



Southside NewsLine

JANUARY 2018 Volume 5 Issue 11

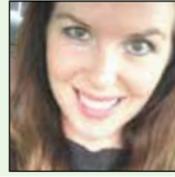
A Florida NewsLine Publication



page 2
Take 5



page 5
Q & A with School Board
Member Lori Hershey



page 7
Get to Know...
Kristin Brenkus



page 10
Puzzles

Preschool raises funds to benefit Wolfson Children's Hospital

By Angela Higginbotham
angela@floridanewsline.com



Photos courtesy Deerwood Academy

Lucinda Chapin (owner), Carolina Jaramillo (assistant director), Sheri Jenkins (business development director), Alex Osborne (Wolfson Children Hospital development coordinator), Asia Mincey (administrative assistant), and Kristina Rad (director)

The Southside's own Deerwood Academy recently held its 10th annual Fall Festival and charity fundraiser. This year, Deerwood Academy donated \$2,717 to Wolfson Children's Hospital.

This year, the school chose a tailgate theme and each of the 12 classrooms worked hard to sell tickets for a chance to win great raffle baskets. Silent auctions for autographed Dallas Cowboy memorabilia was also an exciting feature of the event. The community enjoyed a bounce house, food trucks and a fun celebration for a great cause.

"This event is open to the public every year, so the community should be on the lookout for next fall," said Martrina Thomas,

Wolfson Children's Hospital cont. on pg. 7

Local dental group helps with oral health in Haiti

By Elaine Omann
mail@floridanewsline.com

Dr. Anjali Lueck, a dentist with Narducci Dental Group, located in the St. Johns Town Center, recently returned from a mission trip to Haiti to assist with providing basic dental care to Haitian families who otherwise don't have such resources.

The Renard Foundation partnered with the Narducci Dental Group and formed a clinical team that went to Haiti to provide critical and crucial dental care in Bassin Bleu. The impetus for this mission was a young boy who died due to lack of necessary dental care

for a routine tooth problem. The heartfelt concern led to the foundation and the dental group's desire to prevent such incidents in the future — so they made a commitment to go to Haiti and spend a week helping a community.

In September 2017, during hurricane season, the group made the trip. The members of the team, which included a dentist, a dental assistant, and a local community member, stayed in local guest housing and spent time in the evenings with local families after long hours of clinical work. Days were spent treating children and families as well as educating them on cavity prevention and dental health.



Dr. Lueck as dentist, Majorie as assistant, and a local community member as interpreter work together to help a young girl.

Dr. Lueck was assisted by Majorie, a dental assistant of 17 years. She speaks Creole and was able to serve with clinical



Photos courtesy Dr. Anjali Lueck

The Narducci dental team provided care and training for the community.

cal needs as well as reassure patients during procedures.

Majorie said she found the community to be one of happy people with great spirit. She saw other basic needs that families have, such as for shoes and clothing, and has started a collection of items for the next trip.

The clinical team learned how to practice in an environment with limited resources. One of the challenges during their time was the inability to provide comprehensive care or immediate follow up with patients, Dr. Lueck said.

The Narducci Dental Group is committed to returning to Bassin Bleu, Haiti to continue the work they began and to expand the scope of what they accom-

Haiti cont. on pg. 7

Grandparents celebrated at local school

Grandparents and other special guests recently participated in classroom activities at Jacksonville Country Day School. This was part of the school's annual Grandparents and Special Friends Day.



Photo courtesy Jacksonville Country Day School

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Twin Lakes Academy Elementary to host Curriculum Night

Curriculum Night will be held at Twin Lakes Academy Elementary on Thursday, Jan. 18 from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. Parents of students at the school may attend to learn about and discuss all

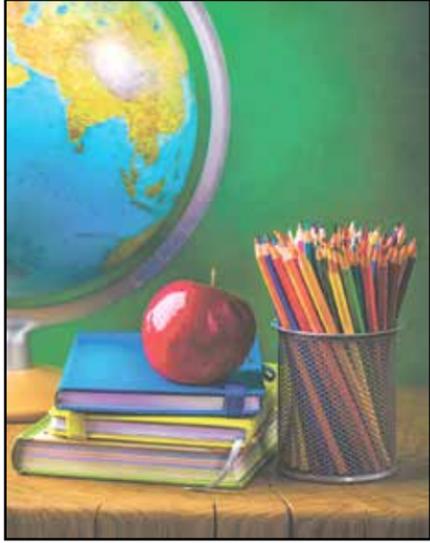


Photo by MetroCreative

aspects of the school's curriculum. One of the main events of the evening is the annual Lego Building Contest that is open to all students, with categories for a Model Build (built from a kit) and Creative Build (created from the builder's imagination). Models will be chosen to win a prize. Additional activities at the event include a book fair, vendors, games, ice cream and food trucks. Visit

<https://dcps.duvalschools.org/tlae> for more information or call the school at (904) 538-0238.

January is Open Enrollment time for Duval County Public Schools

The Duval County Public Schools Choice Expo will be held Jan. 20, 2018 from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. at the Prime Osborn Convention Center. The event showcases magnet programs, career academies, charter schools, high school acceleration programs and neighborhood schools for all grade levels. Teachers, principals and students from every school will be on hand to talk with parents and students about their academic offerings. Visit www.duvalschools.org for more details.

Junior Achievement to present JABoy\$ golf fundraiser

Junior Achievement is holding the inaugural JA Boy\$ Topgolf Challenge to benefit the JA Boy\$ program on Monday, Jan. 29, 2018 from 5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. at Topgolf, 10531 Brightman Blvd. Participants will build teams of six to compete against other teams for best score. Prior to the event, golfers are required to fundraise a minimum of \$150 to play; prizes are up for grabs for top fundraisers who go above and beyond. All funds raised from this event

benefit Junior Achievement's JA Boy\$ program, which brings financial literacy, workforce preparation and entrepreneurship education to Jacksonville's boys and young men through male volunteer role models, taught in the classroom and afterschool. Visit www.JAjax.com for more information.

