

MONDAY
TODAY & next morning
HIGH 88
LOW 64
Mostly sunny, light westerly wind.
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CITRUS COUNTY
CHRONICLE



HOGP

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IN BRIEF

Code review board seeking new members

The Citrus County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) is seeking applications for the Code Review and Appeals Board (CRAB). They are seeking four qualified regular members and one alternate position to fill four-year terms that will expire on Jan. 31, 2026.

CRAB meets as needed. It reviews any locally proposed technical amendments to building standards or regulations and makes recommendations to the BOCC. It also hears appeals of code interpretations and makes decisions on variations and modifications concerning technical codes and standards.

Applications can be accessed online at: citrusbocc.com/boardapplication. Completed applications should be sent to Citrus County Administration, 3600 W. Sovereign Path, Suite 267, Lecanto, FL 34461.

Visit the Citrus Springs Memorial Library today

If you're new to the area or haven't visited your local library, the Citrus Springs Memorial Library invites the public to see what they have to offer from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Friday, 1826 W. Country Club Blvd.

Citrus Springs Memorial Library is not affiliated with the county library system, but is a stand-alone, state licensed nonprofit organization run entirely by volunteers. They rely on community donations and host fundraisers throughout the year to keep their doors open.

It was started more than 30 years ago by residents who saw the need for a library in the community and began out of a garage with donated books from neighbors.

Today, they offer nearly everything the county libraries offer, including books, puzzles, DVDs, CDs and audio books.

They also have new computers with free internet for patrons. Printing and copies are 15 cents per black-and-white page and 30 cents per color page.

In addition, the library has a well-stocked genealogy room. To reserve this room for meetings, call 352-489-2313.

Okinawa marks 50 years of end to U.S. rule

TOKYO (AP)—Okinawa Governor Denny Tamaki on Sunday urged Japan's central government to do more to reduce the U.S. military presence in the southern island group as it marked the 50th anniversary of its return to Japan after 27 years of American rule, amid frustration and bitterness over a lack of support from the mainland.

Tamaki said Okinawa has come a long way since the devastation of World War II and nearly three decades of U.S. rule, which ended when it reverted to Japan on May 15, 1972. But the tiny island group's yearslong demand for the mainland to share its security burden remains unresolved.

More affordable senior housing proposed for Inverness

Developer requesting zoning change

By FRED HIERS
Chronicle Reporter

A Fort Lauderdale development company is taking its first step to build its second apartment project in Inverness, this time for a 55-plus community.

"Following the successful completion of the Colonade Apartments affordable housing project, the same developer, Green Mills Group, is proposing another affordable housing project at 1940 Forest Drive," wrote Inverness City Manager Eric Williams to his council as part of next week's

council meeting agenda. "The initial concept featured a four-story, 110-unit family apartment complex, but after neighborhood outreach and community input changes were made."

"The height was lowered, the number of units reduced and most importantly a change from family to a 55-plus senior housing concept," he said. "The current application is for a three-story, 100-unit, age-restricted apartment complex."

To do that the developer is requesting that the land use for the 6.5-acre site be changed from low density residential to high density residential. This would be the first of two votes by the city council on the request.



WILLIAMS

wood Gardens.

The city council has worked to attract affordable housing in the city as home properties and rents have skyrocketed.

The council will meet 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 17, at city hall, 212 W. Main St., Inverness.

Also in city business the council will consider a resolution objecting to four potential plans to extend the Florida Turnpike north from

Wildwood.

Turnpike officials earlier this month presented the agency's plans and timetable discussing potential routes with the public and elected officials.

The council members directed Williams to write a resolution opposing the plans and allow the council members to review it.

The proposed resolution reads, in part:

"The city of Inverness City Council finds that it is in the best interests of the city and the public to recommend that a 'No Build' option for the Northern Turnpike Extension be adopted and implemented based upon current information. The city of Inverness

City Council would respectfully request that the current study of a Northern Turnpike Extension give further consideration and resources to alternatives such as the expansion of the Interstate 75 corridor.

"The city of Inverness City Council will continue to monitor and respond to updated information about the proposal, including, but not limited to, the Project Development and Environment Study."

Also in city business, the Citrus County Sheriff's Office will give its quarterly Inverness crime and traffic report to the council.

