



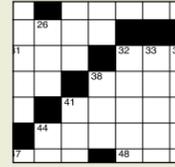
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County School Board  
member  
Beverly Slough



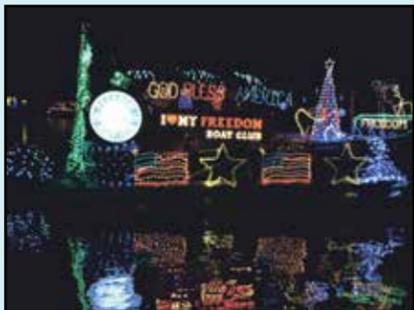
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## Annual Julington Creek Boat Parade spreads holiday cheer

By Angela Higginbotham  
angela@floridanewslines.com



Photos courtesy Julington Creek Prop Club  
Holiday on the Creek is a festive local tradition.

Since 1980, the Julington Creek Prop Club has been presenting the Holiday on the Creek boat parade for everyone to come out and enjoy. This year's event will take place on Dec. 2 beginning at 7 p.m. The highly anticipated night is for all families to gather and enjoy the beauty of color, lights, and sounds of the season along Julington Creek.

The Julington Creek Prop Club invites the community to participate and come out and watch the event. Participants will decorate their boats, homes, and docks to spread the joy and excitement of the holidays.

Dozens of holiday light adorned boats will start at the Julington Creek Marina and travel towards Clark's Fish Camp and under the Julington Creek Bridge, eventually making a loop for spectators to enjoy.

"Typically we have 40 – 50 boats that participate and it's a fun time for the entire family," Prop Club Vice Commodore David Griffin said.

**Boat Parade** cont. on pg. 21

## Team Hayden works to support and educate the community

By Angela Higginbotham  
angela@floridanewslines.com

In 2011, sweet Hayden Chadwell was born at just 35 weeks gestation. Weighing only four pounds, Hayden underwent a surgery for a rare condition called choanal atresia and he received a CAT scan that showed a blood spot on the brain. At that time, doctors were not concerned about the blood spot. A week later after Hayden's surgery, he was given clearance to go home and then complications occurred. The blood spot on the brain had not dissolved as expected and Hayden suffered from a stroke. With only a 1 percent survival rate, Hayden spent 82 days in the neonatal intensive care unit.

Professionals told Hayden's parents, Toni and Scott Chadwell, that Hayden would never eat on his own, breathe on his own, think, or hear.

Today, Hayden is six years old and is enrolled in PedsCare/Hospice of Northeast Florida, a palliative care program for children with life-limiting serious illness/medical fragility. He receives 24-hour care from his parents, family and other caregivers. Receiving occupational, physical, speech, feeding, vision, assistive technology, and music therapy,



Photos courtesy Toni Chadwell  
Hayden Chadwell

Hayden is a happy little boy



Photo courtesy Roberto Gonzalez  
The Chadwell family

who brings love and light to everyone that has the opportunity to be around him.

Hayden's mother, Toni Chadwell, a former theatre management professional, is passionate about spreading love and support for others following the same journey as she and her family.

"It's very hard to know that Hayden wasn't born this way, but one thing that I've learned most is that everyone has a story — so just be kind," Chadwell said. "We love our community and just want to help educate and empower others. We wouldn't want to be anywhere else."

Hayden shows love for his family and friends, especially his eight-year-old brother Evan and his fur babies. He is responsive with smiles; he loves music, going to the pool, feeling the wind on his face, and being close to nature. Hayden and his family live in Julington Lakes and he attends Cunningham Creek Elementary school three days a week.

The Team Hayden organization was created not only to show the amazing joys and triumphs of Hayden, but valuable effort is put into educating and advocating for other families in a similar situation.

"We have a huge community of special needs kids — 8,500 within our corridor. We hope to help the community understand that it's okay to be different," Chadwell said. "Through Team Hayden, we've been able to create support for other families and build a bridge with therapists and doctors to provide services for these kids, not only in our community but throughout the United States."

In addition to involvement with many other organizations and events, Team Hayden is heavily active with Field of Dreams of St. Johns County, an organization of 150 kids who come together to enjoy America's favorite pastime — baseball. A fundraiser is currently being held to build an all accessible playground at the Field of Dreams. A \$600,000 goal is being raised through craft funding and private donations. Hayden will also be a model in the upcoming Wolfson Children's Hospital Antique Art and Fashion show.

Visit [www.facebook.com/TeamHayden/](http://www.facebook.com/TeamHayden/) for more information on Team Hayden or to offer support.

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## Be a part of our Christmas Season...

Sunday, Dec. 10 | Christmas Music Celebration 7:00pm

Sunday, Dec. 24: 9:00am | 4th Sunday of Advent Message

Christmas Eve Services: 10:30am | Family & Children Celebration of Christmas

7:00pm | Candlelight Christmas Message, music by the Worship Team

9:00pm | Candlelight & Communion Christmas Message, music by the Sanctuary Choir

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# take 5

## Host families needed for exchange student program

EF's Educational Homestay Program needs community volunteers to host international high school students during their summer language program. Host families share their home, culture and American way of life with visiting students, aged 14 – 18, from June 29 through July 21, 2018. EF staff will keep students busy during the weekdays; host families enjoy their company evenings and weekends. There are weekday bus stops throughout the area. Contact Ginger Manning, Recruiter and Program Leader, at (904) 446-5646 or efgingwa19@gmail.com for more information and to schedule an application and home visit.

## Writers' group to meet

On Saturday, Dec. 16 beginning at 10 a.m., the Ancient City Chapter of the Florida Writers Association will hold its annual Christmas meeting and party at the Main Library in St. Augustine. Panelists from the audience who have signed up will have five minutes each to address their individual journeys in writing and publishing. Then the audience will have about five minutes to ask questions of each panelist. There will also be a raffle of a holiday basket and holiday refreshments. Attendees may display their marketing materials, but

no books will be sold. The meeting is free and open to the general public. Email fwastaug@gmail.com for more information.

## Bartram Trail Newcomers' and Women's Club to host holiday luncheon

The Bartram Trail Newcomers' and Women's Club welcomes the Outta Sight Band and N'Vision Chorus from the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind to perform at its holiday luncheon, Dec. 12 at 11 a.m. at the Epping Forest Yacht Club. Choices for lunch include roasted turkey breast, peppercorn crusted pork loin, or a balsamic portabella mushroom vegetarian option. All luncheons will include a pumpkin bisque soup appetizer, cheesecake with berry compote as well as coffee or iced tea and a cash bar. Send checks payable to BTNC in the amount of \$29 no later than Dec. 5 to Hilda Gilpin, 621 Pineland Lane, Saint Johns, FL 32259 and indicate entree choice. Visit [www.facebook.com/BTNC1](http://www.facebook.com/BTNC1) or contact Beth Rosado at [bartramtnc@gmail.com](mailto:bartramtnc@gmail.com) for more information.

## St. Johns Audubon to host wading bird habitat cleanup

On Dec. 6, volunteers are needed to assist the St. Johns Audubon Society and Captain Adam Morley to clean up the wading bird habitats and feed-

ing grounds along the Intracoastal Waterway on the "Litter Gitter." The boat leaves Douglas C. Crane Park on Shore Drive in St. Augustine at 8:30 a.m.; volunteers, who must RSVP due to limited space, need to be at the dock by 8:15 a.m. Trash bags and grabbers are provided; volunteers should bring their own work gloves, bug spray, sunscreen, and (reusable) water bottle. RSVP to Marcy Brenner at (401) 441-9263 or [marcyjrbrenner@me.com](mailto:marcyjrbrenner@me.com).

## HAWKE to celebrate 30th anniversary with open house

HAWKE (Humane Association of Wildlife Care and Education) will hold a fall open house to celebrate its 30th anniversary on

Sunday, Dec. 3 from 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. Although the event is limited to current members of HAWKE, those who are not

yet members can join online at [www.hawkewildlife.org](http://www.hawkewildlife.org) with their credit card (\$25 per year for an individual membership) and bring their receipt to the open house. HAWKE celebrities Athena the barred owl, Tewa the screech owl, and Dances with Clouds the swallow-tailed kite will make appearances. Founders Sam and Melanie Stage will host the event and HAWKE

volunteers will be on hand to answer questions about rehabilitation efforts as well as the experience of volunteering for the association. A bird of prey that was rehabilitated will be released at 2:30 p.m. Snacks and drinks will be served. Visit [www.hawkewildlife.org](http://www.hawkewildlife.org) for more information.

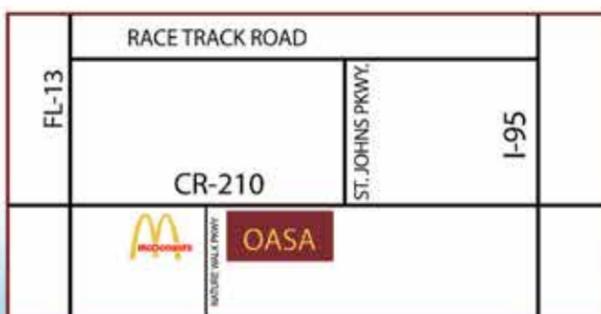


Photo courtesy HAWKE

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# around town

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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24/31	25	26	27	28	29	30

**Through Jan. 31, 2018 St. Augustine Nights of Lights Nightly**  
[www.visitstaugustine.com/event/nights-lights](http://www.visitstaugustine.com/event/nights-lights)

**Jan. 4, 2018 Bettye LaVette at the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall**  
[www.pvconcerthall.com/e9710-bettye-lavette.aspx](http://www.pvconcerthall.com/e9710-bettye-lavette.aspx)

**Jan. 6, 2018 Bird Walk: Owl Prowl at St. Joe Walkway**  
 5 p.m.  
[www.facebook.com/FlaglerAudubon/](http://www.facebook.com/FlaglerAudubon/)

**Jan. 19, 2018 United Way of St. Johns County Givers Gala Casa Monica Resort and Spa**  
[bit.ly/giversgala](http://bit.ly/giversgala) or (904) 829-9721

**Jan. 24, 2018 Let's Go Science**  
 10:30 a.m.  
 Thrasher-Horne Center, Orange Park  
[https://thcenter.secure.force.com/ticket#details\\_a0S2A00000Yc00vUAB](https://thcenter.secure.force.com/ticket#details_a0S2A00000Yc00vUAB)

**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](http://action.lung.org/site/TR/Climb/ALASE_Southeast?pg=entry&fr_id=16325)

**Feb. 10, 2018 Florida STEM and Health Expo**  
 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
 River City Science Academy  
<http://www.flstemexpo.com>

save the date!

**1st**  
**Rotary Club of Bartram Trail**  
 Rotary Club of St. Johns meeting  
 7:30 a.m. (repeating event on Fridays)  
 St. Johns Golf and Country Club Clubhouse  
[www.rotarystjohns.org](http://www.rotarystjohns.org)

**1st - 3rd**  
**41st annual Art and Antiques Show: "London Calling"**  
 Hosted by the Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital  
 Prime F. Osborn III Convention Center  
[www.artandantiquesshow.com](http://www.artandantiquesshow.com)

**2nd**  
**Free Tools to Quit Smoking Class**  
 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.  
 Baptist Medical Center South  
 Call Florida AHEC to register (904) 482-0189  
**Children's Way 5k & Family Day benefiting Ronald McDonald House**  
 3 p.m. 5k; 4 p.m. fun run  
 Ronald McDonald House in San Marco  
<https://rmhcjacksonville.org>

**4th**  
**Current Events Discussion Group**  
 10 a.m. (repeating event on Mondays)  
 Donovan's Irish Pub, US Highway 1  
[adsilby@yahoo.com](mailto:adsilby@yahoo.com)

**5th**  
**Happy Hookers crochet group**  
 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
 Bartram Trail Branch Library  
 (904) 827-6960

**6th**  
**First Coast Card Club - adult card players**  
 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.  
 St. Augustine Library, 1960 Ponce de Leon Blvd.  
 (904) 829-0643

**December Art Walk**  
 5 p.m. - 9 p.m.  
 Downtown Jacksonville  
<http://jacksonvilleartwalk.com>

**7th**  
**FSCJ Symphonic Band Pops Concert**  
 7:30 p.m.  
 FSCJ's Wilson Center for the Arts  
<http://bit.ly/2woXPLv>  
**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](mailto:lancedmalcolm@gmail.com)  
**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  
**U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 14-7**  
 7:30 p.m.  
 St. Augustine Yacht Club near the St. Augustine Lighthouse  
 (904) 460-0243

**7th - 10th**  
**Jacksonville Symphony's Holiday Pops**  
 7:30 p.m. Thursday; 8 p.m. Friday; 3 p.m./8 p.m. Saturday; 3 p.m. Sunday  
 Jacoby Hall  
[www.jaxsymphony.org](http://www.jaxsymphony.org)

**9th**  
**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/](http://www.dosafl.com/outreach/catholic-writers-guild/) or [writerrod@comcast.net](mailto:writerrod@comcast.net)

**12th**  
**Newcomers of North St. Johns luncheon**  
 11 a.m.  
 Maggiano's Little Italy, St. Johns Town Center  
 RSVP by Dec. 5, [sjaird@comcast.net](mailto:sjaird@comcast.net)

**16th**  
**Fruit Cove Cruise In sponsored by Sunshine State Chevelles**  
 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
 PDQ parking lot, 194 State Road 13  
 Repeating event on third Saturday of each month (904) 827-6960

**18th**  
**4-H Science Club**  
 5 p.m. - 5:45 p.m.  
 Bartram Trail Branch Library  
 (904) 827-6960  
**All Star Quilt Guild**  
 9:45 a.m.  
 First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd.  
[www.orgsites.com/fl/allstartquiltguild](http://www.orgsites.com/fl/allstartquiltguild) or (904) 502-5254

**19th**  
**St. Johns CARES meeting**  
 7 p.m.  
 Bartram Academy, 164 Everest Lane, Ste. 1  
[www.stjohnscares.org](http://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](http://Worldgolfvillage.toastmastersclubs.org)  
**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

**28th**  
**St. Augustine/Jacksonville Newcomers Club Trivia evening/dinner**  
 6 p.m.  
 Contact Lea for name of restaurant and to be added to attendee list  
 (904) 829-0643 or (904) 814-9612

**Through 31st**  
**Jax Illuminations drive through holiday lights**  
 6 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.  
 Morocco Shrine Center, 3800 St. Johns Bluff Road S.  
[www.jaxilluminations.com](http://www.jaxilluminations.com)

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

**Q: Today is Nov. 7 and here we are still talking about reimbursement for hurricane damage to county infrastructure. Do you have any updates?**

A: This month we have received a lot more focus from all levels, including state and federal, on getting things moving. We still don't have \$1, but all agencies are pledging to work with improved communications, especially at the local level. Things are moving along professionally, but until we start receiving funding, I'm not going to stop asking questions.