Southside Newcomers Club seeks members

Southside Newcomers Club meets for coffee or breakfast at Mimi's Cafe in the St. Johns Town Center on the first Monday of each month. January's meeting will be held on Jan. 8 due to the New Year's Day holiday. All ladies in the greater Jacksonville area who have recently moved to the area, are long time residents, have had a lifestyle change, want to make new friends, or want to participate in a wide variety of fun activities are invited to attend. Membership dues to Southside New-

take 5



Photo by MetroCreative

comers Club are \$30 per year. Contact phorn94479@aol.com for more information.

River City women to meet

The River City Women's Club meets the third Wednesday of each month for lunch, camaraderie and a fund raising program for charity. This month's luncheon will be held on Jan. 17 at the Ramada Inn, Mandarin, located at 3130 Hartley Road. Social time is 10:30 a.m. with a business meeting at 11 a.m., followed by a luncheon and program. Guest speaker Suzanne Marino from Southern Cross Antiques Mall and No Place Like Home Interiors will combine two topics, "Trash to Treasures" and "What To Do With Our Antiques," with a sample tutorial. Also, the Fundraising Committee will ask members to nominate their choices for the annual charity contributions. Annual membership dues are \$20. Luncheon reservations are required; call Florence at (904) 262-8719.



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Table of Contents

4 Around Town
5 Q&A with Lori Hershey
5 Q&A with Jason Fischer
8 Gardening
9 Community Marketplace
10 Salt Water Fishing
11 Travel

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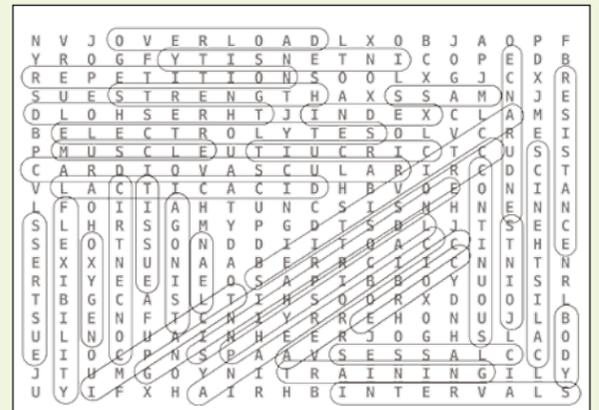
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answers to puzzles on page 10



Answer to our Puzzles

CRYPTO FUN
Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Answers: A. health B. exercise C. body D. weight

jan.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

around town

save the date!

Feb. 3, 2018 Fight For Air Climb to benefit American Lung Association

8:00 a.m. - Bank of America tower, downtown Jacksonville
http://action.lung.org/site/TR/Climb/ALASE_Southeast?pg=entry&fr_id=16325

February 8 Shorebird Walk at Matanzas Inlet with St. Johns County Audubon Society

9 a.m. - 11 a.m. - Matanzas Inlet West Parking Lot, 8655 A1A S., St Augustine
www.stjohnsaudubon.com

February 17 ALJ Saturday Cartooning and Illustration Classes

12 p.m. - Balis Community Center, 1513 Lasalle St., Jacksonville
<http://artleaguejax.org/classes/murray-hill-art-center/cartooning-illustration-class/>

February 24 Chocolate and Beyond, sponsored by RSVP

2 p.m. - 4 p.m. - First Coast Technical college, 2980 Collins Ave., St. Augustine
www.rsvpstjohns.com or (904) 547-3952

February 24 Monster Jam

7 p.m. - EverBank Field
www.monsterjam.com

March 2 - 4 World of Nations Celebration

Metropolitan Park

March 3 Northeast Florida Veg Fest

Riverside Park
www.nfvegfest.org/

April 14 Relay for Life of North St. Johns

12 p.m. - 10 p.m. - Bartram Trail High School
http://main.acevents.org/site/TR/RelayForLife/RFLCY18SER?pg=entry&fr_id=86383

2nd Honeybee Quilt Guild

6:30 p.m.
 Mandarin Presbyterian Church, 11844 Mandarin Road
www.honeybeequilters.org (Repeats first Tuesday of each month)

Deerwood Park Blvd.
<https://floridasistersincrime.wordpress.com/>

UNF men's basketball vs. Jacksonville University

7 p.m.
 UNF Arena; \$10 adults

3rd Medtronic Leaders Toastmasters Club

12 p.m. - 1 p.m.
 Nelson Auditorium, 6621 Charing St., 32216
cgsml3@yahoo.com

8th Southside Newcomers Club First Monday Coffee

10 a.m.
 Mimi's Cafe in St Johns Town Center
phorn94479@aol.com

January Art Walk

5 p.m. - 9 p.m.
 Downtown Jacksonville
<http://jacksonvilleartwalk.com>

Sierra Club meeting
 6:30 p.m. social/7 p.m. meeting
 Lakewood Presbyterian Church, 2001 University Blvd. W.
www.sierraclub.org/florida/northeast-florida

4th National Stuttering Association meeting

6 p.m. - 8 p.m.
 Southeast Regional Library, Room D, 10599 Deerwood Park Blvd.
<https://sites.google.com/site/jacksonvillensa/> or (904) 247-6892

9th River City Writers group
 6:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.
 Southeast Regional Library, Room D, 10599 Deerwood Park Blvd.
 (904) 996-0325

5th Deerwood Rotary Club meeting
 7:30 a.m. (Repeating event on Fridays)
 Deerwood Country Club 10239 Golf Club Drive
Deerwoodrotary.org

11th American Legion Post 372 general assembly
 6 p.m. meet and greet / 7 p.m. meeting
 Mandarin/St. Johns Elks Lodge, 4280 Oldfield Crossing Drive
 (904) 297-8344 or www.mandarinpost372.org

6th Florida Sisters in Crime writers/readers group
 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
 Southeast Regional Library, Room B, 10599

