



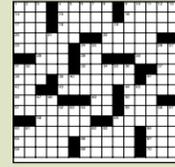
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Photo courtesy INK!

Cherise Lloyd (Eric Tatro's wife); Cristina and Sean Rotolo, owners of Oxi Fresh of Northeast Florida, who followed Tatro during the run to ensure he had supplies; Donna Lueders, executive director INK!; runner Eric Tatro; and Andréa Knight of Haven Hospice.

Fundraising On Foot, River to Beach Run raises \$7,200 for INK! by U.S. Navy veteran

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

Local resident, real estate businessman, and U.S. Navy veteran Eric Tatro recently completed the Fundraising on Foot, River to Beach Run and raised \$7,200 for INK!, the St. Johns County Education Foundation. During Tatro's run, he crossed St. Johns County diagonally from the St. Johns River to St. Augustine Beach with \$100 sponsors for every mile of the 36-mile effort.

Donations were covered by local physician, Dr. Tim Cavacini and his

Fundraising cont. on pg. 13

Back to school is nearly here

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewslines.com

The minivans, bikers, walkers and school buses will be back soon — the first day of school in St. Johns County is Monday, Aug. 16. This year, two new schools will welcome students for the first time: Toco Creek High School in the World Golf Village area and Pine Island Academy in the Nocatee area. These two schools, necessary to combat overcrowding in the northern part of the county, bring the total number of traditional K-12 schools in the district to 40.

"We are excited to bring these two new schools into our school family," St. Johns County School Board Member for District 1 Bev Slough said. "Both Nease and Valley Ridge Academy are severely overcrowded, and these two schools will go a long way to alleviating that. We are also pleased to have two new principals who will share their plans for excellence in education."



Photo courtesy Shelley Howard

School buses will soon be back on St. Johns County roads.

According to the St. Johns County School District, the student count as of June 10, 2021 was 43,985 students, a 1.6 percent increase over the previous year — even in the midst of the pandemic. St. Johns County continues to be one of the fastest growing school districts in the state. Kindergarten enrollment in particular is expected to increase.

"We anticipate a larger kindergarten class this coming year, since last year's was small-

er than usual, perhaps due to COVID," Slough said.

Friday, Aug. 13 is the districtwide "Meet the Teacher Day," where every school is encouraged to have personnel present to meet students; however, schools can, and most do, schedule their own day or stagger them by grade level sometime during the week before school starts. The district encourages parents to check their school's website for

School cont. on pg. 4

St. Johns County celebrates 200th anniversary

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

St. Johns County was founded on July 21, 1821. Along with Escambia County, it was one of the two original counties established in the state after Florida was ceded to the United States.

To mark the county's 200th anniversary, the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners, community leaders, and partner agencies celebrated on July 21, 2021 with a birthday present fitting for the occasion — a historical time capsule. Local artist Isaac Outley, owner of The Driftwood Company, created a one-of-a-kind time capsule, donated in part by Flagler Health+, for this milestone. It will now decorate the halls of the County Administration building for the next 50 years.

Dozens of partner agencies, including the county's two municipalities, the City of St. Augustine and the City of St. Augustine Beach, participated by placing an item they believed captured the current significance of their organizations and their impact on the community into the capsule. Items included the 2021 St. Augustine Amphitheatre show poster, a St. Johns County Public Library System library card, a commemorative St. Johns County Sheriff's Office badge, a special



Photos courtesy St. Johns County

A: The St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners, community leaders, and partner agencies celebrated the county's 200th anniversary on July 21, 2021.

St. Johns County Fire Rescue patch, the 2020 general election ballot, and many other significant items.

The time capsule will remain sealed until 2071, when it's set to be opened during the county's 250th anniversary. This year's Board of County Commissioners hope the items placed inside will give future leaders a glimpse into what life was like in 2021 as well as offer a snapshot of the tremendous work that goes on in our community.

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Local foundation helps cancer patients with travel expenses

By Tiffany Merlo Phelps
mail@floridanewline.com

When Anne Borngesser Bean and her late husband Jim Borngesser found out that he had appendix cancer in January 2013, Jim very quickly coined the term “cancer bonus.”

“The day that you recognize your first cancer bonus is the day that you realize that cancer won’t win every day,” said Bean, explaining that finding something good that happened because of cancer is so important and impactful.

Jim and Anne would drive to cancer appointments early in the morning, which meant that the traffic was light and easy. Cancer bonus. Anne always wanted a Vitamix blender, but didn’t want to splurge. Jim eventually needed his food to be liquified, so a Vitamix was donated to them. Cancer bonus. Friendships were rekindled, and family relationships got stronger. Definite cancer bonus.

Anne said that the community gave so much to her family during Jim’s cancer battle (gifts that Jim had a hard time accepting) that it motivated him to continue fighting. He wanted to be able to return the favor and help other families struggling to find travel funds for medical treatment.

“When Jim moved to hospice and had a limited time to live, he expressed frustration that he didn’t have enough time to do all the things he wanted to do to help people,” said Anne.

Jim passed away on March 25, 2017, at the age of 51. By September, Anne and Jim’s



Photo courtesy Anne Borngesser Bean

Dream Big! Backyard Bash was held in Ponte Vedra in April

sister, Susan Kalmuck, started The Dream Big! Foundation to carry on Jim’s legacy — one of kindness and always giving to others. The Dream Big! Foundation helps families financially who have to travel for cancer-related treatment (near or far).

“Our goal is to get people money as fast as we can,” said Anne. “We have made it as unrestricted and as easy as possible.”

Anne and Jim traveled to New York City for four years of treatment, so gift cards and cash from others made life out of town so much easier. Anne credits those treatments at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center under the care of Dr. Garrett Nash with giving Jim precious time to see two of their children graduate high school and to watch one child begin college.

Also, Jim asked his children to tell him something that they absolutely wanted to do with him before he passed. For Maggie (now 25 years old) it was the opportunity to walk down the aisle with her father so that she could hold onto that feeling for when her real wedding day took place one day. Once others found out about her wish, 250 people attended to watch and the choir

sang as Jim walked Maggie down the aisle at San Juan Del Rio Catholic Church.

“He made it more about her. He gave that to her,” said Anne. “We were in a very good spot when he passed away. He helped us get there. It was an amazing gift.”

These memories drive Anne and her family to continue building Jim’s legacy.

After applying and providing cancer diagnosis verification, Dream Big! recipients must submit two other items: a recipe of their favorite comfort food during treatment and their cancer bonus, the silver lining that Jim so embraced. The recipes will soon be published in The Dream Big! Foundation Cookbook to raise further funds.

Dream Big! recipient and breast cancer survivor Liz Oliver, 39, said that when she received her cancer diagnosis in July 2018, Anne, who she knew through her brother, encouraged her to apply. The gift cards enabled her to travel from Panama City to Sarasota and California for treatments and paid for many costs that the insurance company did not cover, especially holistic treatments and supplements.

“They were a light in a dark moment. Just very good people doing great things for others,” said Oliver.

Her cancer bonus: “I became a better person. I learned to reprioritize my life. I experienced three years of growth, and I enjoy every day now, even on hard days. I am even closer with family and friends.”

John Hudson, a neighbor and friend of Jim and Anne’s, was so inspired by Jim and by The Dream Big! Foundation that he dedicated his 50th birthday party to the cause in June 2020. He had a backyard party with The Rivertown Band, invited 80 people, asked everyone to make a donation in lieu of a gift and raised \$2,500. It was such a success that Hudson suggested another event, The Dream Big! Backyard Bash, in Ponte Vedra Beach in April. Tickets were sold, 25 volunteers assisted, and \$10,000 was raised. Hudson hopes to make this an annual event.

“It was a fantastic community event for a great cause,” said Hudson, who met Jim at the Rotary Club of St. Johns in 2009. (Anne is also a Rotarian.)

