

Around
THE STATE

Citrus County

Water authority to meet Dec. 5

The Citrus County Water & Wastewater Authority will meet at 1 p.m. Monday, Dec. 5 at in Room 166 at the Lecanto Government Building in Lecanto. On the agenda will be an induction of Anthony Dimino to alternate member position, a briefing of the Rolling Oaks Utilities customer service complaint summary, and an update on the WellAqua monthly meeting.

The authority is a board of appointees that provides for the regulation of private water, bulk water and wastewater utilities in the unincorporated areas of Citrus County. The meeting has a public participation portion. For more information, call (352) 419-6520.

Surplus lands meeting scheduled

On Tuesday, Dec. 13, the Southwest Florida Water Management District will host a public information meeting to explain the "surplus lands assessment process" and receive public comment.

The meeting will be from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Lecanto Government Building, 3600 West Sovereign Path, Suite 226, Lecanto.

For additional information, call Cheryl Hill at (800) 423-1476, ext. 4452.

Learn to conserve energy at seminar

Citrus County's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program will host an Energy Conservation Awareness Program from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 13, at the Citrus County Resource Center in Lecanto. The program will feature Dr. Joan Bradshaw, Extension Services director and Sumter Electric Cooperative Inc.

The program is free and open to the public.

Reserve your seat by calling (352) 527-7530. For persons with disabilities requiring reasonable accommodations, call ahead. The Citrus County Resource Center is at 2804 W. Marc Knighton Court in Lecanto.

Beverly Hills plans Christmas party

Beverly Hills Civic Association invites the public to its Christmas party planned for 7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 1, at the Recreation Center, 77 Civic Circle.

The gala will feature food, live music and dancing; cost is \$5.

St. Petersburg

The Rev. George Papadeas: Greek church founder

NANCY KENNEDY
Staff Writer

Postscript

LECANTO — To the members and friends of Archangel Michael Greek Orthodox Church in Lecanto, their founding pastor, the Rev. George Papadeas, was a "priest of priests."

"If it wasn't for Father George, St. Michael's wouldn't be in Lecanto — and I wouldn't be here," said church member George Kanaris. "He married my parents 63 or 64 years ago in Brooklyn, N.Y., so he's been an important part of my family."

Papadeas died Nov. 18 in Daytona Beach at age 93.

Kanaris said the congregation started meeting in a duplex on Ella Street in Inverness in 1981, then moved to a storefront in Lecanto. When the members wanted to build their own building,

they held their first fundraising meeting at Emily's, Kanaris' restaurant in Homosassa, where Papadeas pledged the first \$5,000.

"He was a tremendous fundraiser," Kanaris said. "He had vision. It was his idea to build a banquet hall and his idea for the Greek festivals. More than that, he was truly a holy man. He was charismatic and had a sense of peace about him that drew people."

Born in Altoona, Pa., to Greek immigrants, Papadeas was part of the first group of priests to graduate from the nation's first Greek seminary. Prior to that, Greek Orthodox priests were imported from Greece

to serve churches in the United States.

Papadeas founded St. Paul's Cathedral in Hempstead, N.Y., in the late 1950s and even helped construct the altar. Later he founded St. Michael's in Lecanto and the Ocala Mission in Ocala. While serving the Lecanto church as its priest, he also served St. Demetrios parish in Daytona Beach, traveling every other week to Lecanto from his home in Daytona.

Even after he retired from St. Michael's in 1997, he commuted to Ocala until just a few months ago when his health began to fail.

"When we were coming down here from Michigan, after we were introduced to Father George in 1995, we used to plan our trips around church services, when we met only twice a month," said Sylvia Lovelace, St. Michael's

choir director. "He was inspirational as a preacher, but he was also a wonderful teacher. He taught not only about salvation, but about history. He was good at what he did."

In the late 1950s, Papadeas designed a keyboard layout for Greek language typewriters to make it easier for American typists and gave the idea to Smith-Corona.

In 1960, he brought a "weeping" icon of the Virgin Mary to St. Paul's, which drew hundreds of thousands to see the miraculous manifestation. In 1990, *New York Newsday* named it one of the most significant events of the past 50 years. When Richard Nixon was vice president, he invited Papadeas to the White House to tell him about the icon and its tears, which he wrote about in his book, "Why Did She Cry?"

Among many of his accomplishments, Papadeas went on to become the dean of the Archdiocesan Cathedral in New York City. He wrote and spoke Greek fluently. He raised five children and was spiritual father to thousands.

"In our early years, he was our rock," said George Mavros, longtime church member and spokesman. "When we were trying to form a community out of nothing, he offered hope. Clearly, without him we would not be a congregation. He was dedicated and always put the church first. He was not only a spiritual father, but a friend. Even though he never lived here, he kept in constant contact and communication."

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Trimming trees for Christmas celebration



MATTHEW BECK/Chronicle

Ousted ombudsman adds new accusations to lawsuit

Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE — Florida's ousted long-term care ombudsman on Monday added new accusations to his lawsuit alleging that Gov. Rick Scott forced his resignation at the urging of the nursing home industry.

Brian Lee originally accused the Department of Elder Affairs of violating the state's "whistleblower" law by ousting him to retaliate for his advocacy on behalf of long-term care residents. The department gave him the choice of resigning or being fired after the agency received a letter from Scott's office saying it was time for Lee to go.

Lee's initial lawsuit also accused two trade organizations of interfering with a business relationship by damaging his reputation, which cost him employment opportunities.

The amended complaint also alleges all three defendants violated a law against interference with an ombudsman's duties and that he was defamed by the Florida Health Care Association.

The defendants have 20 days to respond to the amended complaint, which also retains the original allegations.

Lee was forced out in February after the associa-