13th Toast of Jax Toastmasters meeting
 7:30 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.
 Baha'i Community Center of Jacksonville, 5034 Greenland Road
www.toastofjax.com (Repeating event on Saturdays)

20th Duval County Public Schools Choice Expo
 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.
 Prime Osborn Convention Center
www.duvalschools.org

17th River City Women's Club luncheon
 10:30 a.m.
 Ramada Inn Mandarin, 3130 Hartley Road
 RSVP to Florence, (904) 262-8719

22nd All Star Quilt Guild
 9:45 a.m.
 First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd.
www.orgsites.com/fl/allstartquiltguild or (904) 502-5254

19th Deerwood Toastmasters Club
 12 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Southeast Regional Library, Room B, 10599 Deerwood Park Blvd.
Deerwoodtm.toastmastersclubs.org

25th Knitting Chicas
 1 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.
 Southeast Regional Library, Room F, 10599 Deerwood Park Blvd.
 (904) 996-0325

Southside Writers group
 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.
 Southeast Regional Library, Room F, 10599 Deerwood Park Blvd.



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with Duval School Board Member,
District 7, Lori Hershey

Q: Do you have any comment on the recent news reports on the Jacksonville Civic Council's recommendations for the school board's search for a new superintendent?

A: The board welcomes the input of all stakeholders and as we move forward in this process, we will continue to engage with the community.

Q: Do you have any updates on the superintendent search?

A: The board did pick a date for the RFP (Request for Proposal) to be released: Jan. 4, 2018. This gives companies a chance to make a bid to be the superintendent search company for Duval County Public Schools.

Q: Can you go over the timeline going forward with this search?

A: The goal would be to select the search firm by late February or early March. The current goal of the board is to have the new superintendent in place by July 2018.

Q: Is there a chance the new superintendent could be the interim superintendent?

A: The original plan was that the interim superintendent would not be someone who would apply for the permanent position and in conversations I have had with Superintendent Wil-

lis, she is very committed to the short term, but has other long term goals and plans.

Q: Do you have any District 7 updates?

A: Things are very busy this time of year, with the conclusion of the first semester looming. I would like to remind everyone that the first of the New Year is Open Enrollment for parents looking at school choice. To assist with this decision, the Duval County Public Schools Choice Expo will be held Jan. 20, 2018 from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. at the Prime Osborn Convention Center. The event showcases magnet programs, career academies, charter schools, high school acceleration programs and neighborhood schools for all grade levels. Teachers, principals and students from every school will be on hand to talk with parents and students about their academic offerings. Details are on the district's website, www.duvalschools.org.

Finally, I'd like to wish everyone a Happy New Year!

Q: How can our readers contact you?

A: They can email me at HersheyL@duvalschools.org or call me at (904) 316-3609.



with Florida State Representative
Jason Fischer, District 16

Q: Can you bring us up to date on the upcoming legislative session?

A: This year, session starts on Jan. 9, 2018 — earlier than last year. Actually, it's only the second time in history to have this early of a start, rather than the typical March. There were several bills last year that didn't quite get through either the House or the Senate and this early start will allow us to move them through first thing.

Q: Are there any bills that should be off to a fast start this session?

A: A bill to address the opioid addiction was worked on conceptually during the off season. Basically, we need to break down the barriers to treatment of this addiction. Three ways will probably be addressed: removing the pre-authorization requirement to get the medicines that wean addicts off the opioids; limiting the number of opioid pills that can be prescribed at one time; and connecting to a federal database to allow physicians and pharmacies to determine if a patient is using multiple sources to obtain opioids.

Q: What are some of the bills that you will be sponsoring in 2018?

A: House members can sponsor six bills per year. A couple that I am sponsoring have to do with autonomous vehicles. The first will allow these driverless cars to safely deploy on our roadways ... once the the technology has advanced to meet certain functions as outlined in the bill. General Motors expects to have a car meet the criteria by late 2019 – early 2020. Since 94 percent of accidents are

caused by human error, autonomous vehicles meeting the safety parameters will lead to fewer accidents on the roads. Secondly, the Smart Cities Challenge bill will encourage cities and counties to apply for grants to do connected vehicles projects. For example, autonomous vehicles will share information about traffic patterns and alleviate traffic congestion by "talking" to infrastructure, such as to change the timing on traffic lights etc.

Q: What other bills can residents expect to see up for a vote this year?

A: I am co-sponsoring a couple of bills. One is for the Hope Scholarship program to combat serial bullying in schools. If a child is bullied, parents can apply for a Hope Scholarship to finance their child's move to a private school. Bullying still needs to be addressed in our schools, but victims shouldn't have to wait for a solution. Another bill aims to reduce the regulations to getting licensed in certain professions, such as cosmetology. For example, presently, barbers must have 1,200 hours of training and the bill seeks to reduce this to a more reasonable 600 hours in an effort to reduce barriers to entry so folks can get to work sooner. This would also bring the requirements more in line with other professions.

Q: What is the best way for our readers to contact you?

A: Readers can email me at Jason.Fischer@myfloridahouse.gov or call my local office at (904) 332-7297.

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FYI Contact Numbers

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 Patrol Zone 3: Assistant Chief J.G. Short, (904) 828-5463
 Property Appraiser: Jerry Holland, jholland@coj.net; (904) 630-2011
 Supervisor of Elections: Mike Hogan, mhogan@coj.net, (904) 630-1414
 Tax Collector: Michael Corrigan, taxcollector@coj.net, (904) 630-1916
 Clerk of Court: Ronnie Fussell, (904) 255-2000

Jacksonville City Council

District 11: Danny Becton, dbecton@coj.net, (904) 630-1383
 At Large, District 3: Tommy Hazouri, thazouri@coj.net, (904) 630-1396

Duval County School Board (www.duvalschools.org)

District 7: Lori Hershey, hershey@duvalschools.org, (904) 390-2375

State of Florida Elected Officials

State House District 12: Representative Clay Yarborough, (904) 723-5300
 State House District 16: Representative Jason Fischer, (850) 717-5016
 State Senate District 4: Senator Aaron Bean, (904) 346-5039

Federal Elected Officials

U.S. Congress District 4: Representative John Rutherford, (202) 225-2501
 U.S. Senate:
 Senator Bill Nelson, (202) 224-5274
 Senator Marco Rubio, (202) 224-3041

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Kick off the New Year at Southeast Branch Library

By Kaylee Burke
mail@floridanewslines.com

The Southeast Library offers abundant programs and activities to get started on goals for the New Year. Whether simplifying your home, diving into a new book series, or expanding your creativity - there's something for everyone.