For more information about The Dream Big! Foundation, email Anne at anne@dreambigshirts.com. Dream Big! t-shirts are also available for sale, and all proceeds are donated to assisting families. The St. Johns Rotary Jim Borngesser Memorial Dream Big! Golf Tournament will be held on Nov. 19, and those interested in playing should call Anne at (904) 392-9236. It will be held at the St. Johns Golf and Country Club with the Rotary Club of St. Johns supporting Dream Big! for the fifth year.

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The 500 List — As seen in the Forbes February 2020 issue



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BFF Best Furry Friend of the month

Meet Mikasa!



BREED:

Abandoned tabby mixed cat that we found in a park

FAVORITE ACTIVITY: Sleeping on the porch

FAVORITE TREAT: Tuna

FAVORITE FRIEND:

Our two little girls, Olivia and Hannah

HOW YOUR BFF GOT THEIR NAME:

We named her after the wedding china, Mikasa, since she followed us home from a park two weeks before we got married.

This month's sponsor:

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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.

back to SCHOOL

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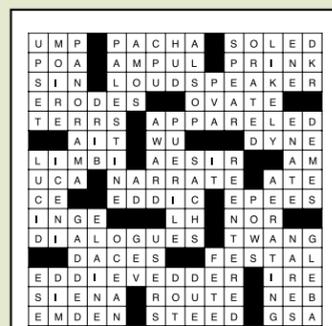


MYSTERY PHOTO

Can you guess where this is? Submit your answer to: mail@FloridaNewsLine.com.



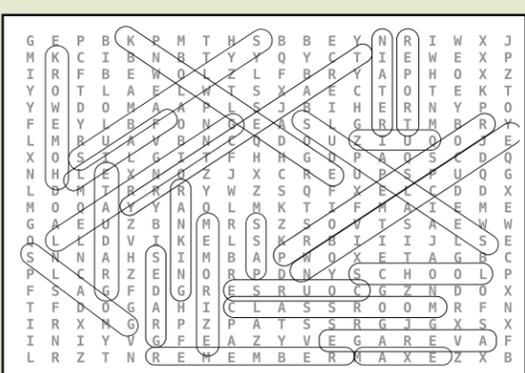
Last month's Mystery Photo was the top of the Julington Creek Plantation Rec Center. Our winner was Mary O'Dwyer. Congratulations!



CRYPTO FUN

Answers: A. educate B. lesson C. degree D. teacher

Answers to our Puzzles PG 14



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with St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections Vicky Oakes

Q: Several months removed from last November's election, can you share some analysis and statistics from St. Johns County?

A: The first thing that struck me was that so many voters cast ballots ahead of Election Day — only 15 percent of our voters went to the polls on Election Day to cast their ballots. We had a very smooth Election Day even though eight precincts still had more than 1,000 voters processed. We had the third highest voter turnout in the state with 85 percent of our registered voters casting ballots.

Q: Do you have a breakdown of how votes were cast?

A: Via Vote by Mail, we had 74,972 ballots requested and mailed to voters; 57,676 ballots were voted and returned to us (33 percent of the total). We had 13 days of Early Voting in 10 locations in the county; 338 poll workers were needed and 93,261 voters cast ballots (52 percent of the total). On Election Day, 39 polling locations with 438 poll workers were in place so that 26,730 voters could cast ballots (15 percent of the total).

Q: Why do you think voting in St. Johns County went so well, even in the midst of the pandemic?

A: There are a number of reasons that I think Florida got it right: Florida law allows a Vote By Mail

ballot to be mailed to a voter upon request;

Florida law allows processing of Vote by Mail ballots prior to Election Day. Our Canvassing Board, which counts these ballots, began meeting weekly or sometimes twice a week on Oct. 9;

We require signature verification on every Vote By Mail ballot;

Early voting was very convenient;

Voter ID is required when voting in person;

We utilize ePollbooks, which makes an automatic update in a voter's record when a ballot is cast (either by mail or in person). This prevents a voter from voting twice; Party poll watchers are allowed to observe the conduct of the election at the precincts during Early Voting and Election Day;

Our Canvassing Board processes are open to the public; anyone can attend and observe our processes;

Our elections are open and transparent — and have been for years.

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 Sheriff Rob Hardwick

Q: With the start of school on Aug. 16, can you share some details about the Youth Resource Deputies assigned to schools from your office?

A: This school year, we will have 51 deputy sheriffs, five corporals, five sergeants, one lieutenant and one captain from the St. Johns County Sheriff's office that will be working for the St. Johns County School District. We now have a deputy sheriff in every school in St. Johns County (including two from the St. Augustine Police Department for schools in St. Augustine). The school district covers 70 percent of the salary and compensation of these employees and the SJSO covers 30 percent, since during the summer when school is not in session, we assign these deputy sheriffs to the beaches or to the Community Engagement Department.

Q: Why do you think it is so important to have deputy sheriffs in schools, besides safety reasons and the Florida law which required this in light of the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in 2018?

A: This is a time for us when we can have a positive influence in students' and parents' lives. From pre-K through high school, we can educate parents and students about what we do. At the end of last school year, I visited every school and met with the principal and office staff. This gave me the opportunity to find out if our deputy sheriffs were doing a good job and the response I received was overwhelmingly positive. These deputies are developing personal relationships with students. I'd like to challenge our community to get involved with the deputy sheriff at their school if they haven't already. Stop by their office and introduce yourself.

Q: What else are you doing to foster relationships with students?

A: One of the cool things we are doing is the vehicle wrap for the deputy's car at the high school. All the funds for this are privately donated. It started with Bartram Trail and St. Augustine High School, and plans are in the works for Nease, Ponte Vedra, Creekside and Pedro Menendez. The graphic design for these eye-catching cars is created by the students, so that leads to even more community buy-in.

We really have one of the best relationships between the sheriff's office and the St. Johns County School District. I can't brag enough about what a great job the school district does.

Q: What other programs do you offer for kids?

A: Our PAL program in St. Johns County actually operates under the same captain as the youth resource deputies with the school district. We offer boxing, cheer, flag football, dance, lacrosse and baseball. I invite the community to get involved with this league.

Also, we have our Explorer program for those youth who might be interested in a career in law enforcement. We have 50 kids right now and a waiting list. They meet every Monday night and have uniforms and rank structure. This is a great recruiting tool as these kids can eventually become deputy sheriffs.

Q: What is the best way for our readers to contact you with any questions or suggestions about this article?

A: They can email me at sheriff@sjso.org or call me at (904) 824-8304. Also, our website, www.sjso.org has a wealth of resources, from alarm registration to Crime Stoppers to our Neighbors app.

School cont. from pg. 1

the most accurate information.

In addition to the two new schools, there are some other changes coming for the 2021 – 2022 school year. There will be a youth resource deputy from either the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office or a local police department in every school starting this year. Previously, there were a few instances with a representative from a private security company at a school with a shared school resource officer between a couple of schools.

As of press date, health and safety protocols have changed from last year, with the removal of the face mask mandate and daily temperature checks being the most notable. According to the district, face masks will be optional in school and on district transportation. Desk shields will no longer be a mandatory feature of all classrooms, but will be used as appropriate when needed for health and safety protection. Teachers are

still asked to maintain social distancing of students and keep seating/desks three feet or more apart to the extent possible. Adequate supplies of hand sanitizer and soap and water will be available. *[Editor's note: Be sure to check the St. Johns County School District's prevailing safety protocols and standards as of the first day of school, due to the fluidity of the COVID situation. Visit www.stjohns.k12.fl.us for more information.]*

There is still time to register your child for school, if you have not already done so, and the district recommends that parents do this as soon as possible. Parents may access information regarding registration requirements and their child's attendance zone by visiting the school district website at www.stjohns.k12.fl.us and clicking on the "Parents & Students" tab. Additional information on registration and school attendance zones may be obtained from the Student Services Office at (904) 547-7797.

