



The CreekLine

January 2018 Volume 18 Issue 1

A Florida NewsLine Publication



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member
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The CreekLine commences 18th year

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewslines.com



Photo courtesy Florida NewsLine

Creative director Julie Gerona, marketing rep. Heather Seay, editor Martie Thompson, office manager Emily Whitehead and original marketing rep. Linda Gay with the very first issue of The CreekLine.

Many things have changed in NW St. Johns County over the past 17 years: we have new roads, numerous new residents and a plethora of new businesses to support the population growth. But one thing has remained a constant — **The CreekLine**, the area's original community newspaper, which still is delivered to every mailbox in NW St. Johns County each month.

The first issue, with a circulation of just 3,500, was delivered in January 2001. Today, The CreekLine's reach has expanded along with the population to encompass an area from Julington Creek to the north, World Golf Village to the south, and everything in between. The current circulation is more than 27,000 issues per month, by far the most of any newspaper in the area.

The CreekLine has stayed the course through economic upswings and downturns, staying true to its mission to bring the good news of NW St. Johns County to its readers — while also supporting local businesses by giving them an affordable advertising forum to reach local residents. It is through this

The CreekLine cont. on pg. 19

St. Augustine welcomes Venardos Circus

- benefiting St. Francis House

By Angela Higginbotham
angela@floridanewslines.com

Come one, come all! The Venardos Circus is coming to town on Wednesday, Jan. 24, 2018. The majority of proceeds from ticket sales of the first performance will go directly to St. Augustine's own St. Francis House in an effort to spread the message of St. Francis and help in its current million dollar fundraising mission. Funds raised will go toward payment for a new building, primarily to be used for children in the area.

"We are so excited to welcome Venardos Circus to St. Augustine and especially grateful to be the beneficiary of the opening night performance," said Karen Hensel, assistant director of St. Augustine Society, Inc., which runs St. Francis House. "As the holidays come to a close it is the perfect way to kick off the New Year and continue the good will of the holiday season — with this special performance that will support services for homeless and less fortunate individuals, families and youth."

Over the past 30 years, St. Francis House has saved and changed lives through the services they provide in helping the homeless citizens of the community.

Come one,
come all!



Photos courtesy Kevin Venardos

An interactive pre-show party takes place one hour before show time with opportunities to meet the cast, snap selfies and play games. The main event lasts approximately 90 minutes, with a brief intermission. The shows run Wednesday through Sunday for the entire engagement, with multiple showtimes on weekends.

"St. Francis House does amazing work. We're proud to be working alongside them for this special event," said Venardos Circus founder Kevin Venardos.

The Venardos Circus is a unique, family friendly traveling show that will be held at the St. Augustine Amphitheater. The circus will present 17 performances, beginning Jan. 24, 2018 and running through Feb. 10, 2018.

Created by former Ringling Bros. ringmaster Kevin Venardos, the Venardos Circus wraps world class circus acts into a Broadway musical style revue. Venardos' all new show features alluring aerialists, amazing acrobatics, comedy, juggling, daredevils, and performers from around the world.

The circus also proudly features its own magical Big Top tent, an intimate setting with seating for only 300 guests. The tent will be set up in the parking

area of the St. Augustine Amphitheatre, adjacent to the larger venue.

"We are the future of the American Circus, live and in person. We're keeping that tradition of fun alive for a whole new generation, and pushing the boundaries of their expectations by turning 'big top circus' into an intimate, interactive, and theatrical experience. It's circus you can feel with your heart," Venardos said.

Tickets are \$25 for adult General Admission and \$15 for youth and seniors. A \$35 V.I.P. experience, which includes special front row seating, is also available. Groups of 15 or more may call (323) 790-4827 to take advantage of special discounts. For more event information visit www.venardoscircus.com or visit www.stfrancisshelter.org to learn more about St. Francis House.

Local golfer memorialized at tournament

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

On Nov. 25, the North Florida Junior Golf Foundation hosted the inaugural Connor Dzion Memorial Golf Tournament at Slammer & Squire in honor of Connor Dzion, an 18-year-old Creekside High School graduate who was tragically killed in a 26-vehicle



Photo courtesy Shelley Howard

More than 70 golfers teed up at the Connor "Peanut Dzion" Memorial Golf Tournament.

interstate accident on Sept. 4, 2017. Dzion graduated magna cum laude and lettered in varsity golf. More than 70 golfers joined Dzion's mother, Melissa, and other family members for the tour-

namment and buffet dinner following. Connor's brother, Colin Dzion, won the putting challenge, coming within three inches of the hole.

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January
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Adopt-A-Shelter-Pet



Meet Shiloh!

Shiloh is a one-year-old male dog who is looking for a new home. He was brought in with his sister by their owners because they could no longer care for them.



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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 farm house at Alpine Groves Park. Our winner was George Gilleo.

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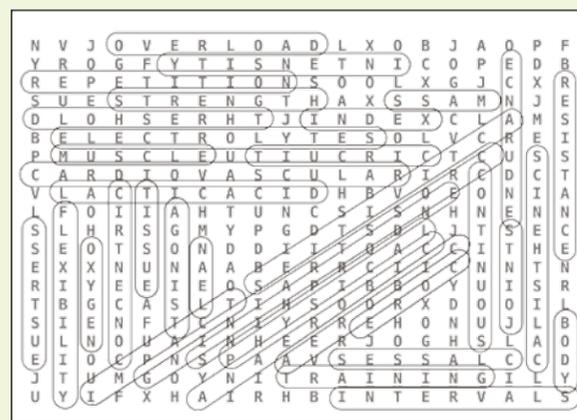
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answers to puzzles on page 24



Answers to our Puzzles

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

take 5

St. Augustine Film Festival kicks off New Year

The St. Augustine Film Festival runs Jan. 18 – 21, 2018 at three venues: The Corazon Cinema and Café with three screening rooms; the large Lewis Auditorium at Flagler College that seats



Photo courtesy MetroCreative

nearly 800, and the intimate Gamache-Koger Theater in the Ringhaver Student Center at Flagler College that seats just over 100. The St. Augustine Film Festival features dozens of foreign and independent films and will bring film directors, producers, writers, and actors into town to showcase their films prior to wider distribution — or for some foreign films — the only time they'll be seen outside their country. Visit www.StAugFilmFest.com for more information or to purchase film passes.

Railway business women to meet

National Association of Railway Business Women (NARBW) will meet on Thursday, Jan. 25 and continuing on the fourth Thursday of each month throughout the year. The January guest speaker will be Edwina Robinson, who will speak about domestic violence. The organization is open to women who are currently or formerly employed, or a relative of someone in a railroad or railroad-connected industry. To RSVP or for more information, contact narbiejax14@yahoo.com or (904) 945-0943.

Current events discussion group celebrates milestone

Current Events, the discussion group that meets each week on Monday morning at Donovan's Irish Pub on Phillips Highway on US Highway 1 at 10 a.m., recently marked its third anniversary. Starting initially with just a few participants in 2014, the group now attracts on average 20 or more people who gather to discuss events that are in the news. Such discussions normally generate strong views and on occasion conflicting exchanges; however, the group at Current Events maintains a civility that respects the views of those with whom they disagree without being disagreeable. The group has no affiliation with any political, religious

or cultural organization. There are no requirements or restrictions on participants — only a desire to participate in a casual discussion of events that are in the news. A fee of \$3 is charged to cover morning coffee, nibbles and room rental. All are welcome. Contact Allan Silberman at ADSilby@yahoo.com for more information.

St. Johns County Audubon offers Children's Shorebird Nesting Program

St. Johns County Parks and Recreation has partnered with the St. Johns County Audubon to offer a free Children's Shorebird Nesting Program on Saturday, Jan. 13, 2018, from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at Nease Beachfront Park, 3171 Coastal Hwy. in

Vilano Beach. This program is for children third grade and up who will learn about the unique birds that nest along

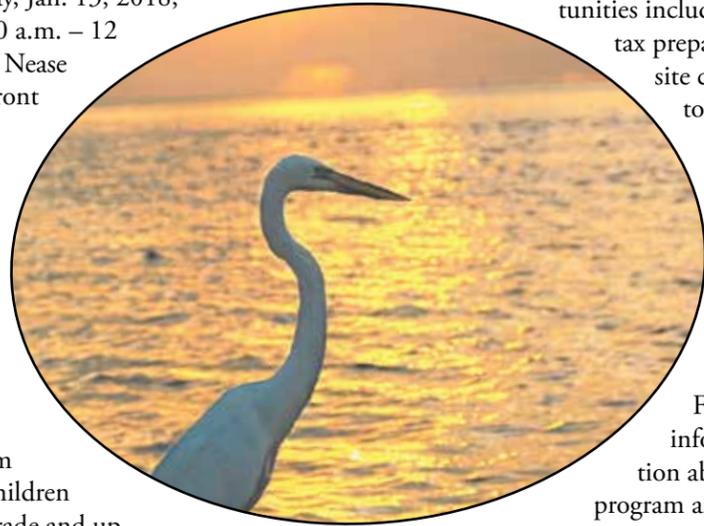


Photo courtesy MetroCreative

local beaches. In addition, children will participate in activities that mirror what the real bird biologists do to protect local nesting sites. For more information or to register, contact Kelly Ussia at kussia@sjcfl.us or (904) 209-0335.