Welcome 2018 with some good, clean for the kids — making homemade soap. That's right, on Jan. 8 at 7 p.m. in the January Maker Monday program, kids aged six – 12 will learn how to make their own soap. Maker Monday gives children a chance to explore the world around them through experimentation and creative, hands-on activities.

Creating a cohesive space to live is a wonderful way to maintain a calmer and healthier lifestyle. Southeast's Homeflow Workshop, which will be held on Jan. 9, 16 and 23 from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m., helps you configure a way to make the space you call home flow as a single unit. The workshop will cover the entirety of the home - the dwelling, its occupants, the property, and the community in which it's located. It's recommended that you register on the library's website, as space for this program is limited.

Bring the kids to paint with Mr. Paul on Jan. 10 from 3:25 p.m. – 4:25 p.m. He will offer his expertise to help

students, aged five – 12 with developmentally appropriate painting activities using a fun, energetic twist to instill creativity.

Join Madeline Martin, USA Today best-selling author of Scottish Historical Romance, for an Author Talk as



Photo courtesy Jacksonville Public Libraries
Budding Scientists at work, interacting with each other and learning all about the skeletal system at Southeast Regional Library.

part of January's Romance series. On Jan. 18 from 7 p.m. – 8:45 p.m., Martin, a Jacksonville native and graduate of Flagler College, will discuss one of her four historical fiction series, Highlander.

If you have an aspiring scientist in the family, the library's Budding Scientist program is a great fit for them! Once a month kids aged six – 12 can come and learn about all things science from students that are a part of Atlantic Coast High School's Science National Honor

Society. Explore and experiment on Jan. 31 at 3:30 p.m.

All library locations will be closed on Jan. 15 for Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The library's digital library is open 24/7 for a variety of e-books, audiobooks, movies and music. All programs are free and open to the public. Find information about additional upcoming events at Southeast Regional Library at jaxpubliclibrary.org/events or call at (904) 996-0325.

Southside Newcomers raffle holiday baskets



Photo courtesy Paula Horning

The Southside Newcomers Club held their annual Holiday Basket Raffle at their November luncheon. Many members generously donated a large assortment of baskets and gifts, most with a holiday theme, which were raffled off following a delicious lunch at Glen Kernan Country Club. There was lots of excitement as tickets were drawn and winners came forward to claim their winnings. Pictured are board members Margaret Walker, Lisa Gengler, Jean Pilkington, Cathy Adams, and Silvia Stahnke. The Southside Newcomers Club welcomes women from the entire Jacksonville area to join; Contact phorn94479@aol.com for more information.

Nutrition Check: Starting the Year off SMART

By Kristen Hicks Ph.D., RDN, LDN and Paige Chaffin
mail@floridanewslines.com

The start of each New Year is always a bittersweet time in terms of judging our health. At this time, new goals are starting to be made and goals from the previous year are assessed for success or failure. Each year around 41 percent of Americans make New Year resolutions, over half of which set out to lose weight or eat healthier. Yet only 9 percent of those individuals feel that they were successful in achieving their goals. (Statisticbrain.com, 2017). Why is this?

People tend to set goals that are unfeasible in hopes that a wave of motivation will arise with the New Year. Although this is a great concept and shows that individuals want to better themselves, it often leads to disappointment when the high expectations are not met.

SMART goals are an effective goal setting strategy that helps set Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic goals in a Timely manner. For example, a basic goal would be "In 2018, I want to be healthier." This goal is hard to reach because it doesn't define what "being healthier" means to you. Vague goals can become overwhelming and often result in a sense of failure.

A SMART goal style could be either "In January, I want to consume at least two vegetables each day" or "In 2018,

I plan to limit going out to eat to less than twice per week for the next three months." Setting more specific goals sets a more realistic foundation to complete them.

When setting your goal(s), make sure they are meaningful and clear in regard to your desired outcome. This will make achieving your goals more rewarding. More importantly, share your goals with your friends and family. Having social support may be beneficial towards completing your goal, and who knows, maybe one of them will want to join in on the fun.

Lastly, reward yourself! The path to reaching your goals doesn't have to be a miserable one. When you have hit milestones, or are simply feeling accomplished, it's okay to schedule some "you time" or treat yourself to something you've been wanting. This can keep you motivated to set and complete more goals.

Setting SMART New Year's resolutions will ensure that the outcome is more effective and positive.

Kristen K. Hicks Ph.D., RDN, LDN is an assistant professor in the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Brooks College of Health, University of North Florida.

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Get to Know . . .

By Angela Higginbotham
angela@floridanewline.com

Kristin Brenkus

Originally from Green Bay, Wis., Kristin Brenkus has always been driven by her own wanderlust. She began moving and exploring the country as a young adult. Following a career path in customer service, real estate and marketing jobs, Brenkus made a discovery of her passion to help empower women all over the world and she became a certified coach. She started her business in women's empowerment and thrives on helping women discover and follow their dreams.

In March 2017, Brenkus followed her heart and moved to Jacksonville so that she could be near family and spend time watching her niece and nephew grow. Believing that a coach can only take a client as far as they, themselves, have been, Brenkus credits her own relationship struggles, experiences, and the healers, mentors and coaches that have helped her feel confident in helping other women find their joy.

1. What are you enjoying most about living on the Southside and on the East coast?

I love being able to see this part of the country. I'm so happy to be here and be near some of my family. I love exploring this side of the ocean

and going to different beaches.