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with St. Johns County School Board Member, Beverly Slough, District 1

Q: What can you share about the upcoming first day of school?

A: School starts on Aug. 16. We anticipate and look forward to a very normal school year with 100 percent in-person learning. It is imperative that you register your child for school immediately if you haven't done so already so that we have enough teachers hired. Visit your zoned school or the school district website (www.stjohns.k12.fl.us) to register and for all the information you need.

Q: What are the health and safety protocols for the 2021 – 2022 school year [as of interview date of July 16]?

A: The school board adopted Superintendent Tim Forson's recommendations at our meeting on July 13. Some highlights include: masks are no longer required, but are optional. We have removed the desk shields and eliminated the temperature checks. We will try to socially distance as we can and use common sense; for instance, we will keep desks three feet apart if possible. We will continue with the enhanced sanitization practices and continue to encourage frequent hand washing.

A further word on our decision on the mask policy: CDC recommendations are just that — recommendations. Our low cases lead us to believe that we are in good stead to not require masks. Families should note that masks are optional and students can wear them if that is their preference.

Q: What happens if a child contracts

COVID?

A: If a student contracts COVID, that child will have to quarantine and we will do contact tracing. This will be coordinated through the county health department, which will be responsible for making the determination to release the student to return to school.

Q: How will extracurricular activities work?

A: Our clubs and athletics will all meet. At the beginning of the school year, we will allow a maximum capacity of 75 percent at games, but the school board has given Superintendent Forson the authority to adjust as conditions warrant. We're going back to normal as much as possible; we will have field trips, plays, and other performances.

Q: Will volunteers be allowed in schools?

A: Yes. Volunteers will be allowed to come back to classrooms and we are looking forward to this. At the beginning of the school year, though, we ask that parents don't just come to the school to eat with their child, in an effort to curb crowding in the cafeteria.

Q: How can our readers contact you?

A: They can email me at beverly.slough@stjohns.k12.fl.us or call me at (904) 547-7510.

[Editor's note: Be sure to check the St. Johns County School District's prevailing safety protocols and standards as of the first day of school, due to the fluidity of the COVID situation. Visit www.stjohns.k12.fl.us for more information.]



with St. Johns County Clerk of Circuit Court and Comptroller Brandon Patty

Q: When will it be possible to get passports at our county annexes in northern St. Johns County again?

A: Passport application services at the Julington Creek Annex (725 Flora Branch Blvd.) and Ponte Vedra Annex (151 Sawgrass Corners Drive) resumed on Monday, July 19, 2021. The annexes are open for processing passport applications by appointment only, which are available between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. on weekdays. Passport applicants are encouraged to call (904) 819-3632 to schedule an appointment and verify which application must be completed before coming to the clerk's office annex.

Q: Can you give an update on the redaction rule changes in civil cases?

A: Based on a recent Florida Supreme Court amendment to Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.420 regarding access to court records, "the clerk shall not be required to identify and designate information as confidential," in circuit civil, county civil, and small claims court documents. Filers are now responsible for ensuring any confidential information contained in court records are appropriately identified for redaction. This only applies to small claims, county civil, and most circuit court civil cases.

Q: Do you have anything else to share?

A: Our office has published the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for fiscal year 2020. The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report is an in-depth report that includes all county financial information such as statements, assets, revenues, expenses, and tax collections. Also, for the first time ever, St. Johns County published a Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR), which summarizes the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (which is more than 400 pages) and explains the county's finances in layman's terms. Both reports are accessible on our website, stjohnsclerk.com.

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

A: A lot of questions can be answered by visiting our website, www.stjohnsclerk.com, which is most commonly used to pay traffic citations or search court records. A little known fact is that it also has an option to report government fraud or abuse, as the clerk's office is a government fraud/waste/abuse auditor. People can also call our main office at (904) 819-3600.

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To make an appointment or for more details, call (904) 288.7858 or visit RiverGarden.org.

August

What's Going On in St. Johns?
A modified calendar of events

Community Calendar

Playing HOOKie, a group for those who enjoy knitting, crocheting and looming (with all items donated to charity) meets every Wednesday from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the outside eating area at Panera Bread in the RiverPlace Shopping Center, 11111 San Jose Blvd. Visit the group's Facebook page (Playing HOOKie) or email playinghookie31@gmail.com for more information.

The Jacksonville Camera Club will feature Michael Cenci, a wildlife and nature photographer, at its meeting on Wednesday, Aug. 4. Another meeting on Aug. 18 will feature the results of the second triannual print competition. There will be a social hour prior to each 7 p.m. meeting. The August outing will be held at Little Talbot Island's Black Rock Beach on Aug. 14. Visit jaxcameraclub.com for more information and meeting location updates.

Northeast Florida AHEC will host a free **diabetes empowerment exercise program** via an online live webinar for people 60 years and older on Mondays, Aug. 9 – Sept. 20, from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. (excluding Labor Day). Attendees will learn how to develop better nutrition and exercise goals. Call Northeast Florida AHEC at (904) 482-0189 or (877) 784-8486 to register.

The St. Johns County Civic Roundtable will meet on Monday, Aug. 9 at 12 p.m. and feature Mike McCabe, Esq., who will present an educational discussion on homeowner associations. This meeting will be via Zoom video conferencing. Email info@sjcroundtable.org to register for the meeting or for more information about the St. Johns County Civic Roundtable.

The All Star Quilters Guild will meet at 10 a.m. on Monday, Aug. 16 at the First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd. The program is "Speed Dating with 12 x 12s," followed by Sew and Tell. Guests are welcome and masks are optional. Visit www.allstarquilters.org for more information.

Herbal Medicine for Beginners will be offered on Aug. 21 at 10 a.m. Attendees will learn about traditionally used herbs to promote wellness and health as well as how to create their own tinctures, teas, and salves. Included are guides, plant identification, lecture and herbal snacks. Pre registration is required via phone or text: (386) 972-1891.

First Coast Florida Lifestyles Newcomers Recreation Card Club will host board games (Rummikub or suggestions) at Kookaburra Coffee in St. Augustine on Sunday, Aug. 22. Arrival is at 2:15 p.m. and games will be played beginning at 2:30 p.m. Masks must be worn while playing and one item must be purchased to satisfy restaurant management. Call the club organizer at (904) 829-0643 (no texts) to RSVP or for information about the club. The club is open to both men and women and is a smoke- and drug-free club.

Northeast Florida AHEC announces a free **Tools to Quit Tobacco Class**, which includes free nicotine patches, gum or lozenges on Tuesday, August 24, from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at Flagler Health and Wellness Center, 120 Health Park Blvd. in St. Augustine. Call (904) 482-0189 for more information or to sign up.

Temple Bet Yam will sponsor a **Mah Jongg tournament** on Aug. 26 at the St. Augustine Duplicate Bridge Club, 10 Fairbanks Street. Registration begins at 10:30 a.m. and the tournament begins at 11 a.m. The \$30 donation includes the tournament, lunch, and cash prizes for the winners. Registration deadline is Aug. 20; call Carol Levy (954) 895-7332 or Teresa Freedman (774) 994-2066 for more information and to reserve your space.

State Rep. Cyndi Stevenson to host mobile office hours

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

For the convenience of residents of District 17, State Representative Cyndi Stevenson will host "Mobile Office Hours" throughout House District 17 during the month of August:

Aug. 18, 2021 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the Ponte Vedra Branch Public Library (101 Library Blvd., Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082)

Aug. 19, 2021 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the Bartram Trail Library Branch (60 Davis Pond Blvd., Fruit Cove, FL 32259)

Aug. 23, 2021 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the St. Johns County Convention

Center at World Golf Village (500 South Legacy Trail, St. Augustine FL 32092)

Aug. 24, 2021 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the Anastasia Library Branch (124 Sea Grove Main St., St. Augustine Beach, FL 32080)

Aug. 25, 2021 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the St. Johns County Main Library Branch (1960 N. Ponce De Leon Blvd., St. Augustine, FL 32084)

To set an appointment, contact Frank DiMarco at frank.dimarco@myfloridahouse.gov. Presently, Rep. Stevenson and her staff are preparing for the 2021 – 2022 Legislative Session; Committee weeks begin the week of Sept. 20.