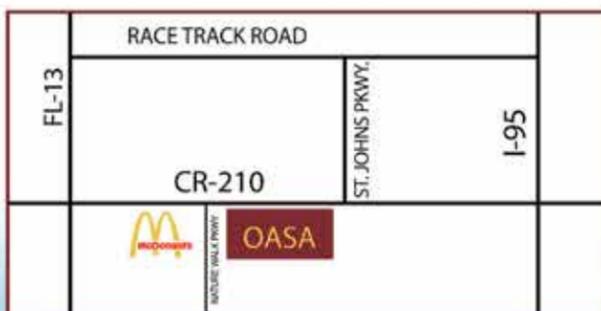
Tax season volunteers needed

United Way of St. Johns County is seeking volunteers during tax season, Jan. 16 – April 15, 2018. Opportunities include greeters, tax preparers and site coordinators to help with the Re-alSense tax preparation program. For more information about the program and the volunteer positions available, visit bit.ly/realsensesjc or call (904) 829-9721.

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around town

Feb. 3, 2018 Fight For Air Climb to benefit American Lung Association
8:00 a.m. - Bank of America tower, downtown Jacksonville
http://action.lung.org/site/TR/Climb/ALASE_Southeast?pg=entry&fr_id=16325

February 8 Shorebird Walk at Matanzas Inlet with St. Johns County Audubon Society
9 a.m. - 11 a.m. - Matanzas Inlet West Parking Lot, 8655 A1A S., St Augustine
www.stjohnsaudubon.com

February 17 ALJ Saturday Cartooning and Illustration Classes
12 p.m. - Balis Community Center, 1513 Lasalle St., Jacksonville
<http://artleaguejax.org/classes/murray-hill-art-center/cartooning-illustration-class/>

February 24 Chocolate and Beyond, sponsored by RSVP
2 p.m. - 4 p.m. - First Coast Technical college, 2980 Collins Ave., St. Augustine
www.rsvpstjohns.com or (904) 547-3952

February 24 Monster Jam
7 p.m. - EverBank Field
www.monsterjam.com

March 2 - 4 World of Nations Celebration
Metropolitan Park

March 3 Northeast Florida Veg Fest
Riverside Park
www.nfvegfest.org/

April 14 Relay for Life of North St. Johns
12 p.m. - 10 p.m. - Bartram Trail High School
http://main.acsevents.org/site/TR/RelayForLife/RFLCY18SER?pg=entry&fr_id=86383

save the date!

4th U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 14-7
7:30 p.m.
St. Augustine Yacht Club near the St. Augustine Lighthouse
(904) 460-0243

Rotary Club of Bartram Trail
7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (repeating event on Thursdays)
Westminster Woods, 25 State Road
lancedmalcolm@gmail.com

8th The Northwest United for Progress club meeting
7 p.m.
Unity Church for Creative Living, 2777 Race Track Road
nwsjcp@gmail.com

Current Events Discussion Group
10 a.m. (repeating event on Mondays)
Donovan's Irish Pub, US Highway 1
adsilby@yahoo.com

9th Bartram Trail Newcomers and Women's Club luncheon featuring Bingo
11 a.m.
St. Johns Golf and Country Club
RSVP by Jan. 3, bartramnc@gmail.com

Jan. 9th - Feb. 13th Northeast Florida AHEC Quit Smoking Now class
Tuesdays, 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.
Flagler Hospital Wellness Center
Free; call (904) 482-0189 to register

11th St. Augustine/Jacksonville Newcomers Club Trivia evening/dinner
5:30 p.m.
Contact Lea for name of restaurant and to be added to attendee list
(904) 829-0643 or (904) 814-9612

Relay for Life of North St. Johns kick off meeting
6:30 p.m.
Allen D. Nease High School
http://main.acsevents.org/site/TR/RelayForLife/RFLCY18SER?pg=entry&fr_id=86383

Palencia Bridge Club plays Party Bridge
11 a.m. - 3 p.m. (repeating event on Thursdays)
Donovan's Irish Pub, 7440 US Highway 1
Diane Tamplin, (904) 808-7326

American Association of University Women (AAUW) Author Luncheon
11:30 a.m.
Amici Italian Restaurant, 1915 A1A South, St. Augustine.
RSVP by Jan. 4: (904) 940-7379 or <https://staugustine-fl.aauw.net/>

12th Rotary Club of St. Johns meeting
7:30 a.m. (repeating event on Fridays)
St. Johns Golf and Country Club Clubhouse
www.rotarystjohns.org

13th Friends of the Library Book Sale
9:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Bartram Trail Branch Library
(904) 827-6960

St. Johns Chapter of the Catholic Writers Guild
10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
St. Paul's Catholic Church school auditorium, 2609 Park St.
www.dosafl.com/outreach/catholic-writers-guild/ or writerrod@comcast.net

16th North Business Council of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce
8 a.m. - 9 a.m.
Westminster Woods on Julington Creek, 25 State Road 13
Register at www.sjcchamber.com or call (904) 829-5681

St. Johns CARES meeting
7 p.m.
Bartram Academy, 164 Everest Lane, Ste. 1
www.stjohnscares.org

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

Newcomers of North St. Johns luncheon
11 a.m.
Cimarrone Golf and Country Club Clubhouse
RSVP by Jan. 6, sjaird@comcast.net

20th Fruit Cove Cruise In sponsored by Sunshine State Chevilles
4 p.m. - 8 p.m.
PDQ parking lot, 194 State Road 13
Repeating event on third Saturday of each month (904) 827-6960

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

23rd First Coast Card Club - adult card players
1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
St. Augustine Main Library, 1960 Ponce de Leon Blvd.
(904) 829-0643

26th Helping Hands of St. Johns County
10 a.m.
First Florida Credit Union, 1950 County Road 210W
jacqphil@aol.com

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

Q: Do you have any input on NW St. Johns County community members' concerns regarding the safety of the crosswalk in front of Dunkin' Donuts and Dollar Tree on Race Track Road?

A: This is another instance of the common conflict between bikers/pedestrians and vehicles. The county's Public Works Department is working to try to come up with a solution, but we have to consider all aspects — legalities, regulations, and school policies. We cannot move the sidewalk and ensuing crosswalk from where it is close to Race Track Road because that is where the Stop sign is located, but if foliage needs to be cut to improve visibility, I would think that could be done relatively easily.

Q: What is the latest on the county receiving funds from FEMA?

A: We finally have a bit of light at the end of the tunnel. Approximately \$3 million of our total FEMA request of approximately \$36 million, which represents five of 29 Project Worksheets (requests for payment) that we made, have been promised to be paid. Keep in mind this is from Hurricane Matthew, not Irma. I'll actually celebrate when this money is in the bank and we can restore revenue back to sources we have borrowed from. I will say that there has been a lot more motivation and communication in the past two months than the previous 10 months from FEMA.

Q: Are any other funding sources coming to fruition?

A: We did receive another piece of good news. Close to \$47 million of Community Development Block Grant money for disaster relief from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development that was promised to us six months ago looks like it will be coming our way. After Hurricane Irma, there was a high likelihood that these funds would be redistributed to other counties in the state, but thankfully, due to a lot of hard work by our county staff and commissioners, we will eventually be getting these funds that were promised. Of course my next question was "When will we see this money?" but I haven't been told a timeframe yet.

Q: What is happening with the discussion on impact fees as a revenue source for St. Johns County?

A: Since the original study was performed in late summer, county staff has not yet brought anything to the County Commission for a decision. The original study was not well received by the board and we felt there were a lot of unanswered questions. I'm in favor of commercial development that will provide good shopping experiences for our residents, but when impact fees are doubled, it discourages the businesses from wanting to locate here. I recommended that we get a second analysis by a different company, but we are still waiting on more information from staff, who is working to provide it.

Q: Can you give us an update on beach renourishment in St. Johns County?

A: There are discussions about some funds available from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection that require a 50 percent match by local homeowners. It is for a specific segment of beach and the residents that would be affected are considering setting up a Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU) with residents committing to pay between approximately \$400 – \$4,000 (depending on their home value and location in relationship to State Road A1A) for the next five to six years.

Q: How is that process progressing?

A: There is a deadline of Jan. 1, 2018 to be at a certain point of paperwork completion. The first reading at a County Commission meeting was in early December and the second required reading will be before the end of the year. This is all just part of the process and doesn't mean we are getting any money yet. We also have been holding community meetings to explain the pros and cons of this proposal.

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

A: Readers can email me at bcc1johns@sjcfl.us or call me at (904) 615-7437.



with St. Johns County Clerk of Circuit Court and Comptroller Hunter Conrad

Q: Do you have any updates for the NW St. Johns County community?

A: We will be expanding our services in the Julington Creek area. Beginning Jan. 9, 2018, residents will be able to get passports as well as passport photos at the Julington Creek Annex on Flora Branch Road. Our office already has a kiosk in the Tax Collector's office where traffic citations may be paid, but we are beginning a pilot program where one of our staff members will occupy one of the windows in the Tax Collector's office for passports.

Q: Since this is a pilot program, what will be the hours for this staff person?

A: It will be part time at first to gauge need. We plan to use existing staff to keep overhead low. The window will be open on Tuesdays and Thursdays only, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. by appointment.

Q: What is the reason for needing an appointment and how should an appointment be made?

A: We want to make sure that people don't have to wait. I think it is important to provide good customer service and govern-

ment should strive just as much as private businesses to provide this.

Appointments may be made by calling the St. Johns County Recording Department at (904) 819-3632 and pressing #2 to speak with a staff member who will schedule the appointment. Appointments will be made on the hour and half hour between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Q: When can folks begin to schedule their appointments?

A: Appointments may be scheduled now and are on a first come, first served basis.

