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Some fear that too much science and philosophy will turn

people into atheists, or at least agnostics, and while this may on occasion be true, the reverse is more likely to be the case.

That is, the more we delve into science, whether that be physics and chemistry, or biology and psychology, the more awestruck we are.

Philosophy and science often begin in wonder, and because there is no end to the study of natural phenomena – we can never know everything there is to know about any subject – contemplation of nature properly ends in reverence.

Christopher Simon



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In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.
Matthew 5:16

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(See message above.)

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Psalm 148:3 NIV

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Orange Audubon Society organizing ‘Conservation of the Unique Wekiva Wild’

The Orange Audubon Society is organizing “Conservation of the Unique Wekiva Wild and Scenic River System” by Ashley Konon on Thursday, February 20, at 7 p.m. at the Harry P. Leu Gardens, 1920 North Forest Ave., Orlando, in the Camellia Room.

What are the exceptional qualities that earned the Wekiva River its designation as a national Wild and Scenic River, one of only two in Florida and 200 around the coun-

try? Ashley Konon, the river ambassador for the Wekiva Wild and Scenic River system, will present for Orange Audubon Society on February 20th and showcase the innovative programs and projects dedicated to preserving this river’s beauty for future generations.

Konon has a degree in Animal Science from the University of Vermont, has been a zookeeper at three zoos, a kayak guide on the Indian River Lagoon and is passionate

about connecting people with nature through her work or hobbies, including photography, kayaking, paddle boarding, painting, biking, and camping. In her role as river ambassador, she focuses on conservation efforts and promoting the health of the Wekiva River system.

The event is free and no reservations are necessary.

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White is named to dean’s list

Samara White of Apopka was among the more than 8,700 undergraduate students at the University of Iowa named to the dean’s list for the 2024 fall semester,

according to the university’s press release.

The University of Iowa has over 200 areas of study to choose from, and is located in Iowa City, IA.

Ottati named to dean’s list

Ansley Ottati of Apopka, seeking a bachelor of science in veterinary health science, was named to the Lincoln Memorial University dean’s list for fall 2024, according to a press release

from the university.

To be placed on the dean’s list, the student must be a full-time undergraduate and have a 3.5 or higher grade-point-average for the semester. Over 700 stu-

dents were recognized for high academic achievement.

Lincoln Memorial University is located in Harrogate, Tenn.

Event: City is compiling third volume of historic community legends

Continued from page 1A

or Bryan Nelson, special music, reception for attendees, and more.

Volume 3 of the booklet “Celebrating Legends of Apopka” will also be available for purchase at this event. The Apopka Youth Council and the Museum of the Apopkans will be partnering together for

this year’s Black History Month Book Project. This collaboration will celebrate and recognize those whose contributions have left an impact on Apopka and surrounding areas.

Email Stephen Cribb, city special project manager, at scribb@apopka.net for additional information about this event.

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SUDOKU ANSWERS
PUZZLE CAN BE
FOUND ON PAGE 2B

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

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Puzzle Solution

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The Crossword Puzzle is found on page 2B

One-pot rice dish makes a delicious rice and chicken perloo

Mrs. Meggett has a recipe for Chicken Perloo in her *Gullah Geechee Home Cooking*. She says, "Many of the one-pot rice dishes in the



Lowcountry and the South can trace their origins back to west Africa. There's jollof rice in West Africa, jambalaya in Louisiana, and here in the Lowcountry? We've got red rice and chicken perloo. Chicken perloo has a lot of the same European and African cooking styles you find in dishes like Spanish paella and Ghanaian jollof rice. However, tender chicken, broth, and perfectly fluffed rice make this a true Lowcountry dish."

From our friends in Plains, Georgia, we are going to savor a couple of the recipes they have shared in the *Plains Pot Pourri*, which the Plains Jr. Woman's Club published in 1977. Their Junior Pledge states: "*I pledge my loyalty of junior clubwoman by doing better than ever before, what work I have to do, by being prompt, honest, courteous; by living each day, trying to accomplish something, not merely to exist.*" It states on the membership page: Honorary Member; Mrs. Jimmy Carter. We feel honored to have been the recipient of this lovely book of recipes so many years ago. There is a note that says, "This book came from Glenn and Geraldine Woodward." As I recall when they gave us the book, they mentioned they were former residents of the Plains area.