Church to host relationship workshops

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

Access Church has scheduled a series of workshops intended to help improve dating and marriage relationships — as well as how to find the right person. The six-week series, which begins Aug. 15, is called "Love, Dates and Heartbreaks" and will feature the church's teaching pastor, Andy Stanley. Topics to be covered over six Sunday mornings include:

- Seeking and becoming the right person.
- Moving from relationship reality to relationship dreams.
- Five rules for dating.
- Learning from relationship mistakes.
- Handling heartbreak.

"At Access Church, we are for you and your relationships because we believe God is for you, regardless of your story. This is a place where you can belong before you believe," said Lead Pastor Rich Barrett. "Instead of telling you

what to think, we want to help you and your whole family make friends, grow in faith, and live with purpose."

Besides helpful, practical teaching and great music for adults, the church also offers amazing environments for kids and teens, who will enjoy fun time with friends and leaders who love them while parents enjoy free coffee and the one-hour service.

Jenny Felix, mother of five children, said, "We love our church! The message is always incredible, the music is awesome, they are the most welcoming bunch of people, and my kids beg to go every Sunday."

With the start of a new school year, there's no better time to build church into the family routine. Access Church meets in person every Sunday at Liberty Pines Academy. Each Sunday there are two opportunities to join in: 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Attendees should be sure to stop by the #ForStJohns table for free t-shirts, mugs, and stickers.

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North Florida Junior Golf Foundation announces 2021 scholarship recipients

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

The North Florida Junior Golf Foundation, Northeast Florida's premier junior golf tour, has announced the 2021 recipients of its annual college scholarship awards — \$24,000 in scholarship funds have been awarded to five female junior golfers and junior golf tour members who have upheld the values of the foundation and demonstrated a high level of academic achievement and a strong commitment to community involvement.

The 2021 scholarship recipients from St. Johns County are as follows:

Bill Straub Sr. Scholarship: Kenzie Heba (\$10,000) Heba, of St. Augustine, graduated from Bartram Trail High School with a 3.83 GPA and will attend the University of West Florida, where she will play on the women's golf team and plans to study nursing. Heba joined North Florida Junior Golf Foundation in 2017 and competed in 45 events.



Photos courtesy North Florida Junior Golf Foundation
Kenzie Heba

NFJGF Scholarship: Thanya Arasu (\$8,000) Arasu, of St. Johns, graduated from Nease High School with a 3.52 GPA and will attend Ohio University, where she will play on the women's golf team and plans to study biological science with hopes of becoming a physician. Arasu joined North Florida Junior Golf Foundation in 2018 and played in 52 events.



Thanya Arasu

Northern Chapter PGA Scholarship: Ashley Huffman (\$2,000) Huffman, of Ponte Vedra Beach, graduated from St. Johns Virtual School with a 3.94 GPA and will attend Jacksonville University, where she will play on the women's golf team and plans to study marketing. Huffman joined North Florida Junior Golf Foundation in 2018 and competed in 37 events.



Marissa Cardenas

Scholarship: Marissa Cardenas (\$2,000) Cardenas, of St. Augustine, graduated from Nease High School with a 3.85 GPA and will attend Florida Southern College, where she will play on the women's golf team and plans to study graphic design and marketing. Cardenas joined North Florida Junior Golf Foundation in 2015 and competed in 84 events.

Visit <https://nfjg.org/scholarships/> for more information.

Henry Tuten Gator Bowl Pro-Am

Additional bed tax to generate funding for beaches and recreation

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

On July 20, the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners allocated 40 percent of the additional one-cent bed tax toward the improvement, maintenance, and renourishment of publicly-owned beaches, as well as an additional 40 percent of the one cent of bed tax for leisure and recreation. The additional one cent of bed tax, officially known as the Tourist Development Tax, is levied on short term overnight stays at hotels, bed and breakfasts, and other overnight accommodations. The county will begin collecting the additional one cent in October.

The levy of the additional one cent increases the county's bed tax from 4 cents to 5 cents, and is estimated to generate an additional \$3 million in revenue annually. The funding allocated for leisure and recreation can be used for tourist-oriented projects, including but not limited to boat ramps and sports complexes.

St. Johns County currently has beach and dune restoration projects underway or planned. The new funding generated by the Tourist Development Tax may be used

for future beach renourishment projects.

During Tuesday's commission meeting, the Board of County Commissioners unanimously voted to remove the northernmost three-miles of Ponte Vedra Beach from an Army Corps of Engineers feasibility study as well as a one-time beach restoration project. This area's erosion has not been as critical as the rest of the project areas, as sand migrates south from the neighboring Duval County Army Corps of Engineers' project. This three-mile portion could be addressed in the future if conditions change. The exclusion will not affect the already approved FEMA Dune Enhancement Project, which will bring additional sand to the entirety of Ponte Vedra Beach later this year. The county is currently assessing the extent of renourishment needed for the section of Ponte Vedra Beach generally located between Sawgrass and the northern boundary of Serenata Beach Club, which includes Mickler's Landing Beachfront Park.

The additional funding from the one cent bed tax increase will also allow for an investment of approximately \$300,000 annually in arts, culture, and heritage resources and approximately \$300,000 annually in marketing and promotion.

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No Excuses Running Club captures 21 medals



Photo courtesy Jill Benavides
No Excuses Running Club

By Jill Benavides
mail@floridanewsline.com

Running at the Florida Middle School Track State Finals is the goal all middle school track teams work for all season — and runners with the No Excuses Running Club had their eye on the prize through five months of training. May 22 finally arrived.

Braden Motycka started No Excuses Running Club's medal count with a fifth place medal in the 3000 M. Then he turned around with Gavin Stopa, Noah Gil, and Nick Rueda and finished first in the 800 relay, earning the state champions title. Charlotte Joseph, Jordan Magloff, Sarah Rose, and Riley Newkirk captured sixth in the 800 relay. Braden Motycka gutted it out in his third event and took eighth in the 1500.

Ella Holick, Halle Stopa, Ava Beatty, and

Tessa McLeod beat their best time by more than half a second in the 100 relay to medal in fifth place. To finish the day off well, Halle Stopa, Ella Holick, Sarah Rose, and Riley Newkirk chased down seventh place in the 400 relay.

Jordan from the No Excuses elementary team medaled in all his events, placing eighth in the 100, sixth in the long jump, and seventh in the 400.

James Russell took home the seventh place elementary medal in the 400. The club's boys' 100 relay team of Aiden Carpio, Sean Lamb, Austen Estoffery, and Josiah Teague set a personal record, coming within .01 seconds of a medal; the relay team is ranked ninth in the state. Even bigger is they taught their team the deeper meaning of a true champion as they joyfully hugged and congratulated the team members who earned the medal they had worked so hard to obtain.

Troop 12 celebrates end of summer 2021 ... and looks for new scouts!



Photo courtesy Michelle DeDeo
Kayaking at Otter Springs campout.

By Michelle DeDeo
mail@floridanewsline.com

Chartered in 1916, Boy Scout Troop 12 has been highly active in the Jacksonville area for more than 100 years and, despite circumstances, managed to enjoy several campouts this year that included shooting sports and kayaking, an Eagle project and ziplining.

Troop 12 is a small, boy-led troop that offers a personalized experience with a diverse selection of campouts, service projects, well-planned meetings and advancement work. Past activities are as diverse as the troop: shore fishing, canoeing the Suwannee, shooting sports campouts that include archery, rifle and shotgun, helping at the Special Needs Camporee and other service projects, river rafting, hiking the Appalachian Trail, and working on advancements. The scouts enjoy each opportunity to be outdoors and get involved in unique experiences.

