

Mandarin NewsLine

JUNE 2018 Volume 12 Issue 8

A Florida NewsLine Publication



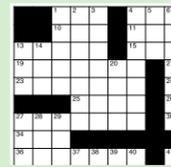
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want to know!



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Tree Giveaway at Mandarin Community Club a success ... again!

By Susie Scott
mail@floridanewslines.com



Photo courtesy Susie Scott

Marie Zimmerman, Mandarin Community Club board member/volunteer and Thompson Ace Hardware owner Jacqueline Thompson with Master Gardener Tatiana.

The Mandarin Community Club hosted the second annual Tree Giveaway for its members and the residents of Mandarin on Saturday, April 28.

The grounds of the historic club located on Mandarin Road were filled with hundreds of trees in a variety of species awaiting crowds to make their selection. Volunteers from the community club were on standby to assist with loading. Representatives from Thompson Ace Hardware on Old St. Augustine Road brought tools and supplies along with a master gardener to advise patrons on best planting practices. The club also welcomed the assistance of Father Joe Gibbes of Church of Our Savior who also volunteered at this very special community event.

Tree Giveaway cont. on pg. 18

Kayaking around Florida (and contributing to a good cause)

By Angela Higginbotham
angela@floridanewslines.com

Former United States Marine Esteban Blyar finished the journey of a lifetime when he pulled his kayak ashore in mid-May after completing a 61-day kayaking trip around the coast of Florida on what is called the Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail. The trail is a total of 1,515 miles long.

Blyar was born in Buford, S.C. into a military family and is a 2013 graduate of Atlantic Coast High School. Not long after graduation, he followed in his father David's footsteps and joined the Marine Corps. Esteban Blyar served for four years. The Marine Corps seemed an obvious choice for Blyar because it was familiar to him; he grew up living overseas for 10 of his first 15 years in Japan, Czech Republic and Honduras before his dad retired back to the United States. It was in Okinawa, Japan where he discovered a passion for outdoors — snorkeling, hiking and kayaking. Blyar will begin training with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) in November.

Averaging 20 – 30 miles per day, Blyar started the circumnavigational trail near the Alabama/Florida line and paddled the coast on his 17-foot sea kayak. He completed the challenge at Fort Clinch State Park. Blyar used his adventure for a great cause: he set up a fundraiser for the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society and raised donations through Face-

book. A donation of \$3,380 was made to the society after Blyar's completion of the trail. Blyar said he supports the society because he received emergency travel assistance from the society while on active duty. Also, his father currently works for the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Jacksonville.

Weather was favorable for the majority of Blyar's traveling.

"The saltwater marsh in the Panhandle was probably the biggest challenge. There's no dry land for at least nine miles," Blyar said. "If anything happens at that point, it's easy to get pushed up into the marsh. I walked about a mile in the marsh. I did also have to camp out for over a day because of wind. It rained all day one day and it got into the 30s some nights, so that was uncomfortable."

Blyar kept a week's worth of food and supplies on hand at a time. His father, and periodically his mom and wife, would meet him along the way to replenish supplies. Blyar would then



Photo courtesy David Blyar

shower in the hotel where his family was staying at the time. After a long day of paddling, he usually set up camp around 4 p.m. and then would spend his time stretching or swimming.

"I enjoyed doing this," he said. "The Everglades and Keys were probably my favorite, but I really enjoyed the wildlife everywhere."

Blyar plans to continue his kayaking adventures in the future. After he gains more experience, he hopes to navigate some of Europe and the Amazon. He has several kayaks for different purposes and is looking forward to more challenges.



Photos courtesy Anne Warren

Wade Eastman, Julien Toussi, Matthew Warren, Ashley Davis, Samantha Morrison

Velobrew Junior Cycling team races in state championship

By Anne Warren
mail@floridanewslines.com

Cycling is a great way to promote a healthy lifestyle, while developing discipline for a sport. The Velobrew Junior Cycling Team, based in Mandarin, helps train young riders for bike racing and triathlons through the coaching of Scott Reeves, founder of Velobrew Cycling. On April 21 – 22 a group of five junior

Velobrew riders traveled to Cooper City, Fla., to race in the Florida State Criterium Championships. Ashley Davis, a

Velobrew Junior Cycling cont. on pg. 11

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take 5

Italian American Club to hold yard sale

The IAC (Italian American Club) Yard Sale will take place on Saturday, June 16 from 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., rain or shine. Anyone is welcome to donate items to the club to sell — no clothing, large furniture or electronics, but treasures you no longer wish to keep will be gratefully accepted for your donation to the club to sell. It is also open to the public to come and share outside space for a \$20 fee, no table. The IAC will be selling food and drinks. Call the club at (904) 586-2700 or visit www.iacofjacksonville.com for information regarding donating items to the club for the yard sale.

Kids Fair to benefit Mandarin Food Bank

On Saturday, June 16, the Mandarin St. Johns Elks Lodge, 4280 Oldfield Crossing, will hold its first ever Kids Fair to benefit the Mandarin Food Bank. The event, free to children age 12 and younger, will run from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and will feature a bounce house, games and prizes. Crafters, vendors, and a bake sale will be on hand to entertain the parents. A raffle for prizes

will be held with the entry fee being one non-perishable food item or a box of Ziploc bags (all sizes) per ticket. The Elks' mission of building a stronger community is fulfilled by helping youth develop lifelong skills, sending students to college, meeting the needs of today's veterans and directing projects that improve the quality of life in our communities. Contact event chair Sheri Rodriguez at (904) 903-6546 for more information.

Class offered to explore library's digital media

Whether you want to download a few beach reads or keep your children entertained with new content throughout the summer, there's no better time to learn the ropes of the library's downloadable media collection. Not only are e-resources convenient, they're also free with your library card. Head to South Mandarin Branch Library on June 16 from 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. for the "E-Books and More" program, where you will learn everything you need to know about downloading e-books, audio books, magazines and music.

Calling acoustic musicians and music lovers

The monthly "Under the Oaks" music jam will take place at Walter Jones Historical Park, 11964 Mandarin Road, on Sunday, June 3 from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m., weather permitting. Attendees should bring a lawn chair and an acoustic instrument if they would like to play. The Mandarin Museum and St. Joseph's Mission Schoolhouse for African-American Children will be open during this event. Visit www.mandarinmuseum.net for more information.

