

Population growth continues in Sanford

By Christopher Patton
Managing Editor

About 9,600 more people call one of Seminole County's seven cities home according to annual population estimates released by the U.S. Census Bureau last week.

Five cities — Lake Mary, Oviedo, Casselberry, Sanford and Winter Springs — posted positive gains while Altamonte Springs and Longwood combined for a total loss of 329 residents from 2000 to 2003.

The estimates are based on Census 2000 population counts — updated using administrative records. Sanford City Manager Al Grieshaber said positive population figures each year can be helpful when applying for government grants and are equally important in mapping the future of the city.

"We will see where our areas of growth are and we will want to make sure our infrastructure is adequate and as we develop our plan to grow the city that we are moving in the right direction," he said.

According to U.S. Census figures, Sanford made the greatest leap in population from 2000 to 2003 with 5,265 more residents. While Sanford grew by only an estimated 36 residents from 2002 to 2003, it widens the gap between the largest city in Seminole County and the second largest, Altamonte Springs.

Sanford took the title of largest municipality in the county between 2001 and 2002, when its population

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Population

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Seminole Municipal Populations

	Total (July 1, 2003)	2000 to 2003 difference
ALTAMONTE SPRINGS	40,942	-258
CASSELBERRY	23,707	1,078
LAKE MARY	13,260	1,802
LONGWOOD	13,674	-71
SANFORD	43,556	5,265
OVIEDO	27,940	1,624
WINTER SPRINGS	31,808	142

boomed by 3,112 residents. Population estimates in Altamonte Springs have remained stagnant, as the city has recorded a .6 percent decline from 2000 to 2003. Sanford officials expect estimates for next year will reflect even more growth when two new large subdivisions on Celery Avenue begin attracting more residents to the city.

While Sanford's growth registers a 14 percent increase it was not the highest in Seminole County. The honor of largest percentage jump in population was reserved for Seminole County's smallest city, Lake Mary.

Since 2000, Lake Mary has boosted its population by 16 percent for an estimated total

of 13,260 people. But Lake Mary may be relinquishing its title of smallest city in Seminole County if population trends continue.

Longwood has averaged a decrease of about 24 residents each year since 2000. With the current estimates Lake Mary sits only 414 residents behind Longwood as the smallest city. While Lake Mary continues some residential growth, Longwood is nearly built out. According to Longwood City Administrator John Drago the recently released population estimates of declining population in the city are not alarming to Longwood officials.

"We're probably too small where the impact would be too great," he said.