

NEW



The Creek Line

Serving the St. Johns County Community

FEBRUARY 2020 Volume 1 Issue 1

INTERNATIONAL GOLF PARKWAY EDITION

A Florida NewsLine Publication



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BFF Best Furry Friend



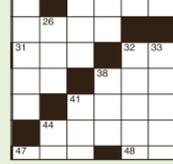
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Get To Know ...
Jennifer Vorburger



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Puzzles

Library patrons support Food for Fines

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

St. Johns County Library patrons were exceptionally generous this holiday season, donating nearly 9,000 non-perishable food items for the county's Health and Human Services Food Pantry. Food for Fines, an annual program in place from Thanksgiving through New Year's, enables patrons with overdue fines to instead donate food for families in need.



Photo courtesy St. Johns County Library

Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library staff with some of the items donated by patrons during the Food for Fines drive.

"It's a real benefit to the community we serve to have the Food for Fines Program," said Tracy Dillon, Social Services Manager for St. Johns County. "The food donated by library patrons replenishes our dwindling food supplies and allows us to operate our Food Pantry for nearly the whole year. It's the most effective county-wide food drive that we have."

Health and Human Services provides a wide variety of services for approximately 10,000 clients in St. Johns

Food for Fines cont. on pg. 12

New High School "HHH" to open fall 2021; ease overcrowding at two existing high schools

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewslines.com

Nease and Bartram Trail high schools will be getting some relief from their extreme overcrowding soon, in the form of a brand new high school in the International Golf Parkway area. The St. Johns County School District has announced that High School "HHH" will be built on a 69-acre site situated adjacent to Mill Creek Academy on International Golf Parkway with a projected opening of fall 2021.

Nease and Bartram Trail high schools currently serve in excess of 2,900 students each, despite capacity of approximately 2,400 and 2,200 respectively, according to School Board member Beverly Slough.

"We are very excited about being able to construct this new high school a bit earlier than we previously thought possible," Slough said. "It will be a beautiful school and will serve the community well."



Slough said that instead of having to wait for the 2022 maturation of approximately \$50 million in bonds that were used to construct Creekside and Ponte Vedra high schools, the district was able to fully fund construction of the new school with new bonds.

"We anticipate breaking ground in late winter or early spring and have the school finished on time to open for the 2021 - 2022 school year," Slough said.

High School "HHH" was designed by utilizing a reuse of a middle/high school from another school district that was adapted to the best practices of the



Renderings courtesy St. Johns County School District

St. Johns County School District. It is comprised of five separate buildings — administration/media center; auditorium, gymnasium, cafeteria and a classroom building — surrounding a secure courtyard. Slough said she is particularly excited about the auditorium, which will seat about 850 and will allow for community events.

According to Slough, the new high school will house three academies: Health Management, Construction Management, and Information Technology. There will also be an advanced program of study, as with all St. Johns County high schools. Slough said at this time, there is no

that time that determination will be made if the school will open with a senior class.

Slough acknowledged public concern that it seems like as soon as a new school is opened, it is already overcrowded. She said while the state of Florida does require a certain capacity that must be met before new schools are constructed, St. Johns County has no problem meeting this requirement.

"We are constrained by money," Slough said. "And the reason we are behind is because people are moving here so quickly. At the beginning of this school year, we saw 6 percent growth while we anticipated 3 percent. We are just beyond excited that this school will be coming online a year earlier than originally anticipated."

While there is no apparent work happening on the school site at this time, because the property is pastureland and didn't require clearing, Slough promised that "very soon" community members will see construction activity.



agreement in place with the military to offer ROTC at the new school.

The zoning process will begin this spring, so everyone fully understands where their new "home" high school will be, Slough said. It is at



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BFF Best Furry Friend of the month

Meet Ruby!

BREED:
Silky Yorkie

FAVORITE ACTIVITY:
Riding the bike in a basket

FAVORITE TREAT:
Celery

FAVORITE FRIEND:
Sugar..... a shih tzu

HOW YOUR BFF GOT THEIR NAME:
We rescued her and that was her name

This month's sponsor:
Palencia Pet Clinic
159 Palencia Village Dr #101
www.palenciapetclinic.com

Do you have a cute pet? Send us your pet's picture and the answers to the five questions above before the 10th of the month. Your pet could be our BFF of the month and you could win a Gift Certificate!
Does your business cater to pets? Would you like to sponsor our contest?
Email editor@floridanewsline.com to enter your pet or sponsor the BFF contest.

Shop DINE Play & STAY

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Answers to our Puzzles

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N	E	G	R	O	A	A	H	S	A	L	E	E	
I	E	E	E	A	N	V	I	L	N	E	A	T	
D	R	E	W	B	R	E	E	S	P	O	A	C	H
E	P	I	C	S	C	A	R	H	S				
P	R	E	D	A	D	S	O	R	A	S			
H	E	A	D	S	O	M	E	T	I	M	E	S	
M	A	M	E	T	T	A	R	S	A	B	I	N	
R	E	C	O	V	E	R	E	D	S	U	L	A	
S	A	R	O	S	N	A	M	M	O	B			
C	B	M	A	W	S	A	R	I	S				
H	O	P	E	H	M	O	D	E	R	A	T	E	S
A	D	I	T	B	R	A	E	S	B	A	A	L	
S	E	R	E	I	N	K	S	D	E	B	R	A	
E	D	E	R	D	A	S	B	R	I	N	G		

CRYPTO FUN
Telephone the code to reveal the answer!

Answers: A. eyes B. exam C. vision D. healthy

around town

Feb

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

Feb. 1
Read to Rover (beginning readers practice reading to therapy dogs)
 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.
 Bartram Trail Branch Library
 (904) 827-6960

Feb. 4
Current Events Discussion Group
 10 a.m. (repeating event on Mondays)
 Amenities Annex, 625 Market St., Palencia
 adsilby@yahoo.com

Feb. 4
First Coast Card Club – adult card players
 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.
 St. Augustine Main Library, 1960 Ponce de Leon Blvd.
 (904) 829-0643

Feb. 4
World Golf Village Toastmasters
 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
 First Florida Credit Union, 1950 County Road 210W
 Worldgolfvillage.toastmastersclubs.org

Feb. 5
Jewish Java
 9 a.m.
 River Garden, 11401 Old St. Augustine Road
 RSVP (904) 224-1408

Feb. 6
Rotary Club of Bartram Trail
 7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. (repeating event on Thursdays)
 Westminster Woods, 25 State Road 13
 www.bartramtrailrotary.org/

Feb. 6
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 14-7
 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.
 St. Augustine Yacht Club near the St. Augustine Lighthouse
 pa@mysafeboating.com

Feb. 7
Bartram Friday Book Club: "Unsheltered" by Barbara Kingsolver
 10 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.
 Bartram Trail Branch Library, 60 Davis Pond Blvd.
 (904) 827-6960

