



page 3
BFF Best Furry Friend



page 6
Q&A with Vicky Oakes



page 7
Get To Know ... Bill Abbott



page 8
Puzzles

The best summer starts at your library

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

The St. Johns County Public Library System is encouraging youth and adults to participate in “The Best Summer at Your Library” Summer Reading Program, which runs through Aug. 6. The program includes virtual and in-person opportunities that are fun for the whole family. Readers of all ages are invited to pick up their free reading logs from any library branch or track their progress virtually through the READ-squared app. Participants may earn free books for every six days read on logs or 60 points reached on READsquared.

As a community partner in education, the St. Johns County Public Library System encourages the whole family to read together during the summer break.

“Librarians understand that children who don’t read and learn during the summer months fall behind. It’s called the ‘summer slide,’” said Library System Director Debra Rhodes Gibson. “The Best Summer at Your Library’ offers incentives to keep reading skills sharp ahead of the new school year.”

Your library cont. on pg. 7

Turning the Page: Learn to Read changes lives, opens doors

By Tiffany Merlo Phelps
Angela Moreno, Learn to Read of St. Johns County’s student volunteer coordinator, knows what it takes to walk in the door of the non-profit and ask for help. Originally from Columbia, she was once a student who wanted to improve her English-speaking skills to feel more independent, but felt a little bit terrified to do so. Now she is the person who empathizes, encourages, and matches students with the very best tutor.



Learn to Read of St. Johns County student Mayra Estupinan with tutor Eve Yu on a recent afternoon.

“She has a very uncanny ability to match the tutor with the right student,” said Learn to Read St. Johns County Executive Director Joe Cinney, who was once Moreno’s tutor.

Moreno worked as an accountant in Columbia and moved to St. Augustine to be near her mother, who owns a cleaning company. And while Moreno admired her mom’s business and work ethic, she was interested in finding her own career path. Moreno said she depended on her then 15-year-old daughter too much to translate for her. Once she connected with Cinney, she found the confidence to communicate on her own with the school, the doctor, and the mechanic. It was a freeing experience.

“I love to help other people who are in my same situation. I understand what it is like to be scared and afraid,” said Moreno.

Cinney said the student/tutor relationship is at the heart of Learn to Read along with his mantra, “practice, practice, practice.” There are currently 30 to 35 volunteer tutors serving 145 students. Cinney said more volunteers are needed. Learn to Read, founded in 1986, offers a variety of programs to anyone older than 16, providing help for each individual literacy challenge. The results can be life changing.

Case in point: Tutor Barb Horton and student Luigi Estrella.

Estrella grew up in the Dominican Republic and attended a bilingual school, learning what he now considers academic English as opposed to conversational English.

Estrella, whose parents did not speak English, moved to the United States in 2019 after spending his childhood thinking he was moving, but then waiting on immigration paperwork to be processed for a family of four.

“At the end of every school year, I’d say ‘I probably won’t be back next year. I’ll be leaving soon,’” said Estrella. “Then when school began again, I’d say, ‘Well not yet, but soon.’”

The papers went through just as Estrella had accepted that he would not be leaving and was enjoying high school in the Dominican Republic.

Once in the United States, Estrella helped his family buy a car, attended his senior year of high school, enrolled at Florida State College of Jacksonville, and decided to spend a few months at Learn to Read of St. Johns County to assist his parents. That was a year ago.

“It turns out that meeting Barb was the best thing that could have happened to me. I was starting to begin my life as an

adult,” said Estrella, who is studying acting outside of college and hopes to be in a movie one day. “Every class I learned something new about the language, the culture, and the laws from Barb. She was always so nice and patient.”

Horton also got to know and tutored Estrella’s parents, his father Jose Estrella (a technician) and his mother Sol Hernandez (a doctor). In fact, they all recently attended a literacy conference in Orlando

where Luigi Estrella read his personal story to the audience.

Horton, who has been teaching Special Education for more than 40 years, said her passion has always been teaching reading and vocabulary. Horton said



Learn To Read of St. Johns County students (Luigi Estrella and his parents) and tutor Barb Norton attending a literacy conference in Orlando.

she holds Learn to Read close to her heart because of the time she can spend with students — individuals who become more like family.

“For me, I feel like I am learning a lot too,” said Horton.

Learn to Read cont. on pg. 7

Presorted Standard ECRWSS US Postage Paid Jacksonville, FL Permit No. 1858

*****ECRWSSDDM****

Residential Customer

Florida NewsLine
450 State Road 13 North Suite 106 PMB 101
St. Johns, FL 32259



Strictly Senior Services Inc
StrictlySeniors.org

You or your loved one can now travel with peace of mind. My service promotes independence while providing personalized care. I offer short and long distance transportation with a kind, caring advocate in the driver’s seat!

Call for escorted door-to-door transportation to/from:

- ♥ Medical Appointments ♥ Special Occasions with Family and Friends
- ♥ Community Activities ♥ Social Engagements
- ♥ Shopping Trips and Salon Visits
- ♥ Airports (including pick-up, drop-of and flight companions)

“We Provide More Than a Ride”



Tracey Kuczinski - Your Senior Advocate
StrictlySeniors.org
904.481.6786
WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE SENIOR TRANSPORTATION



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

Q. Can you tell us about the awards your office has received for reporting the county's finances?

A. We learned in June that we received a second award from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of the United States and Canada, this time for our Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR). The first award was the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, which I call the gold standard for reporting, transparency and disclosure about the county's finances — we've gotten it for 29 consecutive years, which is an achievement in itself. But this second award is for our first-ever PAFR, a shorter, more reader-friendly booklet than the detailed 400-plus-page Annual Comprehensive Financial Report on which it's based.

The PAFR, titled "Tracking Your Tax Dollars: A Guide to St. Johns County's Finances," features highlights from the comprehensive report and is designed to be straightforward and user-friendly for taxpayers without a background in public finance. It is for Fiscal Year 2020 so some of the data is outdated. You can read it at stjohnsclerk.com/pafr/. We will produce a new PAFR this fall for Fiscal Year 2021 showing how tax dollars are collected and spent, as well as more recent trends on demographics, housing, taxes and more.

Q. Knowing that the Clerk of Courts receives monetary judgments and

payments related to court cases, how can readers learn whether they have unclaimed funds with your office?

A. One in five Floridians has unclaimed funds from a forgotten financial account, according to Florida CFO Jimmy Patronis. In May 2022 alone, more than \$36 million in unclaimed property was returned to Floridians, with about \$1.4 million of it coming from the Jacksonville region. As of the end of April, our office had unclaimed funds totaling nearly \$328,000. A quick visit to our webpage, <https://stjohnsclerk.com/clerk-unclaimed-funds/>, will show you if your name is on the current list. Unclaimed funds can range from a few dollars to tens of thousands of dollars, so I would encourage your readers to check on a regular basis. If you have a claim to money held by the St. Johns County Clerk of Courts, contact my office as soon as possible, because each year we send unclaimed funds to the State of Florida. Once funds are sent to the state, we can't assist you in recovering those funds.

If your name appears in the document for annual unclaimed funds turned over to the State of Florida, visit www.ftreasurehunt.org to claim your funds.

Q. Do you have an update on county property owners who have signed up for your office's free fraud alerts?

Brandon Patty cont. on pg. 8

United Way of St. Johns' CEO accepts position with United Way of Florida

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

Melissa Nelson, current CEO and president of United Way of St. Johns County, has been named the new CEO and president of the United Way of Florida, the state organization of 28 local United Ways.

"We conducted a comprehensive search for a leader who can take the United Way of Florida to new heights and found the skill set we need in Melissa Nelson," said Jeff Hayward, United Way of Florida board chair. "As a local United Way CEO who transformed the United Way of St. Johns County, Melissa possesses the interpersonal skills, business acumen and Florida legislative advocacy experience that make her the perfect choice to lead the organization," he added.