Knit-Wits seek members and yarn

The Knit-Wits knitting and crocheting group meets Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the



Photo courtesy Mandarin Museum & Historical Society
Monthly "Under the Oaks" music jam at Walter Jones Historical Park.

Mandarin Senior Center, 3848 Hartley Road. The group recently sent blankets to the military veterans in Washington state and are presently working on baby blankets for Navy Relief and capes for the local Hospice center. No experience is needed to join the group. Additionally, all donations of yarn are accepted. Call Trudy Ferrantello at (904) 608-9463 for more information.

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June
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MYSTERY PHOTO

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

Last month's Mystery Photo was of the big yellow beach chair in front of Hagan Ace Hardware on San Jose Boulevard. Our winner was Ginny Schurke.

Coming In July

Pet Food & Supply Drive

Please donate pet supplies! to Florida NewsLine's fourth annual pet supply drive!

Drop off locations will be announced in July!

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 Pet Food - Treats - Ziploc Bags - Cat Litter
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answers to puzzles on page 16

Answers to crossword puzzle:

1. EASE
 2. APPRECIATION
 3. REUNION
 4. SEERS
 5. EPI
 6. EDAS
 7. MCEGOS
 8. MIAEDP
 9. IDS
 10. MACS
 11. ALAE
 12. MELLOW
 13. ADAGIO
 14. RESTATEMENTS
 15. EPOCHS

Answers to word search:

1. WAVES
 2. SURFBOARD
 3. BALANCE
 4. WIPEOUT

CRYPTO FUN
 Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Answers: A. waves B. surfboard C. balance D. wipeout

Answers to your Puzzles

around town

June

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

June 2 Loretto Elementary School's 75th Birthday and Time Capsule Opening

11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Loretto Elementary School, 3900 Loretto Road (904) 260-5800

1911 Historic Mandarin Store and Post Office open

12 p.m. – 4 p.m.
12471 Mandarin Road
www.mandarinmuseum.net or (904) 268-0784

Mandarin Toastmasters meeting

10:15 a.m. – 12 p.m.
South Mandarin Library, 12125 San Jose Blvd.
MandarinToastmasters.org

Mandarin Republican Club breakfast meeting

10 a.m.
Golden Corral, 11470 San Jose Blvd.
rmclean1@bellsouth.net

June 3

Under the Oaks music jam

2 p.m. – 4 p.m., weather permitting
Mandarin Museum, 11964 Mandarin Road
www.mandarinmuseum.net

June 4

Southside Newcomers Club First Monday Coffee

10 a.m.
Mimi's Cafe in St Johns Town Center
sncmembership84@gmail.com

June 5

Shuffleboard

9:30 a.m. (repeating event on Tuesdays)
Mandarin Park, next to tennis courts at park entrance
Just show up unless it rains

June 6

Honeybee Quilt Guild

6:30 p.m.
Mandarin Presbyterian Church, 11844 Mandarin Road
www.honeybeequilters.org (Repeats first Tuesday of each month)

June 8

AARP Safe Driving Class

8:15 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.
Mandarin Senior Center, 3848 Hartley Road

Register at (904) 262-7309. \$15 for AARP members, \$20 for non-members.

June 9

About Boating Safely class

7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Florida Tackle and gun Club, 9010 San Jose Blvd.
www.safeboatingjax.com

Toast of Jax Toastmasters meeting

7:30 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.
Baha'i Community Center of Jacksonville, 5034 Greenland Road
www.toastofjax.com (Repeating event on Saturdays)

Second Saturday Arts and Farmers Market

9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd.

St. Johns Chapter Catholic Writers Guild

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
St. Paul's Catholic Church school auditorium, 2609 Park St.
www.dosaf.com/outreach/catholic-writers-guild/ or writerrod@comcast.net

Bingo Night at St. Joseph's

6:45 p.m.
Cody Center, 4152 Loretto Road
Open to the community; (904) 742-8777

June 12

Service Officer available

4:30 p.m. – 6 p.m.
Mandarin/St. Johns Elks Lodge, 4280 Oldfield Crossing Drive
(904) 268-4974 (Repeats second Tuesday of each month)

Free Tools to Quit Smoking Class

5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Humana, 9965 San Jose Blvd., Ste. 122
Call Florida AHEC to register (904) 482-0189

June 14

American Legion Post 372 general assembly

6 p.m. meet and greet / 7 p.m. meeting
Mandarin/St. Johns Elks Lodge, 4280 Oldfield Crossing Drive
(904) 297-8344 or www.mandarinpost372.org

Mandarin Council networking luncheon

11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Bonefish Grill, 10950 San Jose Blvd.
www.mandarinCouncil.org

Magnolia Circle of the Mandarin Garden Club

10 a.m.
Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Road (904) 260-2764; mandaringardenclub.org

Book Club/Friends of the South Mandarin Library meeting

1 p.m. / 2 p.m.
South Mandarin Branch Library, 12125 San Jose Blvd.
(904) 288-6385

June 16

Meet the Maple Leaf Divers

12 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Mandarin Museum, 11964 Mandarin Road
www.mandarinmuseum.net

Cruise In sponsored by Sunshine State Chevilles

4 p.m. – 8 p.m.
PDQ parking lot, 194 State Road 13
Repeating event on third Saturday of each month

June 18

All Star Quilt Guild

9:45 a.m.
First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd.
www.orgsites.com/fl/allstarquiltguild or (904) 502-5254

Free Tools to Quit Smoking class

5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
University of North Florida
Register with Northeast Florida AHEC at (904) 482-0189

June 19

Dogwood Circle of the Mandarin Garden Club

10 a.m.
Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Road (904) 260-2764; mandaringardenclub.org

June 20

Small Business Advice: Is crowdfunding right for my business?

6 p.m. – 8 p.m.
Mandarin Branch Library, 3330 Kori Road (904) 262-5201

River City Women's Club luncheon

10:30 a.m.
Ramada Inn Mandarin, 3130 Hartley Road
RSVP to Florence, (904) 262-8719

June 21

Cherokee Rose Circle of the Mandarin Garden Club

10 a.m.
Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Road (904) 260-2764; mandaringardenclub.org

June 22

Spaghetti dinners to go

5 p.m. – 7 p.m.
Italian American Club, 2838 Westberry Road
Pasta, two meatballs and bread; \$8

June 28

Live Oak Circle of the Mandarin Garden Club

7 p.m.
Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Road (904) 260-2764; mandaringardenclub.org

June 30

Summer teen volunteer orientation

3 p.m. – 4 p.m.
South Mandarin Branch Library, 12125 San Jose Blvd.
(904) 288-6385

Calling All Bridge Players

All proceeds go to **The Longest Day**, helping to advance the care, support and research efforts of the Alzheimer's Association.