**Q: There has been some information in the press about the amount of money (more than \$1.4 million) being paid by the county to consultants such as the Ardurra Group for assistance in securing reimbursement from the various agencies. What is your opinion on this?**

A: It is a lot of money and we have to try to determine the proper amount to pay and how much the expertise these consultants can offer is worth. They have been working for 11 – 12 months and yet St. Johns County has still not received any hurricane funding reimbursements. I have asked the question about when we can expect to see results for the money we are spending. Why do we not have any approved (reimbursement) funds and other counties do? I was disappointed that I did not get a satisfactory answer from the Ardurra Group at the meeting in October.

**Q: So where should the county go from here?**

A: Well, I did not get a sense that a majority of the Board of County Commissioners was willing to make any changes at this time for Hurricane Matthew reimbursement funds, but possibly the board could decide to not hire the same consultants for Hurricane Irma reimbursements. This is a multi-month process and meanwhile, I'm just going to keep asking the tough questions. I am not questioning their services, just wondering if we could get the same result without them. I am looking for people to be accountable for what we hired them to do, including staff and consultants.

**Q: Is debris removal still an issue?**

A: In some places, yes. The first pass for pickup is scheduled to be completed by Nov. 15. Areas that are hard to reach will be addressed with smaller equipment shortly afterwards. It's important for people to realize that although I believe overall, St. Johns County residents seem to be recovering more quickly this year than last (after the hurricanes), we still have uninhabitable homes. Not everyone is back to normal.

**Q: Can you shed any light on a local issue in some Julington Creek Plantation neighborhoods where residents are frustrated that drivers are parking cars up and down the streets of their homes in an effort to avoid the parent pick up lane at the nearby elementary school?**

A: Unfortunately this is nothing new and I realize it is very frustrating for residents — but as long as the drivers are parking legally in the streets, that is, not blocking the road for passage of emergency vehicles, there is really nothing the homeowners association, CDD or St. Johns County can do. I will say, though, that it is just plain disrespectful for people to park in front of someone else's house with wheels on the grass in an effort to get off the road. If drivers are not obeying the speed limit or driving dangerously, then residents can call the SJSO non-emergency number, (904) 824-8304, and ask for a speed enforcement visit. Unfortunately, this has always proven to be a short-term fix — I'd ask that drivers above all be respectful of their community and the laws in place.

**Q: Do you have anything else to share with our readers?**

A: I'd like to sincerely wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. I'm happy to represent our community and my chairmanship is coming to a close. Probably by the time this is read, there will be a new chair and vice chair for the Board of County Commission. It has been my honor and privilege to serve in this capacity.

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

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

## Relay for Life of North St. Johns looks ahead to 2018 event

By NewsLine Staff  
[mail@floridanewsline.com](mailto:mail@floridanewsline.com)

Relay for Life of North St. Johns County held its annual kick-off party at Nease High School on Oct. 12. During this meeting, school teams that raised a minimum of \$5,000 were awarded a Relay for Life Campus sign to post at the school. Connie VanWinkle from Swiss Point Middle School, Brooke Paget and Roisin Crowley from Durbin Creek Elementary School, and Cathy Ragusa from Julington Creek Elementary were presented this award.



Photo courtesy Kim Aslan  
Roisin Crowley, former Durbin Creek Elementary student and first student to form a Relay team at this school; Kim Aslan, Event Lead Team; and Katrina Stanton, kindergarten teacher at Durbin Creek Elementary.

"School participation in our community event is a vital part of this event's success and some schools have staff and/or student teams each year," Kim Aslan of Relay for Life North St. Johns County said. "Our committee applauds all our participants and teams who continue battling cancer. We look forward to another successful year."

The next monthly team meeting will be held on Thursday, Jan. 11, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. at Nease High School. Participant and team registration can be completed at [www.relayforlife.org/nstFL](http://www.relayforlife.org/nstFL).

Relay for Life of North St. Johns County is a community event that is seeking volunteers who are highly motivated and determined to battle cancer by joining our committee. There are volunteer opportunities for high school students allowing them to earn service hours. Lastly local businesses can become involved by becoming a sponsor for the event. Email [rfl.northsaintjohnscounty@gmail.com](mailto:rfl.northsaintjohnscounty@gmail.com) for more information.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Annual  
Holiday Tree Lighting**  
at Westminster Woods on Julington Creek

**SATURDAY  
DECEMBER 2<sup>ND</sup>, 2017**  
Starts at 5:00pm

**2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL  
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# Golf tournament raises more than \$25,000 for Betty Griffin Center

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewslines.com

Doctors and their guests took part in the ninth annual Orthopaedic Associates of St. Augustine Golf Tournament which raised \$25,700 for the Betty Griffin Center.



Photo courtesy Orthopaedic Associates of St. Augustine  
Orthopaedic Associates of St. Augustine doctors present donation check to Joyce Mahr, Betty Griffin Center CEO: Dr. Stark, Dr. Kasraeian, Dr. Haycock, Joyce Mahr, Dr. Grimes, Dr. Hort, Dr. Volk, Dr. Henry and Dr. McClone.

“Our group selects a local nonprofit agency, based in St. Johns County, each year as a beneficiary. We felt designating Betty Griffin Center as our recipient for this year’s event was timely since October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month,” said Orthopaedic Associates of St. Augustine Marketing Director Francine Quesada, who coordinated the tournament.

The tournament, which involved 28 teams of orthopaedic doctors and their guests, took place on Oct. 11 at the St. Johns Golf & Country Club. Betty Griffin Center CEO Joyce Mahr was on hand to accept the check donation at a ceremony held in the clubhouse after the event, which was emceed by Action News Jax Sports Director Brent Martineau.

“We’re grateful for all the teams who took part in this event and to the physicians of Orthopaedic Associates of St. Augustine for selecting Betty Griffin Center as their recipient this year,” Mahr said. “We’re grateful for groups

like Orthopaedic Associates of St. Augustine and others in our community who give each year to help us support those victims of sexual and domestic assault in St. Johns County.”

The Betty Griffin Center was founded in 1990 by concerned citizens and incorporated as the Safety Shelter of St. Johns County to develop plans to provide shelter for local victims of domestic violence and their children. Today, Betty Griffin Center shelters more than 500 victims of domestic and sexual abuse annually, operates a 24-hour crisis helpline, provides professional counseling for victims of domestic and sexual abuse, provides age-appropriate violence prevention training and operates two thrift stores to assist in funding the agency’s ongoing operations. If you or someone you know is being abused, call the Betty Griffin Center 24-hour helpline at (904) 824-1555.



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

### Q: What’s the latest on the rezoning for the new K-8 school?

A: At our school board meeting on Nov. 14, we voted to approve Plan C. Basically, all of RiverTown, Aberdeen and Julington Lakes will go to the new school and no children from Durbin Crossing will go to the new school. We also agreed with Superintendent Forson’s recommendation for the transition years. We originally planned to open both new schools as kindergarten through seventh grade, but now in order to ease the transition on middle schoolers, we are going to open the schools as kindergarten through sixth grade.

### Q: What are the advantages to opening as a K-6?

A: It gives more stability to the seventh and eighth graders by allowing them to stay at their present school. It allows the sixth graders to be the “top dog” in the new school and help set the school’s culture. Also, it gives the school district a heads up on how to staff the school as to electives. It’s important to note that we are not setting a precedent by doing this. It’s just because of all the moving parts that we are trying this for this particular time.

### Q: What are the plans for rising fifth graders?

A: Current fourth graders/rising fifth graders at Patriot Oaks Academy who are zoned to move to Durbin Creek Elementary/Fruit Cove Middle School will have the option to stay at POA for their fifth grade year, bypassing Durbin Creek Elementary and going to Fruit Cove Middle once they are in sixth grade. This will alleviate them having to

move to two different schools in two years. This is optional and parents can make this decision based on what works best for their family.

### Q: Do you have a comment on the recent issues surrounding the Fruit Cove Middle School football team?

A: First, everyone must understand that the St. Johns Middle School Athletic Association (SJMSAA) is not an arm of the St. Johns County School District. I think it is disconcerting that the principal of the school was blamed for dissolving the team. There was definitely some miscommunication, as she had nothing to do with the suspension.

### Q: Do you have anything else to share?

A: We are entering into an accreditation year this year. Reaccrediting by AavanceEd takes place every three years for our school district. Parents will see a lot more in-depth surveys going home as well as more data gathering going in our schools. Last time we passed the reaccreditation with flying colors and I hope for the same results this year.

Also, we held the soft opening for the newly reconstructed reception area on the ground floor of the school board offices on Orange Street on Wednesday, Nov. 15. This area has been under renovation construction since flooding from Hurricane Matthew. All subsequent school board meetings will again be held at Orange Street.

### Q: How can our readers contact you?

A: They can email me at [beverly.slough@st-johns.k12.fl.us](mailto:beverly.slough@st-johns.k12.fl.us) or call me at (904) 547-7510.

**Happy holidays and best wishes for a wonderful new year!**

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# E Pluribus Unum

By Jimmy Lee  
mail@floridanewline.com

## Civics for One and All

*Who are you? How did you get here? What makes you the person you are?*

Questions such as these allow us to understand each other. We live among hundreds and thousands of people. We come in direct and indirect contact with each other in all possible manners. But, sometimes, one, or a few, of these other people takes a more central position in our lives. He may move in next door. I may take a job where she works. Sometimes, someone marries into our family and suddenly he or she becomes part of our closest social circle. In each of these circumstances, we begin “knowing” a person on a deeper level. But how do we do that?

Each person has personal traits, deeply concealed ones and openly conspicuous ones. To some people I may be easier to get to know than I am for some others. Why, though? As members of a community, we have no choice but to interact and even build relationships. We learn what our food or restaurant preferences are. We share stories about our family, siblings, children, where we went to school, places we’ve lived. Then, as these relationships develop, and we grow closer, or at least more comfortable, we may share deeper aspects of who we are. Maybe we feel comfortable enough

to talk politics, maybe share a little gossip, and maybe some emotional sensitivities.

Except for those people in our closest circles of family and friends, relationships may indeed remain purely superficial. I suppose this can be good and bad. Sometimes, though, the superficial nature of knowing someone, or even the complete lack of familiarity with him or her creates misunderstanding, hard feelings, or even conflict. This happens at work, in the grocery store, and even among friends and family. Such occasions cannot always be prevented, so we, hopefully, learn how to cope. But we can’t always let problematic relationships just roll off like the proverbial water from a duck’s back.

Certainly, getting to know someone on a deeper level requires a degree of astuteness and finesse. Navigating these situations can be difficult. One perspective of how to do this is provided by Warren Nord and Charles Haynes in their book entitled “Taking Religion Seriously Across the Curriculum.” Sure, this book focusses on religious belief, only one characteristic of who a person is, and it is concerned with teaching religion in school. But, what personal characteristic is more deeply held by people than their values and beliefs about religion? Also,

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where can you find a more perfect microcosm of a community than in its schools?

Nord and Haynes state that students must be taught about religion from the inside and the outside. Despite the ineffability of religious beliefs, students must be taught a sensitivity to the different dimensions of religion rather than to simply reduce them to a set of beliefs — that is, from the inside. They argue that this is best done through religion’s poetry, symbols, and metaphors. To learn religions from the outside, Nord and Haynes say that students must be exposed to the simi-

larities and differences between them.

Certainly, the best classroom learning occurs when the students know each other (and the teacher) more than superficially. Students need to be comfortable enough to share their ideas, ask questions, and trust others to share and receive contending points of view. Doesn’t it make sense then, that our community requires the same level of comfort and trust. Knowing those closest to us more deeply builds understanding, bridges differences, and grows a happier and healthier home for one and all.

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**Briefs**

**Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital announces 41st annual Art & Antiques Show**

The Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital will welcome nationally acclaimed lecturers and internationally recognized art and antiques dealers to the 41st annual Art & Antiques Show, Dec. 1 – 3, at the Prime F. Osborn III Convention Center in downtown Jacksonville. Proceeds fund state-of-the-art services, programs, equipment and facilities to provide healthcare for all children in the Northeast Florida/Southeast Georgia region.

"We invite everyone to the Art & Antiques Show to hear engaging speakers and view art and antiques from national and international dealers while contributing to a cause that is vital to children in Northeast Florida," said Jan Kirby, who is chairing this year's show with Frances Hutto and Kelley Kunz.

Guest speakers include designers Maria Crosby Pollard, India Hicks, Kathryn Ireland, Toma Clark Haines, Juli Catlin and William Nash IV. In addition to the celebrated lecturers and more than 40 antiques dealers from around the country and Europe, the 41st anniversary Art & Antiques show will feature a Booth Crawl with The Antiques Diva®, the Royal Affair Gala with the RiverTown Band and the Children's Fashion Show featuring current and former Wolfson patients.

Show hours are from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. on Friday, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. on Saturday and 12 p.m. – 5 p.m. on Sunday. Daily admission to the show is \$15 and lecture tickets are \$30. Tickets to the "Paddington at the Palace" Children's Fashion Show are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children and free to children age five and under. Tickets are available online at [www.artandantiquesshow.com](http://www.artandantiquesshow.com), by email at [womensboardwch@bmcjax.com](mailto:womensboardwch@bmcjax.com) or by calling (904) 202-2886.