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.sjccoc.us, 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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Storm damage assessment follow-up for real property scheduled

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

Appraisal teams from the St. Johns County Property Appraiser's office will be in the field beginning Jan. 2, 2018, for the entire month of January, performing follow-up damage assessment to properties damaged by Hurricane Matthew and Hurricane Irma. Appraisal teams will be looking specifically at properties where damage was reported to the property appraiser's office, properties upon which appraisers discovered damage through field visits, and areas that were most prone to damage from the storms.

According to St. Johns County Property Appraiser Eddie Creamer, the follow-up assessments will determine whether

all repairs have been completed and the home is able to be occupied as of Jan. 1, 2018, and assessed values restored for tax year 2018. If unrepaired damage still exists, or the home is unable to be occupied, damage assessments will stay in place for the tax year 2018 and be adjusted to reflect the current condition of the home.

"If you reported damage to your home from either storm to our office, or one of our appraisers visited your home to assess damage, there is no need for you to contact us," said Creamer. "However, if your property was damaged from either Hurricane Matthew or Hurricane Irma and you received no adjustment in value in 2017, and the damage is still evident or the home is unable to be occupied as of Jan. 1, 2018, please contact my office so that I may send an assessment team to your home."

Call the property appraiser's office at (904) 827-5500 if you have any questions about these follow-up visits, or damage assessment in general and how it affects property values. Visit www.sjcpa.us for more information.

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

Q: Can you comment on the selection of Allen Anderson by Superintendent Tim Forson to be the principal of the new K-8 school in Aberdeen?

A: Allen is a perfect fit for this school, since he was also at Cunningham Creek Elementary before Palencia Elementary. He is well known in the area and uniformly everyone has been delighted.

Q: How soon will a principal be announced to fill the vacancy he is leaving at Palencia Elementary?

A: We are using the same process we have used successfully over the years. The curriculum team headed by Brennan Asplen has already received desired criteria and perspective of parents and teachers for Palencia's new principal. Superintendent Forson will consider this and make his recommendation to the school board probably prior to the end of this year.

Q: How soon will the new principals (Allen Anderson for the Aberdeen school and Jessica Richardson, formerly principal of Ocean Palms Elementary, for the Nocatee school) begin their new duties?

A: They both start in January. Since there is room available, they will probably maintain offices at Picolata Crossing Elementary. There they can work together since they will be following the same process for things like picking interior colors, flooring and curriculum for their new schools.

Q: Do you have any good news to share?

A: Well, this is the season of going to concerts and performances at our schools.

The talent in our county continues to amaze me. I am also most proud of the Bartram Trail High School football team, which went to the state championship game this year. Their character really shone both on the field and off.

Q: When can community members expect to have their input regarding naming and formation of PTOs for the new schools?

A: Community meetings will be held probably in February or March where input for naming of the new schools will be solicited. The suggestions will then be sent to the school board, which is charged with actually naming the schools. Forming the PTO and picking school colors and mascots will also be done via community meetings, but does not come to the school board.

Q: Can you comment on the trial that started today (Dec. 11) for the civil lawsuit filed by the transgender student against the school district?

A: This is not a jury trial, but rather will be heard by a federal judge. We made accommodations for the young man all along and he seemed happy with these accommodations until this year when he filed suit, which came as a complete surprise to us. It has been very expensive and time consuming and although three days have been allotted for the trial, we are not sure when we will hear of the judge's decision.

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.

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Relay for Life eyes another exciting season

By Atharva Palande
mail@floridanewslines.com

Beep beep boop boop. The joystick is moving furiously in your hands and you stare in horror at the relentless horde of zombies. You're out of ammo and you're out of barricades. You backpedal, furiously trying to escape the ravenous mouths of the undead. They claw at you and they scratch at you. Suddenly, you came across a special loot box and you pick up the laser gun. Now, you smile, realizing that the game is once again in your hands. You've just been rebooted.

While the opening of this very article might have been rather different, it comes completely in line with the theme of the Relay for Life of North St. Johns County this year, where the theme is gaming. The concept stems from the idea that video games and games are a time where friends and family come together to enjoy their time again in a world where they have second chances and they know that they can always come out on top, no matter how hard.

This is the mission of the American Cancer Society as well: second chances and bringing everyone together. We believe that everyone deserves the best of the best in terms of cancer treatment because we believe in the idea of having more birthdays — having more

time to spend with your family and more time to do the things you love.

To conquer and fight such a terrible disease, we need the help of all of you. Yes, you. For this season of the Relay for Life, we need you to sign up with your teams; after all, anything great that happens in games usually happens through team work, not to mention the whole course of history.

To get more information, attend the Relay for Life REBOOT kickoff meeting at Allen D. Nease High School on Jan. 11 at 6:30 p.m. There, you'll receive all the information on how to start a team, join a team, raise money, and what the event will be like. If you already are part of a team or if you already have started one, congratulations, because you have already started the game with a power-up! There will also be a GameTruck at the meeting and you can play games for extra fun.

Relay for Life of North St. Johns will be held on Saturday, April 14 from 12 p.m. – 10 p.m. at Bartram Trail High School. Visit http://main.acevents.org/site/TR/RelayForLife/RFLCY18SER?pg=entry&fr_id=86383 for more information.



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Briefs

Annual Character Counts! Run/Walk scheduled

The Character Counts! 6 Pillars 6K/3K Run/Walk will be held on Saturday, Feb. 3, 2018, at 9 a.m. The run/walk will begin and end at Palencia Elementary School located at 355 Palencia Village Drive. Walkers and runners will enjoy a course running through the neighborhoods of Kensington and Las Calinas and can choose to participate in the 6K (3.73 miles) or 3K (1.86 miles) distance.

Race proceeds will support Character Counts! initiatives throughout the St. Johns County School District. The run/walk is open to all ages, and the top three winners will be awarded in each of the age categories as well as the overall male and female finishers. A cash donation will be awarded to the top three to five schools with the most registrants. All race registrants will receive a tech t-shirt and lots of other goodies from area businesses and organizations. At the finish line, each race participant will receive a commemorative dog tag which is the fourth design in its series.

Registration fees are \$30 prior to Feb. 2 or \$35 on race day for the 6K and \$25 prior to Feb. 2 or \$30 on race day for the 3K. Visit www.racesmith.com/races/CHARACTERCOUNTS.html for registration forms and more information.

North Florida Land Trust announces 2017 Volunteer of the Year

This year, the North Florida Land Trust (NFLT) recognizes two people as its 2017 Volunteer of the Year: Forrest and Nancy Penny. Since becoming volunteers in 2014, the couple has dedicated dozens of hours to numerous NFLT projects and attended many fundraising and community events. In 2015, the couple worked on removing invasive species from Big Talbot Island.

“We are so thankful for

volunteers like Forrest and Nancy,” said Jim McCarthy, president of NFLT. “Without their dedication and enthusiasm for helping our mission to conserve Florida’s lands, we wouldn’t be nearly as successful in our initiatives. It’s always a pleasure to see their smiling faces at every event.”

McCarthy said Forrest and Nancy Penny are always eager to sign up to help, whether it’s an annual fundraiser like the Fish Fry or Salt Marsh Brewgrass Festival or special events like the fundraising event for the



Photo courtesy North Florida Land Trust

Forrest and Nancy Penny are the North Florida Land Trust 2017 Volunteers of the Year.

accomplishments and to award volunteers and supporters for their efforts on behalf of NFLT’s mission. Visit www.northfloridalandtrust.org for more information.

Bartram Trail Newcomers’ and Women’s Club to host Bingo and Bijoux Parisiens

The Bartram Trail Newcomers’ and Women’s Club is ringing in the New Year with Bingo and camaraderie at the Jan. 9, 2018 luncheon. Each Bingo card will cost \$5 and all monies collected will be distributed to the lucky winning members. The fun is scheduled to start at 11 a.m. at the St. Johns Golf and Country Club located at 205 St. Johns Golf Drive in St. Augustine.

Lunch options include a hot entrée of chicken and asparagus crepes with wild rice pilaf or a cold entrée of Cobb Salad. All luncheons include chef’s choice of appetizers, rolls and butter, chef’s choice of dessert as well as coffee or iced tea; a cash bar is also available. Send checks payable to BTNC no later than Jan. 3 in the amount of \$17 to Hilda Gilpin, 621 Pineland Lane, Saint Johns, FL 32259 and indicate your choice of hot or cold entree on your check.

Another event planned for January is a trip to the Bijoux Parisiens exhibit on Friday, Jan. 5, 2018, at 10 a.m. at the Cummer Museum located at 829 Riverside Ave. The \$12 price includes the tour, and access to the other museum and garden exhibits. Bijoux Parisiens illustrates the historic events and influences that shaped French art and helped establish the great Parisian houses including 50 works of jewelry and over 150 drawings, fashion prints, paintings and photography. There will be a 45-minute docent-led tour of the exhibit, followed by lunch at a nearby restaurant.

The Bartram Trail Newcomers’ and Women’s Club meets the second Tuesday of each month from September to May at local restaurants for lunch; contact First Vice President Beth Rosado, at bartramtnc@gmail.com for more information or visit www.facebook.com/BTNC1 to download a membership form.

Spanish-American War Fort. They also volunteer for the quarterly roadside clean-ups on Big Talbot Island and in 2017, the couple committed to join Team Terrapin, a volunteer team dedicated to monitoring diamondback terrapin nesting sites near Big Talbot Island and Sawpit Islands. The two devoted more than 40 hours in the summer to monitor the terrapin nests. The continual monitoring of these turtles throughout the year is crucial to maintaining protection of the species within the region.