Nelson has been with United Way of St. Johns since March 2014. During that time, the organization has more than doubled in its efforts. Annual support has increased from \$1.12 million in 2015, to \$2.37 million in 2021. In 2019, the organization expanded to include Putnam County. Known for the traditional annual funding of nonprofits, during Nelson's tenure with the organization, the organization also administrated \$1.2 million in CARES funds to individuals in Putnam County; added rolling Strategic Grants that focus solely on food insecurity, housing and mental

health; and was recently tapped by St. Johns County Board of County Commission to handle the vetting and distribution of \$7.7 million in American Rescue Plan Act Funds in St. Johns County.

"When I joined United Way, I committed to building relationships within our community, but underestimated the depth, strength and breadth of these connections. Similarly, I could not have imagined the passion I would feel for our mission today," said Nelson. "This very passion led to my acceptance of the position as CEO of United Way of Florida, where I will have the best of both worlds — the continued mission of St. Johns and Putnam County and an expanded focus to all parts of our state. Of course, I must also share how much I appreciate the trust, support and generous friendships of our board, staff, partners and community. Thank you to all that allowed me to be part of what we have built together."

United Way of St. Johns will immediately launch the search for the organization's next president and CEO. Throughout this search and transition, United Way and its community partners will continue their important work addressing immediate challenges of individuals and families in Putnam and St. Johns County while also making long-term investments that tackle the root causes of these issues.



The Firm You Can Trust In Any of Life's Difficult Situations

Our legal team specializes in a wide variety of practices and we are ready to fight and advocate on your behalf.

Over 75 Years of Dedicated Experience

Canan Law has been serving the people of St. Augustine for over 30 years. We are proud to be trusted as one of the area's leading litigation law firms, and each of our St. Augustine attorneys regularly donates time, resources, and efforts to worthy causes that work to make our community safer and stronger.



John Westfield Andrew Morgan Patrick Canan Daniel Hilbert

When the unexpected happens, count on Canan Law

- **Personal Injury**
- **Vehicle Accidents**
- **Civil Litigation**
- **Criminal Defense**
- **Family Law**

Contact us today to schedule a consultation

904.824.9402

1030 N Ponce de Leon Blvd, St Augustine, FL 32084

www.cananlaw.com



450 State Road 13 North
Suite 106 PMB 101
St. Johns, FL 32259
(904) 886-4919
www.FloridaNewsLine.com

Publisher

Mark Pettus
Publisher@FloridaNewsLine.com

Editor

Martie Thompson
Editor@FloridaNewsLine.com

Bookkeeper

Emily Whitehead
Accounting@FloridaNewsLine.com

Social Media

SocialMedia@FloridaNewsLine.com

Advertising Sales

Rebecca Thomson
Rebecca@FloridaNewsLine.com
(724) 968-7602 cell

Linda Gay

Linda@FloridaNewsLine.com
(904) 607-5062 cell

St. Augustine NewsLine Community Newspaper is a free monthly publication distributed via bulk mail and carrier to select routes in Zip Codes 32080, 32084 and 32086 as well as distribution racks in high traffic areas in the greater St. Augustine area. Submission of articles and photographs are received by mail or email, although email to editor@FloridaNewsLine.com is preferred. The writers' opinions do not necessarily reflect the opinion of Florida NewsLine. Advertising Rates are available by request. Florida NewsLine is not responsible for advertisement content or accuracy of information provided by its advertisers, nor does Florida NewsLine endorse any of the products or services included in this publication. Florida NewsLine reserves the right to refuse advertisement or copy from any advertiser. All rights are reserved and no portion of this publication may be copied without the express written consent of the publisher. ©2022.



BFF Best Furry Friend of the month

Meet Miska!



Breed:
Lynx point Siamese

Favorite Activity:
Being brushed

Favorite Treat:
Temptations cat treats

Favorite Friend:
Cleo the greyhound

How did your BFF get their name:
She was named Miska when she was adopted

Do you have a cute pet? Send us your pet's picture and the answer to the five questions above before the 10th of the month. Also tell us you saw the BFF contest in St. Augustine NewsLine. Your pet could be our BFF of the month and appear in St. Augustine NewsLine! Email editor@floridanewsline.com to enter your pet.

COMING IN AUGUST!

Back to School Guide

Contact Linda at
Linda@FloridaNewsLine.com
(904) 607-5062
or Rebecca at
Rebecca@FloridaNewsLine.com
(724) 968-7602



Back to School Guide
coming in August!
Don't be left out!

Table of Contents

- 4 What's Happening in St. Augustine
- 5 Briefs
- 7 Get to Know ... Bill Abbott
- 9 Pantry Raiders
- 11 Travel

St. Augustine NewsLine

Introduce our readers
to your business!

August issue ad deadline: July 19

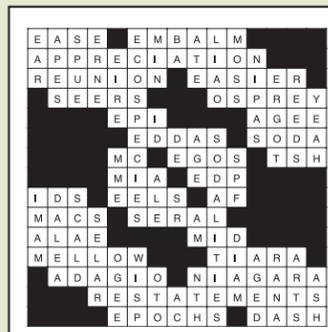
Call 904.886.4919 today to reserve your advertising space!

MYSTERY PHOTO



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

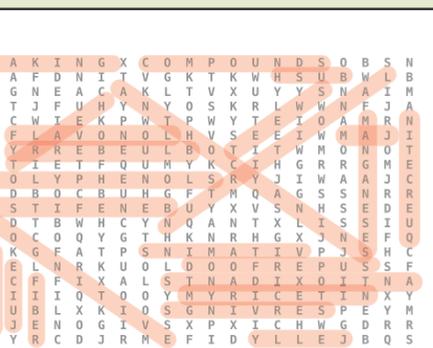
Last month's
Mystery
Photo was
Columbia House
Restaurant.



Answers
to our
Puzzles
PG 8

CRYPTO FUN

Determine the code to reveal the answer!



First Coast Technical College

Your Future Comes First



GRAB YOUR FUTURE.

New classes starting soon.

FCTC.edu

July

Community Calendar What's Happening in St. Augustine

2nd: **St. Augustine Music Festival** presents Baroque to Romanticism, featuring Songs of a Wayfarer and Emily Birsan, soprano, at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Augustine on July 2 at 7:30 p.m. Seating is free.

7th: **Bedtime Storytime** will be held at the Southeast Branch of the St. Johns County Public Library, 6670 US Highway 1 South, on Thursdays, July 7, July 14, July 21, and July 28 at 6:30 p.m. Wind down with Ms. Alex; jammies and stuffies are encouraged.

7th: **LifeSouth Community Blood Drive** will be held at the Main Branch of the St. Johns County Public Library, 1960 N. Ponce de Leon Blvd., from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. on July 7. All donors will receive a recognition item and a free cholesterol screening. Donors must be 16 or older, weigh at least 110 pounds, and show photo I.D. (16-year-olds require written parental permission). If you prefer to make an appointment, visit the Donor Portal at lifesouth.org.

9th: **The Northeast Florida Chapter of Sisters in Crime** presents multi-award-winning author Judith Erwin at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library, 101 Library Blvd. (FOL Room)

on Saturday, July 9. Doors open at 10 a.m. and the meeting starts at 10:15 a.m. Bring your coffee and bring a friend. The group welcomes misters and sisters to learn more about writing, promoting, and enjoying crime fiction. Visit www.nefloridasistersin-crime.org for more information.

11th: **The St. Johns County Civic Roundtable** will meet on Monday, July 11 at 12 p.m. via Zoom. The meeting will feature guest speaker Kyle Dorsey, president of Baptist Medical Center South. Email info@sjcroundtable.org to register for the meeting or visit www.sjcroundtable.org for more information about the St. Johns County Civic Roundtable.

12th: **Teen Gaming, Jumbo Edition** will be held at the Southeast Branch of the St. Johns County Public Library, 6670 US Highway 1 South, will be held on July 12 (Jumbo Kerplunk) and July 26 (Jumbo Angry Birds) at 6 p.m. Registration at sjcpls.org is required for these events.