Mrs. Morris' Crockpot Roast 'n Noodles from *Plains Pot-Pourri* takes six hours in the slow cooker and is terrific for the busy person who wants to have a lovely meal at the end of the day. You only need to add the noodles at the end of cooking, and that might take another 15 minutes.

From the book, *Field to Feast*, we have a wonderful fresh salad using baby greens, strawberries and lime vinaigrette. The recipe comes from Gary Wishnatzki, third generation owner of Wish Farms, who is the grandson of Russian immigrant Harris Wishnatzki, a fruit and vegetable pushcart peddler in 1920s New York City. The summarization of this recipe says: "The citrusy tang of lime vinaigrette is a great match for the sweet strawberries. If you don't like blue cheese, you can swap it for soft goat cheese, or leave it out altogether."

From *Savannah Style*, try the black bean soup. They instruct us to "use only

a wooden spoon for stirring." I don't know why and have tried looking it up. Does anyone out there reading this know why they say to "use only a wooden spoon for stirring."

Dianne Barfield contributed a recipe for Jumbo Raisin Cookies to *Plains Pot-Pourri*. It sounds delicious and will probably make a pretty large recipe.

EMILY MEGGETT'S CHICKEN PERLOO

Recipe from *Gullah Geechee Home Cooking* by Emily Meggett

6 tablespoons bacon grease or vegetable oil
1/2 pound salt pork, cut into 1-inch chunks
1 cup roughly chopped onion
5 cups chicken broth
1 teaspoon Nature's Seasons (Morton's Nature's Seasons Seasoning Blend)
1 teaspoon poultry seasoning
1 pound cooked chicken thighs, skin removed and roughly chopped
2-1/2 cups long-grain white rice, unrisned

1) In a large, heavy-bottomed pot, heat 2 tablespoons of the bacon grease or oil over high heat. Once the grease or oil is shimmering, add the salt pork and cook on high heat for 1 minute. Pour the remaining bacon grease or oil into the pot. Reduce the heat to medium-low and cook the salt pork for about 5 minutes, until browned. 2) Once browned, remove the salt pork from the pot and set aside. Leave enough oil to coat the bottom of the pot. Add the onion and fry for 1 minute. Return the cooked salt pork to the pot and cook the onion and salt pork together over low heat for about 5 minutes, until onion just darkens. 3) Add the broth, Nature's Seasons, and poultry seasoning and bring to a boil. 4) Once boiling, ad the chicken. Cook for about 2 minutes, then add the rice. Adjust the heat to medium-low and cook until most of the liquid has been absorbed, 10 to 15 minutes. 5) If using a steamer, transfer the rice mixture to the top of the steamer, cover and steam over medium heat for about 20 minutes, until done. If you're using the regular pot, continue to cook the rice mixture on medium-low heat for 20 to 25 minutes, until the rice has absorbed all of the broth. Once done, stir the rice with a fork, and serve immediately.

MRS. KAYE MORRIS' CROCK POT ROAST 'N NOODLES
Recipe from *PLAINS POT POURRI*, Food Favorites of Plains, GA

2- to 3-pound beef roast
1 can Golden Cream of Mushroom Soup
1 soup can of water
4 ounces uncooked noodles
Salt and pepper to taste

Put seasoned roast, after being browned on each side in a frying pan, into the crock pot. Pour soup over the roast and add the water. Cover and cook on high until it comes to a good simmer. Turn to low and cook for 4 to 6 hours. About 15 minutes before serving, add noodles to BOTTOM of crock pot and cook on high.