“Volunteering with North Florida Land Trust is the perfect way for us to give back to our community,” said Forrest Penny. “We especially love helping preserve the terrapin nests. Just knowing that you are helping preserve a species in your region is such a rewarding feeling.”

Forrest and Nancy Penny will be honored during NFLT’s annual meeting set for Feb. 13, 2018, which will include keynote speaker and former Governor Bob Graham. The event is a chance for NFLT to give the community and supporters a report on their

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ST. JOHNS Business Monthly

MarketInsight



'Tis the Season

Scott Grant
ScottGrant@StJohnsBusinessMonthly.com

The ink was barely dry on the Declaration of Independence when disaster struck our fledgling Republic. British Regulars landed in Long Island and nearly destroyed George Washington and his Continental Army. The plan of battle was designed by General James Grant, the former governor of Florida who once owned and operated an indigo plantation in Ponte Vedra near Guana. Grant's plan was flawless and sent the Americans reeling back to Manhattan. Washington barely escaped. American soldiers seeking to surrender were slaughtered by Hessian troops. Later Washington would escape to New Jersey where Cornwallis would chase him all the way across the state into Pennsylvania. George Washington and our new Republic were humiliated. Many expected that neither would survive that first long, cold winter.

What we now call the United States needed a miracle. Washington had with him some young lads from Cape Cod commanded by Colonel Glover. They called themselves "Glover's Amphibians" and had already worked miracles. It was Glover's men that ferried Washington and his army from Long Island to Manhattan, from Manhattan to New Jersey, and from New Jersey to Pennsylvania. Washington needed him again. The father of our country had an audacious plan. He would have Glover ferry his troops across the Delaware River and attack the Hessians quartered in Trenton on the day after

Christmas. The code word that night was "victory or death." Washington took the British by surprise, driving the Red Coats from New Jersey and saving the Revolution and his career.

There is something about this holiday season leading into the New Year that fills us all with hope for a brighter future. Everything seems possible. All of our dreams can come true. The promise of the New Year beckons us into a lustrous future. It has not always been obvious in the moment, but that future has always been brighter than anyone in the moment ever imagined. Seventy-six years ago this December, the future did not look bright at all. The Japanese had just bombed Pearl Harbor and we were plunged into a war for which we were woefully unprepared. German submarines were already on the way to our shores to sink our ships and kill our sailors. It did not seem like a good time to invest in stocks, but it was.

Today, again, the future seems uncertain. Will there be jobs? Will people be needed? Will we rip our nation, even our world, apart in a sea of acrimony? The answer is no. Our future is as bright today as it ever has been, possibly brighter. Civilization always advances. America always advances. One of the ways to measure that advance is by charting the advance of the stock market. Since that scary Christmas 76 years ago, the stock market has risen inexorably. If you expect that things

'Tis the Season cont. on pg. 15

Look What You Made Us Do: – 5 Lessons in Brand Storytelling from Taylor Swift

By Leah Frye
mail@floridanewline.com

Unless you've been living under a proverbial rock, then you've probably heard about Taylor Swift's new album "Reputation" and her edgy reinvented image to match. Normally, I'm not one to jump on the pop culture bandwagon, but Swift's new rebrand has me applauding her raw creative genius on a whole other level. As a designer, I appreciate the cool typographic elements of her cover art, but what I'm seriously geeking out about is her brand storytelling.

For those not in the know, a brand story is a cohesive narrative that encompasses the facts and feelings created by your brand (or business). Unlike traditional advertising, which is about showing and telling about your brand, a story aims to inspire an emotional reaction. If 37 million views in three days isn't enough evidence regarding Swift's success at telling a great brand story, then maybe these five lessons will be. Here's a list of things I think Swift and her team have mastered when it comes to the art of brand storytelling:

1. Never underestimate the power of your old image: Nods to the old brand in the new brand allow you to gain new audiences without losing your old following. Tay seems to really get this because she hides tons of easter-eggs in her videos. This accomplishes two things: first, she can reference older parts of her image from the "Fearless" country chart-climbing days which

keeps her original fan base intact. Second, more recent fans get to participate by piecing together the millions of other clues in her videos while enjoying the new pop sound.

2. Some things about your brand story just can't change, and that's ok. Have you ever noticed how Swift continues to produce hit after hit, gaining popularity and cult following, but never uses profanity in her music? That's because there are just some things about your image you can't compromise. Taylor Swift built her empire on her wholesome good girl reputation and even now as she explores an edgier sound she doesn't abandon her morals. Perhaps it's because she knows just how important integrity is to the lifespan of a brand.

3. You don't have to answer all of your audience's questions up front: A good story always has an element of mystery. It allows your audience a chance to involve themselves in your narrative. The key is giving them the essential pieces of information first, then letting them put it all together. In the book "Building a Story Brand" by Donald Miller, Miller says that one of the biggest mistakes companies make in portraying their brand is forcing customers to work too hard in understanding what they offer. While this may be true, I think some businesses also over simplify, making an offer seem like it's too good to be true

Taylor Swift cont. on pg. 15

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On the Seventh Day of Jeans ...



Photo courtesy Jeanette Murphy

Julington Creek Elementary School teachers and staff donated boxes of nonperishable food items during a time of need to the local food pantry. They celebrated by sporting their comfy jeans for seven days.

Hugs Across the County collects food for students

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewline.com

Hugs Across the County, a local all-volunteer nonprofit organization, hosted a “No Hungry Holidays” food drive for local kids who depend on free school-based breakfast and lunch programs in order to provide these meals over winter break.

Collections were held at various Publix and Winn Dixie stores



Photo courtesy Holly Ross

Olivia Ross (Creekside High School), Allie Venturi (Nease High School), Mohammad Alam (Nease High School) at the food collection on Nov. 18 at Publix on Flora Branch.

throughout NW St. Johns County, including the Julington Creek area and County Road 210W as well as in Ponte Vedra Beach and Palm Valley. Drop off locations included the Julington Creek Rec Center, Creekside High School, Bartram High School, Ponte Vedra High School, St. Johns County School District main office and Old City Web Services in St. Augustine. Advanced Disposal provided collection bins at many of these locations.

At press time, Hugs Across the County provided 577 “No Hungry Holidays” food bags to the neediest students in

the county. Of the 37 schools in the district, Hugs delivered food bags to 31; one school received food to pack themselves; three of the remaining schools were already supported by

Catholic Charities; and only two schools had no need.

“Hugs Across the County would like to thank our local Publix and Winn Dixie stores, Advanced Disposal, KeHE food distributors, Kenworth of Jacksonville

for delivery, several anonymous business donors, and each of you who donated at one our collection events or sponsored a bag online,” said Holly Ross, secretary of Hugs Across the County.

Hugs Across the County works closely with the St. Johns County School District to confidentially identify children in need of assistance and provide them with necessities such as food, shoes, clothing and new school supplies. Visit stjohnshugs.org or call (904) 580-4847 for more information.

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BTHS Happenings: Bartram Trail Spanish teacher overcomes obstacles of native Cuba

By Delaney Cantrell
mail@floridanewsline.com

Any Bartram Trail student who has had Ofelia Hampton-Thomas for Spanish can say with certainty that she is not only dedicated to educating students about Spanish language and culture, but also in engaging them in Spanish history with many of her profound, personal stories.

Hampton-Thomas was born in Havana, Cuba during the Fidel Castro regime. While living in Cuba, Hampton-Thomas's father tried to escape the horrendous conditions by obtaining a visa. The Cuban government denied the visa until he could pay back his education debt.

"He had a few choice words that angered some of the communist people," said Hampton-Thomas.

He was then put in a labor camp, where he spent the next eight years. While her father was in the camp, life outside was not any better.

"All bank accounts were closed," said Hampton-Thomas. "Then the business owned by my mother's side of the family was taken."

She said all of this was done to encourage her father to pass on any information he had obtained through his job to the Russians. Hampton-Thomas's father worked for a cement factory as an engineer before being taken by the communists. He refused to pass on information, resulting in more time in the labor camp.

"My father was a very knowledgeable man," said Hampton-Thomas.

Hampton-Thomas explained how restricting life was in the 11 years she lived in Cuba. No worship was allowed; it had to be hidden. She remembers her grandmother taking her to church, but it was done very quietly. When she was about nine or 10 years old, the government closed all churches. She explained that the biggest hardship was not being able to grow up in a free society.

Hampton-Thomas's father was finally released because of unknown reasons.

Hampton-Thomas and her parents traveled to Miami through the Freedom Flights in the late 1960s. After her father endured two days of FBI and CIA inspections, the family was given \$125 and three plane tickets to Chicago. Upon arrival, they were kept in a less than desirable housing establishment that was dirty and included communal bathrooms. They were only allowed to stay there for three days. After that, they were on their own.

"I think for the first time, my father was happy to be here, but he was very scared," said Hampton-Thomas.

When she was in high school, the family moved to Miami and lived with a very close family friend. She met her husband, Bill, through a mutual friend.

"What I love about him most is that he is a very Christian man and very family driven," said Hampton-Thomas.

Once she and Bill started their own family, they decided they did not want to raise their children in the craziness of the city; they moved to

St. Johns in 1999 due to its reputation of great schools.

Hampton-Thomas began her career as a psychology teacher in Miami, but then switched to Spanish. She started at Bartram a year after the school's opening and has been teaching multiple Spanish classes ever since.

Today, Hampton-Thomas and her parents all live in Fruit Cove. Her mother is 90 years old and her father is 88, and she sees them often. She has two children, Andrew (age 30) and Christina (age 28), both of whom live locally.