Support the Alzheimer's Association by playing bridge on The Longest Day!

Jacksonville School of Bridge

is hosting an all-day event on June 21 where you can play the game you love and help a great cause. Whether you play socially or haven't played since college, join us to raise funds for the fight against Alzheimer's.



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with Jacksonville City Council Member
Matt Schellenberg (District 6)

Q: What is the latest on the sale of the JTA Marbon Road property?

A: This transaction hasn't closed yet, but it is anticipated to happen in mid-June. Evidently there is a long-time easement mid-property that needs to be handled prior to closing and the owner of the easement is out of town.

Q: Do you have any updates about a walking trail in Mandarin?

A: Money has been allocated for a walking trail between Palmetto Leaves Park and the kayak launch on Old St. Augustine Road (across Old St. Augustine Road from the Kohl's shopping center). Work will begin very soon on this. Also, we are looking at making a wide bike path along the JEA electric grid from Palmetto Leaves Park, crossing Old St. Augustine Road, and ending near the South Mandarin Library. There is already a walking path and we are trying to add a nice bike path, trying to make something similar to the Baldwin Trail here in Mandarin. JEA is being very cooperative.

Q: What else is happening in District 6?

A: The Mandarin Road sidewalks are now completed and people are walking on them. Surveying is taking place for the proposed sidewalks northerly on Mandarin Road as well as along Orange Picker Road to Brady Road. I will be meeting soon with residents along Orange Picker Road to address their questions about this project.

The Losco Park playground won't be open until mid-June as the play structure is still en route to Jacksonville. Finally, the arborists are continuing their work on trying to determine the best trees for the medians that are being refurbished on San Jose Boulevard.

Q: What else is on your mind?

A: While this administration has been very good at making Mandarin a great place to live, I would like to have an open discussion to determine if perhaps Mandarin should be a city within Duval County, much like the City of Atlantic Beach and the City of Neptune Beach. There are approximately 420 cities in Florida, and with Mandarin's population of about 65,000, it would actually be one of the bigger cities. Of course we would explore the advantages and disadvantages to determine if this is something the citizens of Mandarin would like to do.

Q: What about the inefficiencies and duplication of services that partially led initially to the consolidation of Jacksonville?

A: Fifty years ago, when Jacksonville consolidated, Mandarin had around 4,000 residents and now we have about 65,000. One big advantage would be to have local elected officials who are closer to their constituents. Decisions could be made more quickly and issues dealt with locally. We would still have a representative on the City Council and possibly still be able to use the county police. It might cost more, but perhaps Mandarin's quality of life would be better by being a city within the county? I think it is just time to revisit consolidation and have the conversation. After 50 years, communities, like businesses, should reevaluate where they stand to insure it's still the best thing for the citizens.

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

A: Community members can email me at MattS@coj.net or call (904) 630-1388.



with Duval School Board Member,
District 7, Lori Hershey

Q: What insight can you offer about the choice of Dr. Diana Greene as the new superintendent to lead Duval County Public Schools?

A: Here's the exciting thing about Dr. Greene: throughout the focus groups that met on May 12, if you look at the comments from the participants, which included business leaders, parents and teachers, all of them said she was "the one." A diverse group of people identified one candidate. One person put on their comments, "She's a rock star."

Q: What do you think led them to this conclusion?

A: I think if you took the time to watch her two-hour interview with the board, you would see she has a solid, proven track record. This coming year, Manatee County will have the highest paid first year teachers in the state due to her efforts. She created new sources of revenue for her district while taking the district from a "C" to a "B."

Q: What is the next step?

A: Our goal remains for her to start on July 1. The Office of General Counsel is currently working to negotiate her contract. The plan is for Dr. Willis to stay on and work with Dr. Greene for some amount of transition period.

I talked with Dr. Greene the weekend after we selected her and she's very excited and looking forward to the challenge here. She graduated from UNE, had her first teaching job at Mamie Agnes Jones Elementary and still has family in the area. To come back here as superintendent is a neat opportunity for her.

Q: What other District 7 news do you have to share?

A: On June 2, Loretto Elementary will hold its 75th Anniversary celebration and the community is invited. Also, at the end of the year, Dr. Richardson from Mandarin High School will retire and she will be greatly missed. Under her leadership, she has added culinary arts, health sciences and the VyStar Academy to MHS, as well as the tradition of the homecoming parade. She has built a great culture of community and we wish her well. Finally, I'd like to congratulate Kendall Nash, a senior at Atlantic Coast High School who broke a 62-year drought by becoming the singles Gateway State Champion.

Q: How can our readers contact you?

A: They can email me at HersheyL@duvalschools.org or call me at (904) 316-3609.

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FYI Contact Numbers

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Patrol Zone 3: Assistant Chief J.G. Short, (904) 828-5463
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Supervisor of Elections: Mike Hogan, mhogan@coj.net, (904) 630-1414
Tax Collector: Michael Corrigan, taxcollector@coj.net, (904) 630-1916
Clerk of Court: Ronnie Fussell, (904) 255-2000

Jacksonville City Council

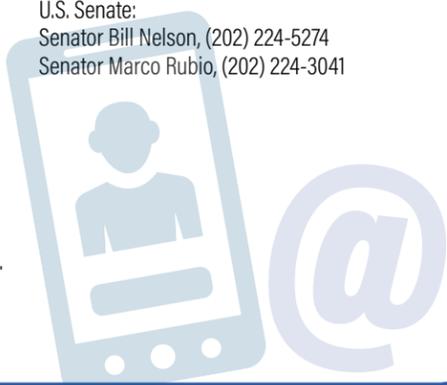
District 6: Matt Schellenberg, matts@coj.net, (904) 630-1388
At Large, District 3: Tommy Hazouri, thazouri@coj.net, (904) 630-1396
Duval County School Board (www.duvalschools.org)
District 7: Lori Hershey, hersheyL@duvalschools.org, (904) 390-2375

State of Florida Elected Officials

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State Senate District 4: Senator Aaron Bean, (904) 757-5039

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U.S. Senate:
Senator Bill Nelson, (202) 224-5274
Senator Marco Rubio, (202) 224-3041



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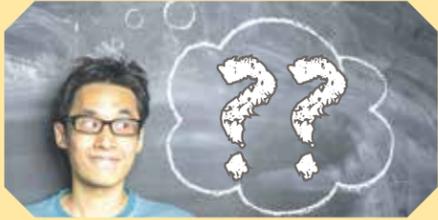
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Inquiring Minds want to know!

