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Naples Daily News

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Judge questions detention closure

Requests proof Alligator Alcatraz won't reopen

Stephany Matat
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

A federal judge is now saying it's not clear whether the controversial immigration detention center dubbed "Alligator Alcatraz" is actually "permanently closed."

U.S. District Judge Sheri Polster

Chappell recently signed an order in a lawsuit brought by migrant detainees and organizations, saying a Florida or federal official needs to appear before her to present official evidence.

Put another way, "show, don't tell," the judge suggests.

Chappell rejected the state's suggestion that the case was resolved because of Gov. Ron DeSantis' announcement that the facility was closed. Attorneys for the plaintiffs say there's no official evidence proving this closure to be

permanent.

They argued that DeSantis' public statements were unclear; he said in a press conference late June that the chances for reopening were "negligible."

Now the state has four days to either cough up official evidence, provide the court with a timeframe for giving the evidence, or restate why the case should be dropped based on the facility's apparent closure.

Neither the governor's office nor the Department of Homeland Security

responded to requests for comment July 16, but the temporary success of Alligator Alcatraz has been lauded by them for its role in carrying out the Trump administration's aggressive illegal immigration crackdown.

During the June press conference, DeSantis said more than 22,000 people were processed and staged for deportation.

The facility in the Florida Everglades

See ALCATRAZ, Page 5A

New medical school to help ease SWFL doctor shortage



People from the college, NCH, local government and others take part in a groundbreaking ceremony for the College of Osteopathic Medicine at 8365 Cadenza Road in Naples on Thursday, July 16.

JONAH HINEBAUGH/FORT MYERS NEWS-PRESS & NAPLES DAILY NEWS

Leaders break ground in Naples on \$200 million campus

Liz Freeman
Fort Myers News-Press & Naples Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

Southwest Florida is on track to have a medical school that will be a first for the region to train physicians to serve health care needs now and in the future.

Dozens of leaders in business, healthcare and government were on hand July 16 to celebrate a groundbreaking for a proposed College of Osteopathic Medicine in Naples at a five-acre site at Rattlesnake Hammock Road and Collier Boulevard.

The project is in application steps for accreditation with the Commission on

Osteopathic College of Accreditation, COCA, and cannot be called a medical school until it achieves "candidate status," said Dr. Wolfgang Gilliar, founding dean and chief academic officer.

That is expected to happen sometime between August and December, he

See MEDICAL, Page 5A

Naples airport deal gains ground

Framework includes rent, purchase option

J. Kyle Foster
Fort Myers News-Press & Naples Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

The City of Naples and the Naples Airport Authority are making progress toward a new deal that could provide millions of dollars to city coffers and give the authority a chance to buy the land on which the airport sits.

See AIRPORT, Page 6A



Voter registration deadline is July 20

Monday, July 20, is the last day to register to vote in the primary election.

Once a voter is registered, three ways to vote:

- Vote-by-Mail voting has already started. Request a mail ballot from the Lee County or Collier County Supervisor of Elections, depending on where you live.
- Early voting in-person begins Aug. 8.
- Election day is Aug. 18.

For registration information, go to <https://registertovoteflorida.gov/home>.

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