Fred Hiers is a reporter at the Citrus Chronicle. Email him at fred.hiers@chronicleonline.com.

NONPROFIT SPOTLIGHT

Ziggy's Haven Bird Sanctuary

By NANCY KENNEDY
Chronicle Reporter

Editor's note: Every community depends on the resources and support that nonprofit agencies provide people, whether physical, material or emotional.

The Chronicle's ongoing series, Nonprofit Spotlight, profiles the nonprofit agencies in Citrus County that exist to help make life better for us all.

To have your nonprofit organization considered for a spotlight, here's the link to an online form you can fill out:

https://www.chronicleonline.com/site/forms/nonprofit_spotlight

It's sometimes quite noisy at Ziggy's Haven Bird Sanctuary in Inverness.

Lots of chirping, whistling and clicking of tongues, squawks and screeches, even an occasional hiss.

But it's music to Wendy Waas' ears.

Waas is the founder and president of Ziggy's Haven Bird Sanctuary, started in 2003 by Waas' now deceased 15-year-old daughter, Tanya, after her beloved umbrella cockatoo, Ziggy, died from a digestive blockage.

What started as a small, home-based rescue has grown into a large-scale sanctuary and adoption facility.

"After doing some research, our daughter thought we should do parrot rescue and rehoming," Waas said. "Parrots are flock animals and really are a specialized animal. It takes a great deal of education to provide a



Photos by Matthew Beck / Chronicle photo editor

Ziggy's Haven Parrot Sanctuary co-director Kim Phelps is startled by a sulphur-crested cockatoo in the bird's enclosure Thursday, May 12. The bird took a couple almonds from Phelps and went on its way. Ziggy's Haven is home to a wide array of parrots of all colors and sizes.

home for an animal that will most likely outlive you."

Now, in loving memory of her daughter, Tanya, Waas is carrying on the fostering work Tanya loved so much.

Ziggy's Haven takes in displaced parrots from animal hoarding situations, owner surrenders and facility transfers. Ziggy's provides a permanent home for parrots that would not do well in a home environment. Friendlier birds are placed in the adoption center while they wait for the right family.

How many people does it take to run Ziggy's?

Kimberlee Phelps is the Executive Director and handles the day to day operations of the organization and the Board of Directors is in charge and meets weekly to go over daily operations.

Ziggy's relies on its approximately 20 volunteers — and they always need more volunteers, especially on Thursdays and Fridays. Those interested in volunteering can stop by the sanctuary anytime Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. to fill out an application, take a tour and see if volunteering at a parrot shelter is right for them.

Who does Ziggy's Haven serve?

"We serve the animals," Wendy Waas said. "The animals are our first priority. Making sure they have adequate housing, appropriate

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These sun conures appear to be cuddling in their enclosure at Ziggy's Haven in Inverness.



Postscript: Mary Dawson, 'Life is good'

By NANCY KENNEDY
Chronicle Reporter

If you wanted to know Mary Dawson's philosophy of life, all you had to do was read the message on the T-shirt or sweatshirt she was wearing: "Life is Good."

Despite the years of battling the cancer that eventually took her life, Mary Dawson thoroughly believed that life was, indeed, good.

Even when she was being chased by a shark.

As the story goes, she and her husband, Tom, were in the Keys and going out snorkeling.



DAWSON

don't worry, he won't hurt you."

They all got into the water and as everyone else went one direction, Tom told Mary, "Let's go this way."

"And then here comes Sam," Tom Dawson said.

"So, I tell Mary just to get against this rock and don't worry about it. Instead, she (races) to the boat. I'm still

there with Sam, and the guy on the boat helps her up the ladder — and her bathing suit top comes off!"

"She loved telling that story," said Tika Policelli, the Dawson's only child. "She told great stories."

Mary Dawson was creative and stylish, a tell-it-like-it-is straight talker, hospitable, kind and compassionate, a fervent supporter of conservative causes and politicians.

She loved the color red and loved Christmas. She loved her animals.

As a child growing up in Whigham, Georgia, a

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Special to the Chronicle

Mary Dawson died April 27 at age 78 after a hard-fought battle with cancer. Those who knew her knew she was rarely without a cap and a "Life is Good" T-shirt or sweatshirt. In this photo taken at Yellowstone National Park, she is with her grandchildren, Tommy and Allie Masut.