Feb. 7
Coffee Club current events discussion, hosted by Deborah Lennon with Edward Jones
 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.
 YMCA, 98 Turin Terrace

Feb. 7
Rotary Club of St. Johns meeting
 7:30 a.m. (repeating event on Fridays)
 St. Johns Golf and Country Club Clubhouse
 www.rotarystjohns.org

Feb. 8
Friends of the Library Book Sale
 9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Bartram Trail Branch Library
 (904) 827-6960

Feb. 8
Family seining
 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.
 Guana Dam, 505 Guana River Road
 (904) 823-4500

Feb. 10
Northwest United for Progress Club
 Social 6:30 p.m./Meeting 7 p.m.
 2777 Race Track Road
 nwsjcp@gmail.com

Feb. 11
Bartram Trail Newcomers' and Women's Club luncheon featuring Sammy Previte of Palm Valley Dietitians
 11 a.m.
 St. Johns Golf and Country Club, 205 St. Johns Golf Drive
 RSVP by Feb. 5; bartramtnc@gmail.com

Feb. 11
Bartram Tuesday Book Discussion: St. Johns Reads "Where the Crawdads Sing"
 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
 Bartram Trail Branch Library, 60 Davis Pond Blvd.
 (904) 827-6960

Feb. 12
Alzheimer's and Dementia Caregiver Support
 3:30 p.m.
 River Garden, 11401 Old St. Augustine Road
 Repeating event on the second Wednesday of each month

Feb. 13
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

Feb. 15
Fruit Cove Cruise In sponsored by Sunshine State Chevelles
 4 p.m. – 8 p.m.
 PDQ parking lot, 194 State Road 13
 Repeating event on third Saturday of each month

Feb. 17
All Star Quilt Guild general meeting
 10 a.m.
 First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd.
 www.orgsites.com/fl/allstarquiltguild or
 (904) 735-0506

Feb. 18
North Business Council of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce
 8 a.m. – 9 a.m.
 Westminster Woods on Julington Creek, 25 State Road 13
 Register at www.sjccchamber.com or call (904) 829-5681

Feb. 18
Happy Hookers crochet group
 6 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.
 Bartram Trail Branch Library
 (904) 827-6960

Feb. 18
St. Johns CARES planning meeting
 6:30 p.m.
 Celebration Lutheran Church, 810 Roberts Road
 www.stjohnscares.org

Feb. 18
All About Driving Evaluations, presented by Dr. King, UF
 11:30 a.m.
 River Garden – 11401 Old St. Augustine Road
 RSVP for lunch: (904) 288-7855

Feb. 19
Jacksonville Camera Club
 6:45 p.m.
 Shepherd of the Woods Church, 6595 Columbia Park Ct.
 www.jax.jaxcameraclub.com (repeating event, first and third Wednesdays)

Feb. 20
Wm. Bartram Scenic Highway Management Group meeting
 6:30 p.m.
 St. Johns County NW Annex, 725 Flora Branch Blvd.

Feb. 25 – March 31
Free Tobacco Free Florida Quit Your Way Program
 Tuesdays, 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.
 Flagler Health+ Wellness Center, 120 Health Park Blvd., St. Augustine
 Call Florida AHEC to register (904) 482-0189

Feb. 27
All About Ortho, presented by Dr. Bell, JOI
 11:30 a.m.
 River Garden, 11401 Old St. Augustine Road
 RSVP for lunch: (904) 288-7855

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take 5

Porch Talks to be held at Alpine Groves Park

St. Johns County Parks and Rec has partnered with the Stetson Kennedy Foundation for Porch Talks, and the next one will be held on Saturday, Feb. 8, from 5 p.m. – 6 p.m. At Porch Talks, local experts discuss local issues focused on art, history, environmental issues, and interesting personalities. Learn about the Northwest part of St. Johns County, including notable landmarks and the historical richness of the area. This month's part of the Porch Talks series is titled, "The Ladies of Tea: 1700s-1900s." This program is free and open to everyone. Alpine Groves Park is located at 2060 State Road 13 in St. Johns. Contact AyoLane Halusky at ahalusky@sjcfl.us or (904) 209-0348 for more information.

St. Johns County groups to host Mentor Fair

The St. Johns County School District, RSVP of St. Johns County and other local mentor groups will host a mentor fair on Wednesday, Feb. 5 from 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., at the Fullerwood Center Auditorium, 10 Hildreth Drive in St. Augustine. Representatives will be on hand to provide information about mentoring students in the St. Johns County School District. Mentor train-

ing will also be provided to interested individuals and a continental breakfast will be available. Mentors give approximately 45 minutes per week to meet with a student and support him/her in academic pursuits and other goals. No prior experience is required and background screening and training are provided at no cost. Contact RSVP/Volunteer Services at or Cheryl.Freeman@stjohns.k12.fl.us or (904) 547-3945 for more information.

Women entrepreneurs conference to be held in February

SCORE Jacksonville, in cooperation with the Business and Leadership Institute for Early Learning and Children's Home Society of Florida, will host a conference specifically geared towards women entrepreneurs on Saturday, Feb. 8 in the Advanced Technology Center on the Downtown campus of the Florida State College of Jacksonville. The theme of the conference is "Engage, Educate, Empower" and will feature several presentations, panel discussions and breakout sessions offering guidance as to how best to launch and operate a business. Among the list of scheduled speakers is Pamela Starr, a leading authority on building customer loyalty and a professional speaker for Grow

with Google. Visit www.jacksonville.score.org for more information.

First annual Lace Up for Libraries 5K scheduled

The Friends of the Library of St. Johns County, Inc. is hosting the first annual Lace Up for Libraries 5K Run/Walk, to be held on Feb. 29 in Nocatee. In addition to the 5K, the event will include a one-mile run/walk and have a Virtual Race option as well! The first 200 5K registrants will receive a commemorative shirt. All proceeds raised from the Lace up for Libraries 5K Run/Walk will benefit St. Johns Reads, a county-wide "One Book, One Community" initiative that targets all ages and in the community. The group's mission is to enrich lives and build community by providing opportunities to Connect, Learn, and Enjoy at Your Library. Volunteers and sponsors are needed for the race; contact Mary Rice at sjfolmr@gmail.com for more information. Visit laceupforlibraries5k.itsyourrace.com to register for the race.



Photo courtesy Metro Creative

Owl + Sunset Symphony coming to Fruit Cove

On Friday, Feb. 7 from 5:45 p.m. – 8 p.m. at Beluthahatchee Park, 1501 State Road 13, St. Johns County Parks and Rec will host an Owl + Sunset Symphony. Attendees will learn about owls and enjoy nature's symphony as they experience the transition from light to dark. Water birds and owls often come out to join the evening symphony. A representative from the Stetson Kennedy Foundation will also share some local history. This program is free, but registration is required; contact AyoLane Halusky at ahalusky@sjcfl.us or (904) 209-0348 for more information.