"I love St. Johns County," said Hampton-Thomas, "I think the kids do so well because of the families these children have. It's all about the parenting and it shows through the kids."



Photo by Delaney Cantrell
Bartram Trail High School Spanish teacher, Ofelia Hampton-Thomas

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School Briefs

Principals announced for new schools

Allen Anderson, principal at Palencia Elementary School, has been selected by Superintendent Tim Forson to be the principal of K-8 school "LL" currently being constructed at 1365 Shetland Drive in St. Johns and Jessica Richardson, principal at Ocean Palms Elementary School, has been selected to be the principal of K-8 school "KK" currently being constructed at 2135 Palm Valley Road in Ponte Vedra. Both nominations were presented to the school board at their December meeting.

Anderson has been the principal of Palencia Elementary since the 2013-2014 school year and has more than 20 years of experience within the St. Johns County School District. He has served as principal at Cunningham Creek Elementary, assistant principal at Mill Creek Elementary and Durbin Creek Elementary schools, a curriculum coordinator at Switzerland Point Middle School and a teacher at Cunningham Creek Elementary.

"Allen is an innovative and collaborative leader," said Forson. "I know that his familiarity with the community and ability to build rapport with students and parents will serve him well."



Photos courtesy St. Johns County School District
Allen Anderson

Anderson was recently chosen as the 2017-2018 Principal of the Year for St. Johns County. He holds a bachelor's and master's degree from the University of North Florida and a master's degree from Jacksonville University.

Richardson started her teaching career in St. Johns County 18 years ago and joined Ocean Palms as principal in 2014. Prior to this she served as the assistant principal at Cunningham Creek Elementary. She also taught second, third and fourth grade and served as an instructional literacy coach. She also worked at PVPV/Rawlings Elementary School and Ocean Palms Elementary School, where she held her first position with the district as a third grade teacher.

"Jessica has an innate ability to develop strong and lasting connections with students, staff, families and community members," said Forson. "She is the perfect candidate to provide a smooth transition to the new school."

Richardson was named St. Johns County Assistant Principal of the Year in 2013. She holds a bachelor's degree from the University of North Florida and a master's degree from Grand Canyon University.



Jessica Richardson

Cunningham Creek Elementary schedules January event

Cunningham Creek Elementary will host Family Game Night on Friday, Jan. 19 from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. The event, sponsored by the school's PTO will feature giant Jenga, Bingo, lifesize chess, and many more fun activities. This is a free event for all Cunningham Creek Elementary families.

Nease Navy JROTC dominates at Mandarin Drill Meet

Nease Navy JROTC's varsity drill team dominated in Personnel Inspection, Academics and Athletics to take home the championship at the Mandarin High School NJROTC sanctioned drill meet on Nov. 18 — beating out 11 other NJROTC units from northern Florida and Georgia. With the victory, Nease has secured its slot in the Area



Photo courtesy Scott LaRochelle
Nease NJROTC's Armed Basic team competes at the Mandarin Drill Meet on Nov. 18.

12 Drill Championships to be held in Douglas, Ga., on March 3, 2018 where they will attempt to defend their title as three-time defending Area-12 Drill Champions.

In addition to claiming the overall trophy, Nease picked up first place trophies

for Personnel Inspection, Academics, Overall Athletics, Armed Basic Drill, Push Ups, and Sit Ups. The team also placed second in the 16 x100 Relay and third in Overall Drill, Armed Basic Drill and the 8 x 200 Relay. Several cadets took home individual medals for exceptional performance: Lilly Short, Mac Davis, Erin Sass and Scott Cummings won first place in Female Situps, Male Pushups, Female Pushups and Academics, respectively.

Dreams Come True at SPMS

This December, Switzerland Point Middle School students helped make a dream come true for Madison, a 10-year-old girl who is battling a seizure disorder. Madison and her family were met by a cheering crowd of sixth, seventh and eighth grade students who are involved in the Dreams Come True Club at SPMS. The club donated a check for \$2,000 to help sponsor her dream vacation to A Very Special Disney World Vacation Resort.

Madison's mom shared her story to the group of about 30 students with tears of gratitude for the grand welcome and beautiful decorations, cake, snacks and treats. She shared how the club made their family feel so special with all the signs and decorations.



Photo courtesy Connie Van Winkle
Dreams Come True Club party.

"It was a joyful afternoon for all at SPMS who shared in the party. Club members left the party with more compassion and understanding of why we work to help families like Madison's—a great lesson for all our kids to learn at SPMS," said Cheri Burnett, SPMS teacher and Dreams Come True Club sponsor.

The charitable endeavors of club members continues as SPMS students work to sell "Dream Grams" on campus and sponsor the school's annual Talent Show, all to raise money to help fund dreams like Madison's.

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Former St. Johns County student / current NFL player encourages local seventh grader with cancer

By Martie Thompson
 editor@floridanewslines.com

Fruit Cove Middle School math teacher Debbie Dill is the common denominator in a heart-warming story involving two of her former students, whose lives otherwise would probably not have intersected.

Most recently, she taught Jacob Shedlin sixth grade math last year. Shedlin, a member of the FCMS football team, was diagnosed in early September with Medulloblastoma, a form of brain cancer, after suffering severe headaches. According to his mother, Jennifer Shedlin, Jacob underwent a 14-hour surgery which removed the tumor in its entirety, but as part of aggressive treatment, he also had six weeks of radiation therapy which was just completed on Nov. 11. Still to come are chemotherapy treatments, which the family hopes will be finished by next fall.

Jacob Shedlin, described as a very good student by Dill, is taking advantage of the school district's home-bound studies program, where a teacher comes to his home four hours per week.



Jacob Shedlin

His mother said he is concentrating on his core studies and recent report cards have evidenced his hard work as he endeavors to stay up to date with his education.

"He's a tenacious guy," Jennifer Shedlin said. "He struggles sometimes with double vision and some balance issues, but he has a great attitude."

Jacob Shedlin has been cheered by visits and messages of encouragement from his friends and neighbors, who, according to Jennifer Shedlin, have surrounded their



Nathan Peterman's heartfelt note of encouragement

family with love. The FCMS football team even dedicated this season to Jacob, who, as an all around athlete, is a fan of football in general and the Buffalo Bills in particular.

That's where the second former student of Dill's comes in: Nathan Peterman, former Fruit Cove Middle School student

and Bartram Trail High School star quarterback — who now plays in the NFL for the Buffalo Bills. Dill contacted Peterman and told him about Shedlin's health challenge. She asked if the Bills organization could do anything to cheer up the young patient.

"I wasn't sure what the outcome would be, since I'm sure Nathan's very busy," Dill said. She didn't tell the Shedlins about reaching out to Peterman.

It was a surprise to everyone when a package containing a heartfelt note from Peterman as well as autographed Bills' cleats, receiver gloves, and other team paraphernalia arrived at the Shedlin home ... on the day that Jacob Shedlin completed his radiation therapy.

"It was a wonderful gift on a great day," said Jennifer Shedlin. "Jacob has all the memorabilia displayed proudly in his room."

Jennifer Shedlin said that she is so moved that Dill would take the time to think of her family at this time.

"She's amazing," Jennifer Shedlin said. "Mrs. Dill is so wonderful to reach out like this to our family. We can't thank her enough."



Photos courtesy Jennifer Shedlin
 Buffalo Bills swag, courtesy of Nathan Peterman

Jacob Shedlin's journey with his cancer diagnosis continues. According to his mother he has learned of two other young students in the NW St. Johns County area who have been diagnosed with brain cancer recently and he has taken a special interest in them — following their progress and encouraging them. He also had the honor of being named one of The Wolfson 55, as a patient who has made an impact at Wolfson Children's Hospital this year and will serve as a sort of ambassador for the hospital.

The Shedlins are very appreciative of the outpouring of love and support from Dill, Peterman and the entire community. You can keep up to date with Jacob Shedlin by visiting www.teamshedlin.com or follow his Facebook page, "Team Shedlin, Fighting Cancer with Hope, Faith and Courage."

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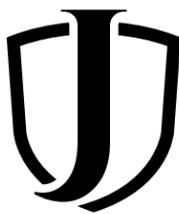
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'Tis the Season cont. from pg. 9

will suddenly change, that civilization will suddenly collapse — you're wrong. Everyone who ever made that bet, lost. I give a popular speech about a submarine attack 75 years ago off of Jacksonville Beach. The speech always ends with the same words: "Never bet against the

United States of America and never bet against the stock market."

Scott A. Grant is President of Standfast Asset Management in Ponte Vedra Beach. He welcomes your comments or questions at scottg@standfastic.com.

Taylor Swift cont. from pg. 9

or just an outright scam. This is because they skip to the end of the story without taking the time to develop the narrative or its characters. Simplification is great, but nobody likes a spoiler! That's why it's imperative to take the time to write a great story instead of just a great ending.

4. A little bad blood never killed anyone: Swift knows drama. Yet she has somehow taken years of media scrutiny and celeb feuds and made them into one crucial villainous element of her brand story — the smartest way of handling any bad reputation I've ever seen (In case you missed it, that's been the theme of her album and recent video releases). With the media as the villain, she's now the hero of her own story. She's taken the old saying "there's no such thing as bad PR" and made it an actual reality.