2. What do you enjoy most about your work as a women's empowerment coach?

It's such an honor to just explore with women and to help co-create a path of energy and help them grow. It can be so overwhelming to walk towards goals. I really believe that people deserve to be happy and it's incredibly rewarding to encourage and see women invest in themselves. Women can reach out to me online and I am honored to see the transition they take during the process.

3. What would you consider your greatest accomplishment?

Walking my truth. At one point, I didn't know what happiness looked like. Now I'm doing exactly what I want to do. I get to support women across the world and I am truly living my dream.

4. What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

I love the ocean, pilates, traveling and

reading. I enjoy connecting with people and seeding relationships. I also spend time focusing on my own personal growth by going to retreats.

5. Even with all of your traveling, what destination still remains on your bucket list?

I have a huge desire to go to Italy. I hope to go in the new year. I love traveling, meeting new people and discovering new cultures. I appreciate that I can travel and work from anywhere. I'll go almost anywhere once and I'll go twice if I love it.

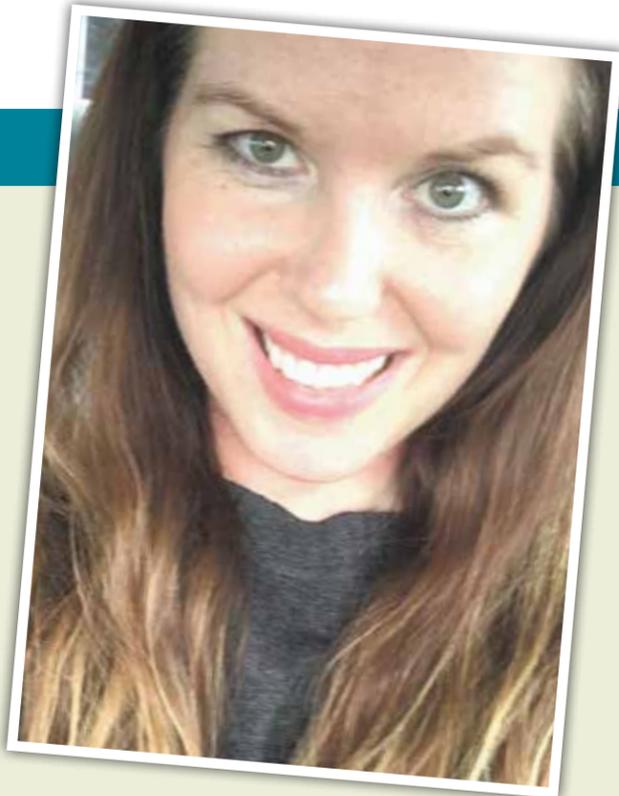


Photo courtesy Kristin Brenkus
Kristin Brenkus

Wolfson Children's Hospital cont. from pg. 1



Photos courtesy Deerwood Academy

administrative assistant at Deerwood Academy. "It's a great event that has been a benefit to many."

Over the past decade, Deerwood Academy has proudly raised between \$20,000 - \$25,000 for local charitable organizations. Deerwood Academy has 196 students enrolled from ages six weeks to five years old.

Haiti cont. from pg. 1

plished. The group welcomes others to participate and become involved.

Visit www.narduccidental.com to learn more about their experience in Haiti and other opportunities. Visit <https://renandfoundation.org> to donate to an upcoming mission.



After providing care for the community the team is shown the Bassin Bleu area.

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Gardening

Weather and the winter garden

By Lesley Arrandale
mail@floridanewsline.com

As we all know, recovery from natural disasters is a slow process. Jacksonville was hard hit by Hurricane Irma, and we are still recovering. There are even some ongoing consequences from Matthew for some of our neighbors. As I write in early December, hundreds of thousands of people in California have fled from rapidly moving wildfires whipped up by strong Santa Ana winds, which are expected to continue for some days. These events are a powerful reminder for us all, that we are vulnerable to forces outside our control. In Florida, too, we have to beware of fire, and we know now just how devastating it is when our St Johns River floods so badly.

If you live in a subdivision with lawns and deciduous trees in the landscape, you are likely at low risk from fire. If your property abuts, or is surrounded by a natural, wooded area it makes sense to assess your situation, which is where this publication will help: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fr076>. To defend against fire, keep the immediate area around your home free of firewood, twiggy debris, and leaves. This also will help to deter termites and other insect pests. Some plants are naturally fire resistant — think aloes and other fleshy-leaved succulents — but plants that contain oily resins, such as pines and saw palmetto, should ideally be 30 feet or so away from buildings if you are in a medium to high risk situation.

Precautions against flooding are perhaps less easy to accomplish. If you live on a waterway, a living barrier of well-adapted native shrubs and trees may help to mitigate the effects of storm surge by holding the riverbank together, but in the case of relentlessly rising water, it's a different matter. Ultimately it became clear that flooding from Hurricane Irma impacted much more of Jacksonville's infrastructure than expected.

And now to gardening! By the year's end, hopefully, we will be seeing some seasonal weather. Our brassicas — kale, cabbages, collards, broccoli etc. — do well in the colder months, and become sweeter after a frost or two. Refer to the "Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide" for planting dates, recommended vari-

eties, and cultural care: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/vh021>. This is now available as a free mobile app called "Florida Fresh." You can find links to articles about composting, pest control, and other relevant topics.

Not all vegetables should be confined to the vegetable garden. Swiss chard Bright Lights makes a bold statement, with gold, cream, white or red tinged leaves and stems. Plant edible kale, which can be found in various shades of pinks and greens and a variety of leaf forms, rather than ornamental cabbage. If your tastes turn to mustard greens, try the striking Japanese Giant Red mustard. Edible peas have fairly innocuous white flowers, but they can be grown on an attractive support for a green accent among lower growing plants. Do note, though, that vegetables benefit from regular fertilizer, and a good quality one at that. And don't ever use any chemicals on them or even near them unless they are clearly labeled for use in the vegetable garden.