**Helping Fight Hunger food drive initiative collects items for nonprofits**

Ameris Bank's eighth annual company-wide Helping Fight Hunger food drive initiative collected more than 999,000 non-perishable food items in October that were donated to food banks throughout the Southeast. Ameris Bancorp, the parent company of Ameris Bank, also collectively donated \$100,000 that was distributed among all the food banks that received the col-

lected food items. More than 80 food banks throughout 65 communities were impacted by this food drive initiative.

According to Feeding America, hunger in America exists for more than 46 million people including 12 million children and 7 million seniors throughout the United States. Ameris Bank's Helping Fight Hunger food drive initiative allowed for a food bank in every town with an Ameris Bank location to receive the donation of goods collected at the local Ameris Bank branch, plus a monetary donation from Ameris Bancorp.

Visit [www.amerisbank.com/Helping-FightHunger](http://www.amerisbank.com/Helping-FightHunger) for more information.

**Newcomers of North St. Johns to meet for holiday luncheon**

Newcomers of North Saint Johns will host a holiday luncheon on Tuesday, Dec. 12, at 11 a.m. at Maggiano's Little Italy at the St. Johns Town Center. This luncheon will be held in Maggiano's large banquet rooms decorated for the holidays. Attendees will enjoy



Photo courtesy Priscilla Cobbs  
Newcomers of North St. Johns members Jane Schwab, Maureen Crichton-Gold and Elsa Brader enjoy a toast at the Doubletree at the October luncheon.

the sounds of the holidays presented by Roger Dodd and Doel Burgos.

This luncheon will feature family-style dishes of freshly baked ciabatta rolls, bruschetta, chopped apple and walnut salad, Italian tossed salad, baked rigatoni and meatballs with smoked Italian cheese, chicken marsala, baked eggplant parmesan, tiramisu, New York style cheesecake and freshly brewed coffee, hot and iced tea and sodas.

The total cost for the luncheon is \$28 for members and \$34 for guests. All reservations must be received by Dec. 5. Contact Sue Aird at [sjaird@comcast.net](mailto:sjaird@comcast.net) for a registration form.

Newcomers of North Saint Johns offers a wide variety of activities for camaraderie and fun, including lunch groups, wine socials, golf, Mah Jongg, Bunco, day trips, and cultural events.

**Chamber's Leadership St. Johns announces 2017 -18 class**

By NewsLine Staff  
[mail@floridanewslines.com](mailto:mail@floridanewslines.com)



Photo courtesy St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce  
Leadership St. Johns Class of 2018

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce's Leadership St. Johns Class of 2018 kicked off their year-long program with the annual retreat, Nov. 3 – 4. The leadership development program, which was started in 2001, has more than 300 alumni including the former superintendent of schools and current Flagler College President Joseph Joyner, the current Superintendent of Schools Tim Forson, Flagler Hospital President Jason Barrett, local entrepreneur and St. Augustine Distillery founding partner Phillip McDaniel, District 1 School Board Representative Beverly Slough and St. Augustine City Manager John Regan.

The Leadership St. Johns Program was established to educate, connect and encourage elite and emerging professionals as they strive to make a positive impact on the local economy and community. This year's class is the largest in the program's history with 27 members from all sectors of industry, commerce and public service.

This year's class includes:

- Michelle Adams, St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum Director of Development
- Janette Allen, Flagler College Director of Development
- Myrna Allen, St. Johns River State College Dean of Teacher Education
- Carlos Aviles, City of St. Augustine Chief, SAFD
- Jeremiah Blocker, North Florida Lawyers, PLLC Partner/Attorney
- Christopher Buttermore, Matthews Design Group, Inc. Project Manager
- Michael Dresback, St. Johns County School District Associate Superintendent for Student Support Services
- Debra East, Launchpad Consultants LLC/Blue Sky Life Coaching LLC Founder/CEO
- Alexius Ferguson, Children's Home

- Society Community Partnership School Director
  - Donna Guzzo, Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach Director of Development
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# ST. JOHNS Business Monthly

## Market Insight



Scott Grant  
ScottGrant@StJohnsBusinessMonthly.com

### Double, Bubble, Toil, and Trouble

Tulip Mania swept across Europe in the 1600s. The first bulbs had arrived from Turkey in the hands of an ambassador of the Holy Roman Empire in the late 1500s. They were immediately coveted. Prices rose rapidly and the higher the price went, the more precious the flowering bulbs became. Trading in tulip bulbs reached near hysteria in the Netherlands, where futures markets were founded to trade in bulbs that had not even arrived yet. Prices rose to inexplicably lofty levels, convincing speculators to sell everything to capture the future gains that seemed certain. At the height of the mania, a single bulb brought the price of a 12-acre estate. After the market crashed in 1637, that same bulb was worth no more than the cost of an onion.

Bubbles thrive on human emotion. As prices rise, more and more people get drawn in, afraid they will be left behind and convinced that easy money is at hand. Each of these speculators knows they are behaving foolishly and overpaying and each expects to find a "greater fool" to buy their overpriced asset in the future. At some point, the bubble bursts and the speculators are ruined. Bubbles are usually easy to recognize in the beginning, but they tend to run on and up, defying all logic until they no longer seem illogical.

There are three rules for bubbles. They tend to last much longer than expected. They tend to accelerate at the end. They tend to burst only after everyone is sucked in.

There has been a lot of talk recently about a stock market bubble. I agree. I think we are in one — but I think we are still in the initial stages. Stock

prices have gone up a lot, but there are still plenty of sceptics out there convinced that the market will crash soon. The time to worry is usually when everyone believes! I think this could be a very powerful bubble, one that carries the stock market to dizzying levels. There are no guarantees, the market might correct or crash tomorrow, but it feels to me like a powerful bubble is brewing on the horizon. It might run on for several years.

There is another bubble out there. Rampant speculation has driven the price of BitCoins to dizzying heights this year. In 2010, a bitcoin was worth less than a penny. Today each one is valued at more than \$7000. The first real world purchase using bitcoins took place right here in Jacksonville. A man bought a pizza for 10,000 bitcoins. Today those same coins would be worth more than \$70 million. That's an expensive pizza! Unlike the stock market bubble, I think this one is getting long in the tooth. In April, bitcoins were at \$1200. They are now over \$7000. More distressing, I have heard many start to rationalize why they will keep going higher. The argument is that they are used by criminals on the "dark web."

I have been picking investments for people professionally for more than 35 years. I am Scottish. When I see something go from the price of a meal to the price of a yacht in a mere seven years, I suffer from a natural incredulity. Needless to say, I won't be buying any bitcoins.

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

## Got the entrepreneurial itch?

By Marge Cirillo  
mail@floridanewslines.com

I was reading an article by Phillip Harper the other day on the 10 best businesses to start in 2018 and beyond according to NBC. Of course, just because everybody's doing it doesn't guarantee success. Any decision to go it alone needs to be informed. Markets never remain static and what's hot today could be as cold as a collection agent's heart a year or so from now.

There's no ironclad way to pick the next big thing — or to avoid buying into the small-business equivalent of the Edsel — but there are ways to insulate yourself from truly unwise decisions. Mostly this involves paying attention to society's big demographic shifts. Ask the right questions and consult the right sources and you can learn who has the money and how they're likely to spend it. Then, think about how you can leverage your knowledge and talents to capture a slice of that market.

There's no substitute for doing your own research, but to help you start the process here are 10 business ideas that figure to be hot for the foreseeable future. Most are representative of broad trends that will generate plenty of other good ideas.

1. Home elder care I. Thanks to the miracle of modern medicine, members of the so-called "greatest generation" are able to live independently, but frequently not without help. Businesses that provide personal services to the elderly — grocery shopping, chauffeuring, and physical therapy — are good bets for the sole operator.

2. Home elder care II. Because of temporary or permanent illnesses and disabilities, part-time assistance may not be sufficient to allow the elderly to remain in their own homes. Sometimes round-the-clock skilled nursing care is required, and agencies that supply competent and honest help are and will be much in demand.

3. Retirement real estate. The elderly like it hot, and boomers will be no exception. Properties in temperate climates, particularly those within easy striking distance of the coast, have begun to go through the roof. (This would explain why in recent years West Palm Beach, Fla., emerged from urban decay to become the nation's fastest appreciating single-family home market.) Selling retirement real estate, or providing services to firms that do, figures to be a growth industry.

Entrepreneurial itch cont. on pg. 10

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## Pub Crawl benefits projects of Rotary Club of Bartram Trail

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewsline.com



Photos courtesy Denise Jones

On Saturday, Oct. 21, the Rotary Club of Bartram Trail held its eighth Fruit Cove Pub Crawl to benefit the local and international projects of the club. About 140 crawlers started at Moon Dog Pie House, went through Bono's, Wakame, La Nopalera and ended up at Iggy's. The event was capped off with the winners of the poker run being announced and a raffle drawing of donated prizes. Bill Lemos of St. Johns was the winner of the Green Egg raffle. His ticket was pulled out of 200 tickets at the conclusion of the Pub Crawl. All raffle proceeds benefit the club's charity projects. The club would like to thank the restaurants for participating and sponsors that helped underwrite the expenses of the event. Visit [www.bartramtrailrotary.org](http://www.bartramtrailrotary.org) for more information.

### Entrepreneurial itch cont. from pg. 9

#### 4. Trust and investment services.

Helping boomers manage the vast wealth they collectively possess will provide plenty of work for accountants, investment advisers, insurance agents, lawyers specializing in trusts and estates and everyone in between. Count on the government to keep the tax code so convoluted that professional advice is always needed.

5. Personal improvement. Long obsessed with how they look and feel, boomers won't hesitate to spend retirement dollars on regimens and treatments that let them cling to at least the illusion of youth. Entrepreneurs who effectively deliver such nostrums as Pilates and yoga, Botox and other beauty treatments and nutritional counseling will tap into a gold mine.

6. Retirement recreation. One of the benefits of good health is the ability to remain active, and boomers will pursue vigorous activities in retirement as no generation before. Golf, fly fishing, hiking, bicycling are just a few of the pursuits on which retirees will drop lots of money. As with real estate, the watchword in this entrepreneurial market is location, location, location.

7. Resort services. Active boomers and younger enthusiasts will fuel a development boom in the most scenic parts of the country. Overcrowding in the national parks and the rapid development of the intermountain West are two signs of this. With more residents

comes the need for more services: restaurants, dry cleaners, copy centers — name it.

8. Outsourcing I. Not all of the jobs being outsourced by U.S. corporations are heading overseas. Plenty of the work is staying at home in the hands of independent contractors in the areas of accounting, law, human resources. An entrepreneur with in-demand expertise would do well to explore the corporate market.

9. Outsourcing II. Not all outsourcing takes place beyond the corporate walls. Often the work is performed by temps supplied to companies by agencies. An agency with a particular "hook" — in other words the ability to provide competent workers a demonstrated sought-after skill — figure to do well in the current and future business environment.

10. IT consulting. The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts eight of the 10 fastest growing jobs will involve computer technology. Clearly, the world is becoming more wired and consultants who can help users adopt new hardware and software products and resolve problems will not have a difficult time finding work.

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

# Area Rotary clubs announce Rotary Youth Exchange scholarships

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewslines.com

Two Creekside High School students are the recipients of Rotary Youth Exchange Scholarships: Annie Rementer, who will be visiting Thailand and was awarded her scholarship by the Rotary Club of Bartram Trail and James Schmidt, who will be visiting Brazil and was awarded his scholarship by the Rotary Club of St. Johns.

These Rotary Youth Exchange Scholarships are in-kind scholarships valued at more than \$24,000 and cover the cost of room, board, tuition and a monthly stipend for one academic year of high school studies abroad. Annually, more than 9,000 students worldwide between the ages of 15 and 18.5 years old earn these prestigious Rotary scholarships.

Beginning last December, these students began meeting with Rotarians and former exchange students for screening, training, and sharing of cultural experiences. They were matched to inbound Rotary students and were involved in extensive language training and preparation to be immersed

in his or her respective host culture.

Additionally, the Rotary Club of Bartram Trail awarded a scholarship to one inbound foreign exchange student from the Brazil and the Rotary Club of St. Johns awarded a scholarship to one inbound foreign exchange student from Mexico. These students arrived in August and will spend the 2017-2018 academic school year studying at a local high school.



Photos courtesy Jeff Hart  
Annie Rementer



James Schmidt

The Rotary Youth Exchange Program began in the 1920s, and its primary mission is to work towards peace and understanding in the world. Rotary Youth Exchange is a member of the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET), a nonprofit organization committed to setting standards for international educational travel and monitoring compliance with those standards. It is also approved by the U.S. Department of State.

The Rotary Youth Exchange Scholarship program in Florida is growing through the efforts of local Rotary Clubs and the multi-district organization, Rotary Youth Exchange Florida, Inc.

Rotary clubs have already begun accepting applications for the 2018 – 2019 academic year scholarship and are also seeking potential host families for the 2018 – 2019 academic year. The host family is responsible for providing room and board for the inbound exchange student for approximately three months. Host families are a vital part of the cultural exchange program.

The Rotary Club of Bartram Trail and the Rotary Club of St. Johns have dynamic memberships of men and women actively dedicated to fostering service above self in our community and around the globe and is part of Rotary International District 6970.

For more information about becoming a Rotarian, being a host family, or recommending an American high school student for the Rotary Youth Exchange Study Abroad Scholarship, contact Jeff Hart, Chairman, Rotary Youth Exchange District 6970 at jeff@ryeflorida.org or (904) 517-3493.

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# Holiday Gift Guide 2017

## Holiday gift-wrapping tips and tricks

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewsline.com

After all the holiday presents have been purchased, the task of wrapping can begin. Although some people find wrapping is relaxing and provides a chance to embrace one's artistic flair, many others find wrapping gift after gift becomes tedious quite fast.