The troop's philosophy, like its charter or-

ganization, is balance: for those who want to get their Eagle rank, the troop provides many opportunities. One scout in Troop 12 will attain the rank of Eagle this year, but the troop is also happy to have those scouts who just want to be a scout, be a part of a team, learn life skills and have fun along the way.

Troop leadership has also had an active year. With 70 years' experience between four leaders, the troop boasts leaders trained in Leave No Trace, Climb On Safely, NRA-BSA Shotgun and Rifle, BSA Lifeguard and Paddle Craft Safety as well as a good selection of merit badge counselors. In addition, the Troop's Charter Representative Jean Benjamin attends most meetings and has been with the troop for more than 80 years.

He said, "I got my Eagle with this troop in 1939. Both my father and uncle were Scoutmasters in the troop. It's a wonderful experience. We just need more boys to keep

Troop cont. on pg. 11

ST. JOHNS Business Monthly

Market Insight



"Bullet Bob" Hayes: The World's Fastest Human

By Scott Grant
ScottGrant@StJohnsBusinessMonthly.com

As the Olympic games return to Tokyo for the second time this summer, it is worth remembering that the first time the games were held in Tokyo, the star of the show was Robert Lee Hayes of Jacksonville, better known as "Bullet Bob," the world's fastest human.

In 1964, before cheering multitudes, Hayes ran away from the competition twice, to win gold medals in the 100 meters and the 4x100 meter relay. Hayes is the greatest athlete Jacksonville has ever produced and the only person in history to win an Olympic gold medal and a Super Bowl ring.

Hayes thought of himself as a football player who just happened to be very, very fast. After graduating high school, he enrolled at Florida A&M in Tallahassee to play football for legendary Rattlers coach Jake Gaithers. Gaithers, it was reported, liked his players "mobile, agile, and hostile."

The Tokyo games were postponed that year until October, the middle of football season. The Rattlers needed Hayes. Coach Gaithers needed Hayes. President Lyndon B. Johnson was concerned that Hayes might get hurt playing football and be unavailable for the Olympics. He phoned Coach Gaithers to express his concern.

LBJ needn't have worried. Bob Hayes was ready. He won his first gold medal in the 100 meters. Despite protests, he ran in the inside lane. That did not stop him. Joe Frazier, the gold medal winning boxer, who would go on to battle Muhammad Ali, lost one of Hayes' track shoes shortly before the finals. That did not stop him either.

Bob Hayes literally ran away from the field and set two Olympic records in the process. His time of 10 seconds flat was a record at the time and remains the fastest time ever run on a cinder track. He also won that race by the largest margin of victory ... ever.

Coach Gaithers once proclaimed Bob Hayes as "the fastest man who ever lived."

He might be right. In the finals of the men's 4x100 relay, Team USA fell behind. When Bullet Bob got the baton, the US was in fifth place. The French were leading. Hayes turned in a heart-stopping 8.6 second final leg to seize the gold. That time is still a record. The LA Times called it "the most astonishing sprint of all time."

After the Olympics were over, Hayes returned to A&M and finished the football season. The Rattlers won their second straight Orange Blossom Classic. That bowl game, held annually in Miami, was considered the Negro National Championship. He went on to be one of the first blacks in the Senior Bowl in January of the next year. Before the game, a New York Times headline announced, "North Pins Hopes on Halting Hayes," adding "Namath also poses problem." The game ended in a 7-7 tie. The South moved the ball but could not score. Late in the game, Hayes caught a 53-yard touchdown pass from Joe Namath that evened the score.

Almost a year earlier, the Dallas Cowboys had invested two "futures picks" in future stars Bob Hayes and Roger Staubach. Hayes paid off immediately. The fastest human on earth led the NFL in touchdown catches each of his first two seasons. Bullet Bob Hayes revolutionized NFL defenses. No one could cover him. He was too fast. Opponents invented zone coverages designed to contain Hayes.

Staubach took a little longer to pay off for the Cowboys. He had to serve three years in the Navy first — but when he and Hayes got together, they made history. Staubach was the star, but Hayes was still an important player when Dallas won its first Super Bowl in January 1972.

Scott A. Grant is a local columnist, author, speaker, and historian. By day he is a fiduciary asset manager and president of Standfast Asset Management. He welcomes your comments or questions at scottg@standfast.com.

Hurricane preparedness tips for businesses

By Marge Cirillo
mail@floridanewslines.com

As small businesses across the country advance along their reopening journeys, owners are hyper-focused on getting customers back through their doors, dividing their attention between marketing to repeat patrons and appealing to prospects. But with so many other areas of business to focus on to get their spaces fully functional — from managing daily operations, to ensuring their businesses are following updated safety and sanitation protocols — recent Tropical Storm Elsa showed us that business owners need a disaster plan strategy that's as efficient as it is informative.

Given everything else owners are working on to get their businesses back on their feet, developing a disaster strategy

may sound like a big undertaking, but it's an essential step for small businesses — and one that can set them up for a future of success. I researched some plans and I think I found one that looks like it could be very helpful in any situation. It's from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and hope you complete it (visit <https://tinyurl.com/fz3ynvb>)

The Florida Small Business Development Center (FSBDC) provides assistance with marketing and business plans for small businesses in addition to financials and business continuity. Here are some hurricane preparedness tips for businesses:

Develop a Comprehensive Plan. An effective hurricane survival plan should be written down and reviewed annually.

Hurricane cont. on pg. 15

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(03/19)



When it's time to call in a tutor

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Back to School Guide

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Linda@FloridaNewsLine.com

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

Busy schedules, hybrid learning and demanding coursework have affected students' academic performance over the last year-plus. The months since a pandemic was declared in March 2020 have been unlike any other, and confronting the academic challenges of the pandemic may have adversely affected some students' grades.

A recent report from the Fairfax County Public Schools Office of Research and Strategic Improvement in Virginia found the number of middle and high school students with two or more failing marks increased by 83 percent in the first quarter of the 2020 – 2021 school year compared to the year prior. But students' grades may slide or they may find certain school



Photo courtesy MetroCreative

Tutors can be valuable resources for students who need some one-on-one attention to master general learning concepts or reinforce skills for key tests or projects.

work overly challenging even in normal years. Since many parents have not seen a periodic table or had to solve high school math problems in decades, tutors may be just what students need to regain their academic footing.

Failing grades are not necessarily the most notable indicator that students can benefit from the services of a tutor. The Princeton Review says 25 percent of high school students say homework is their biggest source of stress, and homework progress can help parents determine if it's time to call in a tutor. Students who find their homework is taking too long, particularly double or triple the amount of time it once required, may need some extra help. Here are some additional indicators that a tutor may be needed.

- Declining test scores: Some students are simply poor test takers, but a gradual or sudden decline in test scores may indicate students are having trouble mastering material. Teachers can pinpoint if certain concepts are overly challenging to students and notify parents if there are any problem areas.
- Poor time management or focus: Students who are struggling may have their

Back to School cont. on pg. 12

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How to help students improve their focus on their studies

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewline.com

Teachers strive to create supportive and challenging classroom environments for their students. Such settings can bring out the best in students and help them overcome obstacles, including an inability to focus.

The struggles students can have with focusing on their studies was apparent during the pandemic. A 2020 survey of more than 400 college students found that 64 percent were concerned about their ability to maintain their focus and discipline in remote instructional environments. Ideally, students will be back in school full-time five days per week by the start of the new academic year – but students may still need help focusing on their studies.

- **Emphasize one activity at a time.** Various studies have shown that multitasking adversely affects performance and makes it hard to concentrate. A recent study from researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology found that performing two or three activities simultaneously puts significantly more

demand on the brain than simply doing those tasks one after another. All students, and especially those who are struggling with focus, should be encouraged to take on one task at a time.