16th: **Adult Craft – Faux Stained Glass** will be held at the Southeast Branch of the St. Johns County Public Library, 6670 US Highway 1 South, on July 16 at 1 p.m. All materials will be provided by the Friends of the Library.

Space is limited to 14; RSVP at sjcpls.org or contact (904) 827-6900.

20th: **Sunset Dolphin Walk with St. Johns County Parks** Naturalist Kelly Ussia at Vilano Beach on July 20 from 7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. There is no charge for the program but registration is required (<https://tinyurl.com/2p8t2kev>).

21st: **Recycled Mosaics class** will be held at the Main Branch of the St. Johns County Public Library, 1960 N. Ponce de Leon Blvd., from 4 p.m. – 5 p.m. on July 21. Learn how to turn trash into treasure and create art out of old discs. All supplies are provided by the Friends of the Main Library. Join in any time; all ages are welcome to drop in and create. Email Kathryn at krosenburg@sjcfl.us for more information.

23rd: **GTM Research Reserve** will host its monthly Beach Cleanup on Saturday, July 23 from 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. No registration is required; meet at the Visitor Center, 505 Guana River Road in Ponte Vedra Beach where gloves and trash bags will be provided. Visit gtm-nerr.org for more information.

24th: **Hopefull Handbags Expo 2022** on July 24 from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. at Classic Car Museum of St. Augustine, 4730 Dixie Highway in St. Augustine. All net proceeds go directly to Hopefull Handbags Global to further its mission for survivors of domestic abuse and their children, specifically to purchase land and build a new building for survivors and their children called Carolyn's Haven of Hope. Tickets are \$7 and are available online (<https://form.jotform.com/221074808209151>). Visit www.hopefullhandbags.org for more information.

28th: **Whitney Lab's Traveling Marine Zoo** will be at The Waterworks next to the Main Library, 1960 N. Ponce de Leon Blvd., from 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. on July 28. Guests will be introduced to a few marine invertebrates that inhabit the estuary and will learn about some of the adaptations that help these animals survive, with an opportunity for hands-on learning at the end. This program is geared for children aged six – 12. Space is limited; RSVP is required at www.sjcpls.org.

Have an event you'd like included in our community calendar? Email the information to editor@floridanewsline.com. Deadline is the 10th of the month for the next month's issue.

Welcome to the new

St. Augustine NewsLine

YOUR COMMUNITY. YOUR NEWSPAPER.



Brought to you by the publisher of The CreekLine, Ponte Vedra NewsLine, Mandarin NewsLine, and the St. Johns County School Directory. We are celebrating 22 years of publishing the finest in community newspapers!

www.floridanewsline.com

Have community news to share? Email editor@floridanewsline.com

Include your business!
For advertising inquiries:



Linda Gay
904.607.5062

Linda@floridanewsline.com



Rebecca Thomson
724.968.7602

Rebecca@floridanewsline.com

Briefs

Army's Second Infantry Division seeks former members for reunion

The Second (Indianhead) Infantry Division Association is searching for anyone who served in the Army's 2nd Infantry Division at any time.

For information about the association and our 99th annual reunion in Kansas City, Missouri from Sept. 28 – Oct. 2, 2022, contact Mike Davino at 2ida.pao@charter.net or (919) 498-1910.

Explore Florida state parks through your library

The St. Johns County Public Library System has partnered with Florida State Parks, the Florida Department of State, and Florida's Division of Library Services to offer library patrons access to Florida State Parks through the Real Florida Reader Program. Now through Sept. 12, 2022, St. Johns County Public Library System card holders may check out a Real Florida Reader day pass for free admission for up to eight people at more than 170 participating state parks.

Passes may be checked out for seven days, with no holds or renewals, at any of the St. Johns County Public Library System library branches. They do not cover activity fees or entry into special events, museum or boat tours, instructor certification diving, boat launching, rentals of picnic pavilions and other facilities, rentals of equipment such as canoes and kayaks, overnight camping, or lodging. Access to Ellie Schiller Homosassa Springs Wildlife, Skyway Pier, and Weeki Wachee Springs state parks is also excluded from this program.

Visit floridastateparks.org/RealFloridaReader for more information about this program or contact your local branch library. Visit sjcpls.org for information on other services the St. Johns County Public Library System offers.

Annual Backpack Challenge scheduled through Aug. 1

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty will host its 23rd Annual Backpack Challenge through Aug. 1.

The Northeast Florida real estate firm is collecting new backpacks and school supplies for students in kindergarten through high school at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty offices. The company is also collecting cash and check donations to purchase backpacks and school supplies, which will be provided to local charities that serve Northeast Florida children.

Donations may be dropped off at the following office locations:

- St. Augustine - 112 Sea Grove Main St., Suite 210, St. Augustine Beach
- Mandarin/St. Johns - 12636 San Jose Blvd., Jacksonville
- MuraBella at World Golf Village – 196 Capulet Drive, Suite 3, St. Augustine
- Ponte Vedra/Nocatee – 333 Village Main St., Suite 670, Ponte Vedra Beach
- Beaches/Intracoastal West/Southside - 375-1 Atlantic Blvd., Atlantic Beach
- Fleming Island/Orange Park - 3535

Highway 17, Suite 10, Fleming Island

- Home Office, 4190 Belfort Road, Suite 475, Jacksonville
- Avondale/Ortega/San Marco - 3627 St. Johns Ave., Jacksonville

Mesh and clear backpacks are appreciated since some schools have adopted a clear bag policy. Label the outside of the backpack(s) with the suggested grade level. Visit FloridaNetworkRealty.com/Backpack for a list of recommended school supplies by grade level.

Dee Roberts announced as gallery's July Featured Artist

Artist Dee Roberts' ability to capture a fleeting moment of light can mesmerize the viewer. During July her nature inspired works will be on display throughout Butterfield Garage Gallery. An Artist Talk First Friday on July 1, at 6 p.m. is an opportunity to hear Roberts talk about her inspirations and processes.

Roberts' goal as an artist is to catch the spirit of what she sees, in abstract form as well as through naturalistic nature and wildlife paintings. She works flawlessly with pastels, watercolor, collage and acrylic, and has garnered many top awards around Florida and Georgia with each of them. With minimal brush strokes her subjects come to life, seemingly ready to jump off the canvas.

Roberts went to the Philadelphia College of Art with a major in Illustration. She has won numerous awards for best painting, best pastel, best figure, and best watercolor painting. In 2010 she was named Watercolor Artist of the Year. She has attained signature status in the Florida Watercolor Society and was juried into the National Watercolor Society's 2014 International Watercolor Show.



Photo courtesy Butterfield Garage Gallery
Hibiscus in oils.

Clerk launches monthly newsletter to share services, programs with county residents

St. Johns County Clerk of Court and Comptroller Brandon J. Patty has launched a monthly email newsletter to share services, programs and news from the Clerk of Court office with St. Johns County residents.

"From valuable services that can keep you safe, to county and court news that could impact you, we plan to deliver relevant and useful information to residents living in St. Johns County," said Clerk Patty. "What's more, our newsletter will be published just once a month so we won't overwhelm your inbox."

The inaugural newsletter highlights the Clerk's free property fraud alert program, the official opening of the new St. Johns County Memorial Garden, a service spotlight on where to get information to appeal your property value assessment, recent scams here and across Florida, and more.

Sign up by emailing "Subscribe" to communications@stjohnsclerk.com or visit <https://conta.cc/3Nn88av> to join the email list directly from the first newsletter.

"Age Your Way" educational series for LGBTQ seniors offered

Age Your Way is the name and theme of a new five-part series of online educational series for LGBTQ older adults. The third in the series, "Accessing the Best Caregiver Support Services," is scheduled for Wednesday, July 13 live at 11:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. The workshop is free, but registration is required by going to MyElderSource.org/AgeYourWay. The 90-minute workshops will be presented live using Zoom online meeting software.