While there are no statistics on just how many gifts the average person purchases

over the course of the holiday season, the National Retail Federation says the average consumer will spend around \$800 on all things holiday. That means there will be a lot of gifts to wrap before the big exchange. Those who want to make gift-wrapping less tedious this holiday season can consider these ideas to streamline the process.

Gather all supplies: When the time comes to wrap gifts, there's nothing more frustrating than hunting for wrapping supplies. Have paper, bows, bags, tissue, pens, tape (double-sided tape streamlines the process), scissors, ribbon, and any other wrapping accoutrements at the ready. Set up a folding snack table near your wrapping area to

hold the supplies so they don't get in the way.

Choose the right location: Always wrap on a large, flat and sturdy surface. Avoid wrapping on a carpet, which will give gift wrap a wrinkled look and increase the amount of time needed to wrap.

gift-wrapping cont. on pg. 13

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# Holiday Gift Guide 2017

gift-wrapping cont. from pg. 12



Photo courtesy MetroCreative

Brown paper bags make for sturdy and versatile wrapping materials.

**Square it up:** If you are a master at wrapping rectangular or square gifts but fail when presents are oddly shaped, place misshapen gifts into boxes and then wrap the boxes. Gift bags also can be used for such gifts, but wrapped boxes may look more appealing under the tree.

**Fabric over paper:** If you think gift wrap is wasteful, think about repurposing fabric into beautiful wrapping for presents. A square of leftover fabric, a piece of a t-shirt or even a portion of a sweater that has seen better days can be transformed into an innovative package for gift-giving. Tie the gathered ends into a bow and skip the tape as well. Dress up with ribbon and a tag for extra flair. Fabric bends and moves, making it more forgiving for oddly shaped gifts as well.

**Stock up on paper shopping bags:** On your next trip to the grocery store, bring

home more than groceries. Walk away with paper bags and free gift wrap. Craft a DIY stamp roller or handmade stamps to dress up plain brown bags. Or wrap the gift in twine and add a sprig of evergreen for a rustic look. Children can even use markers or crayons to create their own designs on gifts, personalizing even further.

**Diversify gifts:** Identify each recipient's gifts by wrapping in a different color or style. Just jot down the key to decoding the wrapping, and you'll save time on individual gift tags.

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# Holiday Gift Guide 2017

## How shopping locally can help you and your community

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewsline.com

Today's consumers have more shopping options at their disposal than they did in years past. Though the Internet may put the world at one's fingertips, more and more shoppers are discovering that buying locally makes for a superior shopping experience.

The benefits associated with shopping locally are many, and the following are just a few reasons why shoppers may

want to look no further than their own communities when planning their next shopping excursions.

**Keeps money in the local economy:** Locally-owned businesses often put a larger share of their revenue back into their communities. Small business owners may be more inclined to employ local residents, giving more people in the community solid employment. Business owners may reach

out and support other neighborhood efforts, such as fundraising initiatives for charities and schools. By shopping at local stores, you have a hand in supporting these efforts as well.

**Save money:** When factoring in travel time and the cost of fuel, shopping locally makes more sense than driving to a faraway mall. In addition, repeat customers who establish a rapport with a local business owner may find that

such owners are more inclined to price match or work with loyal customers to find lower prices through suppliers.

**Diversify your home and lifestyle:** Shoppers who prefer more unique styles may find local businesses cater to their needs better than large chain stores. Larger retailers offer the same products to customers regardless of where those customers live, so a person in California may be decorating

shopping locally cont. on pg. 15



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# Holiday Gift Guide 2017

shopping locally cont. from pg. 14



Photo courtesy MetroCreative

his or her home with the same furnishings as a person in North Carolina. But local shops tend to produce more unique items that are not available nationwide.

**Promote entrepreneurship:** Small businesses are an essential element to the country's economic growth. By shopping locally, consumers are showing their support for this important segment of the national economy.

**Help establish local pride:** Independent shops contribute to the fabric of a community and what makes it

special and unique. Tourists and other visitors will be much more inclined to remember a local shop rather than a big chain in a particular neighborhood. When travelers want to get a feel for a community, they seek out small, local stores that are much more likely to stock a high percentage of locally-sourced goods.

**Attract other businesses:** Private and public sector businesses tend to gravitate around anchor stores. Should a local store be successful, banks, restaurants, salons, and other businesses may move in as well.

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## Choose your Nutcracker

By Martie Thompson  
 editor@floridanewline.com

*“The Nutcracker” is believed by many to be a time-honored holiday tradition. In Northeast Florida, the tradition continues with five productions of the ballet this December.*

*Since each performance is unique, following is a guide highlighting the dates, times and locations of each to help you choose “your” Nutcracker.*



Photo courtesy 123RF.com

**Community Nutcracker**  
**Dec. 8 at 8 p.m.**  
**Dec. 9 at 1 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.**  
**Florida Theatre**  
[www.jaxnutcracker.org](http://www.jaxnutcracker.org)

The retirement of Founding Director Beth Marks led Artistic Directors Dulce Anaya, Debra Rankin and Mark Spivak on a search for new choreographers to help continue this holiday tradition which began in 1992. Heather Stevenson Loveland of Heather Loveland Dance Academy and Suzanne Saltmarsh of Saltmarsh Dance of Jacksonville are guest choreographers for the 2017 performance. In the past 25 years, Community Nutcracker has donated more than \$600,000 to local charities including Dreams Come True. In an effort to promote the arts in schools, Community Nutcracker also offers performances on Dec. 7 and Dec. 8 at 10:30 a.m. for school groups.

**Christ Church Nutcracker Ballet**  
**Dec. 9 at 6 p.m.**  
**Lazzara Theater, UNF Fine Arts Department**  
[www.missfeliciasdance.com](http://www.missfeliciasdance.com)

This year marks the 22nd performance of the Christ Church Nutcracker, directed by Felicia Rhoden of the Christ Church Dance Ministry as well as owner of Miss Felicia’s Dance. Nearly 300 performers, aged two and a half to

90 years old, will take the stage. Proceeds from the performance support children with life threatening illnesses in the Dreams Come True Foundation, Community PedsCare and the Amistad Orphanage in Bolivia.

**Jacksonville Symphony’s First Coast Nutcracker**  
**Dec. 15 at 8 p.m.**  
**Dec. 16 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.**  
**Dec. 17 at 2 p.m.**  
**Moran Theater at the Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts**  
[www.jaxsymphony.org/first-coast-nutcracker/](http://www.jaxsymphony.org/first-coast-nutcracker/)

Jacksonville Symphony’s First Coast Nutcracker has been a tradition in North Florida for more than 40 years. Under the direction of choreographer and artistic director, Rhonda Stampalia, the First Coast Nutcracker showcases internationally renowned principal dancers, the area’s finest young dancers, and Tchaikovsky’s best-loved melodies performed by the Jacksonville Symphony.

**The Nutcracker 2017 by the Florida Ballet**  
**Dec. 16 at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.**  
**Dec. 17 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.**  
**Lazzara Performance Hall, UNF Fine Arts Center**  
[www.floridaballet.org](http://www.floridaballet.org)

The Florida Ballet’s Nutcracker features swirling snowflakes, waltzing flowers, and dancing bonbons. From the captivating dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy to the iconic snow scene, this enchanting classical ballet – set to the beloved music of Tchaikovsky – features guest artists from Cincinnati Ballet along with more than 100 local dancers.

**St. Augustine Ballet Nutcracker**  
**Dec. 16 at 1:30 p.m. and 7 p.m.**  
**Dec. 17 at 1:30 p.m. and 7 p.m.**  
**Lewis Auditorium at Flagler College**  
[www.saintaugustineballet.com](http://www.saintaugustineballet.com)

This year’s production of “The Nutcracker” features guest artists Joseph Gatti, formerly of the Cincinnati Ballet, Corella Ballet principal dancer and Boston Ballet and Andrea Harvey, who has performed as an exhibition ballroom specialist at Blackpool 2017 and Millennium 2017. The St. Augustine Ballet, under the artistic direction of Luis Abella, is a non-profit organization with a mission to involve community members of all ages in meaningful dance experiences.

All of these performances are designed to enchant, enthrall, and bring families and community members together for the holiday season. Which one is right for you?



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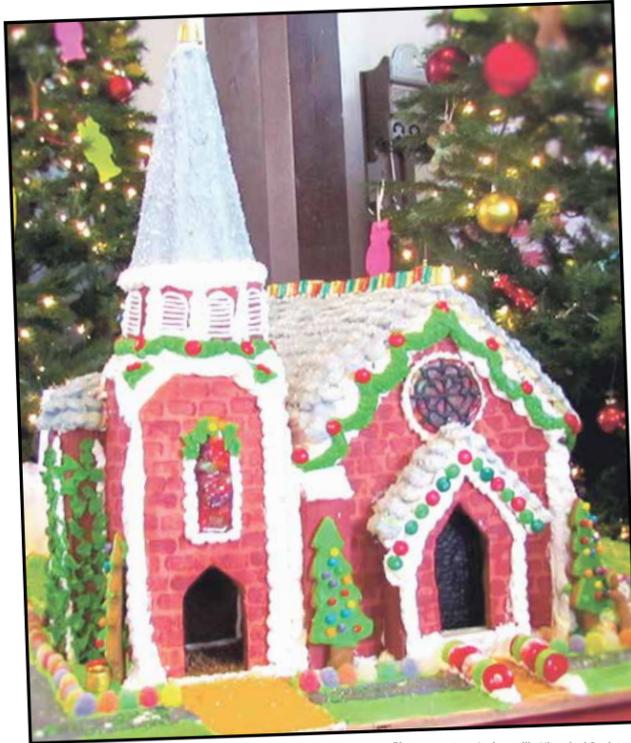
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# St. Johns talent a big part of annual **Gingerbread Extravaganza**

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewslines.com



Photos courtesy Jacksonville Historical Society

The annual Jacksonville Historical Society Gingerbread Extravaganza runs Nov. 30 through Dec. 23, except Sundays.

iconic Mandarin Road in chocolate. The store manager, Thomas Garrett, is uniquely familiar with the road. The Peterbrooke shop he runs sits in the shopping center at the intersection of Mandarin Road and San Jose Boulevard.

The gingerbread houses come in all shapes, sizes and themes and are constructed by friends, families, co-workers, chefs and individuals. While many entries include traditional gingerbread houses and villages, other creations focus on storybook, movie, fantasy and history themes. Icing, fondant and candies are typically used, and occasionally builders use a main ingredient other than gingerbread.

The finished gingerbread houses and creations are featured along with dozens of other entries at Jacksonville Historical Society's Old St. Andrews, 317 A. Philip Randolph Blvd., across from the Veterans Memorial Arena.

The Gingerbread Extravaganza runs Nov. 30 through Dec. 23, except Sundays. It's open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, and at 10 a.m. on Saturdays. A donation of \$5 for adults and \$3 for children older than three is suggested. Parking is free.

"This is an event for all ages," said Jacksonville Historical Society Executive Director Emily Lisska. "It's also the most creative art show in town."

Special Gingerbread Extravaganza activities and field trips are also available to schools, seniors and other groups. Visit [info@jaxhistory.org](mailto:info@jaxhistory.org) or call (904) 665-0064 for more information.



The Junior League of Jacksonville Sustainers' Festival of Trees is part of the Extravaganza display. The trees range from holiday themes to Florida-related history themes.

**Jacksonville Historical Society's Gingerbread House Extravaganza**, a local holiday tradition, will open for a three-week December run on Nov. 30. The event showcases dozens of gingerbread houses and confection creations made by area pastry chefs and everyday citizens. NW St. Johns County residents are taking an active part in this annual event.

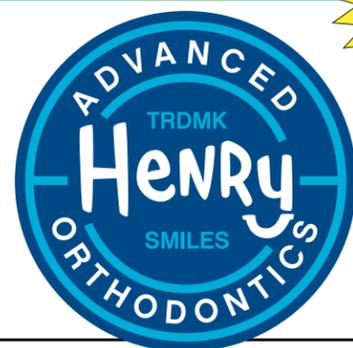
Bartram Trail High School junior Emmanuelle Victor established a Women in Architecture and Engineering Club at the school this year, and they decided to put their knowledge to work using the sometimes finicky gingerbread as construction material. Participating in the Gingerbread Extravaganza are Bartram Trail students Victor, Cassidy Roberts, Sarah Parrot, Jessica Paul and Lucy Story.

Janet, Steve and Piper McInall, longtime gingerbread builders and residents of St. Johns, are also part of the show. The family has participated for more than a decade, constructing symphonies, gingerbread warriors and exotic buildings from gingerbread.

Just north of St. Johns County, Peterbrooke Chocolatier in Mandarin highlights the greater community's

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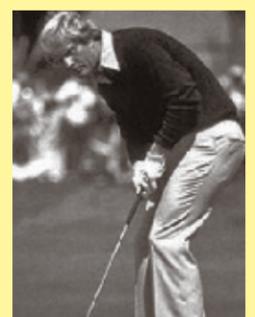
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## Field of Dreams spring registration in process

Registration is now open for the Spring 2018 season of Field of Dreams. The Field of Dreams baseball league enables children with special needs (mental or physical disabilities) to have the opportunity to play baseball in an organized league, to wear a uniform, to have their names announced, to participate in the singing of the National anthem before each game and to be a player on an athletic team. Players have a buddy to assist them as they play on a turf and fenced field with an announcer and an umpire.

The mission of Field of Dreams, 501c3 nonprofit organization, is to provide a sustainable voluntary organization that provides a safe, ADA certified facility where special needs children of all ages can play baseball for free and be an active part of a thriving athletic association.

Visit [www.fodbaseball.com](http://www.fodbaseball.com) to register your child or to learn about sponsorship opportunities.