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewsline.com

Are you puzzled about something going on in Mandarin or wondering about whatever happened on a topic from a previous issue? Email your question to us at editor@floridanewsline.com by the fifth of the month and we will do our best to track down the information for you.

While we will do our best to answer all the questions we receive, we may not be able to answer all questions received each month. Also, due to publication scheduling, the time it takes to research answers may vary.

Here are answers to questions we received this month:

Q: I'd like to report potholes, ruts and drainage bumps all along Loretto Road. Nothing, with the exception of the rut in front of Loretto Elementary School, has been addressed.

A: We reached out to Councilmember Matt Schellenberg who contacted John Pappas of the Department of Public Works for the City of Jacksonville. His executive assistant, Alice Checorski, gave us the following information:

"Our Right of Way and Stormwater Maintenance Division is scheduled for repair work at 3900 Loretto Road, in front of the school, on June 4, the first day school is out. Between Jan. 1, 2017 and May 2018, 25 repairs along Loretto Road were performed. Additionally, records indicate the entire length of the road was resurfaced eight years ago. It will not be scheduled for resurfacing for quite some time.

"If there is a specific location that needs to be investigated, we will be glad to do so."

Q: What are the green wooden boxes, about 4 in. x 4 in. and 18 - 24 in. high, located on private residences along Scott Mill Road south of Interstates 295?

A: We thought these might be some sort of historical markers, so we reached out to Sandy Arpen of the Mandarin Museum & Historical Society. She said that's not what they were, but offered to try to find out for us. After a little investigating, she was told they were part of the sewer system — a type of pump station, one for every two houses.

To verify this, we asked City Council Member Matt Schellenberg to help. He queried some city workers, but didn't hear anything definitive back.

So, how about you, dear readers? Anyone know the answer to this question?



with Jacksonville City Council Member
Tommy Hazouri (At Large District 3)

Q: Can you give us an update on the Marbon Road/JTA property?

A: The sale of this property to First Coast Energy/Daily's has finished due diligence and should close within 30 days ... by June 23. There will still be 15 - 20 parking spots for JTA to use for the Park and Ride, which will be designed by First Coast Energy and then approved by JTA. First Coast Energy will maintain the bus stop and parking spots.

Q: What do you know about a new bike/pedestrian trail in the area?

A: A bike/pedestrian trail between Palmetto Leaves Park/Greenland Road and a terminal spot to be determined is now being designed. This is part of a long term plan to create more bike trails and pedestrian paths in our area. I think it's a welcome addition to Mandarin.

Q: What are your thoughts on the new Duval superintendent?

A: The Duval County School Board has selected Dr. Diana Greene as the new superintendent. She will be focused on all of our students and establish trust in the the community while getting our district financially solvent. I believe the state legislators and governor cannot continue to shortchange our students.

Q: Do you have anything else to share?

A: We have heard a lot of requests for a public dog park in Mandarin. The Parks Department is designing a plan for a location behind the South Mandarin Library where the Rotary Park is now located. I'd like to hear community members' thoughts on this.

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

A: They can email me at THazouri@coj.net or call (904) 630-1396.



Photo courtesy Gail Packard

Mandarin Women's Club offers summer fun

April showers tried to wash out the club's annual picnic, but the club prevailed with a hearty lunch for a hungry group of ladies and their guests. At the April luncheon members elected their 2018-2019 officers who will serve under the guidance of Susie Marshall, president: Geri Marchiava, Bev Severns, Toni Hadlick, Susie Marshall, Linda Peacock, Kathy Sisbarro, Mary Shell, and Jean Hopper. As summer nears, the club will take a break from monthly luncheons, but there are several activities during the summer months for active members. Complete and submit the Membership Form located at www.mandarinwomensclub.com if you would like to participate in these activities.




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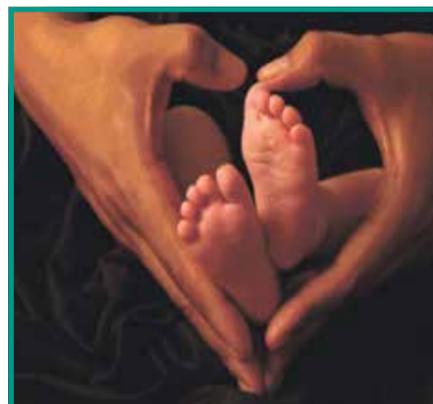
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Briefs

Hospital CEO joins Jacksonville Civic Council

Memorial Hospital President & CEO Bradley S. Talbert, FACHE, has been elected to serve as a member of the Jacksonville Civic Council, a non-partisan group of 72 of the community's most prominent leaders from the business, civic and nonprofit sectors.

"It is a true honor to be asked to join such a prestigious and respected group of community members who work collaboratively to make Jacksonville the best possible city," said Talbert. "Much like Memorial Hospital, the Jacksonville Civic Council is a mission-driven organization committed to improving the lives of people in our community."

The Jacksonville Civic Council was formed eight years ago and gives CEOs a unique voice in public policy advocacy. The Civic Council tackles various community issues, including timely topics that impact the healthcare sector. In addition to serving as a member of the Jacksonville Civic Council, Talbert serves on the Board of Directors for the ACHE North Florida Chapter, the Jax Chamber's Board of Directors and as a member of the JAXUSA Partnership Policy Council and the American Heart Association's 2018 First Coast Heart Walk Executive Team.

River City Women's Club elects officers

The River City Women's Club has elected Board Members for 2018 – 2019: Betty Harrelson, president; Melanie Kessel, first vice president; Terry Meier, second vice president; Hilda Bryson, recording

secretary; Carol Rienhardt, treasurer; and Nardine Koester, parliamentarian.