Whether you are the caregiver or the person receiving the caring, it is important to know the wishes of your loved one and how to plan for your care in the event you cannot care for yourself. Issues discussed in this session include the resource available to make sound decisions for you or your loved one. Subject matter experts include Jackie Boyd, author of the Caregiver Guide and long-time aging specialist and LGBTQ advocate; and ElderSource CEO Linda Levin.

The recording and resources presented in the first two workshops are available on the ElderSource website. The sessions, sponsored by the LGBTQ Fund at the Community Foundation for Northeast Florida, are presented by ElderSource and SAGE, a national advocacy and services group for LGBTQ elders.

Visit MyElderSource.org/AgeYourWay for more information and to register.

500 volunteers needed for Feed My Starving Children meal packing

Northeast Florida area residents will come together Aug. 12 – 13 to combat world hunger through a partnership between Ponte Vedra Presbyterian Church and Feed My Starving Children, a Christian non-profit

dedicated to providing nourishing meals to starving children worldwide. Seven million emergency meals were just sent to Ukraine by Feed My Starving Children.

A projected 500 community volunteers will pack 102,000 meals with their own hands in two days in four two-hour sessions. This is a great opportunity to serve individually, with your family, friends and coworkers.

The event will take place at Ponte Vedra Presbyterian Church, located at 4510 Palm Valley Road.

Volunteer meal packing registration is available now online. Visit <https://give.fmsc.org/jacksonville> to view session hours and to register to volunteer.

SARAH ★ ARNOLD

COUNTY COMMISSION





APPOINTED BY GOVERNOR DESANTIS

◀ MEET SARAH

THE RIGHT PATH
FOR ST. JOHNS COUNTY

★ ★ ★

Paid for by Sarah Arnold, Republican, for St. Johns County Commission, District 2.



with St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections
Vicky Oakes

Q: Do we have a Primary Election this year?

A: Yes. The Primary is scheduled for August 23.

Q: Have candidates that are running for office filed their papers?

A: Yes. Candidate qualifying ended June 17 and the Primary Election ballot is finalized.

Q: How can I find out who will be on my ballot?

A: A sample ballot will be mailed, or emailed, to every registered voter unless you requested a vote-by-mail ballot. Sample ballots are mailed three weeks prior to an election and are also available on our website. You can access yours by using My Voter Status and looking up your voter record. A list of Primary Election candidates is also available on our website along with a full list of candidates who qualified with our office.

Q: When will vote-by-mail ballots be mailed?

A: Vote-by-mail ballots go into the mail on July 9 for overseas and military voters. They are the first to be mailed their ballots, 45 days prior to the election. The ballots for all other voters who requested vote-by-mail ballots will be mailed around July 18.

Q: I don't remember if I requested a vote-by-mail ballot. How can I check?

A: Visit www.votesjc.gov and use My Voter Status to look up your voter record. You can verify your address on file with the Elections Office, update it if you need to, and see if you have a request on file. If you haven't requested a ballot, it's not too late. You have up until 10 days before the election to request a ballot be mailed to you.

Q: Will there be early voting for the Primary?

A: Yes. Early voting is available from 9 a.m. – 6 p.m., Aug. 13 – 20, at these six locations: Ponte Vedra Branch Library, Julington Creek Annex, Supervisor of Elections Office, St. Augustine Beach City Hall, Southeast Branch Library, and the Hastings Branch Library.

Q: I heard some election day polling locations have changed. Will I be notified if mine changed?

A: Yes. Due to the 2020 Census and the 2021 redistricting process, we have new voting districts, new precinct lines, and some new polling locations. All registered voters were mailed new voter information cards in June to notify them of the changes. If you did not receive your new card, visit www.votesjc.gov and use My Voter Status to look up your registration and verify the address on file with the Elections Office is correct. Your polling place is also listed.

Q: A candidate I want to vote for is registered in a different party than I am. What do I have to do in order to be able to vote for them?

A: Due to Florida's closed primaries, you received the ballot of the party in which you are registered. Unless the candidate is from your same party, you must change your party in order to be able to vote for them. The only exception is nonpartisan races on the Primary ballot, such as County Judge and School Board. These races appear

Vicky Oakes cont. on pg. 10



with St. Johns County Property Appraiser
Eddie Creamer

Q: What is coming up on the calendar of the Property Appraiser's Office?

A: Our office has completed valuations needed for the creation of the tax roll. This tax roll was submitted to the county taxing authorities and the Florida Department of Revenue on June 1. With that submission, we also submitted our annual budget, since the taxing authorities fund our office.

Q: Can you give us any insight into the numbers on this year's tax roll?

A: This year, the Just Market Value of the tax roll is \$61.2 billion, which is the largest tax roll ever for St. Johns County. The Taxable Value is \$40 billion, which represents a 15.26 percent increase over the initial submission in 2021. These increases are due to a combination of an increase in property values as well as the addition this year of \$1.9 billion in new construction.

Q: What happens next?

A: The Florida Department of Revenue has 30 days to review the tax roll and the taxing authorities use the tax roll to create their budgets. We will resubmit the First Final Tax Roll on July 1. This 30-day window allows our team to do quality control work and make any adjustments as well as answer any questions from the Florida Department of Revenue. Then, TRIM notices will be mailed.

Q: What can you tell us about TRIM notices?

A: TRIM is the most important document a property owner will get in St. Johns County. They will be mailed by our office on Aug. 19

and are also available online (www.sjcpa.us) as of that date. Within the mailing, property owners will receive a copy of the State of Florida Taxpayer's Bill of Rights and a list of exemptions in addition to the TRIM notice. The TRIM notice also contains the date and time of the budget hearing for each of the taxing authorities, so property owners can attend to learn more.

Q: What will the TRIM notice contain?

A: The TRIM notice shows the market value, the assessed value and the taxable value of your property for 2021 and proposed for 2022. It will also show any exemptions for the property. Make sure you check your TRIM notice for accuracy as to values and exemptions. The taxes are listed by taxable authority and will show what the taxes would be if the county made no changes to the budget. This is called the "rollback rate," essentially what your taxes would be this year to allow the county to collect the same amount of money as last year. TRIM will also show the proposed taxes if the proposed budget is passed; this is what would be on the tax bill.

Q: What should property owners do if they disagree with the value assessed by your office?

A: When the TRIM notice is mailed, a 25-day clock starts. If the taxpayer has any discrepancy with the Property Appraiser's Office, they should contact us to discuss. If we can't come to an agreement, the taxpayer can file an appeal with the Value Adjustment Board. It is very important to do this within the 25-day window, because if not, a taxpayer will lose his or her right to appeal.

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.

JENNIFER COLLINS
FOR ST. JOHNS COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD DISTRICT 3

JENNIFER COLLINS WILL CHAMPION THE
GOVERNOR DESANTIS EDUCATION POLICY
ON THE ST. JOHNS COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

A Champion for our Children

TRUSTED CONSERVATIVE. DEDICATED PARENT. NOT A POLITICIAN.

Meet Jennifer

Paid for by Jennifer Collins for St. Johns County School Board, District 3

Sam Raven is a local author born in St Augustine, Florida.

Sam grew up roaming the swamps and wood lands, hunting and fishing. Graduating from school he entered military life trying to find "his way" for life. Many of the thoughts are related to this time and places visited while on Duty.

Available at Discover Books, Amazon and Barnes and Noble

KRISTA CHUCK
Keating-Joseph ElectKrista.com
Labanowski ChuckForCommissioner.com

Had enough? Aug. 23rd, vote twice to stop overdevelopment that is destroying our county.

Paid for by Krista Keating-Joseph, and Charles "Chuck" Labanowski, Republican candidates for St. Johns County Commissioners, Districts 4 and 2

Life

travel • pantry raiders • gardening
fishing • entertainment • puzzles

Get to Know ...