- **Take breaks.** The Cleveland Clinic notes that various studies have found that periodic breaks improve mood, boost performance and increase a person's ability to concentrate and pay attention. Many students are well acquainted with lengthy cramming sessions on the eve of a big exam, which can feel like a rite of passage for high schoolers and college students. Parents and educators can emphasize the importance of taking breaks during such sessions and how periodic rest can help improve performance.

- **Take a piecemeal approach to big tasks.** The Child Mind Institute notes that breaking big tasks down into smaller, more manageable pieces can help kids effectively tackle more challenging tasks. The piecemeal approach can make big tasks seem less daunting, and the success kids have at each smaller task can provide some needed momentum as they draw closer to solving the problem.

Troop cont. from pg. 8
it going!”

Although Troop 12 usually meets at Congregation Ahavath Cheshed on San Jose Boulevard at the intersection with Baymeadows Road, lately the scouts have been meeting at the Scoutmaster's house in Julington Creek Plantation, as all of the scouts go to Creekside, Liberty Pines and Nease. The troop's Committee Chair Allan Grinnan said, “With so many of our scouts graduating, we are actively looking for new scouts. When we do start meeting again on San Jose, we'll start carpooling again as it was easy to get the boys to meetings and back ... but for now meeting in JCP is convenient.”

Landen T., who recently graduated from Nease and finished his Eagle project, said, “I joined the troop at the end of eighth

grade, and I could have made Eagle earlier if COVID hadn't happened. I just hope the troop keeps going as this is a great group. We got to experience going on a nuclear sub like in Crimson Tide and a Navy ship within a month of each other because several of our leaders were in the military. Not many people get that experience.”

The troop's youngest scout, Noam A., goes to Liberty Pines and is working on his lower ranks. When asked about his favorite experience so far, he immediately said, “Camping!”

Interested boys aged 10 to 17 and their parents as well as Webelos Dens are welcome at any time to visit and learn about Troop 12. Visit www.jaxtroop12.com or email jaxtroop12@gmail.com for more information.

Michelle DeDeo is scoutmaster of Troop 12.

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Back to School Guide

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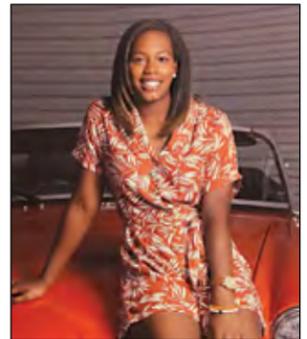

Historic Coast Pearls awards scholarships



Daesha Holmes



Tairi Huggins



Te'Jayah Jones



Brian Kaman



Takerah Prince



Evan Seltzer

Historic Coast Pearls, Inc., established in 2018 in St. Augustine, announces the 2021 Historic Coast Pearls Scholarship Awardees. This year six students will receive a scholarship to continue their education in Florida and beyond: Daesha Holmes (Trinity Christian Academy); Tairi Huggins (Darnell Cookman School of Medical Arts); Te'Jayah Jones (Robert E Lee High School); Brian Kaman (Pedro Menendez High School); Takerah Prince (First Coast High School) and Evan Seltzer (Paxon School of Advanced Studies). The scholarship is opened to graduating seniors of Clay, Duval, Flagler, Putnam, and St. Johns counties.

Historic Coast Pearls, Inc. is a non-profit organization that focuses on programs and activities that address educational, health, environmental and social needs of the Northeast Florida area.

Back to School cont. from pg. 10
attention drift or they put off doing tasks because they don't grasp the assignments.

- Lack of homework help at home: Parents may have prior commitments during the times of day when their children are doing homework. Even when parents are home, they may discover that the concepts covered in school are not being taught in the ways parents learned them and they may have difficulty assisting their children. Tutors can step in and help students when parents cannot.
- Learning disorder: Certain students learn differently from others due to a diagnosed or undiagnosed learning disorder. A child who

is struggling with reading, phonics, spelling, and writing may have dyslexia, according to the tutoring experts at Dyslexia Practitioner NJ. Tutors who specialize in learning disorders can assess and address learning conflicts and tailor instructions in ways that can help students overcome those challenges.

- Students "shut down" or say they "hate" school: Disinterest in school or expressions of hating going to school may be indicative of academic struggles in the classroom, says the Princeton Review. Some students get so frustrated they simply give up. Tutors can solve learning puzzles and help get students back on track and reignite their interest in school.

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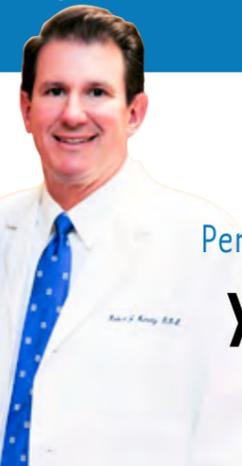
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Get to Know ...

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewsline.com

Kellyann Costanzo

Kellyann Costanzo is a native of Jacksonville and attended Mandarin area schools. Costanzo said as she was growing up she had such varied interests, she at one point asked her grandmother to help her narrow down what she was going to do with her life. She worked with her father in his construction business and developed her entrepreneurial streak. She was influenced by her grandmother and aunt and developed a love of interior design. She was able to combine both of these passions by going into home staging and then real estate, which also had the benefit of a flexible schedule, perfect for her because by then she was a single mother of three young daughters. These careers served her well until her entrepreneurial spirit again was ignited. Today, she lives in St. Augustine with her husband Tommy and is embarking on her newest venture — a children's consignment boutique called Hudson & Grace.

Q: How did you meet your husband Tommy?

A: We met while we were attending an online church. We are both Christian. We hit it off immediately and he actually relocated here from Connecticut to be near me. We have been married for a year and a half.

Q: How did you come up with the idea to open a children's consignment shop?

A: It was my dream to give my daughters security for the future, so we combined my love for business with our love for children. There was nothing like this store in the area and I saw a need. We thought about buying an



Photo courtesy Kellyann Costanzo
Kellyann and Tommy Costanzo

existing store or going with a franchise, but I'm too creative for that option. Tommy was very instrumental in helping implement my dream. This project was three years in the making and we held a lot of brainstorming sessions. A lot of thought and love went into this store and the branding. I really wanted to offer a welcoming environment and be a hub in the community.

Q: How do you plan to serve the community?

A: This is very important to me. Our passion is to bring the love of Jesus Christ into our community and our world and that's what we hope to share through our shop. We want to meet the needs of growing families and make shopping easy, fun, and relaxing. We have a coffee bar, a candy bar, and a prayer wall. We have a library/playroom

for children so that moms can shop peacefully. And, I'm very proud that we will be giving 10 percent of our proceeds back to the community on a quarterly basis. We will solicit ideas from customers as to how to donate the money. Some ideas are to support single parents in the area with perhaps a house cleaning or a meal. Maybe we will make a monetary donation to Foster Closet. Whatever we do, we will make sure the money stays local

Q: How did you come up with the name Hudson & Grace?

A: I have three daughters and at first I wanted to use their names, but I didn't want to potentially alienate moms of little boys. So we picked these

two names in one of our brainstorming sessions to represent that we have clothing for both girls and boys.

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

A: I enjoy reading, scrapbooking, art, and travel. I enjoy going anywhere coastal in Florida. I love the beach.

Q: Do you have any pets?

A: Yes, we have two dogs and three cats. Our German Shepherd mix, Sherman, is the official head of the welcoming committee at Hudson & Grace.

Get to Know ...

Interested in being featured? Email Martie Thompson at editor@FloridaNewsLine.com

Fundraising cont. from pg. 1

wife Lisa, along with The Macquarie Group Foundation, which matched funds raised in accordance with the foundation's guidelines. The Fundraising On Foot, River to Beach Run included a 36-mile run from Tatro's home in Julington Creek Plantation to the Beachcomber St. Augustine restaurant in St. Augustine Beach on Saturday, July 3.