As autumn slipped into winter, the natural landscape mellowed. Along our roadsides, the brilliant yellow flowers of goldenrods gradually faded, while bushy bluestem grasses (*Andropogon glomeratus*) glowed rusty brown against the lowering sun. You must have noticed pink muhly grass (*Muhlenbergia capillaris*), its billowy seed heads gloriously backlit, in many of our local parking lots. Out in the countryside, often along the edge of marshland, the lovely native groundsel bush (*Baccharis halimifolia*) has been full of clouds of white flowers which are good nectar sources for various pollinators. The female plants produce fluffy white seed heads, thereby extending the show. In sunny spots, the leaves of the deciduous native Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) turned a deep burgundy red as it shut down for the winter — a beautiful sight. While a bit of a handful to control, this vine produces small black berries in late summer that birds really relish.

Happy New Year and a Healthy 2018 to you all.

Rodeheaver Boys Ranch debuts new obstacle course

By Krista Purcell
mail@floridanewsline.com

Rodeheaver Foundation received a grant to create a military-style obstacle course to benefit the boys at Rodeheaver Boys Ranch and honor our fallen soldier Sgt. Timothy Officer. We've also recently built a learning center on our grounds with the funds from a St. Johns County and Palatka Rotary Club Grant.

Rodeheaver Boys Ranch, located in Palatka, has been providing complete care for up to 50 disadvantaged boys for the past 68 years. Children make their way to the Rodeheaver Boys Ranch because they have no home of their own due to parental death, desertion, divorce, disability or dysfunction.

One of our greatest success stories at the Ranch was Tech Sgt. Timothy A. Officer, who was a Tactical Air Control Party Airman. After staying at the Ranch as a child, he later served 14 years in the Air Force, during which he deployed several times in Iraq and Afghanistan. He was awarded the Bronze Star twice, once with the "V" device for valor, and over 20 medals and ribbons. Sadly, he was killed in 2015 after a parachute-training incident during a military freefall training at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.

Officer visited the Ranch right before the accident, showing interest in building an obstacle course at the Ranch similar to ones he would use for military training and exercise. He was appreciative of the time he was able to spend at the Ranch as a child while his own father served in the military. We have been recently awarded a grant from Laster Family Foundation and have completed building this military-style obstacle course for the boys, while helping to honor Officer's legacy.

The Ranch sits on 800 acres of land in Palatka. We have our very own Boy Scout Camp, Vehicle Program, Pool, Learning and Tutoring Center, Equestrian Program, garden, and now a military style Obstacle Course. The boys con-

tinue to stay on the Ranch when school is out during the summer, so finding new and different outdoor activities for the boys at Rodeheaver Boys Ranch is always beneficial.

Rodeheaver Foundation was also recently awarded a grant from the Quad Club Rotary Collaboration of St. Johns County and the Rotary Club of Palatka to build a Learning Center at the

Ranch, replicating a modern library or student center and used as a Learning Center, where the boys can be tutored with their homework, SAT prep, or other academic

endeavors. The grants allowed us to build a classroom at the Ranch with almost 20 new computers and laptops.

We are now trying to fundraise for a part-time tutor to make great use of our new Learning Center at the Ranch. Having a funded tutor in the past has lead to the Ranch boys consistently maintaining an overall grade point average of 3.00 or better. Rodeheaver Boys Ranch and Rodeheaver Foundation do not receive any government funding, and rely solely on grants, events and private donations.

Rodeheaver Foundation is also hosting its third annual fundraising tournament benefitting Rodeheaver Boys Ranch. Rodeheaver Boys Ranch Benefit Bass Tournament will be held on March 10, 2018 at the Palatka City Docks in Palatka. This event draws registrants and boats from all over Northeast Florida, including St. Augustine, Palm Coast, Ponte Vedra, Palatka, Gainesville and Jacksonville.

Visit RodeheaverFoundation.org for more information.

Krista Purcell is Director of Development at Rodeheaver Foundation. Contact her at KPurcell@RodeheaverFoundation.org or (386) 983-0658.



Photos courtesy Rodeheaver Boys Ranch



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U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary update

By Paul Tynda
mail@floridanewsline.com

Recently there has been a recall on the Kidde brand fire extinguishers that many boaters may have on board to meet the federal requirements for recreational boats. The recall was announced on Nov. 2, 2017 and includes the red, white, and silver colored cylinders that are ABC or BC type fire extinguishers. Two types of disposable fire extinguishers with plastic handles or push buttons are also included in the recall.

Recently there has been a recall on the Kidde brand fire extinguishers that many boaters may have on board.

This recall includes 134 types of fire extinguishers numbering around 40 million individual fire extinguishers. For more information and to see if your fire extinguisher is part of the recall, visit the Coast Guard Auxiliary national website www.cgaux.org and go to the prevention directorate in the "What's New" section where you will see the Coast Guard Marine Safety Alert

regarding the recall. Alternatively, you can go to www.cpsc.gov (the Consumer Product Safety Commission) and search for the recall notice.

Even if your fire extinguisher is not a part of the recall, you should be checking the condition of your fire extinguishers monthly. Make sure the tank is in good condition with no rust or damage; this includes the handle and the nozzle. Check the pressure indicators and gages to see that they are showing in the operable range. Make

sure there are no clogs in the nozzle or hose. Occasionally some insects can try to make the opening their home and this is more likely if your boat is stored outside. Check the seal and tamper indicators; they should not be broken or missing. Most importantly keep the fire extinguisher in an accessible place on the boat where anyone on board can get to it in an emergency.

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A fire extinguisher is just one item on the list of required safety equipment that should be in good working order on your boat. One way to ensure that you and your boat meet the federal requirements is to schedule a free vessel safety check with one of the Coast Guard Auxiliary vessel examiners. All passing vessels are issued a decal that is good for the year it is issued and placed on the boat.

Visit www.safeboatingjax.com for more information, to schedule a vessel safety check, or to register for a safe boating class. The next safe boating class is scheduled for Feb. 3, 2018 and is now accepting students.