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**with St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections
Vicky Oakes**

Q: What is the focus of your office for the month of February?

A: Keeping in mind that the March 17 Presidential Preference Primary is a closed election, it's important for voters to note that only registered Republicans and Democrats can vote. Of the 193,540 registered voters in St. Johns County, 45,562 of them are registered with no party affiliation or with a minor political party and, in accordance with state law, are not eligible to vote. These voters can change their party affiliation easily online or by calling our office. The deadline to change party affiliation to vote in the March 17 election is Feb. 18.

Q: What else is happening in February?

A: Vote by Mail ballots, for those voters who requested them, are scheduled to be mailed out on Feb. 6. It's not too late to request a Vote by Mail ballot; simply call our office or go online to do so. If you don't remember if you have made a request, go to the "My Voter Status" tab on our website to check.

Q: How long does a Vote by Mail request last?

A: This request lasts for two general elections, which would be four years. We ask voters to specify if they'd like the request for a shorter period of time.

Q: Are there any polling place changes for the March 17 election?

A: Yes, since the last election, in the Northwest we have had a couple of changes. Precinct 102, which covers a large portion of Julington Creek Plantation, will now vote at Unity Church, 2777 Race Track Road. (Precinct 105 still votes at Creekside Christian Church.) Also, Precinct 109, which used to vote at Bartram Trail High School, will move to the Shearwater Amenity Center. We have already mailed out new Voter Information Cards to all affected voters.

Q: Do you have anything else to share about the Presidential Preference Primary?

A: There are 16 Democrat candidates and four Republican candidates on the ballot. We prepare the ballot based on when the state certifies, which has already occurred. Voters need to pay attention and be aware of which candidates have recently suspended their campaigns. These candidates will still be on the ballot due to the earlier date of the state certification.

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

A: Readers can email me at voakes@votesjc.com or call me at (904) 823-2238. Our website, www.votesjc.com also has a wealth of information.



**with St. Johns County Property Appraiser
Eddie Creamer**

Q: It's the new year ... what is happening at the Property Appraiser's office?

A: Yes, it's 2020 and property taxation is kicking off another year. We are now in the assessment process and will be until June.

Q: What do you recommend property owners do at this time?

A: We currently have "working values" for properties on our website. I recommend that homeowners review their numbers and if they have any issues they can contact our office now to discuss. The same thing goes for exemptions — they can review them online and make sure the proper exemptions are applied.

Finally, especially if a homeowner is considering selling, they should check their portability on the website for accuracy. The courts have ruled that once a home is sold, you have no standing to appeal the portability amount.

Q: Can you give us some more information about portability?

A: If your property is homesteaded, the most its value can increase is the lower of 3 percent or the increase in the state's cost of living. The state of Florida just released its CPI (Consumer Price Index) and it is 2.3 percent, so this will

be the cap for this year (since it is lower than 3 percent).

Q: Is it also time to consider homestead and other exemptions?

A: If you have existing exemptions on your property, they will be automatically renewed for this year unless you notify us. If you are applying for new exemptions in 2020, such as homestead, veteran, senior, or widow/widower, you must do it before the deadline date of March 1, 2020. Homeowners can go online to apply or call our office with questions. The required documentation for each exemption is also available online.

One other note on exemptions: the senior exemption is a low income exemption. The state of Florida just released the required maximum income to qualify; for this year it is \$30,721 adjusted gross income.

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

A: Our office is located at 4030 Lewis Speedway Ste. 203, (904) 827-5500. It is open Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Also, readers can email me at Eddie@sjcpa.us or call me at (904) 827-5500.



**with Florida State Representative
Cyndi Stevenson, District 17**

Q: When did session begin and what is on the schedule at this time?

A: Session began on Jan. 14. All bills have been filed and the next thing approaching is the budget. Leadership decides the big pieces, basically the five major categories of the budget, and then it's up to the budget chairs to get everything to fit in. Eventually, the budget will be sent to the governor, who has a line item veto. He can take items out of the budget, but not put them in.

Q: Can you give an overview of Florida's budget?

A: First, money is very limited and entitlement costs are growing rapidly. It used to be that K-12 funding was the largest part of the budget, but now healthcare is largest.

Q: Can you expand upon how limited the money is?

A: I don't think people realize how slow the recovery since the recession has been for the State of Florida. The state's general revenue didn't recover to its pre-recession level, on a per-person basis, until 2018. Put another way, we are in the 11th year of economic expansion, but it took nine years to get revenue to pre-recession levels. Recovery has been slow. Yes, revenues have increased, but demands have grown as well. It's only in the last two years that we have been able to spend funds on non-obligations, like water resources and land acquisition (i.e. Florida Forever).

Q: So, the amount of entitlements (obligations) make it challenging to fund other items?

A: Yes. From 2000 – 2015, 91 percent of revenue went to obligations rather than discretionary spending. Entitlement costs are consuming more and more of our budget and putting pressure on everything else. We have kept Florida a relatively low-tax state and kept our pension funds funded, but it makes it harder to fund other items like infrastructure. And when voters pass Constitutional Amendments that either give tax breaks to certain groups or pin down part of the budget for certain things, these give us even less flexibility.

I think we need to be very careful with Constitutional Amendments, as these are forever.

Q: What do you see as the top priorities in funding this year?

A: The governor has advocated for affordable workforce housing, so I believe that is a priority. I believe teacher funding is a need and will be a priority in session, along with prison funding and mental health and substance abuse funding. We still have a lot of work to do, but we will keep chipping away at it.

Q: What insight can you give us on St. Johns County?

A: It's interesting that, statewide, tourism led us out of the recession and housing has been very slow. This is hard for us in St. Johns County to believe and why it's important for our local delegation to advocate for us because we are different. St. Johns County is a bit of an aberration in the state as it grew throughout the recession and attracted more and more families. The legislature needs to advocate for line items to help our high growth areas, because we still have unmet needs in St. Johns County: we need more judges to service our increased population, we need more mental health services and on top of that, we've had major hurricanes.

Q: Do you have any bills that you are sponsoring?

A: Yes, I have several. There are two bills related to mental health (one for early identification and treatment for those with psychosis and one for Baker Act reforms); a bill to allow physical therapists to more fully practice; a bill for recovery care centers to provide a more affordable option for those who don't have enough care at home; and a bill that will help us have a state estimate for resiliency projects related to sea-level rise.

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

A: Readers can email me at Cyndi.Stevenson@myfloridahouse.gov or call my local office at (904) 823-2300.



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with St. Johns County Commissioner Jimmy Johns, (District 1)

Q: As of last month, Hunter Conrad had just been hired as the county's interim county administrator. Can you give an update on the search on for the permanent county administrator?