Photo courtesy Leigh Cort

## Women's Food Alliance announces 2018 - 2019 advisory board

The Womens Food Alliance, which cultivates and advances networking, education, and collaboration for women in the culinary and hospitality industry in the Northeast Florida/Southeast Georgia region has announced its 2018 - 2019 advisory board. Pictured are Faye Lance (Sugar Snob Chocolates), Becky Lowry (Casa Marina Hotel), Nancy Guarnieri (St. Francis Inn), Kathleen Hurley (retired B&B owner), Monica Stouder (Mon-

ica Lea Imagery), Barbara Golden (St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches Visitors & Convention Bureau), Cindy Stavely (St. Augustine Pirate/Treasure Museum), Lauren Titus (Edible Northeast Florida Magazine), Nancy Slatsky (Swiss Chalet Fine Foods), and Leigh Cort (president, Womens Food Alliance). Visit [www.XOwomensfoodalliance.com](http://www.XOwomensfoodalliance.com) for more information.



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## Helping Hands group strives to make holiday season more joyous

By Mary Safin  
mail@floridanewsline.com



Christmas trees that Helping Hands of St. Johns County decorated for Community PedsCare Hospice.



Photos courtesy Mary Safin  
Giving decorated Christmas trees to Community PedsCare Hospice for their annual Holiday Party. Pictured are Amanda Spence and Dr. Anne Elliot from Hospice and Helping Hands members Roberta Gjeloshaj and Jean Russo.

Helping Hands of St. Johns County continued its work on behalf of the community this fall with an eye towards making the holiday season brighter.

On Oct. 27, members of the group decorated 12 table top Christmas trees for Community PedsCare Hospice for use at their annual party. The trees will be given to the families after the party. This year Helping Hands held a contest among its volunteers for the most beautiful and creative trees; Kay Rudy's tree was voted Most Beautiful and Chandra Garlipp's tree was named Most Creative.

Another holiday project involved wrapping shoeboxes, which, when filled with donated gifts, will be donated in December to various groups to gift to a less fortunate child or a senior citizen. The decorated empty boxes were distributed at the Vendor Fair at St. Johns Golf and Country Club on Nov. 7 and during November at First Florida Credit Union on County Road 210W. Filled boxes need to be returned by Dec. 10.

Brunch with Santa is planned for Dec. 9 at the Homeless Coalition for the residents there. Another Holiday Party for Field of Dreams and special needs children, organized by Sheilah Drewienkowski, is planned for the holiday season on Dec. 16.

The group will again be collecting toiletries to have on hand to give out as needs arrive. Small unused toiletries from hotels are most convenient for the homeless. Larger unused items are given to others as well as senior residents at various assisted living facilities.



Photo courtesy Markland

## Residents welcome autumn

Dozens of Markland residents celebrated the change of seasons by participating in a Fall Festival on Sunday, Oct. 8 in front of the Markland Manor House. Sweet smelling bales of hay were available to stuff-your-own scarecrow. Other activities included pumpkin decorating, donut biting, face painting, balloon animals, bouncy house, Dare-devil Island, musical pumpkin patch, rock climbing and authentic hay rides pulled by two beautiful horses. Three food trucks were on hand and children of all ages enjoyed winning prizes and making pumpkin pie-plate faces among other arts and crafts. Visit [www.Markland.com](http://www.Markland.com) for more information.



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## Get to Know . . .

### Susie Peterson

By Martie Thompson  
editor@floridanewline.com

Susie Peterson's fascination horses began when she went to summer camp at age 11 and fell in love with a black horse named Lightning. Now she and her husband Mike live in Switzerland on 10 acres and have six horses, which includes four Paint Horses, a miniature horse and a Belgian draft horse.

Susie, a Jacksonville native, moved to Ponte Vedra Beach as a teenager and attended both Fletcher and Wolfson High Schools. She worked at Prudential and married young and had two daughters. She eventually worked as a Realtor with Century 21 and Watson in the early '80s before marrying Mike, her second husband, and blending their families 30 years ago.

They were living in Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra Beach when he asked her if she was ready to go live in the country and have those horses she had always wanted. So they moved to Orangedale on State Road 13 and bought their first horse, a Paint Horse, in 1993. They raised Paint Horses and had 13 of them when they moved to Whitelock Farms in 2001 for a larger and newer home.

By 2007, Mike Peterson wanted to live in the mountains, so they moved to Montana and brought 21 horses with them. They enjoyed the wide open spaces in Montana until Susie Peterson began missing her children (four between them) and five grandchildren. And, as she said, "The snow and ice were also a factor!"

In 2014, she moved back to Florida and he followed a few years later after staying behind to sell the Montana property. Now they live on a "work in progress" home on acreage in Switzerland, with their horses and big dogs: two St. Bernards and a malamute.

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

I love this little slice of heaven. Our property feels like the country, yet we live close enough to town for shopping. I love the oak trees and fruit trees on our property. I look out the windows and see our horses grazing in the pasture; it is very tranquil and peaceful. There is just something about seeing the sun shining and the horses' silhouettes.

#### What do you consider your greatest accomplishment?

We are happy and healthy and everything is paid for! It's a nice place in life to be. We enjoy what we have.

#### What are your favorite things to do with your grandchildren?

We have so much fun. We ride the

horses and swim in the pool. We also have a drone that we enjoy flying over the horses.

#### What is your favorite thing to do with the horses?

We love to go trail riding. We put them in the trailer and then either go to the Julington/Durbin Trailhead off Bartram Park Boulevard or across the Shands Bridge to Bayard off State Road 16. We also ride on our own property. We even have an obstacle course for the horses out back.

#### If you could take three things to a deserted island, what would they be?

I would take wine, a horse and just one of my dogs ... but it would be hard to pick which one.



Photo courtesy Susie Peterson  
Susie and Mike Peterson ride their Paint Horses, Magic and Cheyenne.

Boat Parade cont. from pg. 1



Photos courtesy Julington Creek Prop Club  
Boats are decorated with lights and loop around Julington Creek for all to enjoy.

After the parade, a celebration will take place at the Julington Creek Marina. Boaters who participate in the parade and others are invited to join in on a night of fun with plenty of food, door prizes and live music. The board will announce the first, second and third place winners at the celebration.

The Julington Creek Prop Club is a 501c nonprofit organization committed to sharing a passion for boating and our waterways with everyone while also enhancing the boating experience.

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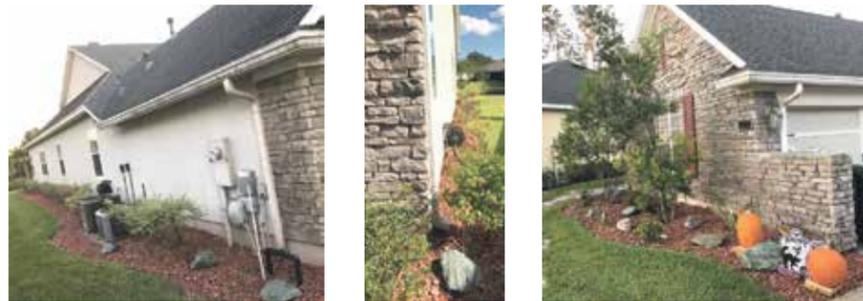
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## School Briefs

### Liberty Pines Academy wraps up first semester

Liberty Pines Academy students recently raised more than \$39,000, which will be used to fund new technology including iPads and computers for the classrooms, at the school's most successful Boosterthon to date.

The school will host the Winter Night of the Arts/PTO Holiday Vendor Night for Liberty Pines Academy families on Dec. 12 at 6 p.m. There will be arts and crafts for the kids, music from the band and choir, along with student art on display for all to enjoy.

The school's middle school football team won its first playoff game in school history. Everyone at the school is proud of the players and coaches for their hard work and dedication.

The second quarter ends on Dec. 21 and winter break is from Dec. 22 – Jan. 7.

### Switzerland Point students spread encouragement via locker notes

The week of Oct. 23 – 27 spearheaded a year-long grade level Character Challenge at Switzerland Point Middle School with daily random acts of kindness contests to promote anti-drug and bullying awareness campaigns.

Three students, who fittingly asked to remain anonymous, reached out to school administration with a special request to spread a little kindness among the school campus. Their idea was to post notes of encouragement on every student's locker to promote friendship and highlight the importance of self-esteem. These students selected quotes with positive messages such as, "Be somebody who makes everybody feel like somebody" and "Encourage someone. Let your words heal, not wound," and placed more than 1,350 notes, one for each student's locker, throughout the school.

When sharing their idea for the project, one of the students explained, "We just want to help out our peers who can't get a break. This would not be your traditional Red Ribbon Week awareness project but we feel that it is extremely important. Our goal is to give kids like this a little bit of encouragement."

"These thoughtful students are to be commended for their thoughts and actions. It is a reminder that everyone has the power to do something to make our world a better place," said Switzerland Point Principal Kirstie Gabaldon.

### Palencia Elementary announces annual Pirate 5K and Family Run

The fourth annual Pirate 5K and Family Run, hosted by Palencia Elementary School and presented by Mathnasium, will take place on Saturday, Jan. 20., 2018. The race is a chip timed event that winds through the tree lined streets of the Palencia neighborhood. The 5K is scheduled to begin at the Palencia Club at 8 a.m. followed by a one-mile Family Fun Run starting around 9 a.m.

Last year the Pirate 5K attracted 400 runners from all over North Florida and even Georgia. The event raised more than \$5,500 towards providing a sun shade over the PE court of the school.

"The Pirate" aka Captain William Mayhem and his pirate crew the Swashbucklers, a local group the supports charities and historical reenactments, will make an appearance to cheer on the runners and take pictures.

Because so many students run in both the 5K and the Fun Run it is a great opportunity to choose to have a family fitness activity actively supports the elementary school. Additionally, because the race is held in January, the Pirate 5K run times may be used to qualify for other major runs, such as the Gate River Run being held on March 10, 2018.

Entry fees are \$30 for the 5K and/or 5K and Fun Run. Prices increase Jan. 9, 2018 to \$35. The one-mile Fun Run only is \$15. All registered participants get an event shirt. Visit [www.ThePirate5K.com](http://www.ThePirate5K.com) to register.

### Cunningham Creek announces holiday events for school families

Cunningham Creek Elementary will host a couple of fun events for students and families leading up to the holiday season.

The annual Light the Night event, proceeds of which will benefit the St. Augustine Youth Services Boys' Home, will be held on Friday, Dec. 8 from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. The event will feature crafts, story time and a performance by the school's chorus. The Cunningham Creek PTO and the Bartram Trail Rotary Club will host a complimentary spaghetti dinner along with hot cocoa and cookies. Donations are encouraged.

The school's second annual Holiday Hotcakes event will be held on Dec. 16 from 8 a.m. – 11 a.m. Families will feel festive drinking hot cocoa, creating holiday crafts and enjoying snow ... in Florida. Tickets will go on sale two weeks before the event. The event is hosted by the Cunningham Creek PTO as a fundraiser for the school.

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## Troop 280 catches some air

By Kenny King, Jr.  
mail@floridanewsline.com



Photo courtesy Derek Smith  
Troop 280 scouts went indoor skydiving at iFLY in Orlando.

A highlight for October for Boy Scout Troop 280 was a trip to Orlando for indoor skydiving. The scouts' trip to iFLY began with a STEM-based class where they learned the science and math that affects flight. Once completed, each scout received a flight suit and helmet and headed for the flight tube. Each scout and adult had two flights where they applied the theories they had learned.

The troop also had its monthly campout at Camp Shands. In addition to regular camping activities, scouts participated in a fun shooting day. The scouts had the opportunity to shoot rifles, shotguns, archery, and learned tomahawk throwing. This fundraising day called Ghostbusters is held every October and is open to all. Several

scouts and leaders also participated in a Cub Scout Halloween-themed campout called Spookaree. Troop 280 scouts prepared a haunted trail and dressed as ghosts and goblins for the Cubs' adventure.

The troop has welcomed six new scouts and looks forward to hosting visiting Webelos and their families about to cross over to Boy Scouts at Campfire Night on Nov. 20.

The troop meets on Monday nights at River of Life United Methodist Church on Race Track Road. Visit [www.julingtoncreekscouts.com](http://www.julingtoncreekscouts.com) if you would like to attend the campfire or would like additional information.

## Nease NJROTC hosts promotion and awards ceremony

By Scott LaRochelle  
mail@floridanewsline.com

Nease NJROTC held its First Quarter Promotion and Awards Ceremony on the parade deck on campus in late October, recognizing the cadet corps for exceptional performance during the past quarter.

Five ceremonies were held throughout the school day as each cadet company conducted their awards program during their respective class periods. As part of their leadership training, cadet company commanders organized, planned and executed the entire ceremonies. Active duty recruiters from the United States Marine Corps and Navy assisted in the presentations.

"Watching the naval science instructors lead these ceremonies in the past made it look so easy," said Alpha Company Commander Medina Blekic. "But when all the responsibility from start to finish was in my hands — I definitely felt a ton of pressure to perform."

In addition to Blekic, Company Commanders Peyton Gustafson, Troy Barber, Mason Ruckle and Robin Mendenhall led their cadets in ceremonies replete with the formal customs and courtesies seen in active duty events.

Of the 233 member corps of cadets, 94 cadets received promotions. To be promoted, cadets must pass a written examination and complete a mini-



Photo courtesy Scott LaRochelle  
Nease NJROTC naval science instructor Gunnery Sergeant Duane Hanson presents the Sailor of the Quarter award to Cadet Forrest Vosburg.

imum number of community service hours. The higher ranks require more demanding exams and greater community service hours. In addition to the promotions, 223 Navy JROTC ribbon awards were presented to the cadets for meeting requirements in Unit Service, Community Service, Drill Team and Color Guard.

Parents were invited during the ceremony to pin the new ranks on their cadet.

The two most prestigious awards presented during the day were the Sailor of the Quarter awards — one given to the top freshman and top upperclassman. Cadets Forrest Vosburg and Erin Sass received these esteemed awards.

Nease NJROTC has been recognized as the No. 1 NJROTC unit in Area-12 (northern Florida and state of Georgia) for five of the past six years, and was the Most Outstanding Unit in the Nation in 2015.