Paul Tynda is the Commander of Flotilla 14-8 of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Travel

Visit Panoramic Parks in Utah

By Debi Lander
mail@floridanewsline.com

America's National Parks have been called our greatest national treasure. I agree. Trips to any of the 58 parks provide dramatic views, unforgettable memories and fun times.

Florida offers three national parks: Biscayne, Dry Tortugas and Everglades. If you haven't visited, consider a road trip.

The state of Utah (13th largest by land area) boasts five National Parks and they rank as some of the most spectacular in the country. Last summer, I traveled out West to visit two of Utah's finest: Arches and Canyonlands.

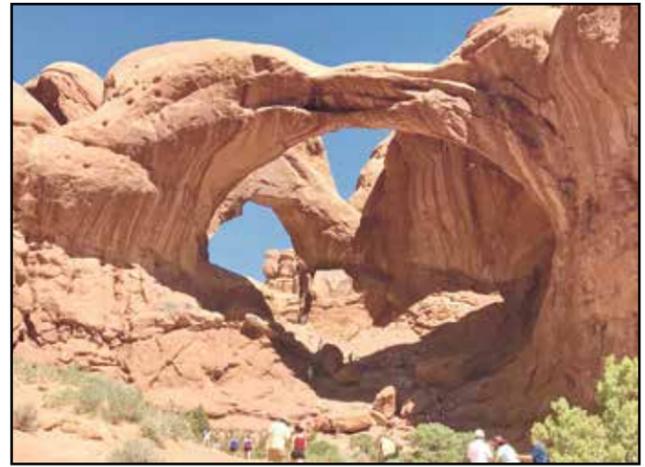
The town of Moab, Utah makes a good base, with plenty of lodging options and restaurants. It caters to outdoor types especially those into

and if all conditions are perfect, it seeps into crevasses and weaknesses in the sandstone, expands and contracts with the weather and after centuries, an arch is formed. Ironically, the same forces that form an arch also destroy it.

The arches are delicate and park rangers promote the catch phrase, Don't bust the crust. It's the blackish stuff you see on the ground, known as "biological soil crust," and it is essential in preventing erosion. This topsoil is so fragile that one step can wipe out years of growth — a very important reason to stay on the marked trails.

Fortunately, you can explore much of Arches by driving and taking short hikes. In the summer, temperatures soar.

lands. The overlook offers a majestic viewing point 2,000 feet above the gooseneck bend in the Colorado River. The horizon looms 100 miles away, and I was overwhelmed by the vastness of the rock real estate and inhospitality of the region. Hard to imagine ancient Puebloan people ever lived in these parts.



Double Arch

panorama. No words needed. Go early and soak in the sunrise as it illuminates the arch.

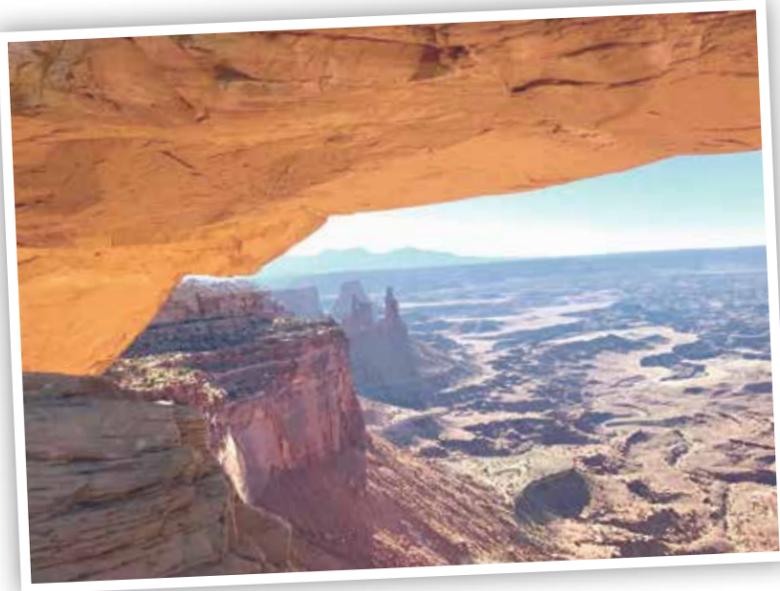
I hiked to more outlooks including the aptly named Grand Point Over-view. This section of Canyonlands is reminiscent of the Grand Canyon, except the gorge does not drop quite as deep, and the walls of the canyon are farther

Further along, I entered the Island in the Sky section of Canyonlands and trekked the trail to Mesa Arch, an arch spanning 50 feet across the mesa's edge. It frames a castle-like scene. Then, I slowly and carefully sat down at the top of a 500-foot vertical cliff and took in the spellbinding, sweeping

from the river.

Whether you are looking for landscape or adventure, the Utah parks won't disappoint.

Visit www.bylandersea.com to read more of local travel writer Debi Lander's stories and travel tips.



Photos courtesy Debi Lander
View from Mesa Arch in Canyonlands

camping, hiking, biking and rafting. One morning, make sure you watch the sunrise as it hits the surrounding red rock canyons. They burst forth with fiery blazes. In fact, you almost need sunglasses. It's impossible to ignore the power of Mother Nature.

I started at Arches and followed my usual protocol of watching the introductory film in the Visitor Center. The one in Arches is, hands down, the best intro I've seen in the national parks. After watching, I understood how arches, the rarest of geological formations, develop. Water is the architect

Double Arch stands as the largest formation and its parking area always remains crowded. But, if you see nothing else, don't miss this area. Double Arch is massive, on a scale you can't imagine until you stand humbled at its feet.

Nearby rests North and South Windows and Turret Arch. These immovable sandstone creations somehow emit excitement, a feeling even children grasp.

Next day, I headed toward Dead Horse State Park, on the way to Canyon-

The Pantry Raiders

Start the year off on a Mediterranean foot

Peppers play a significant role in the Mediterranean diet, providing nutrients such as vitamin C and potassium while also giving meals a fresh boost of flavor. Long touted for its health benefits, the Mediterranean diet has piqued the interest of men and women looking to get healthy. Those who want a meal with a little Mediterranean flare can try the following recipe for "Mediterranean Beef Ragoût" from Judith Finlayson's "The Healthy Slow Cooker (Second Edition)" (Robert Rose).