GARY WISHNATZKI'S BABY GREENS WITH STRAWBERRIES AND LIME VINAIGRETTE

Recipe from *Field to Feast*, by Pam Brandon, Katie Farmand, and Heather McPherson

3 tablespoons vegetable oil
1-1/2 tablespoons white-wine vinegar
1-1/2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
1 tablespoon honey
1/2 teaspoon coarse salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
8 cups lightly packed baby greens
1 pint strawberries, stemmed and sliced
1/3 cup coarsely chopped red onion
6 tablespoons toasted and chopped pecans
6 tablespoons crumbled blue cheese
6 tablespoons crumbled cooked bacon
1) Whisk together oil, vinegar, lime juice, honey, salt, and pepper. Set aside. 2) Toss together baby greens, strawberries, and onion. Add vinaigrette and toss to coat. Top each serving with 1 tablespoons pecans, 1 tablespoon blue cheese, and 1 tablespoon bacon.

BLACK BEAN SOUP
Recipe from *Savannah Style*, a Cookbook by The Junior League of Savannah, Inc.

1 pound black beans
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 medium ripe tomato
1 bay leaf
1/2 medium onion
1/2 medium green pepper
1 garlic clove, unpeeled and crushed
...
1/2 cup olive oil
1/2 medium onion, chopped
1/2 green pepper, chopped
1 garlic clove, minced
1 level teaspoon crushed oregano

1/4 teaspoon cumin
2 tablespoons wine vinegar
1 tablespoon salt
...
1/2 teaspoon hot sauce
2 tablespoons dry sherry
1) Wash beans and discard imperfect ones. Place in a deep bowl and cover with water 2 inches above beans. Soak overnight. 2) Next day, pour beans into a 3 to 4 quart kettle with the same soaking water. If necessary, add more water so that beans will be covered one inch above. Add to the beans: 2 tablespoons olive oil, whole tomato, bay leaf, 1/2 onion, 1/2 green pepper, crushed garlic clove. Bring to a boil, then lower heat to moderate, cover and cook until beans are tender, about 1 hour. Use only a wooden spoon for stirring. Remove the bay leaf and what is left of the half onion, tomato, pepper and garlic. 3) In a skillet, heat 1/2 cup olive oil and sauté the chopped onion and green pepper until transparent. Add the garlic, crushed oregano, cumin, wine vinegar and salt. Stir to mix well and cook 2 minutes longer, then add to beans. Stir in hot sauce, cover and cook for a good half hour. Correct seasonings, and add sherry. Serve hot with cooked long grain white rice and raw chopped onions.

JUMBO RAISIN COOKIES
Recipe from *PLAINS POT POURRI*, Food Favorites of Plains, GA

2 cups raisins
1 cup water
3-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
1 cup shortening
1-3/4 cup sugar
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla
1/2 cup nuts, chopped
Place raisins and water in saucepan, bring to a boil and boil three minutes. Cool. Do not drain. Mix dry ingredients and sift together. Cream shortening and sugar. Beat in eggs. Stir in raisins and liquid. Add vanilla. Gradually stir in flour mixture, blending well. Stir in nuts. Drop from tablespoon two inches apart on greased cookie sheets. Bake 12 to 15 minutes at 375 degrees. Makes 2-1/2 dozen large cookies.

View Kitchen Kapers by Nancy online at www.theapokkachief.com/recipes

JAN. / FEB. 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 Dwell-ey 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 Wekiwa Circle, Apopka 32712, open from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. For infor-

mation, call 407-884-4311

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

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7

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.Contact: latrondra@cfc-christianchamber.com

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8

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 9

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10

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 Mondays at 6:30 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 or call Carrie 781-867-1071.

TOASTMASTERS: Apopka Foliage 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 11

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 12

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 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.Apopkatostmasters.com.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13

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, February 15 at NW Recreation Complex Amphitheatre with Chubby Carrier and the Bayou Swamp Band from 5-7 p.m.

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: apokfalgca@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 orangecomgv@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 TOASTMASTERS' 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.theapopka-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 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.

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, 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.

*Apopka Area Chamber of Commerce, 180 E. Main St., Apopka. For more info, call 407-886-1441

COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR INFORMATION

Events, fund raisers, and non-profit organizations Info: fax 407-889-4121, or email ads@theapokkachief.com Subscribe to The Apopka Chief E-Edition or Home Delivery Call 407-886-2777 or Visit www.theapokkachief.com In County: \$30 with E-edition, or \$25 for just postal delivery. Out-of-County: \$35 with E-Edition or \$30 for postal delivery