5. Put on a big show, but make the message simple and meaningful: We've been trained, whether we realize it or

not, to search for the moral of a story no matter what it is. We like things we can clearly summarize and define, true, but we also enjoy things with deeper meaning. For this album, Taylor Swift is obviously telling the media and haters that she's fed up with their scrutiny. But what makes us feel connected to this image of speaking out? Simple. It's our human ability to relate to struggle and the shared desire to overcome and accept. Miller in his book lists one successful ending for a brand story as the fulfillment of potential. He states, "Whether it's by fulfilling a purpose or accepting themselves as they are, this return to contentment resolves something in a story that is universally human: the desire for self acceptance."

Leah Frye is a Designer at Design Extensions.

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Local preschools raise funds for Weaver Legacy Endowment



Photo courtesy The Academy at Julington Creek

On Oct. 6, The Academy at Julington Creek hosted its seventh annual Fall Festival to benefit the Weaver Legacy Endowment, established by the Weaver family to support behavioral health programs at Wolfson Children's Hospital and Baptist Health for young adults. Their goal for the endowment is to do more than treat those with behavioral health conditions, but to also help patients who are receiving treatment while making the community aware of the need for behavioral health programs.

This year The Academy at Julington Creek partnered with sister school Deerwood Academy and with the help of local businesses, vendors, and Academy families and staff, presented a donation of \$2,700. Pictured are Lucinda Chapin, owner; Carolina Jaramillo, Deerwood Academy assistant director; Sheri Jenkins, Academy business development director; Alexandra Osborne, development coordinator for Wolfson Children's Hospital; Asia Mincey, Academy administrative assistant; and Kristina Rad, Deerwood Academy director.

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HEALTH & WELLNESS

Nutrition Check: Starting the Year off SMART

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

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

People tend to set goals that are unfeasible in hopes that a wave of motivation will arise with the New Year. Although this is a great concept and shows that individuals want to better themselves, it often leads to disappoint-

ment when the high expectations are not met.

SMART goals are an effective goal setting strategy that helps set Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic goals in a Timely manner. For example, a basic goal would be “In 2018, I want to be healthier.”

This goal is hard to reach because it doesn't define what “being healthier” means to you. Vague goals can become overwhelming and often result in a sense of failure.

A SMART goal style could be either “In January, I want to consume at least two vegetables each day” or “In 2018, I plan to limit going out to eat to less than twice per week for the next three months.” Set-

ting more specific goals sets a more realistic foundation to complete them.

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

Lastly, reward yourself! The path to reaching your goals doesn't have to be a miserable one. When you have hit milestones, or are simply feeling accomplished, it's okay to schedule some “you

time” or treat yourself to something you've been wanting. This can keep you motivated to set and complete more goals.

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

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



Photo By MetroCreative

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

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How to overcome workout fatigue

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

Regular exercise provides a host of immediate and long-term benefits. Those who exercise regularly can maintain healthy weights while reducing their risk for illnesses such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

While exercise can make people more energetic throughout the day, some might find themselves battling fatigue during their workouts. Muscle fatigue is a normal side effect of exercise, but people who are experiencing difficulty getting through their workouts due to fatigue may benefit from the following strategies.

• Eat a balanced diet. The Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS) in New York City advises that a well-balanced diet that includes complex proteins, fruits, vegetables, and carbohydrates can help men and women combat workout fatigue. People who are working out in an effort to lose weight may think that combining exercise with a diet low in carbohydrates can help them achieve their goal more quickly; however, the HSS advises people dealing with workout fatigue to increase the amount of carbohydrates they eat. Doing so will help muscles maintain their glycogen levels, which are depleted during exercise. According to the HSS, carbs should account for between 40 and 60 percent of aerobic athletes' caloric intake, and between 30 and 35 percent for anaerobic athletes.

• Eat before and after a workout. Early risers who like to exercise first thing in the morning might develop muscle fatigue if they workout on empty

stomachs. The HSS recommends eating a light meal or snack roughly two hours before exercising, and then eating again within one hour of finishing a workout. Doing so provides some energy during a workout and helps muscles broken down during exercise refuel and repair.

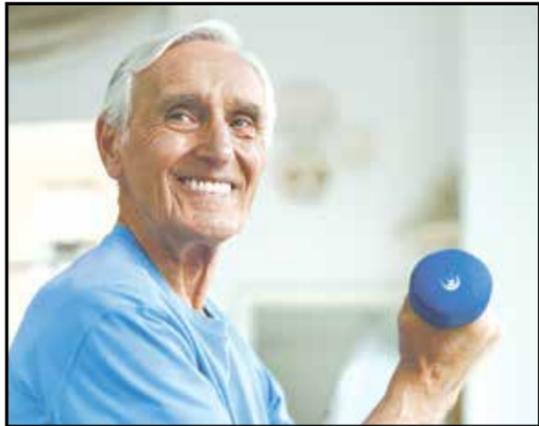


Photo courtesy Metrocreative
Use proper form when exercising to combat workout fatigue.

• Stay hydrated. Hydrating during a workout helps replace the water and nutrients that are lost through sweat. Muscles that are not hydrated during a workout and throughout the rest of the day are susceptible to fatigue.

• Use proper form when exercising. Improper form can lead to injury and/or muscle fatigue. Men and women who cannot adhere to proper form when working out may need to reduce the amount of weight they're lifting. As activities are performed using proper form, people may find they're building muscle without growing fatigued. As workouts progress, weight can be added.

• Give the body time to recover. Whether it's more time between sets of repetitions or an extra day off between workouts, a fatigued body might just need more time to rest and recover.

Aging men and women must recognize that they might not be capable of pushing themselves as hard as they once did and should adjust their workouts accordingly.

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Get to Know . . .

Nicole Crouch

By Angela Higginbotham
angela@floridanewsline.com



Photo courtesy Nicole Crouch
Nicole Crouch with Kekoa

A native Floridian, Nicole Crouch grew up in South Florida and studied education at the University of Florida. While in Gainesville, Crouch met her husband of 26 years, Alan, currently an instructor at Ribault High School and a former member of the United States Marine Corps. Serving in the Marine Corps led to 20 years of traveling for the couple and their two children. Crouch spent her career mostly working with private companies and she retired to Durbin Crossing in St. Johns County.

Passionate about helping students reach their highest potential, in 2013, Crouch and her husband opened a successful tutoring franchise in St. Johns, Mathnasium. Feeling called to help the community through exceptional math help for students is work that Crouch is proud to do. Also passionate about reaching her own highest potential, Crouch has followed a significant weight loss journey over the past 15 months. She encourages others to consider a lifestyle that will encourage good health, both physically and mentally.

1. What do you enjoy most about living in St. Johns County?

I love the community. Our business is here and we are proud of that. I enjoy the weather and the people. It's just a great place to live.

2. How did your weight loss journey begin and what was the process of your success?

Like most women, I was just busy and focused on raising my children. I felt that I had lost myself somewhere along the way. I was approaching 50 years old and feeling broken. I say I wanted to be fit before 50. We were empty nesters and I was tired and out of shape. I met Joey at Sculptafit and loved what they had to offer women. I started in September of 2016 and I've lost 100 lbs. in a controlled, safe, natural way and by eating well. The program tailors to anyone's needs and fitness level. My mind and body feel in alignment again and I have so much more energy to do my work at Mathnasium and whatever else I want to do.

3. What advice would you offer someone who is struggling with a health or weight issue?

My advice would be to just take the first step of acknowledging the need to make a change and then change one thing in your routine or eating habits. Make a commitment to that one change and then a lot of other things will fall into place.

4. What do you consider your greatest accomplishment?

Raising well rounded and successful children. Our daughter is a student at the University of Florida and our son is in the Marine Corps. Raising them well has always been my main goal and my life's focus. Helping them become well adjusted, good citizens is my greatest accomplishment. I am very proud of them.

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

Spending time with my husband. We enjoy our church. We often travel on the weekends. We like going to Disney and also visiting our daughter at school. We try to stay active and we spend time at the gym and take walks.

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The CreekLine cont. from pg. 1

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Many advertisers, like Doug Nunnery of The UPS Store, Terri Kinder of Affordable Water, Dr. Richard Oglesby of Greenbriar Animal Hospital and Dr. Tom Lahmann of Julington Creek Chiropractic, have supported The CreekLine since its inception. They do so because they see return on their advertising investment since readers see their ads and patronize their businesses. Supporting local business is widely believed to be the best way to keep a healthy and vibrant local economy.

"I have been advertising in The CreekLine since its humble beginnings as a small community newspaper. As in my own business, the team at The CreekLine endeavors to build relationships and take care of people. I have always felt our two organizations are very much alike: small business oriented, community-minded, local," said Nunnery. "I can't begin to count the number of times I've had a customer come into our store and say they saw our ad or read my contributed article in The CreekLine. That tells me something. Honestly, I would feel I was somehow missing out or had lost my connection with my community if I failed to run an ad in The CreekLine."

Going forward, everyone at The CreekLine remains committed to continuing the core mission by publishing interesting articles about people and events in the community. While The CreekLine was the first in the Florida NewsLine family of newspapers, it is not the last — sister publications Mandarin NewsLine, Southside NewsLine and Ponte Vedra NewsLine round out the company's monthly repertoire, offering advertisers the opportunity to reach most of southern Duval County and all of northern St. Johns County.

We appreciate everyone who has sent in articles and photos for publication as well as those who have alerted us to newsworthy events over the years. We are grateful for advertisers who have supported our mission, while we support theirs. And we are thankful to all our readers, for whom we publish the paper each month. We look forward to the next 18 years!

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The undefeated U13 Florida Elite 2 girls won the North Florida Fall Premier Soccer Division with a total of 26 points.