Mediterranean Beef Ragoût

(Makes 8 servings)

- 2 lbs. trimmed stewing beef, cut into 1-inch cubes and patted dry
- 2 tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 2 onions, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons ground cumin (see note 2 below)
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- 1 tsp. grated lemon zest (optional)
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. cracked black peppercorns
- 1 cup beef stock
- ½ cup dry red wine
- 14-ounce can no-salt-added diced tomatoes, including juice
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 roasted red bell peppers, thinly sliced, then cut into 1-inch pieces
- ½ cup sliced pitted green olives
- ½ cup finely chopped parsley leaves

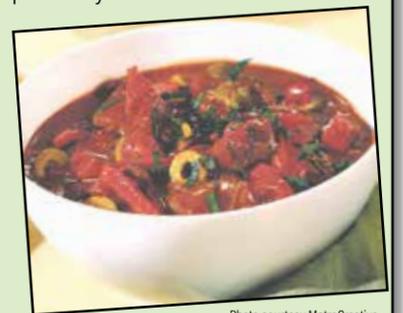


Photo courtesy MetroCreative
Mediterranean Beef Ragoût

1. In a skillet, heat 1 tablespoon of the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add beef in batches and cook, stirring, adding more oil as necessary, until browned, about 4 minutes per batch. Transfer to slow cooker stoneware as completed.
2. Reduce heat to medium. Add onions and garlic to pan and cook, stirring, until onions are softened, about 3 minutes. Add cumin, thyme, lemon zest, if using, salt, and peppercorns and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add beef stock, wine, tomatoes with juice, and bay leaves and bring to a boil. Add to slow cooker and stir well.
3. Cover and cook on low for 6 hours or on high for 3 hours, until mixture is bubbly and beef is tender. Stir in roasted peppers, olives and parsley. Cover and cook on high for 15 minutes, until peppers are heated through. Discard bay leaves.

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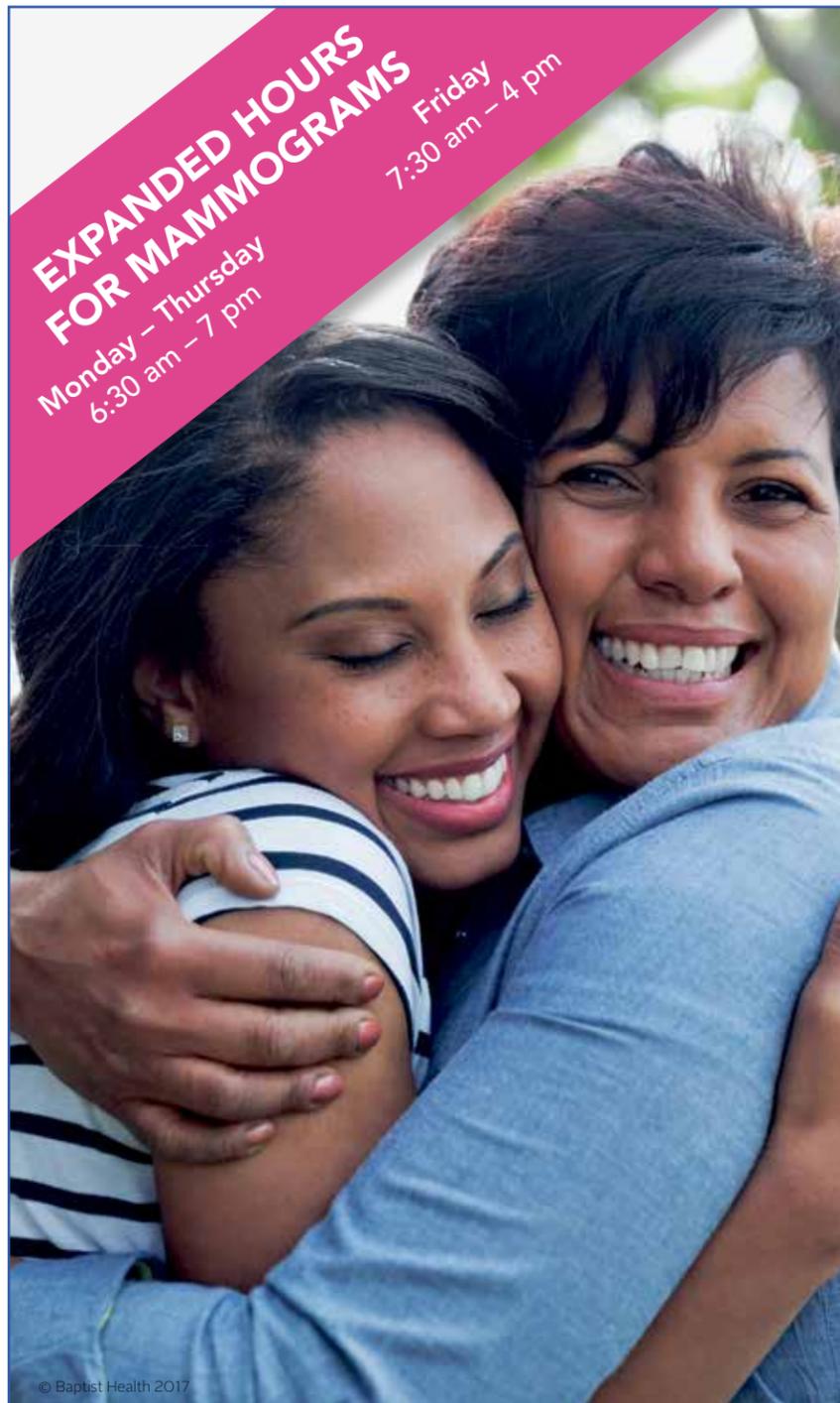
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