The River City Women's Club meets the third Wednesday of each month for lunch, camaraderie and a fundraising program for charity at the Ramada Inn, 3130 Hartley Road in Mandarin. Social time begins at 10:30 a.m., followed by a business meeting, luncheon and program. The club will meet June 20. Guests are welcome and reservations are required.

Call Florence at (904) 262-8719 to reserve a spot. Membership application is \$20.

Southside Newcomers Club to meet

Women in the Greater Jacksonville area who have moved to the area, are long time residents, have had a lifestyle change, want to make new friends, or want to participate in a wide variety of fun activities are invited to check out the Southside Newcomers Club. Groups and activities include Bridge, Bunco, Canasta, day trips, dining out, book groups, beading, movies, Mah Jongg, lunching at various locations, and more.

Coffee or breakfast is held at Mimi's Cafe in St. Johns Town Center on the first Monday of every month to learn more about Southside Newcomers Club and monthly luncheons are held at various country clubs with different programs each month.

The next luncheon and program will be in September. Membership dues for this social group are \$30 per year. Contact snmembersh84@gmail.com for more information.

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Back in Time

By Brett Nolan
mail@floridanewslines.com

with Brett



Photo courtesy Mandarin Museum & Historical Society
Front of the Read House.

postmaster at the time. He son Charles F. Read assumed the position of postmaster later.

Calvin Read's grandson, Calvin C. Read built a two-story farmhouse in 1885 on a portion of the property. This wooden frame house features lathe-turned porch posts and scroll-cut brackets along the veranda. Around the entire roofline, including both ends of the porch roof, a unique wooden cornice poised with pointed vertical staves highlights the estate.

Calvin C. Read was a citrus farmer like his family before him, continuing on with the tradition. Fannie Bowden, another descendant of one of Mandarin's pioneer families, occupied the house later in the years to come.

The structure received three out of four stars in a city supported study that turned into the masterwork, "Jacksonville's Architectural Heritage," published in 1989. The publication categorizes a three-star rating as "a great value to the immediate neighborhood." The Read home was recognized by the state as making "a significant contribution to the architectural integrity of the community and is a landmark symbolizing Mandarin's past."

As of today, this property on Brady Road, across from the Mandarin Community Club, is on the market for sale. Purchasing this home and giving it a little TLC would help protect the charm of Mandarin. Think you have what it takes?

Brett Nolan is a volunteer with the Mandarin Museum & Historical Society. Visit www.mandarinmuseum.net for more information about Mandarin's history.

The area of Mandarin, since the opening of its first post office in 1765, had several name changes. Originally under British rule, "St. Anthony" was what the area was called. When Spain took possession of Florida again in 1783, the name was changed to San Antonio and once again the name changed after Florida became a U.S. Territory — to Monroe — after our fifth president.

The name Mandarin first appeared on Federal Post Office records in July 1830; however, it wasn't until 1841 when Mandarin officially incorporated as a town. This was all done under the direction of Calvin Read. Read credited the name after the popular local fruit, the Mandarin orange. But not everyone was happy with this decision for township. Surrounding Indians in the area took arms on Dec. 20, 1841 and raided Mandarin; they burned many structures and killed four people.

Calvin Read was a prominent figure in our community back then. He came from New England shortly after Florida was under American control and quickly became known for having Mandarin's largest orange groves. While being an avid citrus farmer, Read also was Mandarin's

Rock out at the Mandarin libraries

By Kaylee Burke
mail@floridanewslines.com

Libraries Rock! That's the theme of Jacksonville Public Library's 2018 Summer Learning Program, which will kick off with parties at Mandarin Library on June 6 from 2:30 p.m. – 4 p.m. and at South Mandarin Library on June 7 from 3 p.m. – 4 p.m. Attend the parties to learn about special library programs and events for all ages.

No student has to experience the "summer slide," which can happen when students aren't exercising their brain enough and can cause a dip in academic skills. Over the summer the library provides kids a place to discover new interests, read books, and make memories.

Along with an abundance of programs to keep young minds engaged, the library is challenging students of all ages to read six hours by Aug. 10. Students can track their reading progress online to earn weekly digital badges, cool prizes and a free book – and also be entered in a drawing for a chance to win an iPad. Register for Summer Learning and Reading online or in person at your neighborhood branch. And be sure to pick up a free registration gift bag at any library location.

On June 13, 20 and 27 from 3 p.m. – 4 p.m., South Mandarin library is offering Books and Bricks, a school age program where students will be inspired to build a creation based on interesting, selected books. For the young music enthusiasts, Story Songs and Sing-Alongs turns stories into songs, and takes kids on a journey around the world! Don't let them miss out on the musical adventure June 13 from 2:30 p.m.– 3:30 p.m. at Mandarin Library and June 21 from 3 p.m. – 4 p.m. at South Mandarin Library.

"I'm bored" is the last thing you want to hear from teens during the summer months. Help steer clear of the boredom with two six-week long, hands-on art and technology programs in June



Photo courtesy Jacksonville Public Library
DCPS student Sammy Sauod proudly presents his Certificate of Art from the South Mandarin Library at the Student Art Reception held on April 19.

and July. Rock the Canvas at Mandarin Library provides unique art experiences for teens aged 12 – 13. On June 14, 21, and 28 from 3 p.m. – 4 p.m., they can create book bindings, wire sculptures, embroidered magnets and more while jamming out to music. South Mandarin Library's Tech Rocks takes technology to a whole new level every Wednesday beginning June 13 from 4 p.m. – 5 p.m. Teens aged 13 – 18 will explore things such as 3D pens, robotics, Artificial Intelligence (AI), lasers and more.

Join Keith Marks, founder of the music-based nonprofit Avant, June 12 at 7 p.m. at Mandarin library for a discussion on the historical and musical components of the library's Radical Jewish Culture collection. Marks will dive into the collection's history, intent, and impact across the globe.

For a complete list of all the happenings at the library this summer visit www.jaxpubliclibrary.org/summer. All programs are free and open to the public. Find information about additional upcoming events at Mandarin and South Mandarin branch libraries at jaxpubliclibrary.org/events or call Mandarin Branch Library at (904) 262-5201 or South Mandarin Branch Library at (904) 288-6385.