A: The Board of County Commissioners is responsible for the determination of the interim county administrator as well as the permanent one. We want to demonstrate that whoever gets the permanent position is the correct person with the best fit for St. Johns County. I advocate for whatever is necessary, including possibly a nationwide search, to demonstrate that we've performed our fiduciary responsibility to our constituents. Representing the interests of the people and not taking short cuts for this long-term decision is what I call good government. [Editor's Note: On Jan. 21, the Board of County Commissioners voted 5-0 to hire Hunter Conrad as the permanent county administrator.]

Q: Do you have any new information about beach renourishment?

A: My understanding is that the federal government has recently approved money for St. Johns County beach renourishment. In order to receive these funds, a local funding source for a small percentage of the total is needed. We would have to find and provide these funds. What I hear the most is that we should use some of our reserve funding, and that might happen, but it's important to note that in that case, these funds would then not be available for current maintenance needs — and also

it would hinder our potential bonding capacity. This is all something we will need to consider and discuss. Federal funds sound like a great deal for us; we just need to make sure that this is where the majority of our St. Johns County residents would like their local dollars spent.

Q: Do you have anything else to share with NW St. Johns County?

A: I regularly hear people question, with concern, the pace of growth in our county, so I am currently having staff put together some numbers so that we can see factually if growth has spiked in recent years. They will provide numbers on population (I do know that we have netted an increase of between 5,000 – 7,000 people each year for the past few years) as well as the number of platted and approved (but not yet constructed) residential lots. One fact I'm aware of is that in 2019, we had 10 percent fewer residential building permits issued than 2018. It's important to understand and consider all these numbers. We don't want to contract too quickly, because that would raise demand and the cost of housing, making it unaffordable, just as too much availability will drive housing prices down. When I get these numbers from staff, I will share them — hopefully by the next issue of The CreekLine.

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

A: Readers can email me at bcc1jjohns@sjcfl.us or call me at (904) 615-7437.



with State Attorney, 7th Judicial Circuit, R.J. Larizza

Q: What is happening of interest in the State Attorney's Office?

A: I'd like to bring something important to people's attention. Recently, we were prosecuting a man who managed to obtain the Florida Bar Association numbers for two of the prosecuting attorneys working his case for our office. He then fraudulently created an email account and electronic files and sent a case dismissal through the attorney portal to the clerk of court's office. Someone from the clerk's office contacted us about it and we have since charged this man with theft of personal information and forgery among other counts. We have also corrected and strengthened the attorney portal to make it more secure.

The takeaway from this is ... no one, not even the State Attorney's Office, is immune from electronic fraud.

Everything from mobile deposit of checks to online shopping is actually a risk. All the technological things that make life easier create an opportunity for tech savvy criminals to use to their advantage. Florida is the number one state in the country right now for fraud.

Q: As pertains to electronic fraud and personal identity theft, do you have any tips to share?

A: First, check with all three credit reporting agencies, as they can be different, for unauthorized activity. You get one free credit report per year for this purpose. You can subscribe to a service that monitors your credit or do it yourself. You can also freeze your credit.

If you are using wireless internet, invest in a firewall product to protect your computer and any credit card information that you might have stored.

Be sure to do your due diligence about whether you want to share your phone number or email address, even for things like store rewards programs, but especially for things like sweepstakes.

Be aware of what technology can do for you as well as for the pitfalls. It's important to balance the convenience of technology with security.

Readers can visit our website, www.sao7.com and look under the "Protect Yourself" tab for more tips.



FYI Contact Numbers

St. Johns County Local Government (www.sjcfl.us)
Sheriff's Office: Sheriff David B. Shoar, dshoar@sjso.org, (904) 824-8304
 Julington Creek Field Office: (904) 209-2150
Property Appraiser: Eddie Creamer, sjcpa@sjcpa.us; (904) 827-5500
Supervisor of Elections: Vicky Oakes, voakes@votesjc.com, (904) 823-2238
Tax Collector: Dennis Hollingworth, taxcollector@sjctax.us, (904) 209-2250
Clerk of Court: Hunter S. Conrad, (904) 819-3600
St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners
 District 1: Jimmy Johns, bcc1jjohns@sjcfl.us, (904) 209-0301
 District 2: Jeb Smith, bcc2jsmith@sjcfl.us, (904) 209-0302
 District 3: Paul Waldron, bcc3pwaldron@sjcfl.us, (904) 209-0303
 District 4: Jeremiah Blocker, bcc4jblocker@sjcfl.us, (904) 209-0304
 District 5: Henry Dean, bcc5hdean@sjcfl.us, (904) 209-0305
St. Johns County School Board (www.stjohns.k12.fl.us)
 District 1: Beverly Slough, beverly.slough@stjohns.k12.fl.us, (904) 547-7510
 District 2: Tommy Allen, tommy.allen@stjohns.k12.fl.us, (904) 547-7510
State of Florida Elected Officials
 Governor Ron DeSantis, (850) 488-7146
 State House District 17: Representative Cyndi Stevenson, Cyndi.Stevenson@myfloridahouse.gov, (904) 823-2300
 State Senate District 7: Senator Travis Hutson, (386) 446-7610
Federal Elected Officials
 U.S. Congress District 4: Representative John Rutherford, (202) 225-2501
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MarketInsight



The Bull Moose

By Scott Grant
ScottGrant@StJohnsBusinessMonthly.com

Teddy Roosevelt was climbing Mount Marcy in New York State when he learned that President McKinley had died as a result of a gunshot wound received a week earlier. He travelled five hours by wagon and then by train to Buffalo to take the oath of office in the home of a friend. When he took that oath on Sept. 14, 1901, he became the youngest president in history. (I know what you are thinking, what about John F. Kennedy? JFK holds the distinction of being the youngest elected president. Teddy Roosevelt, at 42, is still the youngest man ever to hold the office. Kennedy was 43.)

McKinley had been shot on Sept. 6 while visiting the Pan American Exposition. The assassin was an anarchist named Leon Czolgosz. When you hear the word anarchist, you think of a crazy lone gunman. It turns out that the Anarchists were an organized movement and a world-wide one as well. Tsar Alexander II was killed by an anarchist in 1881.

Teddy Roosevelt would serve as president for seven years. During his re-election campaign of 1904, he promised he would not run for a third term. It was a promise he would regret. In 1908, Teddy turned over the reins to his hand-picked successor, William Howard Taft. The prodigious Taft, who was so heavy that he reputedly once got stuck in the White House bathtub, disappointed his mentor. In 1912, Teddy returned determined to set matters straight. Roosevelt ran a strong primary campaign, but party bosses seated enough delegates to ensure Taft would prevail. Teddy Roosevelt fumed.

Teddy literally pulled his delegates from the Convention and left to form his own party. He called it the Progressive Party, but it would come to be known by a different name. They say William Howard Taft never wanted to be president. He wanted to be Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. In 1921, he got his wish when he was appointed to the position by President Warren G. Harding, becoming the only person in history to hold both offices.