By Tiffany Merlo Phelps
mail@floridanewslines.com

Bill Abbott

Magician Bill Abbott received his first magic kit when he was 12 years old, performing shows in his basement for neighborhood kids with his mom providing finger sandwiches. “My memories of it were great, but I am not sure that I was at the David Copperfield level,” joked Abbott, who moved to St. Augustine four years ago from Toronto, Canada. What Abbott gained from that early exposure to magic enabled him to gain confidence and turn a hobby into a successful 20-year career. “It gave me a little bit of courage, encouragement, and the ability to socialize. I was able to show something to adults and explain it to them. This empowered me to move forward.” It was also at this age that Abbott went with his father to a trade show and watched American magician Paul Gertner performing right in front of him. “He was the first professional magician that I watched performing live. It was emblazoned in my psyche that this can be accomplished, that you can do what you love for a living.” Abbott went on to perform at children’s birthday parties in high school and then night clubs and lounges during college, specializing in tableside magic. Abbott attended Ryerson University securing a degree in social work while majoring in sociology and psychology, courses that proved to be very useful when it comes to performing sleight of hand magic and mentalism. Ultimately, magic became his full-time gig (he has now performed in more than 5,000 shows in 11 countries). Abbott was recently named Canadian Magician of the Year by Canadian Association of Magicians and has created magic illusions and effects for “America’s Got Talent” and “The Steve Harvey Show.” As it turns out, the very first magic trick (a card



Photo courtesy Justin Snavelly
Bill Abbott

trick) Abbott performed as a child is the very same trick he now uses at the start of his current show, “Magic Hideaway” held at the Casa Monica Hotel.

Q: What was the inspiration for the Casa Monica show?

A: I had a friend in Toronto who owned a jazz club in a three-floor complex. I was able to perform a magic show there for three years, and I loved it. It was the perfect marriage of everything with music, a lounge and magic. Once it closed, I was constantly seeking out that type of set-up. My wife, Rebecca, and I sent a proposal about “Magic Hideaway” to Casa Monica owner Richard Kessler, and three months later we got the go ahead. Rebecca handles the administrative side of the show and serves as the house manager. We have created a 22-seat venue that is reminiscent of a vintage jazz club, working closely with Richard Kessler and the hotel’s staff to make an intimate setting.

Q: What attracted you to St. Augustine?

A: We visited St. Augustine nine years ago, and we fell in love with it. It is also a great location to serve clients with my consulting and prop business. I travel quite often to New York and Las Vegas, watching shows, taking notes, and creating magic illusions and effects for other shows as well as networks and streaming services.

Q: You mentioned that you prefer small live magic shows to large television shows. What appeals to you about a smaller setting?

A: I really don’t love performing on television. There are more factors on television and so much that you can’t control. In a small setting, the audience gets to see everything up close, and there is not a bad seat in the house. It is happening to you, and you have the opportunity to see something impossible. You cannot deny it. The experience is very different from watching it on television. This has been my focus: close contact. The goal is to connect people through a collective experience similar to the experience that you find in a comedy club. It is hard to duplicate that feeling when performing on television. The audience, if you are listening, teaches you everything that you need to know. My persona in the show is a larger extension of who I am day to day.

Q: You have two sons ages 19 and 20. Are they interested in following your career path?

A: They both love music, and one is pursuing a career in the music industry while the other is the executive sous chef at The Castillo. They both grew up around magic and they said, “That’s Dad’s thing.”

[Author’s note: Magic Hideaway is held every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 6 p.m. and 8:30 pm at the Casa Monica Hotel in downtown St. Augustine.]

Learn to Read cont. from pg. 1

Student Mayra Estupinan, who was a pediatrician in Ecuador, said her tutor Eve Yu has given her hope and confidence.

“She is amazing. I have learned so much from her,” said Estupinan, who moved to St. Augustine with her husband for his job at Northrop Grumman.

Estupinan said Yu also helped her to practice interview questions which led her to accept a job in facilities at a school.

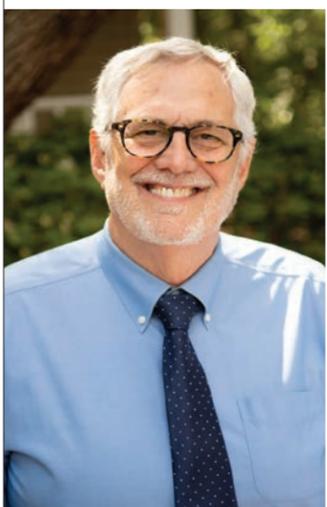
“My goal is to speak more clearly, especially with groups of people,” said Estupinan. “My dream is to return to my profession. I am feeling more confident every day.”

Learn to Read offers Adult Basic Education, GED Test Prep, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Job Readiness Skills and Health and Financial Literacy. The organization, which offers all services for free, has recently expanded to Putnam County and lower Duval County. Tutoring and group classes are a part of the process.

[Author’s note: For more information about Learn to Read of St. Johns County, visit www.Learn-toReadStJohns.org or call (904) 826-0011.]

Your library cont. from pg. 1

“The Best Summer at Your Library” is proudly sponsored by the St. Johns County Public Library System’s multiple Friends of the Library groups. To learn more about the library’s 2022 Summer Reading Program and how to register for the variety of programs, contact your local branch library or visit www.sjcpl.org.



Elect Jim Springfield

St. Augustine City Commission Seat 5

www.VoteJimSpringfield.com · Jim4staug@gmail.com

READY TO SERVE

PAID FOR BY JIM SPRINGFIELD, CANDIDATE FOR ST. AUGUSTINE CITY COMMISSION SEAT 5

Puzzles

Answers on page 3
Provided by MetroCreative

BLUEBERRIES WORD SEARCH

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

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

- ANTHOCYANINS
- ANTIOXIDANTS
- BAKING
- BENEFITS
- BLUEBERRY
- BUSH
- COGNITIVE COMPOUNDS
- FIBER
- FLAVONOL
- HEART
- JAM
- JELLY
- JUICE
- MANGANESE
- MYRICETIN
- NUTRITIONAL
- POLYPHENOLS
- PURPLE
- QUERCETIN
- SERVINGS
- SUPERFOOD
- SWEET
- VITAMINS

CRYPTO FUN

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to blueberries.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 21 = E)

- A. 22 21 12 14 9 22**
Clue: Well-being
- B. 26 21 25 25 23**
Clue: Small fruit
- C. 5 10 9 25 18 21 5 9 7**
Clue: Vitamins/minerals
- D. 4 21 14 18 6 18 19 10 7**
Clue: Very tasty

Answers: A. health B. berry C. nutrients D. delicious



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

Q: Can you describe some of the scams that have come to your attention?

A: We've had some interesting fraud pop up lately that has to do with real estate: vacant property, home improvement, and vacation rentals would be the broad categories.

Q: What fraud are you seeing with vacant property?

A: Most people think you can't steal a home, but it can be done — and we've prosecuted some cases in St. Johns County. Vacant property is typically the target and a quit claim deed along with the legal concept of adverse possession is how it is done. For example, a dishonest person might illegally live in a vacant home for awhile and then utilize a quit claim deed to turn the property over to themselves and then sell or rent the property fraudulently. If they sell the property, they will offer owner financing, so that title insurance is not required as with a mortgage company. When the rightful owner shows up at the property, surprised that someone is there, they often call law enforcement, who is then shown the quit claim deed. This then looks like a civil matter, but it's a fraud to illegally record documents.

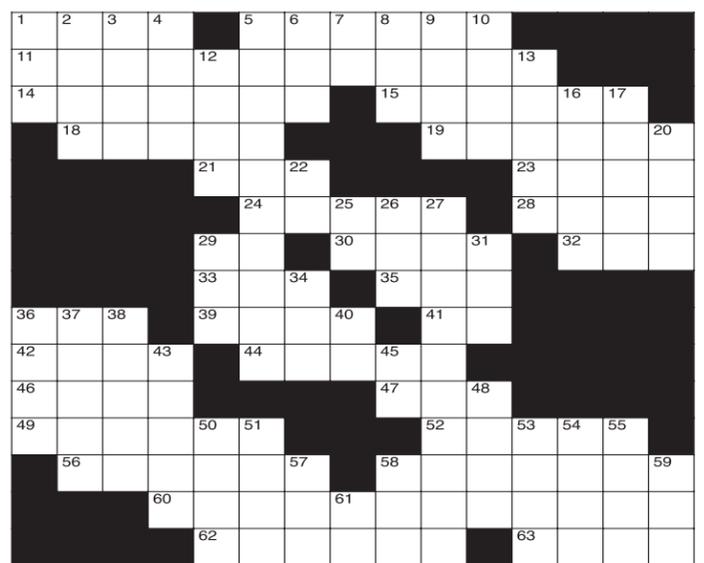
My advice if you have vacant property: ask someone you trust to keep an eye on it to ensure no one is living there illegally and also check with the county regularly to make sure there have been no documents filed on the property such as quit claim deeds. Consider this as you would check up on your credit report.