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REAL ESTATE & BUILDERS GUIDE

Tips for first-time home buyers

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

Buying a home for the first time is an exciting period in a person's life. Deciding to buy a home often indicates buyers are ready to establish firm roots in a community where they can see themselves living for years to come. The process of buying a home is rarely easy, and first-time buyers



Photo courtesy MetroCreative
First-time buyers may be intimidated as they begin searching for their homes, but there are several ways to make the process go smoothly.

may feel overwhelmed at times. Such feelings are perfectly normal and felt by first-time buyers regardless of their budgets or home preferences. But there are a few ways to make buying a home more enjoyable than it is nerve-racking.

- Examine your finances. The first step toward buying a home has nothing to do with deciding if you prefer a craftsman- or Spanish-style home. Before you even begin your search for a home, carefully examine your finances to determine how much is coming in and how much is going out of your household each month. Figure out how much debt you are currently carrying, be it student loan, automotive, consumer or any other types of debt. Order a credit report so you can see how prospective lenders are likely to see you, and address any errors you find on the report before meeting with any lenders. Peruse past bank statements to track your spending habits, looking for areas where you might be able to scale back if need be.
- Be prepared when visiting lenders. Prospective borrowers can make the home-buying process go smoothly by having all of the necessary documentation ready when visiting potential

lenders. Many mortgage lenders will want to see some recent pay stubs (from both borrowers if buying with a spouse or partner), a couple years' worth of W-2s and tax returns, as well as your recent bank statements. You can always call ahead and ask lenders what they need to see when applying for a loan. Having these materials ready in advance means

you will spend less time at the bank and more time finding the right home for you.

- Secure financing before you begin house hunting. Many first-time home buyers might not realize the benefits of securing financing before they begin looking for a home. Mortgage pre-approval lets buyers know how much a bank will loan them, meaning they won't spend time looking at homes they can't afford. In addition, pre-approval means buyers won't lose out on their dream homes as they scramble to secure financing after making an offer.
- Work with a local real estate agent. Real estate agents are an invaluable resource to home buyers and are especially valuable to those buyers who have never before purchased a home. Agents can help first-time buyers navigate the often confusing and, at times, disappointing process of buying a home. Choose an agent who is established in the area where you want to buy a home. He or she can provide information about local property taxes and schools as well as a multitude of additional issues that first-time buyers may not think of. Agents also know the lay of the land regarding home prices, which can ease first-time buyers' fears about overpaying for their first homes.

Northeast Florida real estate in short supply

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com



Photo courtesy MetroCreative

As April came to a conclusion, 2,441 homes brokered by members of the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors had changed hands. This number was down 2.4 percent from 2,502 sales last April. There were 2,998 pending sales, or 10.6 percent more than a year ago.

The median sales price for the month was \$218,500 and the average price was \$269,251. These figures were 9.3 and 9.9 percent higher than a year ago, respectively.

With robust competition for available homes in a market with short supply, 13 percent of sales went for prices above the original listing price.

Homes sold in an average of 63 days, down from 75 days in April 2017.

Months' supply of inventory is at 3.4, or 12.8 percent less than a year ago. This equates to 8,264 homes on the market for sale, including the 3,810 new listings that were added during the month.

2018 NEFAR President Ben Bates said, "Despite more sellers entering the market the past couple of months, sales remain strong and inventory continues to be well below the five- to six-months that is considered a balanced market."

April 2018 housing market reports are now posted by the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors on NEFAR.com. Except where otherwise indicated, statistics reflect combined results for single-family residential and condominium properties.

About NEFAR: The Northeast Florida Association of Realtors is Northeast Florida's largest professional association, comprising more than 8,000 members working in all facets of the real estate industry, including residential and commercial sales as well as property management. All statistics in NEFAR's reports are based on data compiled from NEFAR's wholly owned subsidiary, the Northeast Florida Multiple Listing Service (NEFMLS).



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Debbie is a native Floridian and a long time Jacksonville resident with over 20 successful record breaking years in Real Estate industry. She has been ranked #1 in Jacksonville several years, and recognized by Real Trends and Wall Street Journal as a top real estate professional in America. Debbie has been the #1 agent at her Watson Realty office since 2000 and sold 132 homes in 2017.



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REAL ESTATE & BUILDERS GUIDE

Mandarin Place's Yard of the Month awarded

Susan and Damon Burkhart of 14413 Pond Place Drive won "Yard of the Month" for April. The judging was done by Barbara Petty of the Mandarin Garden Club.



Photo courtesy Diane Frisco

Farm to table approach at new senior living community

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewsline.com

Senior living community HarborChase of Mandarin has the look and feel of a private club or resort. And that is exactly the idea, according to Executive Chef and Director of Hospitality Todd Kazenske.

"We want to be recognized as the Ritz Carlton of senior living," Kazenske said.

"We might not be there yet, but that's our goal."

In addition to a brand-new property, including modern and colorful

they are not able to prepare foods using the eggs due to FDA requirements) and an herb garden in which Kazenske is growing tarragon, rosemary, mint, sage, parsley and fennel.

"We can use the herbs for independent living meals only, again due to the federal

requirements," he said. "Soon I will be planting basil, thyme and oregano."

The Loretto Courtyard, located directly off the fine dining room, has lemon, lime and grapefruit trees in addition to a croquet

court, putting green and outdoor kitchen. There is also a wood burning hearth oven.

Kazenske said the company's philosophy is to give residents independence and choice to eat different foods and in different places. To that end, Harbor Chase has multiple dining venues and food is available somewhere on property at just about any time.

A chef by trade, Kazenske transitioned into being a pastry chef. He has worked at five star and five diamond restaurants and resorts as well as Le Cordon Bleu in Atlanta most recently. He said this is his first foray into the senior living business and he was attracted to the job due to HRA's vision to treat its communities like the resorts he is accustomed to. He plans to introduce a lot more baked goods and pastries made from scratch to reflect his pastry chef background.

HarborChase of Mandarin, located on San Jose Boulevard, opened its doors to its first residents in January 2018. The community offers independent living, assisted living and memory care. Visit harborchase Mandarin.com for more information.



Photos by Martie Thompson

Todd Kazenske stands by his herb garden at HarborChase of Mandarin.



furnishings with a variety of socialization areas, Harbor Chase is stepping up the industry's food and beverage game. With a farm-to-table approach to dining, the community aims to promote sustainability with living well.

"Within the next four to six weeks we will take our farm-to-table to the next level by offering farm fresh vegetables, soups and salads," Kazenske said.

Each of the communities in the HRA (Harbor Retirement Associates) family will be able to locally source food that is in season.