“These girls play for each other and it shows on the field,” said team coach Mike Holzemer.

The U13 girls only had three goals scored against them all season due the dynamic play of the defense and team goalie, Caitlyn “Cat” Rea. The team scored 25 points throughout the season.

“We are going to enjoy our Division Championship and use the time to train for the upcoming spring season,” Holzemer said.



Photo courtesy Mya Surrency

Troop 280 welcomes visiting Webelos

By Kenny King
mail@floridanewsline.com

This month, Troop 280 had many events for the scouts and visiting cubs, including a Webelo campfire, where Cub Scouts from the area were invited to join the troop for a campfire night. All the scouts gathered around the campfire for traditional scout songs, skits, and laughter and the cub scouts had the chance to meet with some of the older scouts and learn about all the fun they can look forward to as Boy Scouts.



Scouts from Troop 280 visited the Memorial Hospital ER as part of their Medicine Merit Badge.

We also went to Sebastian Inlet State Park for the November camping trip. There, we had the opportunity to fish in the inlet. Scouts worked on the fishing merit badge and almost everyone caught fish. They also learned about geocaching and participated in two hikes in search of the caches, which is like a world-wide game of hide and seek. Around the world, there are hidden boxes called caches that people have to find. The

cache is marked on a GPS or map, along with info about the size and helpful hints for finding them. The cache can be hidden anywhere in plain sight. Everyone learned map and compass skills.

The troop is also working on the Medicine Merit Badge. This is a very interesting experience as scouts learn about the history of medicine, influential scientists and inventors such as Hippocrates whose ground-work is still being applied today. The troop toured the Memorial Hospital ER in Julington Creek and learned about emergency procedures, diagnostic testing, and many of the careers paths relating to medicine.

Troop 280 meets on Monday nights at River of Life United Methodist Church on Race Track Road. Visit www.julingtoncreekscouts.com for more information.



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Shaffer selected for 2017 Power Showcase World Classic

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewline.com

Christ's Church Academy first baseman Benjamin Shaffer has been named to the 12th annual Power Showcase All-World Team. Each player is personally selected by the Power Showcase based on his abilities, power, scout references, and high school and showcase tournament performances.

Shaffer will represent Florida during the prestigious Home Run Derby that will feature top amateur power hitting prospects from around the world and the during the All-World Classic Game. The game highlights the five-day, all-encompassing educational experience known as the World Power Showcase, which will be staffed by some of the very best coaches. The event will



Photo courtesy Bob Shaffer
Christ's Church Academy first baseman Benjamin Shaffer

be held at Marlins Park in Miami, Dec. 27 – 31 and includes a MLB Scout Day in front of all 30 organizations, a welcome dinner/ jersey presentation ceremony, the home run derby itself, two mental strength sessions and involvement in the Power Showcase's philanthropic arm, the Home Runs that Help.

Shaffer plays for the Christ's Church Academy Eagles, coached by Kurt Dugan, and the

Braves Scout Team Florida, coached by Brian Dalton.

Visit www.powershowcase.com for more information.

Bartram Bears come up short in title game against Venice



Photos courtesy Melissa Muley
Captains for the game: Joey Gatewood, Parker Devine, John Amell, and Riley Smith



Bears' defense stops Venice's quarterback (12) Bryce Carpenter.

Devin Ellison stopped short of the goal line in the Bears' 37-24 loss to Venice in the Class 7A title game, Dec. 9 at Camping World Stadium in Orlando.

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Faith News

Jan. 9: In His Image Ministry presents Planting Hope, a faith-based support group for families with special needs children, from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. at Fruit Cove Baptist Church, ROC Room 202. This group meets the first Tuesday of every month. Contact Barbara Campbell at barbara.inhisimage@gmail.com for more information regarding this ministry or to register.

Jan. 10: Fruit Cove Baptist Church will host Prevail, a care and support group for single mothers, from 6:15 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. in the ROC building at Fruit Cove Baptist Church, Room 301. Moms will participate in a Bible study and enjoy fellowship with childcare provided. For more information or to register, contact Linda Warne or Gwen May at (904) 287-0996.

Jan 17: The Military Wives Support Group will meet from 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. at Fruit Cove Baptist Church, ROC Room 201. Attendees will meet other wives going through or who have gone through the same struggles. There will be a morn-

ing devotional, sharing in fellowship time, some refreshments, and discussions. Childcare available by reservation. For more information or to register, contact Debra Stoutamyer at (904) 687-8374.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints hosted the sixth annual community-wide event celebrating “Jesus Christ: The Reason for the Season” on Dec. 1 – 2. The event featured live Christmas music and a live nativity, as well as hundreds of nativity displays from around the world. In addition to crèches, the hall was decorated with ornaments and artwork depicting the birth, life and ministry of Jesus Christ.



Photo courtesy Darice Auston
Nativity displays at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.



Photo courtesy Lorie Shvets

United Way board serves Thanksgiving meal to Armstrong residents

On Monday, November 13, United Way of St. Johns County board members came together to serve nearly 200 meals to residents in the Armstrong community. Members of the Board of Directors have committed to serving this Thanksgiving meal in Armstrong for eight years. Melinda Peebles at SEA Community Help Resource Center, First Baptist Church of Armstrong, Chef Gaynor and her culinary students at First Coast Technical College, Mojo Old City BBQ and Bono’s were all responsible for the success of the event. Pictured are Tony Bernados, Kelly Green, Suzanne Brown, Bobby Crum, Lisa Payne, Cynthia Williams, Melissa Nelson

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Fishing

Capt. David's Fishing Report

By Captain David Lifka
mail@floridanewsline.com

The cost of fishing tackle can sometimes be considered to be on the little bit ridiculous side. There are fishing rods and reels that can vary from \$30 to \$300; gear, such as pliers pushing \$80; and tackle boxes that can easily go over \$50. Add some hooks and weights that can easily be more than a dollar apiece, a filet knife that can run up to \$50, a few lures for \$10 to \$15 apiece and you're liable to end up with a treasure chest instead of a tackle box.

Starting with a rod and reel, try purchasing a combo that has already been set up and properly matched. Most big name sporting goods stores will have these on display and ready to try. Often store brand outfits, very similar to the more expensive brands, will be offered at a price of just a third of what the brand name is asking. Also, be on the watch for sales as the more expensive outfits are often featured in ads with savings of 40 – 50 percent.

If you have ever compared a tackle box with a modern day tool box you might surprised to learn there is very little difference between the two, but for some reason, tackle boxes come with a higher price tag. For the average fisherman, a tackle box with a couple trays and a few compartments is all that is needed. By

purchasing a tool box to be used in the same role as a tackle box there could be savings of as much as 50 percent.

Finally, putting tackle in your tackle box is another expense that can add up quickly. Fortunately, there are a few things that can be done to help out with the overall costs. One way is to check online sporting goods stores' clearance specials. Everything you could possibly think of to fill a tackle box

is offered on a regular basis with pretty good savings.

Also, there are online auction sites that offer shopping in quantity and bulk, such as hooks and sinkers for some of the best prices around. Expensive fishing pliers can be replaced by a trip to any hardware store by purchasing nine-inch needle nose pliers and a pair of toenail clippers. Inexpensive filet knives will do almost anything an expensive knife will do, as long as you have a good sharpener to go with it, saving you money again.

Fishing Report: Take advantage of speckled perch (crappie) in area lakes and creeks as we are in peak season. On pretty days, any type of pan fishing just might pan out.

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



Photo courtesy MetroCreative



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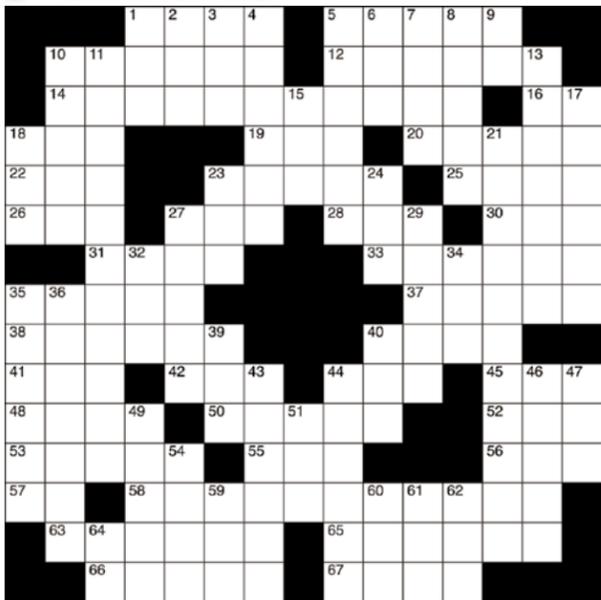
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Puzzles

Answers on page 2
Provided by MetroCreative



CLUES ACROSS

1. Isodor __, American Nobel physicist
5. One a day keeps the doctor away
10. Extents
12. Noticing
14. Scriptural
16. Star Trek character Laren
18. "The Crow" actress __ Ling
19. Not good
20. Measures gold
22. TV network
23. Wasting
25. Money in Ghana
26. Young girls' association
27. Title of respect
28. High schoolers take this test
30. Crunches federal numbers
31. Wild or sweet cherry
33. Celestial bodies
35. Fruit of the oak tree
37. Royal Navy ship during WWII
38. Of cherished symbols
40. Satisfy
41. 5th. day (abbr.)
42. Swiss river
44. Royal Albert Hall (abbr.)
45. Cool!
48. Flat metal shelves
50. Enclosed
52. A way to pass
53. City in Iraq
55. Printing speed measurement
56. Twitch
57. Indicates position
58. Made lawful
63. Took down
65. A way to travel on skis
66. North winds
67. Tunisian metropolis