Q: What about home improvement fraud?

A: Recently we had 50 victims in our district of a roofing scam. As you know, there is a shortage of labor and many reputable contractors are quoting long periods of time to complete a project. Some homeowners may then seek out other contractors and come across some that are not so reputable. Scammers are always ready to take advantage. It's a red flag if the contractor asks for all the money for a job up front. Make sure any deposit requested seems reasonable and do your due diligence as it pertains to licensing and insurance. You can call the county and find out if a contractor is licensed to work here and in addition to asking to see the proof of insurance, maybe take the additional step of actually calling the insurance company to verify coverage.

Q: Finally, what can you tell us about vacation rental property fraud?

A: If you're going on vacation, always use a reputable agency to find the property you want to rent. Be careful searching online because sometimes what is represented on the internet is not reality — and you won't know it until you show up ready for your vacation. Plus, by then the scammer will already have your personal information and even your money. One thing you can do to verify the accuracy of the rental property listing is to look up the property by address on the county's property appraiser's website. You can also contact a local realtor that specializes in rental properties and ask them to check it out. If it turns out that the listing is fraudulent, they may end up helping you find a legitimate rental property. A little prevention/work up front can really pay off.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Absence of difficulty
- 5. Preserve a dead body
- 11. Gratitude
- 14. The act of coming together again
- 15. More cushy
- 18. Visionaries
- 19. Large, fish-eating bird
- 21. Indicates near
- 23. NY Mets legend Tommie
- 24. Icelandic books
- 28. Pop
- 29. Hammer is one
- 30. Sense of self-importance
- 32. Thyrotrophic hormone
- 33. Can't be found
- 35. Electronic data processing
- 36. Passports and licenses are two
- 39. Snake-like fishes
- 41. Air Force
- 42. Popular computers
- 44. Intermediate ecological stage
- 46. Wings
- 47. Used in combination
- 49. Laid back
- 52. Jewelled headdress
- 56. Slow
- 58. Famous Falls
- 60. Reassertions
- 62. Periods of time
- 63. Hyphen

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Body part
- 2. Mimics
- 3. Expel large quantities
- 4. Sea eagle
- 5. Genetically distinct varieties
- 6. Dialect of Chinese
- 7. Famous Mr. T character
- 8. Consumed
- 9. Chinese dynasty
- 10. Menace to yards
- 12. Ireland
- 13. Palm trees
- 16. Fungal disease
- 17. Willis and Robert are two
- 20. Affirmative! (slang)
- 22. It shows who you are
- 25. The First State (abbr.)
- 26. Get older
- 27. Associations
- 29. Woman (French)
- 31. Sunscreen rating
- 34. Brew
- 36. Leader
- 37. Plants in the legume family
- 38. Burn with a hot liquid
- 40. Junior's father
- 43. Scads
- 45. Morning
- 48. Length of a line (abbr.)
- 50. Double curve
- 51. Small, thin person
- 53. Worn by exposure to the weather
- 54. Mars crater
- 55. Humanities
- 57. Word element meaning ear
- 58. To the ___ degree
- 59. Residue of something burned
- 61. It cools your home

Brandon Patty cont. from pg. 2

A. We are about a fifth of the way to our goal of 10,000 subscribers and working hard to get out the message. In the coming weeks, we are looking to partner with our fellow Clerks of Court in northeast Florida in a shared message about protecting our residents' properties from scammers through our free notification services. It's easy to sign up and it's totally free. Our service provides an early warning to a property owner, alerting them to check their records online and take action if a property record or mortgage document has been fraudu-

lently altered. Sign up at <https://stjohnsclerk.com/recording-activity/> and let your friends and families know that their county may also offer similar free services.

Q. How can residents get in touch with you?

A. You can call me on my cell phone at (904) 599-8688, the Clerk's Office at (904) 819-3600 or visit us online at stjohnsclerk.com. I also invite you to check out our recently launched monthly newsletter at <https://contact/3y4se4p> and sign up to receive it monthly via email.

Community Marketplace
Call (904) 886-4919 for advertising rates



We offer Fictitious Name Advertisement
Call for more info! (904) 886-4919

HEALTH & FITNESS

VIAGRA and CIALIS USERS! 50 Generic Pills SPECIAL \$99.00. 100% guaranteed. 24/7 CALL NOW! 888-445-5928 Hablamos Español

Dental insurance - Physicians Mutual Insurance Company. Covers 350 procedures. Real insurance - not a discount plan. Get your free dental info kit! 1-855-526-1060 www.dental50plus.com/ads #6258

Attention oxygen therapy users! Inogen One G4 is capable of full 24/7 oxygen delivery. Only 2.8 pounds. Free info kit. Call 877-929-9587

MISCELLANEOUS

Prepare for power outages today with a GENERAC home standby generator \$0 Down + Low Monthly Pmt Request a free Quote. Call before the next power outage: 1-855-948-6176

Eliminate gutter cleaning forever! LeafFilter, the most advanced debris-blocking gutter protection. Schedule free LeafFilter estimate today. 15% off Entire Purchase. 10% Senior & Military Discounts. Call 1-833-610-1936

AT&T Internet. Starting at \$40/month w/12-mo agmt. 1 TB of data/mo. Ask how to bundle

& SAVE! Geo & svc restrictions apply. 1-855-364-3948

BATH & SHOWER UPDATES in as little as ONE DAY! Affordable prices - No payments for 18 months! Lifetime warranty & professional installs. Senior & Military Discounts available. Call: 855-761-1725

Donate Your Car to Veterans Today! Help and Support our Veterans. Fast - FREE pick up. 100% tax deductible. Call 1-800-245-0398

HughesNet - Finally, super-fast internet no matter where you live. 25 Mbps just \$59.99/mo! Unlimited Data is Here. Stream Video. Bundle TV & Internet. Free Installation. Call 866-499-0141

Looking for assisted living, memory care, or independent living? A Place for Mom simplifies the process of finding senior living at no cost to your family. Call 1-844-428-0445 today!

Become a published author. We want to read your book! Dorrance Publishing trusted since 1920. Consultation, production, promotion & distribution. Call for free author's guide 1-877-729-4998 or visit dorranceinfo.com/ads

Job Finder:

Windward Marine Center of St. Augustine is hiring all trades, paint, fiberglass, mechanical and general labor, experience preferred but not required. 40 hour week with occasional overtime, paid vacation, holidays, health and dental insurance. Wage commensurate with experience. Apply in person to 404 Riberia Street, St Augustine 904-824-4394

If you love working with children and are looking for a friendly caring environment to work and teach, visit www.ivybrookacademy.com to learn about our award-winning half day preschool. Contact katie.bono@ivybrookacademy.com for available teaching opportunities.

Looking for an exciting new career? Join our LifeSouth team and help save lives, right here in your community! Visit lifesouth.org/careers for all open positions.