During the campaign, Roosevelt was in Milwaukee to give a speech. He had the speech written on 50 pages of paper, folded twice and stuffed into the pocket of his suit along with his eyeglass container. As he walked out of his hotel, a man approached and pulled a .32 revolver and shot the former president in the chest at point blank range. Roosevelt went down. The crowd reacted violently, beating the would-be assassin and shouting, "Kill him!" Teddy was calmer. "Bring him here," he said. "I want to see him." He asked the man, "What did you do it for?"

The wadded sheets of paper and steel case slowed the bullet which lodged against the former president's rib. Teddy

carried the souvenir with him for the rest of his life. Roosevelt's entourage wanted to rush him to the hospital, but Teddy had other ideas. He coughed into his handkerchief and seeing no blood determined that his lungs had not been pierced. "He pinked me," Roosevelt declared. "You get me to that speech." Less than an hour later, he took the podium and announced, "I don't know whether you fully understand that I have just been shot." The audience gasped audibly as Roosevelt opened his jacket to show his bloodied shirt before adding, "It takes more than that to kill a bull moose!"

From that moment on, Roosevelt's new party was known as the "Bull Moose Party." Teddy got more votes than Taft in the general election. Woodrow Wilson, with only 42 percent of the popular vote, won the presidency in an electoral landslide. Teddy Roosevelt ran the most successful third-party campaign in our history, but for the rest of his life he remained bitter about the result.

Some people look at the two political parties and yearn for a third choice. You have to wonder if Teddy Roosevelt could not make it work, whether anyone can.

Scott A. Grant is a local author, historian, columnist, and speaker. He is president of Standfast Asset Management in Ponte Vedra Beach. He welcomes your comments or questions at scottg@standfastic.com.

Scott Grant's book, "The Merchant of Death is Dead: True Stories of the Progress of Humanity," in which he shares some of his favorite columns, is now available: <https://tinyurl.com/tjn7tj65>. Over the last 14 years, Grant has been a regular columnist for two newspapers and has perfected several history presentations. After two years of touring the local northeast Florida civic clubs, museums, and schools, he was asked to produce a book. This is his first publication. He is delighted to share his knowledge of history and investments.

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3 strategies to manage your time more effectively

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

Busy professionals juggling the responsibilities of work and family often feel pressed for time. Adding a 25th hour to the day might not be possible, but busy men and women can make more time by managing their existing time more effectively.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention note that stress and time management are linked. People who effectively manage their time may, as a result, prove more capable of handling stressful situations than those who are not as adept at time management.

Effective time management is an ongoing process that often requires people to revisit their approaches as their commitments change. In addition to making such adjustments when necessary, men and women can employ these three strategies to manage their time more effectively.

1. Keep track of yourself. Maintain a log that indicates how much time you're spending on the various tasks you perform throughout the day. Without such a log, it can be difficult to determine where time is being wasted and which activities require the most attention. In addition, maintaining an activity log can shed light on when you tend to be the most productive and when your energy begins to wane. That's an especially beneficial thing to know, as it may compel you to make changes that can boost your energy

levels at times of the day when you can most benefit from a little extra energy. For example, if you notice your productivity routinely slows to a crawl after lunch, you might choose to change your diet so you consume more energy-boosting foods at midday.

2. Steer clear of your mobile devices. A 2019 study from eMarketer.com estimated that people will spend an average of three hours and 43 minutes on their mobile devices each day in 2020. The study found that much of that time was spent using social networking apps. Some professionals may need to use social networking apps as part of their jobs, but those that don't should steer clear of their mobile devices during the day. Doing so may reduce distractions that can have an adverse effect on productivity, thereby helping people get more done in less time. During the workday, turn off unnecessary mobile phone notifications, such as those from sports or social media apps.

3. Make an effort to clear the clutter. Clutter might not seem like too big a threat to productivity, but studies have found that it is. The National Association of Productivity and Organizing Professionals notes that 54 percent of adults are overwhelmed by clutter at home and work, with 78 percent acknowledging they have no idea how to deal with it. One study even found that the average person wastes more than four hours per week searching for papers.

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Gardening

It's February - Already

By Master Gardener Volunteer Lesley Arrandale
mail@floridanewsline.com

Now is a good time to sow seeds of popular summer vegetables, particularly tomatoes, peppers, both hot and sweet, and eggplants. This is an indoor project, though, as soils will not warm up sufficiently until all danger of frost has passed, usually after March 20 or thereabouts. Use a potting soil formulated for seedlings and keep your seed tray in a warm place to encourage germination. Once you have tiny plants, give them plenty of light. Be aware that overwatering is a potential problem as it can cause seedlings to rot and die: a fungal condition called "damping off." Fertilize with a weak solution every week or two, or use a slow release product, keeping it away from tender stems.

There are some vegetables that should be sown directly in the garden if they are to grow well, and in February these include corn, cucumbers, snow or English peas, radish (a useful quick grower), squash, turnips, and watermelon. If you have limited space, take a closer look at the Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide, to help refine your options (<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/vh021>). Always grow what your family will eat, or be prepared to coax them into new and different flavors.

When considering where to grow, aim to move your crops from place to place each season. Crop rotation helps to discourage insects that are attracted to particular types of plants, and soil-

borne diseases that attack certain plant groups don't have the opportunity to build up to really damaging levels. You may not have an easy situation to deal with, since different vegetables mature at different rates and take up different amounts of space, but it is worth avoiding growing the same plants in the same place year after year. Ideally plants in the same family (see <https://tinyurl.com/vqqqslq>) should be grouped together to make this easier. Record what, when, and where you plant in the garden using simple diagrams. As your crops finish, tidy up any potentially diseased material if you haven't done so already, and replenish the soil with compost. Draw up the next planting plan and keep these records season to season. (I certainly cannot remember the details of what I planted two or three years ago!) Aim for a three year rotation at minimum, and perhaps use a cover crop for green manure (see the Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide) if you have a space you don't want to use.

When I was a child, my parents worked in our garden — the term in England that encompasses the whole backyard. My dad grew the vegetables and fruit, and my mum loved her flowers. It never occurred to me then that all flowers had their seasons, although the Michaelmas daisies (then in the Aster genus now re-

Gardening cont. on pg. 12

2020 Economic and Market Outlook: A Call for Resilience



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Wednesday, February 19
Marsh Creek Country Club
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Presentation will begin at 11:30am with Complimentary lunch to follow. Program will be until 1:30pm.

Presented by:

Christopher M. Thompson CRPC®, CFP®, First Vice President – Investment Officer

Please RSVP to Janine at 904-273-7956 or email Christopher.thompson@wellsfargoadvisors.com

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Life

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Get to Know . . .