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## Julington Creek Elementary goes wild for fourth annual Jaguar Challenge

By Angela Higginbotham  
angela@floridanewslines.com

The Julington Creek Elementary PTO members work tirelessly every year to ensure another successful Jaguar Challenge fundraiser for the school. This year's challenge was kicked off with an energetic pep rally on Oct. 27. Always a favorite for the kids, Jazzy the Jaguar made an exciting appearance to encourage the students to have fun with fitness during this challenge. Funds raised during this fundraiser will be put towards playground enhancements, upgraded technology and 10 percent of the money raised will go straight to the teachers to help with classroom supplies. The students will receive prize incentives for meeting preset goals throughout the fundraising time frame. This year's total goal is \$50,000, a number that was surpassed during the 2016 Jaguar Challenge. Thus far, students have raised \$37,000 of the goal.

Four hundred students, teachers, staff, friends and family were in attendance for the Jaguar Challenge 5k / 1-mile Friends and Family run on Nov. 2. The course was mapped around Julington Creek Elementary and led by coaches on staff and the Fruit Cove Middle School cross country team. The Fruit Cove Middle School cheerleaders were in attendance to moti-

vate the crowd. DJ Journhigh, a bounce house, Marco's Pizza and Hawaiian Snosis shaved ice were also in attendance to celebrate and add to fun to the friends and family event.

"The kids loved the fun with fitness friends and family run. I came up with this challenge in an effort to find a way for the school to keep 100 percent of the pledges raised and we have had great success thanks to volunteers, teachers, students and their families," Jaguar Challenge Chair Larissa Prendergast said.



Photo courtesy Julington Creek Elementary  
Jazzy the Jaguar attended the Jaguar Challenge pep rally on Oct. 27.

Pajama day, cozy movies at lunch and other fun rewards will be given to classes as the pledges come in and goals are met. The final Jaguar Challenge fun run is set to be held on Nov. 16, followed by a celebration party on Nov. 20, where the students who raised the most pledges will be recognized for their success in helping their school.

"Thank you to the community for the strong, continuous support of Julington Creek Elementary," said Principal Jeanette Murphy said.

Julington Creek Elementary has approximately 1,000 students from kindergarten through fifth grade. The Jaguar Challenge is their main fundraiser of the year.

## Volunteers of the Year announced at Julington Creek Elementary

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewslines.com



Julington Creek Elementary Principal Jeanette Murphy with Linda Piscatella.



Photos courtesy Ingrid Jones  
Julington Creek Elementary Principal Jeanette Murphy with Larissa Prendergast.

Larissa Prendergast has been selected as Volunteer of the Year at Julington Creek Elementary. She has served as PTO president, room mom, and volunteers her time in the classroom and school/PTO sponsored activities. Prendergast created the largest fundraising event at JCE, the Jaguar Challenge, which raises \$40,000 – \$50,000 each year while focusing on fitness and healthy living — and all of the proceeds from this benefit students.

Linda Piscatella has been selected as Senior Volunteer of the Year at Julington Creek

Elementary. She began volunteering at JCE when her grandchildren attended the school; although they are now in high school, she continues to volunteer on a daily basis by assisting with the morning car line. After her "morning duty" she continues to share her time by assisting with kindergarten registrations, kindergarten school tours, Bingo Night, Spaghetti Night, proctoring, health screenings, and anything else needed.

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## BTHS Happenings: Bartram senior owes DECA Club for career goals

By Delaney Cantrell  
mail@floridanewslines.com

DECA President Jacob Hoelle started off the 2017 – 2018 school year with many plans in mind for the club. When meeting this Bartram Trail senior, it is clear why the club is so successful under his leadership. In addition to an infectious personality, his ambition and optimistic attitude have contributed to the growing popularity of this business minded club.

Hoelle has lived in St. Johns County his entire life. He looks up to his brothers, Joseph (21) and James (18), as well as his parents, Christopher and Diana. The Hoelles are very supportive of Jacob and are a very close-knit family.

Hoelle said, "DECA is an international club that helps prepare high school students who are interested in the business and finance world."

This club provides opportunities for exposure into the business world, allowing students to get a glimpse of different occupations and to see if they may actually be interested in a business or finance related career.

Hoelle has been a member of DECA since his freshman year. He competed in the Marketing Communications Team Decision Making competition with fellow DECA member, Regan Clark, and placed first at the district competition during his freshman and sophomore years. He and Clark teamed up again to earn first place at districts and fourth place at states their junior year in the Marketing Management

Team Decision Making competition.

This is Hoelle's first year leading the club as president after serving as treasurer his junior year. Hoelle's first plan of action for the school year was to increase DECA membership — and membership is up 24 members this year to a total of 240.

Another goal of Hoelle's is to have more members place in the international competition at the end of the year. The club has seen increasing placement at the international level during his four years of high school. Although it is only the beginning of competition season, students have already begun

working on their papers, test preparations, and presentations in an effort to take as many members as possible to the international competition.

When asked what DECA has done for him personally, he responded, "I went from a student who had no idea what I wanted to do to a student who truly has a path now."

Hoelle plans to attend a four-year university (hopefully the University of Alabama) where he will major in finance and continue on for his Master's in Business Administration. Hoelle is grateful that he did not listen to his freshman self who did not want to join DECA, because it initially sounded like "too much work." DECA has proven to be a rewarding and fun experience that allowed him to meet lots of new people with similar life goals. He would encourage other freshman to break out of their comfort zone and give DECA a try.



Photo courtesy Delaney Cantrell  
Bartram Trail High School DECA President Jacob Hoelle

## Creekside sophomore heads to Hollywood for national pageant

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewslines.com

On most weekend, you will find Lauren Sonnier covered in a layer of dust and supporting Horse Sense and Sensitivity, which is a local nonprofit therapeutic horseback riding program located at Bailey's Ranch off Bishop Estates Road. Sonnier feels blessed to serve exceptional children as a therapeutic riding volunteer and is amazed at how much she learns from her students every week.

Sonnier's volunteerism started at age six, when she joined Girl Scouts as a Daisy. Over the years, she has continued her service to the community and was awarded both the Silver and Bronze Award for Girl

Scouts for her volunteerism.

Sonnier is a sophomore at Creekside High School and a member of the National English Honor Society and Hispanic Honor Society. Math and science are her favorite classes and she is enrolled in the Advanced Scholars Program, Civil Engineering Academy and participates in Advanced Placement classes.



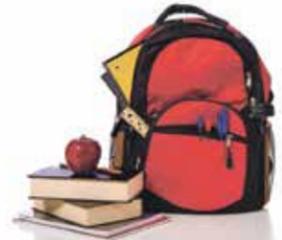
Photo courtesy Andrea Seymour Sonnier  
Lauren Sonnier wearing her winning dress purchased from Clelia's Party Dresses.

On July 9, 2017, Sonnier decided to compete in the National American Miss Florida's state pageant as a way to gain confidence and experience in public speaking

for her personal growth. She was honored with first place in the Heart of Service competition for her exceptional service to the Saint Johns community. As a result of this, she is headed to Hollywood to compete at the national level over the Thanksgiving holiday.

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## St. Johns County to host phone calls from Santa

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewslines.com



Photo by MetroCreative

St. Johns County Parks and Recreation is hosting phone calls from Santa this holiday season for children eight years old or younger. Santa will make his phone calls between 6 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. nightly from Dec. 5 – Dec. 7.

Parents must register children by Dec. 2 by downloading a registration form from [www.sjcfll.us/youthactivities](http://www.sjcfll.us/youthactivities) and or emailing it to [jjbratovich@sjcfll.us](mailto:jjbratovich@sjcfll.us) or faxing it to faxing it to (904) 209-0321.

Call (904) 209-0386 for more information.

## Keeping your pets safe during Holiday Season

By Dr. Michael Bredehoeft  
mail@floridanewslines.com

As wonderful as the upcoming holiday can be for your family, it can be a dangerous time for our four legged friends. Table food, ornaments and decorations can have disastrous consequences if ingested by your dog or cat.

**Food:** Slipping your pet rich holiday foods and bones can lead to inflammation of the intestinal tract (enteritis) and pancreas (pancreatitis), which can lead to vomiting, diarrhea, dehydration and in severe cases, blood poisoning and death.

Dogs are extremely attracted to dark chocolate, which contains theobromine and caffeine. In small amounts, it is likely to only cause diarrhea, but in large amounts can lead to arrhythmias of the heart and seizures.

Keeping our furry loved ones away from the dinner table at mealtime will help reduce episodes of accidental ingestion, as well as the temptation to share your meal.

**Ornaments:** Tinsel, ribbons, garland and potpourri, oh my! All of these holiday regulars can make your home look like a shiny, exciting playground to your cat. The attraction cats have to tinsel and garland is obvious, but if ingested, can lead to a life-threatening blockage of the intestinal tract. If your pet likes batting around the low lying glass ornaments, consider placing them out of reach or going plastic. Who doesn't love the smell of pine and evergreen during the holidays? Both liquid and dry potpourri can be extremely toxic to your pet, so be sure to keep them safely away.

**Holly and mistletoe:** Thinking about decking your halls with holly, mistletoe and poinsettias? Think again. They are known to cause stomach and intestinal upset if ingested. In addition to these symptoms, holly berries can cause central nervous system depression and mistletoe can cause depression of the heart. If you suspect that your pet may have ingested a poisonous plant, call your veterinarian or the poison control hotline at 1 (888) 426-4435.

**Guests and pets:** Your holiday guests, especially children, may not know the proper way to interact with your pet. Supervise every interaction your pet has with others. Be sure to watch for signs of distress, like growling and hissing. Creating a comfortable, quiet, safe place for your pet, such as their crate or a separate room, during these high stress events will go a long way in reducing their (and your) anxieties.

Wishing you and your pet a very warm and safe holiday season!

*Dr. Michael Bredehoeft is the owner of Switzerland Animal Hospital in St. Johns. Visit [www.switzerlandanimalhospital.com](http://www.switzerlandanimalhospital.com) for more information.*

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### Tax Tip of the Month

In 2015, approximately 10,000,000 taxpayers owed an estimated tax penalty. Most taxpayers can easily reduce or eliminate this penalty by increasing their withholding or adjusting their estimated tax payments for the remainder of the year. This penalty can easily be avoided with a little planning. If you would like assistance in determining whether you can avoid this penalty, or even, perhaps, reduce your tax for 2017, please contact us at 904-880-3200.

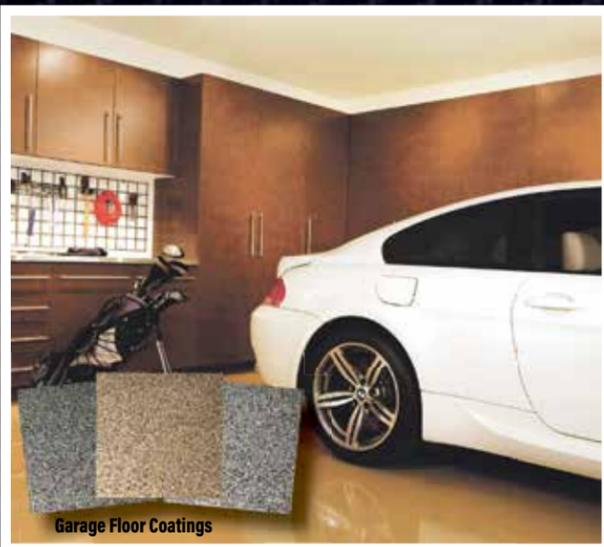
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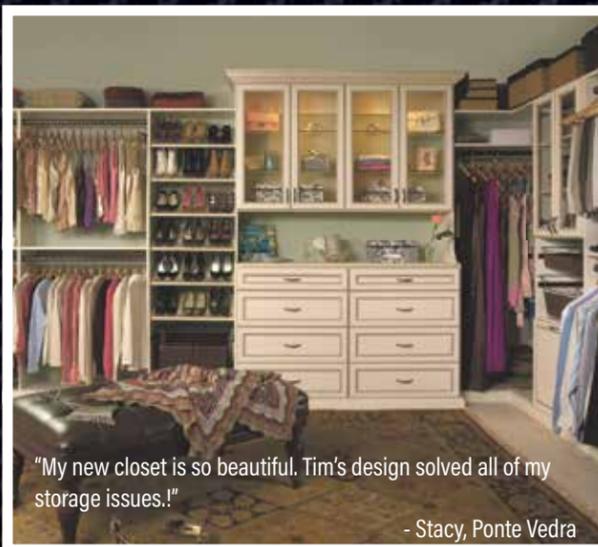
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## Golf Tips from T Shot Ranch

By Janie C. Farina  
mail@floridanewsline.com

### "Doo Bee" a better golfer

"Doo Bee Doo Bee Doo you make me feel so happy"...

*Aka Snuggle Bunny/Schnuffel*

Growing up on the golf course, hitting balls was a challenge, since Nick Stoner Golf Course was minus a driving range. Summers we lived in an apartment above the pro shop.

My dad, the pro, would take us beside the green of the par 5, 18th hole at the crack of dawn, and hit towards the tee box until we saw golfers approaching.

Timing was important so we could "shag" the balls before the group came down the fairway to hit their second shots.

Dad would say "You made me feel so happy when I can throw a blanket over what we hit," not only because they were good target shots, but then we could "shag" the balls in record time and not scavenge around looking to pick them up.

So what does it take to "Doo" all the right things and become a "Doo Bee" golfer that can lay a blanket over the balls you hit?

There are two ball flight laws we have to conquer to avoid that scavenger hunt for your golf balls: Path and Clubface.

Path is the road the club takes to the ball.

Imagine playing darts from the side, instead of face on, and hitting the bullseye? That's basically what golfers are required to do. Since golf is played from the side, not face on, our perception to the target is compromised by eye dominance. Therefore it's critical to look at the desired target with both eyes, while lining up your shot, as in darts. Only then place

the club, plant your feet, and settle before each swing to be on the proper path. (Taking a practice swing may be done before we make our final lineup to keep

the target fresh in our mind's eye.) Alignment sticks, videos, and partners are all great resources to keep in check with proper alignment, and target awareness.

In addition to Path, "Better Doo Bee Players" make sure the Clubface is perpendicular to the desired target.