The marathon runner successfully helped to contribute to INK! due to his family's values and belief in quality education for all children in the region, and much needed help for teachers and students in public schools. Tatro, his wife Cherise Lloyd, and their two young sons moved to St. Johns County from Texas in 2016, specifically for their jobs and for the boys to attend the top school system in Northeast Florida. Since arriving in the region, Tatro has become involved in the community and serves as immediate past chair for the St. Johns Chamber of Commerce's North Business Council, along with his friend Donna Lueders, the executive director for INK! and newly named chair for the Council.

"We thank Eric, Dr. and Mrs. Cavacini, and The Macquarie Group Foundation for the inaugural initiative to help local schoolteachers and students," Lueders said. "We hope this becomes an annual event in celebration of our nation's Independence Day." she said.

The St. Johns County Education Foundation which operates as INK! (Investing in Kids), has an ongoing mission to provide innovative programs and classroom resources to promote the academic success of students in the St. Johns County School District. Visit www.ink-stjohns.org or email Donna.Lueders@stjohns.k12.fl.us for more information.



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Hurricane cont. from pg. 9
This plan should address policies and procedures for employee safety regarding hurricanes, business continuity and contingency plans in the face of damage to the business's facilities and policies for dealing with employees, customers and vendors.

Some of the key elements of an effective plan are:

- Conditions that will activate the plan
- Chain of command

- Emergency functions and who will perform them
- Specific evacuation procedures, including routes and exits
- Procedures for accounting for personnel, customers and visitors
- Equipment for personnel

Determine procedures and individual crisis management responsibilities. Identify which personnel are required to be on-site in the days surrounding a hurricane, as well as who is essential to business function, whether required on-site or not. Be sure to communicate areas of

responsibility for key staff and how to perform their emergency-response duties effectively.

Coordinate with others. Understand the hurricane response plans of other businesses in your area as well as police, fire department, hospitals, and utility companies. It is also helpful to communicate with suppliers, shippers, and others with whom you regularly do business.

Prepare employees. Communicate your hurricane plan with all your staff; obtain

all emergency contact numbers for employees and ensure understanding of roles, responsibilities and expectations for every employee.

Review emergency plans annually. Assess changes in your business or to the community that may affect your hurricane response plan and make the necessary changes each year.

Marge Cirillo is the Florida Small Business Development Center consultant for St. Johns County. She can be reached at m.cirillo@unf.edu or (904) 209-1295.

Fishing

Capt. David's Fishing Report

By Captain David Lifka
mail@floridanewsline.com

It seems that everything has been lining up to a great start to this year's fishing season on the St. Johns River. Lack of heavy spring rains had the salinity levels near perfect, inviting many species of saltwater fish into our area of the river. Decent sized shrimp had also begun to run, making fishing conditions even

better; however recent rains and passing tropical weather could have a cause and effect that could hamper fishing and shrimping in our parts of the river that could last days, a week or two, or even longer.

For most of its 310 miles, the St. Johns

River is considered to be a mostly fresh-water river. Because the St. Johns flows north, we are actually part of its lower basin with about the last 45 miles running through St. Johns, Clay and Duval counties. With our close proximity to the Atlantic Ocean, salinity levels fluctuate with wind and rain throughout the year. North of the Main Street Bridge, downtown Jacksonville is considered the official border of the saltwater portion of the remaining river.

While local rain can be heavy and occur nearly every day over the summer, it has the least effect on our area salinity levels; however, the rainfall that falls south of the remaining 250 plus miles of river can have a much larger effect on how salty or fresh our area waters are. With the St. Johns upper basin beginning just west of Vero Beach in an area known as the St. Johns Marsh, all the rainfall between here and there will eventually end up here. So while local rainfall can have some effect on our salinity levels, rainfall to our south can have even a greater effect.

Current salinity levels often help decide the quality of a fishing season, but can fluctuate greatly in days or weeks — not due to the weather we are having here, but due to the weather 100 miles away. Watch the weather here and there, and remember the river is always draining and what is here today is gone tomorrow.

Despite recent weather, we have been off to a great start with both fishing and shrimping this year. Lots of slot reds



Photo courtesy Edie Hartley
Marvin Hartley caught this redfish in May, south of Doctors Inlet on a gold spoon.

and larger have been caught around the Buckman Bridge, weakfish and good sized croakers have been abundant from the Buckman to Green Cove, and of course the shrimp are here.

Fishing Report: Reds, mangroves, weakfish, and croakers from the Buckman to Green Cove. Shrimp being caught in Doctors Lake.

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

Email your Catch of the Month photo to catchofthemonthpictures@gmail.com. Be sure to include the name of the person(s) in the photo, the name of the person who took the photo, the type of fish and date and location of the catch. We will select a photo each month for publication.

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10 tips to increase your water intake

By Kristen Hicks-Roof PhD, RDN, LDN, CLC and Crystal Liebenberg BS
mail@floridanewsline.com

We have all heard that it's important to consume water daily, but what's the big deal anyway? There are many ways in which water improves your overall well-being. Water helps maximize physical performance, protects and lubricates your joints, flushes out waste from your body, prevents constipation, aids in general digestion, and many more. A rough estimate on your daily recommendations is around two to three liters or one gallon (more needed if physically active). Many people find it difficult drinking the recommended amount of water. Some individuals simply don't like the taste, and others just forget to consume fluid until dehydration kicks in.

Here are 10 easy ways to increase your water intake:

1. Keep a reusable water bottle with you while you're on the go. Some bottles have time goals written down the side of them that can help you keep track throughout the day.
2. Have a glass of water with every meal and/or snack.
3. Alternate a glass of water with other beverages you consume (e.g. coffee, tea, soda).
4. Place a glass of water next to your

- bedside in the evening to drink first thing in the morning when you wake up.
5. Flavor your water with frozen fruit or herbs to mix up the taste. Try various combinations (berries, citrus, melons, basil, mint, lemongrass)
6. Try drinking one glass of water per one to two hours.
7. Download an app or a calendar reminder that sends you reminders to drink a cup of water, or just create your own reminders on your smartphone.
8. Mix it up — you can also increase your water intake by drinking various drinks that contain water such as tea, flavored sparkling water, and coffee.
9. Eat your water — many fruits and vegetables are very high in water content. A few of these include watermelon, cucumber, pineapple, strawberries, grapefruit, cantaloupe, and oranges.
10. Set goals for yourself. If you exercise, a goal could be taking a water bottle with you to the gym or on a walk so you can drink while on the go.

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

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Gardening

Wet and wetter still!

By Master Gardener Volunteer Lesley Arrandale
mail@floridanewsline.com

While waiting for Tropical Storm Elsa, I had to reflect on how much rain we'd already had in the previous few weeks. Overnight, on a couple of occasions, there were three inches of water in the rain gauge, and lesser amounts almost every other morning. Now our flourishing tomatillo plants are showing signs of over-watering, with yellowing, dropping foliage — despite growing in a fairly well drained raised bed.

It's not unusual for some plants to perish after being overwatered, particularly if it happens often and their roots can't dry out sufficiently to take in enough oxygen. Whether they're in pots or in the ground, if they aren't adapted to wet conditions their roots can't cope, and rot can set in. Wilting and yellowing leaves in this situation doesn't mean a plant needs more water, but is a strong indication that its roots aren't healthy and can't take up adequate water. "Melting" leaves can be a clue to disease, and in the case of perennials with a central growth point, once the crown of the plant is affected there's very little hope of survival.