Jennifer Vorburger

By Cassy Fiano-Chesser
mail@floridanewsline.com

Jennifer Vorburger and her family have been residents of Julington Creek for 16 years. Her family, which consists of her husband Mike, and their four children: Hunter (25), Jake (18), Matthew (12), and Cate (10), is one of the longest-attending families at Durbin Creek Elementary, which has led to Vorburger's notoriety for how much time she's spent in the car line. With 16 consecutive years dropping kids off and picking them up, it's totaled so far 2,970 hours, or more than 123 days. She's also the new owner of a small business, and has some great suggestions of ways to pass the time for other car line parents out there!

Q: What brought you to the Julington Creek area?

A: I'm from Orlando, but I've been living in Jacksonville since 1992. I started off in Ponte Vedra Beach, lived in Mandarin, and then once we started having kids, I knew I wanted to get into Julington Creek, just because of the community, the amenities, the bike paths. It just seemed a lot more family-friendly.

Q: Have you always been a small business owner?

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editor@FloridaNewsLine.com

A: I actually worked in marketing and communications for Florida Blue for 13 years, and then when kid number four came along, I became a stay-at-home mom. My sister-in-law told me that her nine-year-old daughter had a glamper party, and she noticed that my husband and I are into camping. We bought a trailer a couple of years ago, and we did a makeover on it. It got featured on a webpage called "Pop-Up Princess," which is a site where people can submit their camper makeovers. So she noticed we were into "glamping," or making camping a little bit nicer. She thought I would be perfect at doing these glamper parties. I started in June, last summer, and it's really taken off. We were pretty steadily booked for all of 2019, and going into 2020. It's my own company, so it's much more flexible, and it's fun.

Q: How did you get so much time with the car line?

A: I actually thought it was kind of funny! It feels like I've spent years and years in the car line. We've always been zoned for Durbin Creek, which opened in 2003; Hunter was the first of my children to attend. With kids ranging in age from 25 down to 10, I'm on my 17th year of dropping off and picking up kids in the car rider line. This equates to a total of 2,970 hours and counting in the line — or 123 full days of my

life in DCE's line. My youngest child, Cate, is in fourth grade, so I still have another year of "The Line." In the end, I'll be looking at a total of 3,240 hours in the car rider line.

Q: What are your expert tips for surviving while you're waiting in the car line?

A: I use it to get all kinds of things done! In the earlier years, I timed the current baby's nap to coincide with pickup. Or I'll work on doing bills, take phone calls, or even just enjoy the quiet time. Sometimes I would use it to give the pets or foster pets a ride in the van. We started fostering kittens for Jax Humane Society a little over two years ago and the kittens love to ride in their window seat we bought them. My kids always loved coming in after school and seeing the kittens too. Most recently, I use the time for advertising my new Glamper Party business that is plastered all over the back of my van.



Photo courtesy Jennifer Vorburger
Jennifer Vorburger has some fun during her time in the car line.

Q: What do you like to do for fun in your spare time?

A: We're a really outdoorsy family, and we love to travel. We also love biking on the Julington Creek bike paths. And we like to do things like hiking, camping, kayaking — anything that's outside.

Fishing

Capt. David's Fishing Report

By Captain David Lifka
mail@floridanewsline.com

We have reached the time of year where fishing can be at its most difficult. Cold weather and cold water temperatures definitely have a direct influence on the current bite. Fortunately, so far this winter has been fairly mild, keeping water temperatures higher than usual. If this keeps up for just a few more weeks, spring fishing could be coming in like a lion.

With spring comes the best largemouth bass fishing of the year. After spending the winter low and slow, largemouths will hit all area freshwater ponds, lakes, creeks, and the river with a bodacious appetite. This bite is brought on due to the largemouth's springtime spawning season. You can expect the spawn to last several weeks, with excellent bass fishing taking place before, during, and after the spawn. Spawning bass can be spotted on their beds for easy fishing in shallow waters during the spawn.

Saltwater fishing is ready for kickoff at any time this time of year. As bait fish begin their migration north due to warming sea temperatures, the predatory fish that we like to catch will soon follow. Bluefish are often the first fish to show. With razor sharp teeth, and piranha-like feeding frenzies, blues are plentiful and easy to catch during their spring run. Just about any bait, live or artificial, will be attacked while they are passing through in the surf. Cut baits and finger mullet seem to be their favorites though.

Whiting usually follow the blues, but can begin to show before the blues if we've had a mild enough winter. When the Whiting do show, it's time to hang on to your hats, as the bite can happen as fast as your bait hits the bottom. Dead shrimp and sand fleas are their favorite bait.

When fishing in the surf, try locating a "bite zone" to increase productivity. By casting to different depths or locations, give each spot a few minutes to see how fast a bite occurs, and what the quality of the fish is that comes from that spot. You may also want to just try a slow retrieval every minute or so till your bait finds the area where the best fish are most concentrated.

In the upcoming days or weeks, spring fishing offers some of the fastest and easiest fishing of the year. For getting started, don't look at the calendar, but watch the weather. Periods of warmer days with water temperatures averaging 60 degrees or warmer is the ticket to give it a try. If you are really anxious to get out, every 50 or 60 miles you drive south moves up the fishing season a week or two.

Fishing Report: Area freshwater largemouths are a must for anyone looking for their first or trophy bass. Don't forget your neighborhood ponds and lakes for some great bass fishing.

Whether you catch one, some, or none, the family time spent fishing will last a lifetime.

Vicky Dakes
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ELECTION DATES FOR 2020

PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY ELECTION
MARCH 17, 2020

PRIMARY ELECTION
AUGUST 18, 2020

GENERAL ELECTION
NOVEMBER 3, 2020

VOTER REGISTRATION & PARTY CHANGE DEADLINES

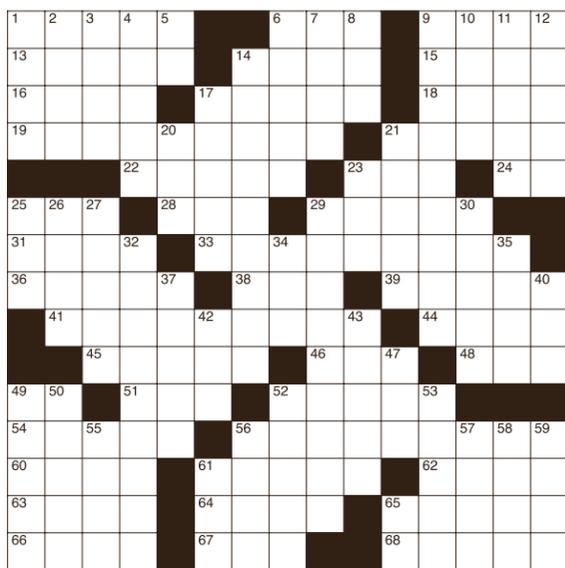
PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY REGISTER BY FEBRUARY 18, 2020