If a player has a great golf swing, proper path, and a crooked clubface, the ball will not go to the intended target. Be aware: grip (how we place our hands on the handle of the club) and lie angle (the angle of the shaft and the head off the club to the ground) are important factors that contribute to making contact on the sweet spot of the clubface, and subsequently getting the ball to the desired target. (Proper club fitting with a good instructor will facilitate a player into the right grip, posture, and set up to the ball).

Just as "Doo Bee Doo Bee Doo" Snuggle Bunny sings, when we put the two ball flight laws into effect, "feeling happy" happens with good timing, like setting words to music.

So "Don't Bee a Don't Bee" and make the same mistakes over and over again, hunting for balls like Easter eggs; be a "Doo Bee Doo Bee Doo" and put all your eggs in one basket.

Stay feeling happy in golf!

*Janie C. Farina is a 26-year teaching professional recently who relocated to the St. Johns area. She is now available for golf instruction at two local golf courses. Email her at [hitthedirt2@gmail.com](mailto:hitthedirt2@gmail.com) with comments or questions.*



Photo by MetroCreative

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# Faith News

**Dec. 2:**  
**Cross Creek Church, 401 Greenbriar Road in St. Johns,** will host Campfest from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Kids can participate in camp activities including archery, sling shots, arts and crafts, outdoor cooking, campfire, music, bounce houses and more at this free event. Lunch will be sold. This will also be a time to learn about a local family camp. Email the director, Alecia Forester, at [starlingloscc@gmail.com](mailto:starlingloscc@gmail.com) for more information.

**Dec. 2:**  
**Presbyterian Women and Helping Hands** are sponsoring a Christmas Gift Bazaar at Geneva Presbyterian Church, 1755 State Road 13 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Just in time for the holidays, the event will feature unique gifts, make and take crafts, Christmas décor, bake sale, hotdog lunch, cards and more.

**Dec. 3:**  
**Geneva Presbyterian Church** will host a special Hanging of the Greens service on Sunday, Dec. 3 at 10:30 a.m. at the church, located at 1755 State Road 13.

**Dec. 3:**  
**Chabad of St. Johns is partnering with Lowe's** to host a pre-Chanukah Menorah Building Workshop beginning at 2 p.m. at Lowe's located at 4040 Oldfield Crossing Drive. Wearing mini Lowe's aprons and goggles, children will each craft a Menorah with a host of supplies available from Lowe's. Light refreshments in the form of fried foods to remind attendees of the miracle of the oil will be available during

a demonstration of olive oil making. Additionally, Judah Maccabee will make his annual appearance. Visit [www.JewishS-JohnsCounty.com](http://www.JewishS-JohnsCounty.com), email [Info@JewishS-JohnsCounty.com](mailto:Info@JewishS-JohnsCounty.com) or call (904) 701-4422 to RSVP or for more information.

**Dec. 13:**  
**The Geneva Community Ringers** will present a combined bell choir concert at 7 p.m. at Geneva Presbyterian Church, 1755 State Road 13, where three groups come together to ring handbells and chimes, nimbly demonstrating more than eight different handbell techniques.

**Dec. 15:**  
**St. Patrick's Episcopal Church, 1221 State Road 13,** will host Christmas Movies on the Lawn beginning at 7 p.m. Attendees should bring a blanket and chair, holiday cheer and an appetite for family fun, food and surprises. All ages are welcome. Visit [www.stpatricksepiscopal.org](http://www.stpatricksepiscopal.org) for more information.

**Dec. 17:**  
**Geneva Presbyterian Church** will present its Christmas Cantata, featuring a 16-instrument ensemble from the Jacksonville Youth Symphony Orchestra and the church's adult choir, at 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. Conductor Frederick J. Kunkel has curated a varied selection of Christmas music to "celebrate of the 'Glad Season' and radiantly affirm the goodness of life." Tickets to the event at 1755 State Road 13 are free, with a goodwill offering at the door. Call (904) 287-4865 or visit [genevapresbyterian.org](http://genevapresbyterian.org) for more information.

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**Do you have any Faith News?**

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## Shepherd of the Woods Lutheran Church

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**Christmas Eve Services**  
 Sunday, December 24th  
 5:00, 7:00, 9:00 and 11:00pm

**Christmas Day Services**  
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# Fishing

## Capt. David's Fishing Report

By Captain David Lifka  
mail@floridanewsline.com

Once again it's the time of year to find the perfect gift for the fishing people in your life this holiday season. When shopping there is always that little bit of uncertainty as to whether the gifts you buy are actually something they need or will even use. Your goal is to find the perfect gift, but your confidence to do so just isn't quite there. Here are a few ideas that will hopefully make this year's shopping a little easier:

If money is not an object, then definitely a new fishing boat is the way to go. Ranging in price from tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands of dollars, this is an idea that probably will not be on too many people's shopping lists; however, a fishing kayak is a different story.

Kayaks provide a fishing platform capable of chasing down multiple species of fresh and saltwater fish. From rivers, to creeks, lakes, ponds, marshes, and even the ocean, one could expect a kayak to provide the access required to catch bream and bass on one day, trout, reds, and flounder on another and even kingfish and cobia on yet another day. Because of their relatively low costs to purchase (usually a few hundred dollars up to a couple thousand), and little to no cost to own after purchase (no gas, no maintenance, no registration fees), a fishing kayak really could make a great gift for

someone wanting to take their fishing talents to another level.

For the new or established fishing person you may be shopping for, there are still many more gift ideas that won't put as big of a dent in the wallet. Here are a few more ideas:

Wearable inflatable life vests, additional life jackets, proper Coast Guard equipment, first aid box, and any other items that might relate to the safety of a fishing trip. Fishing tools, such as bait knives, fillet knives, and fishing pliers. New generation coolers, which can hold ice and cool contents for days instead of hours. Additional tackle boxes or trays to increase tackle storage. New marine electronics such as GPS, sonar, and marine radios, and finally something really easy: clothing. Not just shirts and shorts, but also the products that are designed to protect against UV rays including sunglasses and hats.

Fishing Report: Speckled perch, also known as Crappie, should be turning on in area creeks and lakes during cooler weather periods with live minnows for bait. On the warmer days, switch to worms for bait and a possible shellcracker bite.

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

## Hear for the Holidays winner: Robert Groves

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewsline.com

Dr. Leslie Newmeyer, Au.D of Jax Audiology and Hearing Aid Center partnered with Florida NewsLine to make a difference in a deserving individual's holiday season this year with the gift of hearing. Through



Photo courtesy Linda Gay  
Dr. Leslie Newmeyer, Robert Groves, and Hart Felt Ministries volunteer Rod Lee.



Dr. Leslie Newmeyer fits Robert Groves with his new hearing aid.

the generosity of Oticon's donation of a pair of Oticon OPN Hearing Aids, Robert Groves was selected as the winner in the Hear for the Holidays contest.

Groves was born in Gastonia, N.C. in 1928 and moved with his wife of 41 years to Jacksonville to start a real estate business. He retired in 2008.

Groves is very sociable and enjoys the company of others. Every morning he takes a long morning stroll around his

apartment complex, but he feels he has been missing a lot of what's going on around him due to not being able to hear. Groves has wished for a hearing aid, but his income restricted him from pursuing such a costly device.

Groves was overjoyed to hear he would be the recipient of the Oticon Hearing Aid and is looking forward to enjoying this holiday season with the gift of hearing.

Visit [www.jaxaudiology.com](http://www.jaxaudiology.com) for more information.

## Nutrition Check: Portion distortion

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

Holiday festivities are generally filled with large, delicious feasts with extensive options of meats, sides, breads and desserts. Research has shown that when there is more food available, the average person will take advantage of this and overconsume calories.



Photo courtesy MetroCreative

More than likely each person will be faced with a huge variety of traditional holiday favorites and it is important to savor them; however, overindulging can lead to bloating, heartburn, upset stomach and potential weight gain.

To prevent eating more than our stomachs can handle, it is just as easy as two words: portion distortion. This means you can enjoy the foods that you want to around the holidays, but be mindful on the quantity of each choice you select. Some tips you can use this holiday season for portion control include the following:

- If available, use smaller serving utensils. It has been shown that larger plates and utensils encourage us to take more than we need, because a half-filled large plate looks bare. Try selecting small plates, cups and bowls to enjoy your favorite foods.
- Don't skip meals. Around the holiday time, we have vivid memories of our favorite pumpkin pie or stuffing that is a family tradition. You

are going to enjoy at that family party later, but if you don't eat all day, you might be tempted to overeat once you start, so have healthy snack options to munch on during the day while cooking — like a vegetable tray, fruit and cheese platter or bite-sized appetizers. Consuming foods during the day will make the chances less likely that you will overconsume at the big meal.

- Lastly, think when you are eating. We all want to hear the stories of our friends and family, but getting distracted can cause mindless eating. Listen to your body when it's telling you that you are full. It takes approximately 30 minutes for signals to move from our full stomach to our brain to let us know that we are full, so eat slowly and mindfully.

*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.*

## The Pantry Raiders

## Host a delicious holiday brunch

By Chef Nils Rowland  
mail@floridanewslines.com

Holiday dinners may garner the bulk of hosts' attention, but overnight guests need to eat breakfast and lunch as well. Brunch can save hosts some work and give families a great opportunity to break bread without some of the formalities that may accompany holiday dinners. This holiday season, consider serving this ideal brunch recipe for "Farfalle with Crabmeat, Asparagus, Scrambled Eggs, Garlic, and Herbs" from Norman Kolpas' "Buongiorno! Breakfast and Brunch, Italian Style" (Contemporary Books).

### Farfalle with Crabmeat, Asparagus, Scrambled Eggs, Garlic, and Herbs

(Makes 4 to 6 servings)

- 1 pound farfalle
- ½ pound asparagus, trimmed and sliced diagonally, ¼-inch thick
- 10 extra-large eggs
- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese, plus more for serving
- 2 tbsp. heavy cream
- ½ pound cooked lump crabmeat, picked over to remove any bits of shell or cartilage
- ¼ cup finely chopped fresh chives
- 2 tbsp. finely chopped fresh Italian parsley
- Freshly ground black pepper



Photo courtesy MetroCreative

Farfalle with Crabmeat, Asparagus, Scrambled Eggs, Garlic, and Herbs

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add the farfalle and cook until al dente, following the manufacturer's suggested cooking time. About two minutes before the pasta is done, add the asparagus.

Meanwhile, in a mixing bowl, beat the eggs with a fork or whisk until slightly frothy. Set aside. When the pasta and asparagus are done, drain and set aside. Immediately melt the butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic and sauté until fragrant, about one minute. Add the pasta and asparagus and toss briefly to coat them with the butter mixture. Pour in the eggs, add ¼ cup Parmesan and the cream, and stir and toss the mixture until the eggs just have begun to form moist curds, about two minutes. Add the crabmeat, chives and parsley and continue cooking and tossing until the eggs have formed more solid curds that cling to the farfalle, one to two minutes more.

Serve immediately with freshly grated Parmesan and black pepper for guests to add to taste.

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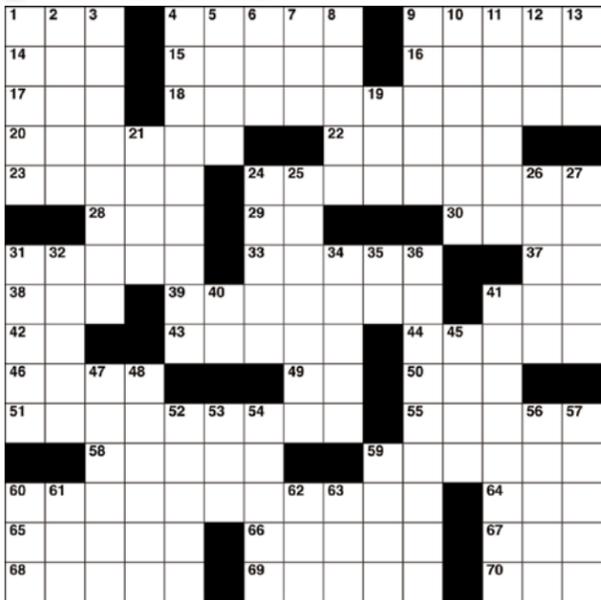
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# Puzzles

Answers on page 2  
Provided by MetroCreative



**CLUES ACROSS**

1. No (Scottish)
4. Heroic tales
9. A way to tend
14. Not or
15. Where rockers play
16. Dutch name for Ypres
17. Ingested
18. A resident of California
20. Unfounded rumor
22. Oats
23. Type of women's coat
24. Life forms
28. Every
29. Alternating current
30. Withered
31. "Gymnopedies" composer
33. Plate glasses
37. Muscial artist \_\_\_ DeBarge
38. Before
39. Arrange in steps of size
41. Electron cloud model

42. Morning
43. Leonard \_\_\_, famed Swiss mathematician
44. Capital city of Buenos Aires province
46. Snouts
49. Of I
50. Swiss river
51. Perplexes
55. Made angry
58. Precious stone
59. Type of envelope
60. One who believes in reason and knowledge
64. Monitors brain activity (abbr.)
65. Get \_\_\_ of
66. Actress Zellweger
67. Spinal muscular atrophy (abbr.)
68. "Inferno" author
69. Puts together in time
70. Silvery-white metal

**CLUES DOWN**

1. Civil Rights group
2. Early Slavic society
3. Mammals that lack incisors and canines
4. Blasphemy
5. Israeli city
6. Put this in your hair
7. Black tropical American cuckoo
8. Month in the Islamic calendar
9. Begets
10. Court game
11. Painkiller
12. New Zealand parrot
13. Suffix
19. Egg cells
21. Another name for Thor
24. About pontiff
25. The academic world
26. Raise
27. Civil rights city in Alabama
31. Encompasses
32. Helmet
34. Nostrils
35. Lovable Spielberg alien
36. Divides
40. Ruthenium
41. Preceding all others in time
45. Past participle of lie
47. Fastener
48. Overindulged
52. Ancient lyric poem
53. Ardent supporter
54. Iranian village and Islamic pilgrim attire
56. A fragrant resin obtained from tropical trees
57. Semitic fertility god
59. Millisecond
60. Cool!
61. "Take on Me" singers
62. ESPN sportscaster Bob
63. Accommodating place

## READY-TO-WEAR WORD SEARCH

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

**WORDS**

- BLOUSE
- BUTTONS
- COAT
- COLLAR
- CORSET
- COTTON
- COUTURE
- CREASE
- CUFF
- DESIGN
- DRESS
- FROCK
- HEM
- INSEAM
- JACKET
- LAPEL
- LENGTH
- LINGERIE
- PLEAT
- POCKET
- POLYESTER
- SEAM
- SEASONAL
- SHELL
- SHIRT
- SILK
- SKIRT
- SLACKS
- SPORTS COAT
- SPORTSWEAR
- SWIMSUIT
- TAILOR
- TUCK
- UNDERWEAR
- WOOL
- ZIPPER

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally & diagonally throughout the puzzle.