Paying top cash for men's sportwatches! Rolex, Breitling, Omega, Patek Philippe, Heuer, Daytona, GMT, Submariner and Speedmaster. Call 833-603-3236

Put on your TV Ears & hear TV w/unmatched clarity. TV Ears Original - originally \$129.95 - now w/this special offer only \$59.95 w/code MCB5911-888-805-0840

AloeCare Health medical alert system. Most advanced medical alert product on the market. Voice-activated! No wi-fi needed! Special offer w/code CARE20 for \$20 off Mobile Companion. 1-855-341-5862

DISH TV \$64.99 For 190 Channels + \$14.95 High Speed Internet. Free Installation,

Smart HD DVR Included, Free Voice Remote. Some restrictions apply. Promo Expires 1/21/23. 1-866-479-1516

The Generac PWRcell solar plus battery storage system. Save money, reduce reliance on grid, prepare for outages & power your home. Full installation services. \$0 down financing option. Request free no obligation quote. 1-877-539-0299

Vivint. Smart security. Professionally installed. One connected system for total peace of mind. Free professional installation! Four free months of monitoring! Call to customize your system. 1-833-841-0737

Safe Step. North America's #1 Walk-in tub. Comprehen-

sive lifetime warranty. Top-of-the-line installation and service. Now featuring our free shower package & \$1600 off - limited time! Financing available. 1-855-417-1306

Protect your home from pests safely and affordably. Pest, rodent, termite and mosquito control. Call for a quote or inspection today 844-394-9278

Reader Advisory: The National Trade Association we belong to has purchased the above classifieds. Determining the value of their service or product is advised by this publication. In order to avoid misunderstandings, some advertisers do not offer employment but rather supply the readers with

ALOE CARE HEALTH

The World's Most Advanced Medical Alert System

Voice-Activated! No Wi-Fi Needed!

\$20 OFF Mobile Companion

Offer code: CARE20

CALL NOW 1-855-521-5138



Prepare for power outages today

WITH A HOME STANDBY GENERATOR

\$0 MONEY DOWN + LOW MONTHLY PAYMENT OPTIONS

Contact a Generac dealer for full terms and conditions

REQUEST A FREE QUOTE
CALL NOW BEFORE THE NEXT POWER OUTAGE
(866) 643-0438

*To qualify, consumers must request a quote, purchase, install and activate the generator with a participating dealer. Call for a full list of terms and conditions.

GENERAC



FREE
7-Year Extended Warranty*
A \$695 Value!

INK! recognizes St. Johns County students, mentors, and educational leaders at Take Stock in Children® graduation

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

The St. Johns County Education Foundation, which operates as INK! (Investing in Kids), is the exclusive umbrella agency for Take Stock in Children® (TSIC), a state-wide non-profit organization that offers deserving low-income students a unique opportunity to escape the cycle of poverty through education, mentorship, college success coaching, and the opportunity to earn college scholarships.

This year, the TSIC graduation event was held on May 23 at St. Augustine High School and 18 TSIC students graduated with a special program highlighting the academic achievements each earned over the course of their high school careers. Graduating scholars earned college scholarships funded by individual donors, corporate sponsors, and fundraising partners. Tim Forson, Superintendent of the St. Johns County School District, delivered opening remarks and recognized students, mentors, teachers, high school principals, school board members, INK! staff, and volunteers, among others.

Students are selected for TSIC when they are in the eighth grade in St. Johns County public schools. Upon acceptance into the program, students sign a contract to maintain a 2.5 grade point average (GPA), maintain good behavior and attendance, and remain drug and crime free. The program continues to be the only public-private partnership of its kind in the U.S.

One hundred percent of all monetary donations received by INK! for the Take Stock in Children program are directed to the purchase of scholarships for St. Johns County students and fully matched by the Florida Prepaid Foundation.

According to Donna Lueders, INK! executive director, the graduation event serves as a meaningful recognition of an outstanding group of graduates from the class of 2022.

"Our event also honored TSIC mentors who are exceptional volunteers. They give their time, experience, and listening skills to students at critical points in their young lives. A mentor's impact is truly profound, lasting well beyond the high school years of our young scholars," said Lueders. According to James Wheeler, INK! Operations & Student Programs Director, all graduating seniors received scholarships, while several students were recognized for exceptional achievement during the ceremony.

Jessica Fader from Pedro Menendez High School received a Flagler Health+ Scholarship. She is graduating with a GPA of more than 4.0 and will complete her Associate of Arts degree at St. Johns River State College in St. Augustine this summer. Fader participated in the Health Sciences Academy at the high school. She plans to pursue studies in nursing and attend the University of North Florida in the fall.

Horace Taylor from Nease High School re-

INK! cont. on pg. 10



Photo courtesy INK! (Investing in Kids) 2022 graduates receive laptops.

Pantry Raiders

Make watermelon the centerpiece of meals

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

Few things are as delicious and refreshing as watermelon on a warm day. Watermelon grows quite readily in summer and is often ready to pick after three months of growing time. Harvesters look for a pale buttery yellow spot on the bottom of watermelon (the ground spot), indicating ripeness; however, shoppers can do their part and pick perfect watermelon at the store. The fruit should be firm, symmetrical and free from bruises, cuts or dents. The melon also should be heavy, as it is comprised of 92 percent water.

Most people immediately think of watermelon as a sweet snack or as a palate cleanser after an evening meal, but watermelon is equally at home in savory dishes as it is in sweet offerings. You may enjoy this recipe for "Zesty Watermelon Chicken Salad Tortilla Cups" courtesy of The National Watermelon Promotion Board and recipe author Shannon Kohn. This is a great warm weather meal that looks impressive and is both cool and filling for summer entertaining.



Photo courtesy MetroCreative
Zesty Watermelon Chicken Salad Tortilla Cups

Zesty Watermelon Chicken Salad Tortilla Cups

Makes 12 servings

4 8-inch flour tortillas

¼ cup softened cream cheese

2 tbsp. mayonnaise

- 1 tbsp. cayenne pepper sauce
- 2 tbsp. chopped green chiles
- 1 cup cooked, chopped chicken
- 1 ½ cups chopped watermelon
- ¼ cup roasted, salted pumpkin seeds (pepitas)
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- 1. Preheat oven to 375 F.
- 2. Using a 4-inch cookie cutter or cup, cut rounds out of each tortilla. Press one tortilla round down into each cup of a 12-cup muffin pan.
- 3. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes or until tortilla cups are light brown and crispy. Remove from oven; allow to cool.
- 4. In the bottom of a large bowl, combine cream cheese, mayonnaise and pepper sauce until smooth.
- 5. Stir in chicken and green chiles. Fold in watermelon.
- 6. Divide and fill each tortilla cup with an extra amount of the watermelon-chicken mixture.
- 7. Divide and garnish with an equal amount of pumpkin seeds and green onion, respectively.

REPUBLICAN

JEREMIAH BLOCKER

ST. JOHNS COUNTY COMMISSION, DISTRICT 4

The Experienced Conservative
Fighting For A Free & Prosperous St. Johns

Keep Our Community Safe

★ ★ ★

Put Families First

★ ★ ★

Foster Responsible Development

Republican Primary: Tuesday, August 23
JeremiahBlocker.com

Paid by Jeremiah Blocker, Republican, for St. Johns County Commission District 4




An Even Brighter Future

Recent years have taught us that life is fragile, a hug is priceless, and that a virtual visit is good but being together in person is the best. Throughout our 76 years of continuous excellence, we've learned many things. Importantly, that by working together with an unwavering commitment to our mission, we'll ensure an even brighter future for our community's seniors.



Our beautiful 40-acre Mandarin campus offers:

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| Short-Stay Skilled Nursing & Rehabilitation | Outpatient Therapy |
| Long-Term Nursing & Memory Care | Adult Day Program |
| | Home Health Care |
| | Independent Living |

For more information, call (904) 260.1818 or visit RiverGarden.org



Photo courtesy AAUW 2022 scholarship recipients.

AAUW St. Augustine awards scholarships

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) St. Augustine Branch has awarded three scholarships to local university students who are residents of St. Johns County. The scholarships are for the 2022 – 23 academic school year.

Danielle Castano has been awarded the \$1,500 Jean Luoma scholarship. She is a student at the University of Florida where she is working towards her master's degree in International Relations and plans to graduate in spring 2023. Her interests are human rights violations, migration policy, and democratic erosion in Latin America.