CLUES DOWN

1. Seafood
2. Incan god of mountains
3. Ritzy LA neighborhood __ Air
4. Line that connect points of equal pressure
5. Audience-only remarks
6. Chest muscle (slang)
7. Pointed top
8. Lavender
9. Linear unit
10. Knives
11. 2016 World Series champs
13. A way to arrange
15. Talk
17. Serving no purpose
18. Container
21. Breathes new life into
23. Beloved dog Rin Tin __
24. A bag-like structure in a plant or animal
27. Yemen capital
29. Sacred book of Judaism
32. Make a mistake
34. Wrestlers wrestle here
35. Respiratory issue
36. In league
39. Resinous insect secretion
40. Unhappy
43. Turbulent area of a river
44. Neglectful
46. Sours
47. Calendar month (abbr.)
49. Grooves
51. Sony Pictures Television
54. Monetary units
59. Command right
60. 1,000 cubic feet
61. Expression of triumph
62. Dinner jacket
64. The first two

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 Y R O G F Y T I S N E T N I C O P E D B
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 D L O H S E R H T J I N D E X C L A M S
 B E L E C T R O L Y T E S O L V C R E I
 P M U S C L E U T I U C R I C T C U S S
 C A R D I O V A S C U L A R I R C D C T
 V L A C T I C A C I D H B V O E O N I A
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 E I O C P N S P A A V S E S S A L C C D
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- B. 3 6 3 23 1 9 7 3
Clue: Physical activity
- C. 17 15 4 24
Clue: Physical structure
- D. 16 3 9 20 14 19
Clue: Mass

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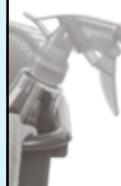
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# Travel

## Visit Panoramic Parks in Utah

By Debi Lander  
mail@floridanewslines.com

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

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

The state of Utah (13th largest by land area) boasts five National Parks and they rank as some of the most spectacular in the country. Last summer, I

traveled out West to visit two of Utah's finest: Arches and Canyonlands.

The town of Moab, Utah makes a good



Photos courtesy Debi Lander  
View from Mesa Arch in Canyonlands

base, with plenty of lodging options and restaurants. It caters to outdoor types especially those into camping, hiking, biking and rafting. One morning, make sure you watch the sunrise as it hits the surrounding red rock can-

yons. They burst forth with fiery blazes. In fact, you almost need sunglasses. It's impossible to ignore the power of Mother Nature.

I started at Arches and followed my usual protocol of watching the introductory film in the Visitor Center. The one in Arches is, hands down, the best intro I've seen in the national parks. After watching, I understood how arches, the rarest of geological formations, develop. Water is the architect and if all conditions are perfect, it seeps into crevasses and weaknesses in the sandstone, expands and contracts with the weather and after centuries, an arch is formed. Ironically, the same forces that form an arch also destroy it.

The arches are delicate and park rangers promote the catch phrase, Don't bust the crust. It's the blackish stuff you see on the ground, known as "biological soil crust," and it is essential in

preventing erosion. This topsoil is so fragile that one step can wipe out years of growth — a very important reason to stay on the marked trails.

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

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

Nearby rests North and South Windows and Turret Arch. These immove-

able sandstone creations somehow emit excitement, a feeling even children grasp.

Next day, I headed toward Dead Horse State Park, on the way to Canyonlands. The overlook offers a majestic viewing point 2,000 feet above the gooseneck bend in the Colorado River. The horizon looms 100 miles away, and I was overwhelmed by the vastness of the rock real estate and inhospitality of the region. Hard to imagine ancient Puebloan people ever lived in these parts.

Further along, I entered the Island in the Sky section of Canyonlands and trekked the trail to Mesa Arch, an arch

spanning 50 feet across the mesa's edge. It frames a castle-like scene. Then, I slowly and carefully sat down at the top of a 500-foot vertical cliff and took in the spellbinding, sweeping panorama. No

words needed. Go early and soak in the sunrise as it illuminates the arch.

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

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

Visit [www.bylandersea.com](http://www.bylandersea.com) to read more of local travel writer Debi Lander's stories and travel tips.



Double Arch



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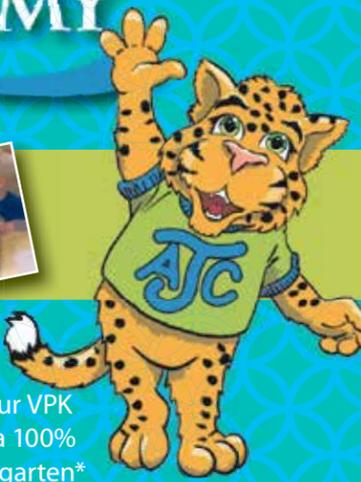


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# Gardening

## Weather and the winter garden

By Lesley Arrandale  
mail@floridanewslines.com

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

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

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

And now to gardening! By the year's end, hopefully, we will be seeing some seasonal weather. Our brassicas — kale, cabbages, collards, broccoli etc. — do well in the colder months, and become sweeter after a frost or two. Refer to the "Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide" for planting dates, recommended varieties, and cultural care: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/vh021>. This is now available as a free mobile app called "Florida Fresh." You can find links to articles about composting, pest control, and other relevant topics.

Not all vegetables should be confined to the vegetable garden. Swiss chard Bright Lights makes a bold statement, with gold, cream, white or red tinged leaves and stems. Plant edible kale, which can be found in various shades of pinks and greens and a variety of leaf forms, rather than ornamental cabbage. If your tastes turn to mustard greens, try the striking Japanese Giant Red mustard. Edible

peas have fairly innocuous white flowers, but they can be grown on an attractive support for a green accent among lower growing plants. Do note, though, that vegetables benefit from regular fertilizer, and a good quality one at that. And don't ever use any chemicals on them or even near them unless they are clearly labeled for use in the vegetable garden.

As autumn slipped into winter, the natural landscape mellowed. Along our roadsides, the brilliant yellow flowers of goldenrods gradually faded, while bushy bluestem grasses (*Andropogon glomeratus*) glowed rusty brown against the lowering sun. You must have noticed pink muhly grass (*Muhlenbergia capillaris*), its billowy seed heads gloriously backlit, in

many of our local parking lots. Out in the countryside, often along the edge of marshland, the lovely native groundsel bush (*Baccharis halimifolia*) has been full of clouds of white flowers which are good nectar sources for various pollinators. The female plants produce fluffy white seed heads, thereby extending the show. In sunny spots, the leaves of the deciduous native Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) turned a deep burgundy red as it shut down for the winter — a beautiful sight. While a bit of a handful to control, this vine produces small black berries in late summer that birds really relish.

Happy New Year and a Healthy 2018 to you all.

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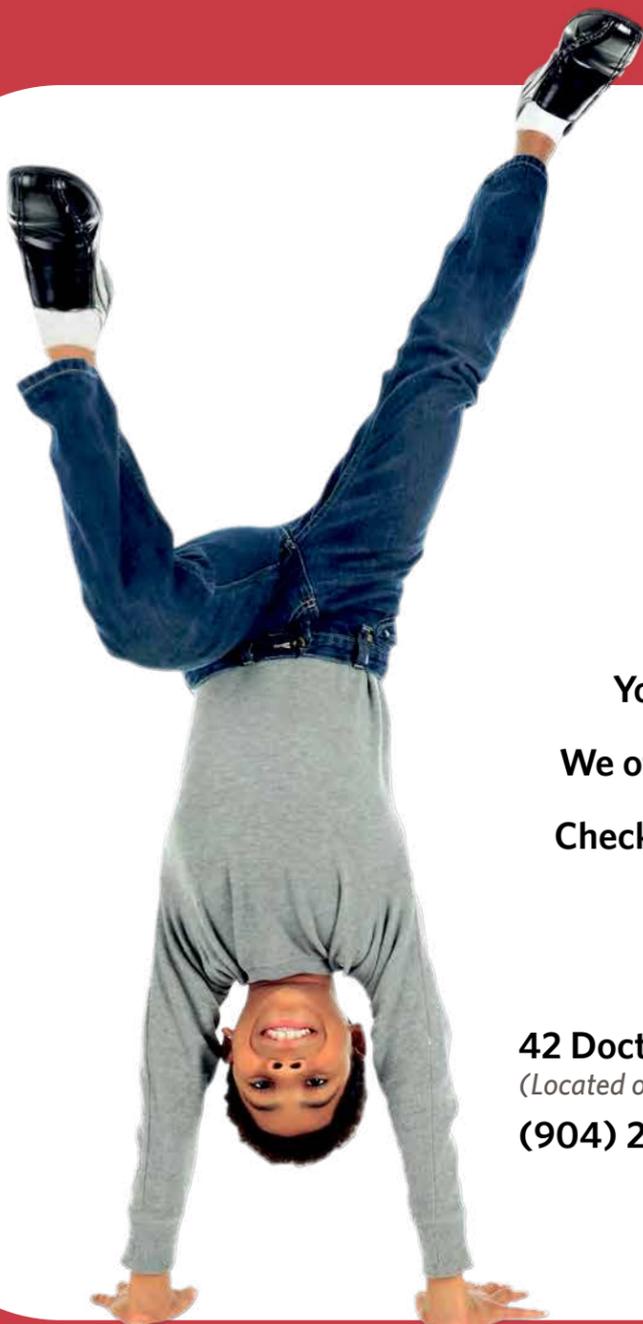
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