PRIMARY ELECTION REGISTER BY JULY 20, 2020

GENERAL ELECTION REGISTER BY OCTOBER 5, 2020

Puzzles

Answers to puzzles on page 3
Provided by MetroCreative



CLUES ACROSS

1. Indicates number of days
6. When you hope to get there
9. Hairstyle
13. Black (Spanish)
14. Expresses pleasure
15. Away from wind
16. Tech pros organization
17. Wile E. Coyote is familiar with it
18. Clean
19. Saints' signal caller
21. A way to hunt
22. Poetries
23. Automobile
24. Secondary school (abbr.)
25. Indicates before
28. Male parent
29. Short-billed rails
31. It pays to keep yours
33. On occasion
36. David __, US playwright
38. Slang for cigarette

CLUES DOWN

1. __ Blyton, children's author
2. Colleague
3. "The African Queen" writer
4. Crater on the moon
5. Toward
6. Overhang
7. Identifies something close at hand
8. Sign language
9. Unbroken views
10. Ancient Greek City
11. Stretch out to grasp
12. Alcohols that are unfit for drinking
14. Humorous stories
17. Long song for a solo
20. Barrels per day (abbr.)
21. City of Lights
23. A place to sleep
25. Advanced degree (abbr.)
26. The back

27. Furniture-makers Charles and "Ray"
29. Songs to a lover
30. Gland secretion
32. 10 meters
34. Disfigure
35. Stores grain
37. Sacred book of Judaism
40. Catch
42. Promise
43. Challenges
47. Russian space station
49. Banking giant
50. Served as an omen
52. Drenches
53. Type of sword
55. Minor planet
56. Messenger ribonucleic acid
57. Japanese ankle sock
58. Obtain in return for services
59. Waste matter
61. A proposal to buy at a specified price
65. Unit of loudness

GOOD SIGHT WORD SEARCH

D Y S Q B H L U Y M R H Q B I E G U D E
 N R U T A E N R O C V I S I O N C Q F I
 D G G P A T V Y I M I L V G L A S S E S
 I V N N O C A E P O F Y G R E A H I R P
 S M T O I M B S V B F O E I S P N L Q M
 O Y L T S I G O L O M L A H T H P O C G
 R O U O O C D O A B C I I G E A U C A Y
 D P M V D S E N P P T G M N R E Q F T I
 E I V S B R I R B T M Y S C L E R A A F
 R A S C I T A H O M O L L S Q M P O R S
 Y N U T E T O D A E G M R G P A P O A E
 B P Y R C F A I E T Y E E A F T F M C Y
 I O D O F A P M Y A F E Q T I U Q S T E
 F F E I V O T N G L I U S C R B E G O S
 O E C B Y S I N E I E I I I L I P A C H
 C E P L D F I C O O T A M I G S S Q Y C
 A H B E O I T Q U C N S V N C H E T S Y
 L M D C R I B S L C C U A E H G T T N D
 A F U O O S T N E M U R T S N I W S E C
 I S F N T L O L A L N I A C U I T Y L H

WORDS

- ACUITY
- AMBLYOPIA
- AQUEOUS
- ASTIGMATISM
- BIFOCAL
- CATARACT
- CONTACTS
- CORNEA
- DISORDER
- EYES
- EYESIGHT
- FOCUS
- GLASSES
- INSTRUMENTS
- LENS
- MYOPIA
- OFFICE
- OPHTHALMOLOGIST
- OPTICIAN
- OPTOMETRIST
- REFLECTION
- RETINA
- SCLERA
- VISION



Solve the code to discover words related to vision.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 8 = e)

- A. 8 13 8 2**
Clue: Used for sight
- B. 8 21 25 3**
Clue: Test
- C. 16 9 2 9 15 23**
Clue: Sight
- D. 20 8 25 10 4 20 13**
Clue: Free of illness

Food for Fines cont. from pg. 1

County throughout the year.

"We've seen the Food for Fines Program grow every year since we first implemented it in 2007," said Library System Director Debra Rhodes Gibson. "For each item of food donated, a dollar is taken off fines on their account. It's even supported by our patrons who don't

have fines. The whole community gets behind it."

Food for Fines is one of several collaborative programs that the St. Johns County Library System participates in with other county departments, extending its reach to county residents. Visit www.sjcpls.org for more information.

Gardening cont. from pg. 10

categorized as Symphyotrichum) were a late summer treat for many beautiful butterflies. It was clear that the produce came and went seasonally, apparently controlled by my dad. Now I understand that we have flowers that bloom in certain seasons, for varying lengths of time, and their life cycles include setting seed for the next year. With experts advising us that we should aim to have

flowering plants available year round for those oh-so valuable pollinators – like honey bees – this article may help: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/mg035>. And for shrubs and trees to support honey bees, see <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in1223>.

Check out "A New Leaf" at <https://tinyurl.com/yxuhw2qq> and be prepared for a productive and beautiful spring.



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| February 2020 |    |    |    |    |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|
| M             | T  | W  | T  | F  |
| 3             | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  |
| 10            | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 17            | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 24            | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |

- Teacher Optional Planning
- 8 Teacher Planning (non-student day)
- 2 Teacher Inservice (non-student day)
- Classes Resume
- Student/Teacher Holiday
- End of Quarter
- Days in question



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| Cialis 20mg         | 16          | \$119.00 |
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# Travel

## A weekend in Wytheville, Virginia

By Debi Lander  
mail@floridanewsline.com

Travelers often find unexpected joys, fewer crowds, and budget-friendly prices in smaller cities. I recently discovered these advantages in Wytheville, located in Southwest Virginia, at the intersection of highways Interstate-81 and Interstate-77, not far from the Tennessee border. Wytheville's population numbers just 8,500, but there's plenty to see and do.

My first stroll down Main Street brought me to the Edith Bolling Wilson Museum. Who? Edith Bolling, a child born and raised in Wytheville, became the first lady when she married Woodrow Wilson in 1915, during his first term as President. (I can only imagine the media frenzy that would cause today.) When Wilson suffered a stroke in 1919, Edith actually made many presidential decisions on his behalf.

Her birthplace sits next door to the museum. The house has yet to be restored, but the near-empty rooms speak loudly of the past. I was fascinated by Edith and her place in American history. (She was born during the Civil War Reconstruction and has a 10th generation link to Pocahontas.)

The Thomas A. Boyd Museum focuses on Wytheville's history, including a reasonably recent, but sad, chapter. In 1950, Wytheville had more polio

cases than any other city in the state. The year became known as the Summer Without Children. Accounts say it was as if the Pied Piper spirited all the children out of town. Parents would not permit the kids to play outdoors. Several iron lungs of various sizes are displayed, a poignant reminder of how polio victims were affected and treated at this time.

Today's outdoor enthusiasts will find a variety of hiking, biking, horseback riding, and boating options among Big Walker Mountain Trail, New River State Park, and Crystal Springs. Drive up to Big Walker Mountain Lookout (elevation of 3,405 feet) and climb the 100-foot tower for endless views of beautiful Appalachian Mountains. Motorcycle riders find the epicenter of the "Claw of the Dragon" in Wytheville, a 200-mile scenic trail running through the Blue Ridge Mountains.