As a first generation American with parents from Columbia, South America, Castano is interested in the economic challenges facing Black and Hispanic people in Florida. She has written papers about cross-cultural awareness and is an active volunteer in the community, mentoring and tutoring refugee students.

Caeli Benyacko is receiving the Diane Boyce scholarship award for \$1,500. Caeli is a sophomore at the University of Florida, slated to graduate with a bachelor's degree in physics with an emphasis in nanoscience in spring 2024. She is currently a research assistant at

the university. It was during her eighth grade AAUW Florida Tech-Trek camping experience that she became interested in the observable world and decided to pursue physics in college with a particular interest in condensed matter.

Aniya Foster is the recipient of the Linda Andiric scholarship award in memory of former member Zuhul Ulban. The award is \$1,500. Foster is in her junior year at the University of Florida, majoring in physiology and kinesiology. She plans to pursue a doctoral degree in physical therapy.

As a woman of color and an avid athlete, her dream is to inspire other young women of color by working with a professional basketball team. In addition, she plans to open her own physical therapy practice and service her community by partnering with nonprofit organizations offsetting the cost for those who can't afford rehabilitating services.

The AAUW is a non-profit organization whose mission is to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. The local AAUW branch offers scholarships each year to local college or university students, male or female, who are residents of St. Johns County. Visit <https://staugustine-fl.aauw.net/> for more information.

Vicky Oakes cont. from pg. 6

on all ballots.

Q: Is there a deadline for registering to vote or changing my party for the Primary?

A: Yes. The deadline for new registrations and party changes is 29 days prior to an election. In the case of the Aug. 23 Primary, the deadline is July 25.

Be sure to visit votesjc.gov often for updated election information. The Frequently Asked Questions provide answers to questions asked most often, and there is a special section for vote-by-mail questions. My staff and I are here to serve you, and we will make it easy for you to vote. Sign up for my newsletter by visiting our website or call the office for assistance at (904) 823-2238.

INK cont. from pg. 9

ceived a Flagler Health+ Scholarship. He is graduating from high school and from St. Johns River State College with his Associate of Arts degree. Taylor's cumulative high school GPA is more than 4.2. In addition to earning the Bright Futures Scholarship, Taylor has been offered multiple scholarships by the University of Florida. He will be attending the University of Florida in the fall.

Aidan Bryant from St. Augustine High School received the Beaver Toyota Scholarship. Bryant is graduating with a cumulative high school GPA of 4.68. He completed his high school career with "A" grades in every class including 14 Advanced International Certificate of

Education (AICE) Program and advanced placement (AP) classes. Bryant earned the prestigious AICE Diploma. In addition to earning the Bright Futures Scholarship, he has been awarded the Machen Scholarship which is the highest scholarship offered by the University of Florida. Bryant will be attending the University of Florida in the fall.

The Take Stock in Children, St. Johns County Outstanding Senior Academic Achievement Awards were presented to Taylor and Bryant. They will each receive a \$500 award for books during their first year of college as bestowed by the Davidson Cares Foundation.

Visit www.ink-stjohns.org for more information.

Travel

Curious About Curacao?

By Debi Lander
mail@floridanewslines.com

Every summer, Floridians prepare for the possibility of hurricanes. Not so for those in the ABC islands (Aruba, Bonaire, and Curacao) in the Caribbean. They lie just off the coast of Venezuela, beyond the hurricane belt, so if you want to visit the Caribbean in the summer or late fall, head in their direction.

I recently returned from Curacao and was awe-struck by the waterfront in the capital city of Willemstad. Rainbow-hued historic houses in the Dutch architectural style create an unforgettable scene and are protected as a UNESCO World Heritage site. Unlike the white buildings that dominate many Greek and Mediterranean isles, Curacaoans prefer bright colors.

To cross over the waterway into the downtown, you use the Queen Emma floating footbridge. The bridge swings to one side if a ship needs to pass through. It's fun to watch, but you can get

stranded before it closes again. As the locals call her, the "Old Swinging Lady" gets illuminated at night.

Of course, all Caribbean islands brag about their white sand beaches, clear turquoise water, and vibrant sea life. Thirty-five smaller, more intimate beaches and coves dot the shoreline in Curacao. You won't find a string of resort hotels off a boulevard or one long beach. The little coves permit snorkeling off the beach, and many scuba divers find they can dive without the need for a boat.

Curacao receives little rain, so the landscape remains dry, again helping to keep those hurricanes away. Cacti and scrub bushes grow all over the place, as does aloe vera. You can visit an aloe farm and learn about its multiple uses.

Two national parks offer very different experiences. If you want to climb to the highest point on the island, arrive early at Christoffelpark. A round-trip hike to



Photos courtesy Debi Lander
Jeremi Beach.

the summit will take about three hours and rewards with a 360-degree panoramic view. Shete Boka Park, however, provides a much more dramatic picture. This park rests on the northernmost point, and massive waves constantly bombard and send spray skyward. The boardwalk and viewing platforms offer great photo ops, but be careful and hang on to the little ones.

If you take children, consider staying at an all-inclusive property like the Corendon Mangrove Beach Resort with its incredible waterpark. They offer exciting rides with twists and turns for all ages and a child-friendly area for the young ones. The King Cobra drops and flings daredevils. The waterpark is rarely crowded, so the kids will get plenty of rides. The resort also offers a fantastic main swimming pool, swim-up bar, a lap pool that tends to stay quieter, and its own beach.

One of my favorite moments was discovering wild flamingos. If you are lucky, you may find them close to the road. The quirky creatures twist and curl their necks around like backyard



Photos courtesy Debi Lander
Queen Emma Floating Bridge.

hoses. Their coral color reflects against the tranquil water in a lake, creating a beautiful scene.

Curacao offers a variety of lodging options from AirBnB rentals, villa rentals, boutique hotels, resorts, and all-inclusive properties. I suggest you plan to rent a car. It takes just two hours to drive from tip to tip.

Take a nonstop flight to Curacao from Miami. Remember your sunscreen and appetite; the local cuisine blends Creole, African, Spanish, Dutch, and Caribbean flavors. Enjoy!



Photos courtesy Debi Lander
Powerful waves at Shete Boka.

COMING IN AUGUST!

Back to School Guide



Contact Linda at
Linda@FloridaNewsLine.com
(904) 607-5062

or Rebecca at
Rebecca@FloridaNewsLine.com
(724) 968-7602

Faith & Allegiance to the Constitution

Raised in a military family, Casey Woolsey knows what it means to protect the Constitution and do one's duty to Country. As County Judge, Casey Woolsey will bring those same values to the bench.



Meet Casey



PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY
VETERANS & PROSECUTORS

CASEY
WOOLSEY
FOR COUNTY
COURT JUDGE

Paid by Casey Woolsey for St. Johns County Court Judge Group 2

Coming in August!

St. Johns County School Directory

45,000+
copies printed and distributed through all St. Johns County Schools

Reach your target market!
This publication sells out quickly.
Reserve your space today!

Call Linda Gay
904.607.5062
Linda@floridanewslines.com

Rebecca Thomson
724.968.7602
Rebecca@floridanewslines.com

FLORIDA ELITE SOCCER ACADEMY

Florida's Number 1 Youth Soccer Program

Programs for ages 2-19 - Boys & Girls
NEW PROGRAMS NOW OPEN
Year round program for all levels of play
Multiple locations

www.FloridaEliteSA.com

Welcome to the new

St. Augustine NewsLine

YOUR COMMUNITY. YOUR NEWSPAPER.

Brought to you by the publisher of The CreekLine, Ponte Vedra NewsLine, Mandarin NewsLine, and the St. Johns County School Directory. We are celebrating 22 years of publishing the finest in community newspapers!

www.floridanewslines.com

Have community news to share? Email editor@floridanewslines.com

Include your business!
For advertising inquiries:

 Linda Gay
904.607.5062
Linda@floridanewslines.com

 Rebecca Thomson
724.968.7602
Rebecca@floridanewslines.com