"This is exciting to us as chefs," Kazenske said.

Already, the Mandarin property is working towards the fresh approach to food. Onsite in the Memory Care Courtyard is a chicken coop (although Kazenske said



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I have been in Real Estate almost 16 years and after I started using Kendall Title I am hooked. I cannot imagine entering a Real Estate transaction with all its many moving parts without Marti and her staff.

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Get to Know . . .

By Angela Higginbotham
angela@floridanewslines.com

Josh Rogers

Growing up in Pensacola, Josh Rogers would often make his way to the Jacksonville area in search of better surfing conditions. When his high school sweetheart, Sarah, decided on nursing school at the University of North Florida, he followed her east and earned his degree in business management from UNF. The two have been married for 12 years and live in the Bartram area of Mandarin. They have four sons, often referred to as the “Wolfpack,” ranging in age from two to nine years and a foster daughter whom they adore.

“At the beginning of our marriage we saved money and planned to take a six-month trip around the world. When we found out that Sarah was pregnant, that changed everything. The travel fund became the family fund,” Rogers said.

With a growing family and a desire to have a more flexible schedule for traveling and homeschooling adventures, Rogers began his career in real estate. He got his start with Pulte Homes and 11 years later, he serves primarily the Mandarin and North St. Johns County areas. Rogers is currently ranked 15th of 8,000 agents in Northeast Florida and he credits a lot of his business growth to stressful times financially not that many years ago.

“We were up to our eyeballs in credit card debt and we started a new budget following plans from Dave Ramsey,” said Rogers. “We hit reset and flipped the switch. I started treating my business like a business owner, working hard and seeking wisdom.”



Photo courtesy Josh Rogers
The Rogers family

1. What do you enjoy most about living in Mandarin?

Mandarin is ultimately centralized. It's great for easy access to the beaches, the river and the St. Johns Town Center. It's a great place for family activities and also running a business.

2. Serving as a foster parent is a special part of your life. What would you like people to know about fostering?

Awareness for fostering is so important. Our foster daughter is nine months old now and we brought her home from the hospital when she was only two weeks old. There is a tremendous need for foster families, yet if just one family from every church took in a child, then the need would be filled. Kids need a safe environment while their biological families are working towards healing and staying focused on recovering from the difficulties in life. We get to love on this little girl every day and treat her as our daughter. People always ask, “Won't it break your heart if she leaves you one day?” Of course, it will. If it doesn't break our hearts, then we aren't doing it right.

3. You take a more personal approach to building relationships through your business. Do you think this benefits your success?

I think it does but regardless, it's just more important to me to spend time actually getting to know people and contribute to their lives in some way. I have a life on life approach in business and I want to be a part of long term relationships with people. I can spend thousands on advertising or I can buy

coffee for as many moms who will show up for a Mother's Day treat. I can build a fire and keep throwing cash on it or I can cut down logs and it will burn for a lot longer. I love this community and I love the people in it. The relationships are important to me.

4. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I enjoy gardening and videography. I am a trainer for a class at Trinity Fitness in Ponte Vedra as well. We stay involved in our church and we focus a lot on homeschooling and taking adventures as a family. We decide each year what is best for each child and if homeschooling isn't the right choice for any of them down the road, then that's okay. We are just focused on enjoying the journey now and I want to get this stage right with no regrets. Business deals will come and go, I can't control that but I can control the influence I have on my family.

5. What's your secret to managing a happy family and a successful business?

Sarah. Each month I send her to a hotel for 24 hours. It's a game changer. She comes back a new woman. Chocolate and wine helps for the in between days.

Get to Know . . .

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

Velobrew Junior Cycling cont. from pg. 1

seventh grader at Switzerland Point Middle School, placed second in the girls 13/14 race. Julien Toussi placed first in boys 13/14 and Matthew Warren placed first in boys 15/16. Both Toussi and Warren are eighth graders at Fruit Cove Middle School. Samantha Morrison, a freshman at Bishop Kenny High School, placed third in women's category 4 race.

The young riders train every day for one to two hours either on the road or on a trainer. They get together for intensive trainer coaching with Reeves once a week and ride in group rides from Open Road Bicycles on Hendricks Avenue on Saturdays and Sundays when they are not racing.

Different disciplines in cycling include road, cyclocross, mountain biking, BMX and track. Many riders cross train in different areas during different seasons in order to race all year round. Reeves has coached many kids who earn a scholarship to ride for a college team.

When asked the qualifications for becoming a cyclist, Reeves said, “You need two legs, a bike, and really want to have fun!”

Contact Scott Reeves at velobrew@gmail.com for more information.



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SUMMER CAMP GUIDE





Episcopal students participate in pilot musical service project

By Melissa Salek
mail@floridanewsline.com

Music heals and music unites, a notion well known by participants in Songbird, a pilot community outreach program of Episcopal School of Jacksonville (ESJ), in partnership with the Central and North Florida Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association. During February through April, ESJ students combined their love of song with a desire to help others in a unique musical experience with residents who have memory disorders. The program took place at Starling at San Jose, an assisted living facility in north Mandarin.



Photo courtesy Carolyn Tuttle
Episcopal School of Jacksonville students Julia Polster, '22 and Phoebe Fletcher, '22 sing along with a Starling resident.

Headed by Episcopal School of Jacksonville Choral Music Director Carolyn Tuttle, the program uses music to help form a connection between the students and elders with memory disorders.

Singing together from a music playlist customized for each resident, the students not only learn about the therapeutic benefits of music, they also discover the joy of just being with the elders.

"I think it definitely brightened up their day and gave them something fun and enjoyable to do,"

said ESJ eighth grader Samuel Salameh.

The Songbird program also taught students about dementia and memory disorders. Cari Eyre, associate director of programs for the Central and North Florida Chapter of the Alzheimer's As-

sociation, designed a training program for the students and facilitated their early interactions with the seniors. "I like helping people and doing it through music," said eighth grade student Katie McCawley. "It makes me feel good when I make other people feel good."

Second grader wins first place at Children's Art Show



Photo courtesy Judy Bryan

Mandarin resident Jack Milton won first place in the Children's Art Show during the Mandarin Art Festival held Easter weekend. Milton is a second grade student at San Jose Episcopal Day School.