I've recently had some native plants installed in my front yard and the "meadow" is mulched with pine straw to discourage weeds. I've chosen drought resistant plants: dwarf Simpson stopper (*Myrcianthes fragrans Compacta*), flowering perennials, and clumping grasses to attract more birds and insects, but not surprisingly, mulching the soil has meant that they find the area less useful. Certain birds like to gather fallen seed and insects from bare soil, which is now covered, and insects that nest in the ground, like some native bees, have also been denied easy access. This, along with my positive experience growing Asian long beans — allowing predatory insects like ladybugs to come in and clean the vines of black aphids, rather than resorting to pesticides — has shown me that trying to uphold the esthetics of a tidy, attractive-to-most-humans yard is not necessarily best for wildlife.

This is clearly something I need

to get in better balance. Once the plants are established I will lighten the mulch and resolve to get out there regularly to pull weeds, which I find can be somewhat therapeutic, depending on the weather. Adding a very light layer of homemade compost will also add to the variety of microbes and small invertebrates, but I'll take care to ensure the compost is thoroughly finished, so as not to risk introducing more weed seeds into the area.

For inspiration, I enjoy reading "The Neighborhood Gardener" (<https://tinyurl.com/vxmcps7>). The July issue has advice on cleaning up the summer vegetable garden and also how to deal with houseplants if you are planning a trip. The advice is wide-ranging. Our local Extension newsletter, "A New Leaf – Yard and Garden," can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/wk6djv6s>.

If you're considering a cool season vegetable garden, now is the time to get started. Check the Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide for recommended planting times, and the Gardening Solutions website for a host of useful articles: <https://tinyurl.com/yj55bbt4>.

You don't need to sow everything yourself, but some vegetables don't transplant well and you will have more success if you direct sow into the garden. Buying transplants will usually be more costly than a pack of seeds, but there's the cost of potting soil to consider. If you only want a few plants of a given vegetable, purchasing good quality starts may be your best choice. Since mature collards are large, I found that four plants supplied enough greens for a meal for two, once a week, and I could probably have picked more. Don't grow what you don't enjoy, but do experiment with something you're curious about. I tried kohlrabi and enjoyed them. While I didn't grow many, a few plants added variety to our table and I will probably find room for some this next season. Happy gardening!

Pantry Raiders Spice things up at your next picnic

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

Picnics are often pot luck affairs. While standard picnic fare like potato salad and watermelon are always welcome, spicing things up with something new can make picnics that much more memorable.

The following recipe for "Sunday Picnic Deviled Eggs" from Neal Corman and Chris Peterson's "Virgil's Barbecue Road Trip Cookbook" (St. Martin's Press) is fairly spicy and can provide a little extra kick at your next picnic.

Sunday Picnic Deviled Eggs

Serves 4 to 6
8 extra-large eggs
¼ cup mayonnaise
1 tsp. Creole mustard
¼ tsp. Cholula Hot Sauce
¼ tsp. ground cumin
½ tsp. kosher salt
¼ tsp. cracked black pepper
2 tsp. finely chopped pickled jalapeño slices
1 tsp. pickled jalapeño juice
½ Hass avocado, peeled and pitted
Pinch of smoked paprika
1 tbsp. chopped fresh cilantro
2 oz. dried Spanish chorizo

1. Place the eggs in a medium pot and cover with cold water. Bring to a boil, cover the pot and remove from the heat. Keep covered for 11 minutes, then



Photo courtesy MetroCreative
Sunday Picnic Deviled Eggs

remove the eggs from the water and place in a bowl of ice water to stop the cooking process.
2. Preheat a sauté pan. Cut the chorizo into very small dice and sauté until crispy. Set aside to cool.
3. In a small bowl, combine the mayonnaise, mustard, hot sauce, cumin, salt, pepper, jalapeño, and jalapeño juice.
4. When the eggs have cooled, carefully crack the shells and peel under cold running water. Slice the eggs lengthwise and remove the yolks, being careful to leave the whites intact.
5. Combine the avocado and egg yolks in a small bowl, and mash together with a fork until smooth.
6. Add the avocado mixture to the mayonnaise mixture and blend thoroughly. Spoon the mixture into each half of egg white. Dust with the paprika, sprinkle with the cilantro and chorizo, and serve.

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Travel

Discovering Spokane and the Palouse

By Debi Lander
mail@floridanewslines.com



Sunrise over the farmland in the Palouse.

The state of Washington lies opposite from Florida on the map, much too far to drive. So, I flew some 3,000 miles to land in Spokane. The city sits near the state's eastern border with Idaho. I found a sparkling downtown: streets without trash, graffiti, and no homeless people.

Riverfront Park, the site of the 1974 World's Fair, sat directly across my hotel. The following day, I took to the meandering walkways within the 100-acre site. I couldn't help but run into the largest Radio Flyer red wagon in the world. I felt like I'd been dropped into the movie set of "Honey I Shrunk the Kids." Built in 1989 as part of the "Centennial Celebration of Children," the vintage toy replica stands 12 feet tall. The mammoth wagon can fit 300 people, and the handle provides a fun way to slide down to the ground.

The sound of thundering water pulled me along, and I soon found Spokane Falls. It's the most significant urban waterfall in the country. The double-tiered falls rest next to a natural amphitheater that's enveloped by a metal structure —

rigging that looks like an oversized spider web. Behind it, a round glass-enclosed building featured a vintage carousel. And I spied a gondola overhead, but it wasn't running that morning.

The real reason behind my trip was to see a region called the Palouse, about 75 miles east. As I approached, I began to understand why the area attracts so many photographers. The landscape features large round and rolling hills, somewhat like Tuscany, but the hills are not as steep and with very few trees. According to a BBC article, my friend and Seattle resident Amanda Castleman wrote, "The Palouse was formed over a period of 2,500 years, when massive ice dams shattered in Montana, releasing 2,000 ft-high surges towards the Pacific. The 65 mph torrents gouged lakes and canyons and exposed ancient lava formations. These stark and stunning swathes — known as the Channeled Scablands — still pierce the agricultural idyll of the Palouse today.



Sunset from Steptoe Butte.

"The Ice Age floods also pooled fine, fertile dirt — sometimes 200ft deep — that the wind eventually swept into dunes."

Wheat farms covered the hills, the crop bright green and low to the ground in mid-June. The Palouse produces up to 100 bushels per acre or 125 million bushels a year — twice the national average. Occasionally, vibrant, almost neon fields of golden canola blossoms intersect. The seeds are crushed to produce canola oil.

Steptoe Butte, a state park, is the highest spot in the area at 3,612 feet. The butte affords an ideal location for taking sunrise and sunset photos, as you can easily walk around the 360-degree summit. The photographer's problem, during summer, comes from the timing of those events. Sunrise occurs around 4:30 a.m., and

sunset at about 8:30 p.m., making for long days.

One evening I ventured to Palouse Falls, about a two-hour drive, on two-lane, curvy roads. In the middle of nowhere, the falls dramatically shoot out of a canyon wall and drop 180 feet. An underground river creates a dramatic setting. Unfortunately, the sunset looked blah, but the falls deserve a visit.

In the Palouse, old and new barns, grain elevators, and tiny towns dot the countryside, providing more rural photo options. If you are into photography or geology, the Palouse is a must-see; otherwise, a drive through this unique landscape is all you'll need.

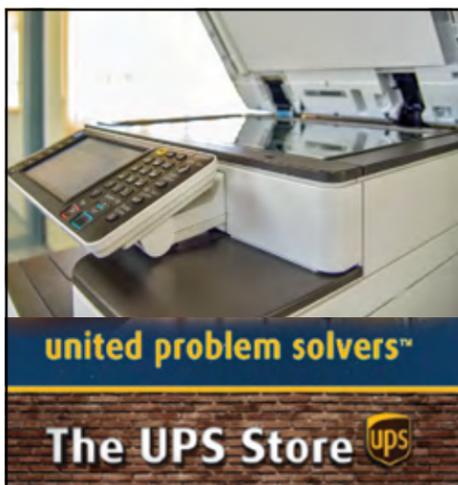
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