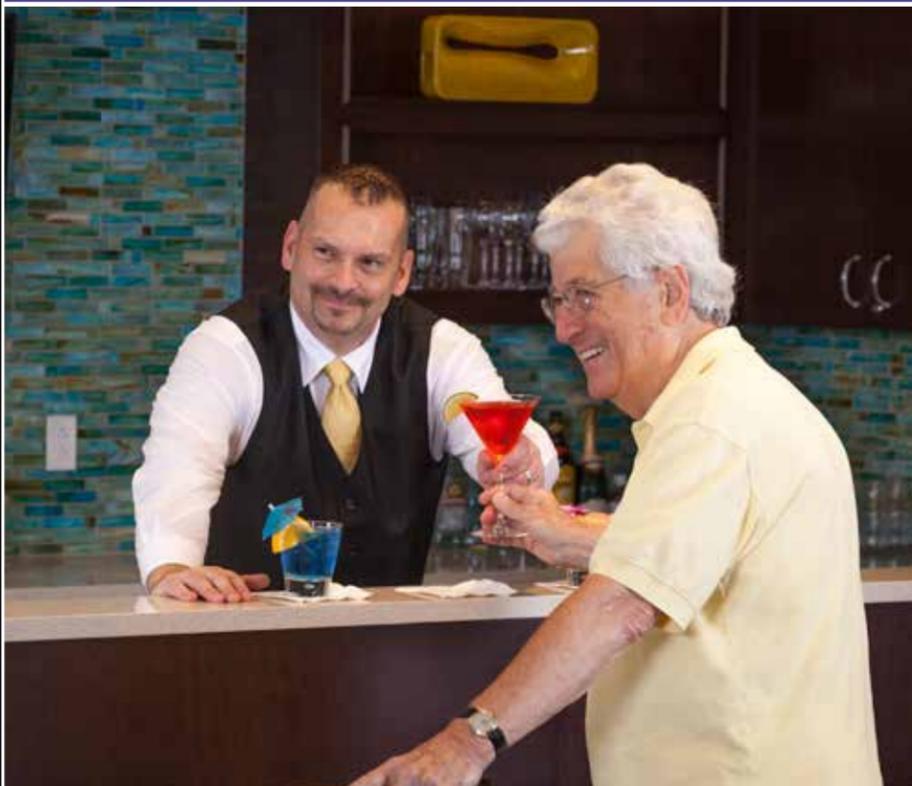
## CRYPTO FUN

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to Walt Disney.  
Each number corresponds to a letter.  
(Hint: 20 = m)

- A. 20 8 7 15 14**  
Clue: Film
- B. 17 12 15 20 17 5 14**  
Clue: Make to move
- C. 20 8 6 1 14**  
Clue: Mickey is one
- D. 3 17 20 15 22 18**  
Clue: Relatives

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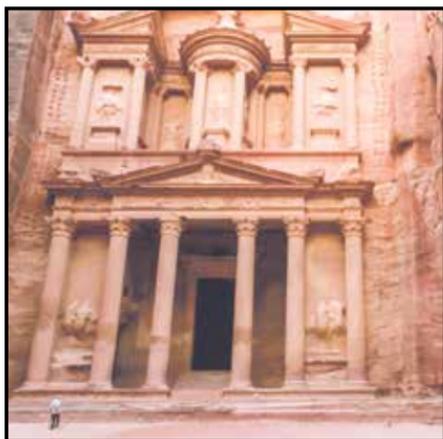
## Finding the jewels of Jordan

By Debi Lander  
mail@floridanewsline.com

Americans generally don't include the Middle East on their bucket list, but I'd like to change your mind about Jordan. The Hashemite Kingdom, Jordan's official name, is the safest country in the region and extremely welcoming to tourists. Jordan offers incredible historic sites, attractions, and adventures for luxury to budget travelers.

Petra, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, stands out as the favorite. The ancient city flourished as the strategic crossroads for spice and silk trade some 2,300 years ago, but routes changed and earthquakes twice ravaged the area. By the 13th century, only local Bedouin tribes remembered Petra. In 1812, Swiss explorer Jean Louis Burckhardt disguised himself as an Arab wanting to make an offering. He convinced a guide to take him to the area. Burckhardt rediscovered Petra's tombs, but couldn't fully inspect the ruins. His guide became suspicious, forcing Burckhardt to leave. He wrote about his findings, but they, too, remained off limits for decades.

The Treasury, a delicate and beautifully chiseled stone structure, lies hidden at



Photos courtesy Debi Lander  
Petra Treasury

the end of a mile long walk between massive 10-story high boulders. The movie "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" features Harrison Ford and Sean Connery in a miraculous escape from the location.

Reaching the Monastery takes a climb of 900 rough, worn steps unless you'd prefer a donkey ride. The reward at the end more than justifies the arduous trek opening up views of the most intricate architectural shrine. Petra includes many more temples, tombs, an amphitheater and streets within the vast World Heritage site.

Wadi Rum, about an hour from Petra, is also part of the cinematic legend, providing locations for the movie "Lawrence of Arabia," highlighted by British Intelligence Officer T.E. Lawrence's epic battle. Camel and jeep tours into the desert offer overnight camping. The more budget conscious still have a



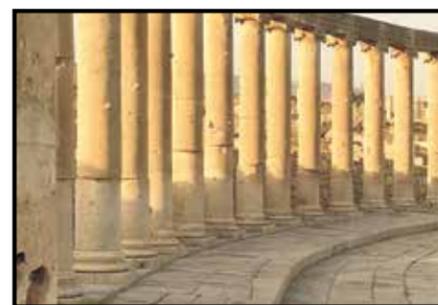
A Bedouin and his camels

sand Columns, displays the best ruins outside of Italy. In some ways, I found them superior to their counterparts in Rome, as they haven't been overly visited. You'll need at least a half-day to explore the expansive archeological destination. Recently, opera star Andrea Bocelli gave a concert in the amphitheater.

Other than Israel, no other country has more biblical sites. Bethany Beyond the Jordan attracts as the site of Jesus' baptism. It's common to see Christians being dunked in the River Jordan during their baptismal ceremony. Nearby, at Mt. Nebo, stand where Moses first gazed upon the Promised Land.

The accommodating Jordanians offer farm-fresh, colorful and American friendly food, but don't expect burgers and fries. Meals begin with salad, fresh bread and an array of toppings like hummus, tabbouleh or moutabel, similar to baba ghanoush.

Direct flights from New York City arrive in Amman, the capital. Western-friendly hotels and local-run establishments alike await. My suggestion is to sign on for



Jerash

a five – seven day tour of the country and prepare yourself for the thrill of a lifetime.

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

dazzling choice — sleeping under the crystal clear starry sky. Slightly splurging turns an already fantastic experience to "glamping" (glamor camping) in rooms with ensuite bathrooms. Accommodations include Zarb, a delicious Bedouin dinner cooked in a sand-covered pit.

Aqaba, a famous harbor on the Red Sea, offers boating and great snorkeling or scuba diving. Farther up the coast, Dead Sea luxury resort hotels sparkle next to the often-iridescent water. Relax on the beach and give yourself the mud treatment and dip in the salty brine. My skin never felt better!

The Romans were no strangers to Jordan. Jerash, called the City of a Thou-

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# Gardening

## Planting for beneficial insects

By Lesley Arrandale  
mail@floridanewsline.com



With the mild — actually exceptionally warm! — temperatures we've been experiencing, we can continue planting some hardy perennials and bulbs in December, as well as shrubs and trees. Bear in mind, though, that we are now in a dry season, and be prepared to water newly installed plants to get them well established.

Neonicotinoids (neonics) are a class of systemic insecticides that can be used on many types of plants. Briefly, there is evidence to show that, in combination with other stressors, bees can suffer from these chemicals because they spread throughout treated plants, and are found in both the nectar and pollen ingested by bees and their brood. It makes sense, therefore, when choosing flowering plants that encourage insects to enhance our gardens, we need to consider whether they may unintentionally be harmful. Growers of native plants will avoid the use of neonicotinoids, as do Bonnie Plants, growers of vegetables and herbs. Proven Winners' plants are produced without neonics, but they also sell liner plants to nurseries that then grow them to sale size, and not all of those nurseries will necessarily avoid neonics. So do your research, ask questions of the nursery staff where you buy plants, and choose wisely. Large bees and small bees are attracted to different types of flowers; those with short tongues collect nectar from ray flowers, or typical daisy-like

flowers, whereas larger bees have longer tongues and can handle tubular flowers. Unlike hummingbirds, which are readily attracted to red flowers, bees prefer flowers in shades of blue, purple, white or yellow.

Aim to find a range of plants that bloom at different times of the year. Early bloomers include the native spiderwort, *Tradescantia ohiensis*. It has one-inch, pretty blue to purple triangular flowers, which are clustered at the top of 12 – 18 inch stems; they open briefly, but sequentially. It self seeds readily and spreads by rhizomes, so make sure it will fit with your plans. Other spring-blooming native flowers include violets, wild petunia (*Ruellia humilis* — not the Mexican type) and coreopsis. Many of our trees that bloom in spring, like the redbud (*Cercis canadensis*), are invaluable to pollinators. Red maple (*Acer rubrum*) is a particularly important source of nectar for honey bees, as well as a cheerful reminder that spring is on the way. For inspiration, check out The Florida Friendly Landscaping™ Guide to Plant Selection and Landscape Design at [http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/FYN\\_Plant\\_Selection\\_Guide\\_2015.pdf](http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/FYN_Plant_Selection_Guide_2015.pdf). Bloom times are given to help you achieve a colorful garden year round.

Now the clocks have changed, our lawn watering schedules have been adjusted to once a week. To ensure you have the

correct schedule, please see <http://www.coj.net/departments/neighborhoods/environmental-quality/irrigation-and-fertilizer>.

As grass gradually becomes dormant in cooler weather it will need less water and you may find that rainfall is adequate. Remember that overwatering, at any time of year, can cause problems with diseases. Cut down on mowing and cut the grass high so it has a strong root system going into winter. Hand pull cool season weeds, or spot treat with an her-

bicide suitable for your grass species, to keep them under control. If your grass is still recovering from damage caused by debris from hurricane Irma laying on it for weeks, check out the November/December issue of "A New Leaf" for recommendations: <http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu/documents/nleafNovemberDecember.17.pdf>. As always, you will find timely articles on vegetable growing, what to plant in December, and upcoming classes. Happy floriferous Holidays, One and All.

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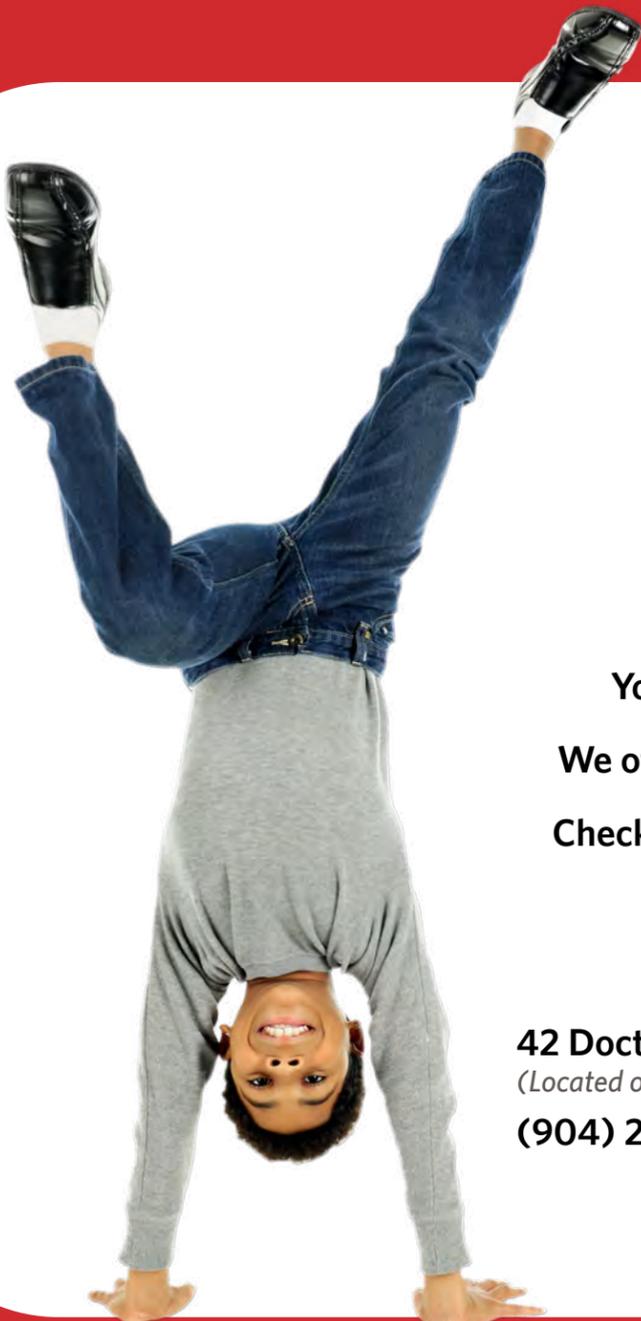
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