The Fort Chiswell Animal Park grew from the childhood dream of Jeff Arches. The 45-acre safari park features animals from six continents, mostly rescued animals.



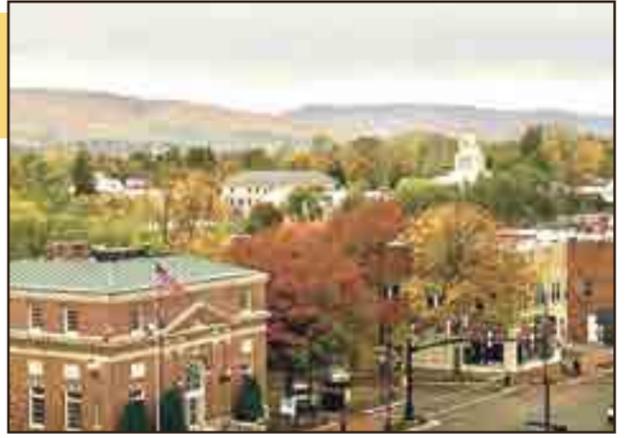
Fun at the Fort Chiswell Animal Park.



Edith Bolling Wilson birthplace museum.

You ride along with windows open on an old school bus, and exotic animals come up to the vehicle. The guide tells you how you can feed them. I turned my back, and a camel pushed his head in the window and stole the entire bag of animal feed off the seat. He enjoyed quite a feast while we all laughed. The attraction runs on an abundance of love and care. It's a happy place that I feel comfortable recommending, especially if traveling with children.

As far as food and beverage, Wytheville's got it covered. The West Wind Farm Winery does everything from grape to glass by hand. They hand-pick, crush, bottle and



Photos courtesy Debi Lander  
Wytheville Main Street.

label wines from the five-acre vineyard. Wytheville welcomes beer enthusiasts to two trendy craft breweries.

The Wohlfahrt Haus Dinner Theatre presents musicals to 50,000 guests per year in a 250-seat arena. With those numbers, you know they must be doing something right. The three-course meal and the show were excellent. Another night, I suggest dining at the atmospheric Log House 1776 Restaurant. Plan to stay and browse the gardens, antique, and gift shops in outer buildings.

Wytheville draws a crowd to its annual Chautauqua Festival and Balloon Rally, an eight-day family-oriented music and arts festival from the third to the fourth Saturday every June. The spectacular evening balloon glow earns rave reviews. Balloon rides are available the next morning.

## Kathy Runyan, Realtor



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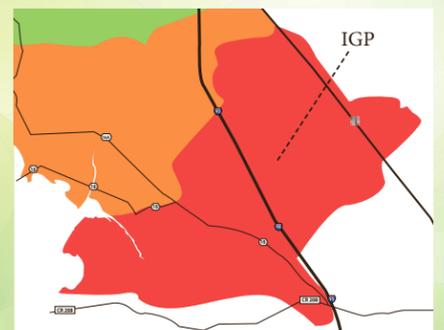
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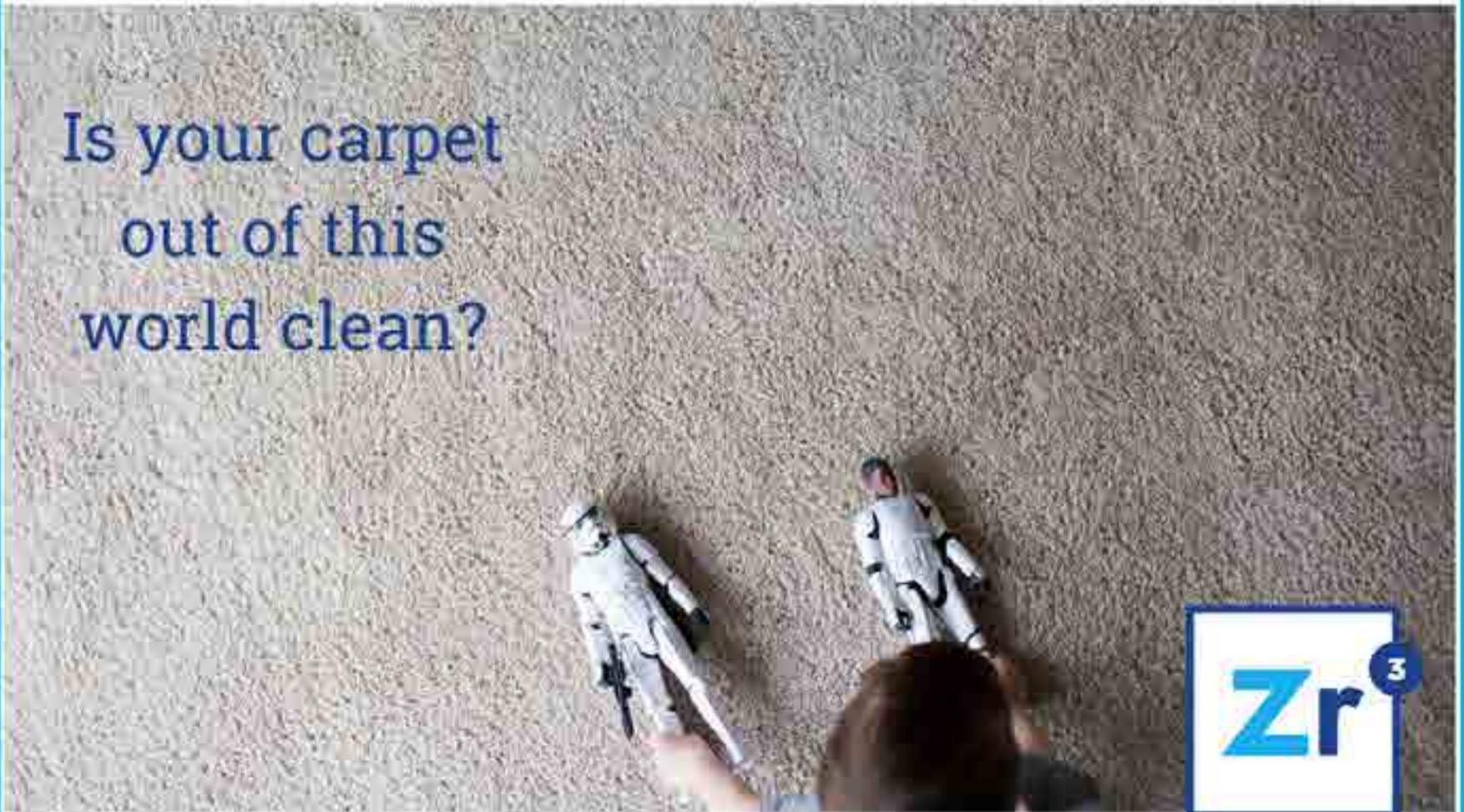
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