It was wonderful to see the interaction between the students and the residents," said Eyre. "It was a beautiful way to bring joy to people living with dementia, while at the same time introducing a terrific group of young people to a population they might not otherwise interact with."

Episcopal School of Jacksonville's Songbird program was inspired by and modeled on a similar program run by Evan Powers in Orlando, who piloted the Songbird program with his students at Avalon Middle School. Tuttle knew

instantly that it was something that fit well with her students and with the community service focus at ESJ.

Tuttle plans to continue the program in the next school year, expanding to include sessions in both in the fall and the spring so that more students can participate.



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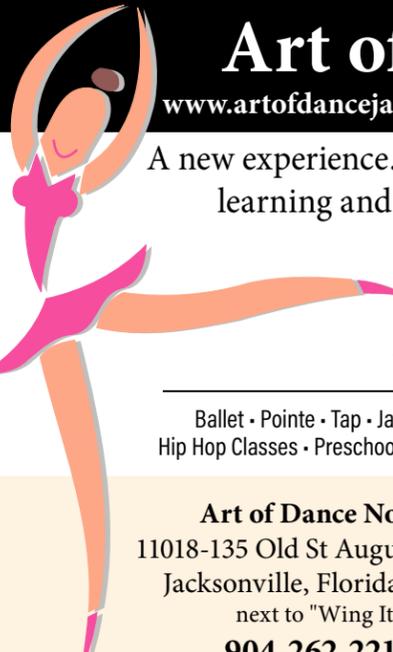
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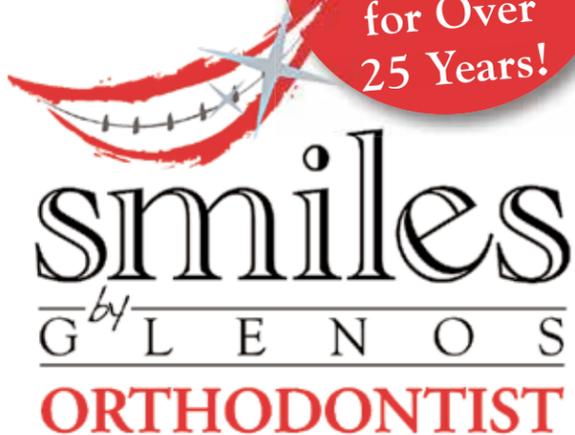
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River City Science Academy recognizes teachers

River City Science Academy's parent volunteer organization organized teacher appreciation week to say thanks to our heroes. Mandarin's Chick-fil-A and Daily's donated food to the event.



Photo courtesy River City Science Academy

Family fun at Crown Point Carnival

By Mary J. Eyster
mail@floridanewsline.com

On Saturday, May 5, Crown Point Elementary PTA held the school's annual Spring Carnival. The students, parents, siblings and the surrounding community enjoyed lots of games and activities such as face painting, Marvel marble, disc toss, Thor hammer throw, Plinko, Dino Dig and more. The carnival also included four bouncy houses for all ages, cakewalk, local food trucks, Kona Ice, and lots of cotton candy and popcorn.

kids and adults. The challenge for the day: Who is going to dunk Principal Brett Hartley? How many times?

The event provided an opportunity for the Crown Point community to come together, enjoy beautiful weather and participate in fun activities. A large group of volunteers from Mandarin High School as well as teachers and parents all contributed to the event's success.

The dunking booth was popular with



A fun time was had by all at the Crown Point Elementary Spring Carnival.



Photos courtesy Mary J. Eyster
Principal Brett Hartley in the dunking booth.



Photo courtesy Loretto Elementary School

Loretto third graders learn about solar energy

Third grade students, led by parent Jessica Martinez and third grade teachers Leigh Ann Vondrasek and Joan Vogt, recently had the opportunity to engage in a fun lesson about heat and solar energy. The hands-on activity involved the students making their very own solar oven. Business Partner Jumpin' Jax House of Food donated pizza boxes, which served as the perfect material to create the ovens. Students worked in groups to create a solar oven out of the boxes, which produced enough heat to melt the marshmallows and chocolate inside for s'mores. The students also pointed out how perfect the boxes were, as "It's all about the energy!" is printed on the boxes.

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Gardening

Weeds or Wildflowers?

By Master Gardener Lesley Arrandale
mail@floridanewsline.com

It's a truism that weeds are simply plants in the wrong place, and it comes to mind especially now as spring is shifting gears to summer. It's a time of rapid green growth, and before we know it, our beds can be overrun with weeds.

Natural mulches, which break down more rapidly as temperatures rise, should be replenished as needed. If mulch is decomposing and settling it can be a good medium for germinating seeds, so either fluff the mulch to disturb and uproot small weed seedlings or have a good old fashioned hand weeding session and pull large weeds. You can compost in place (tucked tidily under the mulch) most weeds that are seed free, but definitely dispose of dollar weed and Florida betony, for example, that will regrow from even the tiniest piece. Either way, don't let weeds linger.

Mulch is also invaluable in the vegetable garden to reduce weeds, and clean, organic mulches like shredded leaves atop homemade compost add valuable nutrients while helping to keep both the soil moist and rains from splashing back onto the plants. Pine straw is lightweight and also works well.

By early May, the medians and roadside verges were full of flowering plants, amid rough grasses (and not a few "weeds"). Nowadays city budgets would appear to limit mowing, and I'm all for it. Not only do I often see some of my favorite native plants in just these places, but they are havens for insect life while undisturbed. One hardy plant that thrives in these conditions is *Gaillardia pulchella* — blanket flower — a red and yellow daisy. For a few weeks in the spring, patches of blue-eyed grasses (*Sisyrinchium* sp.) resembled lovely hazy blue blankets. In early May, fragrant white orchids — marsh lady's tresses or *Spiranthes odorata* — popped up in moist places along highways and in damp front yards. Tiny white flowers spiral along the top three inches of the stems which are at least a foot tall. As is often the case with delicate wildflowers, they aren't individual showstoppers, but look beautiful growing together. As long as people desire perfectly groomed front yards, and more and more of Jacksonville is developed, there is a growing need for wild areas in Jacksonville, and these unruly medians and roadside "meadows" help enormously.

Azaleas and other spring-flowering shrubs should be pruned after they flower, traditionally before the end of June. (Summer and fall bloomers can be tackled when dormant in late winter.) Perennial herbaceous plants will flower for longer if spent blooms are removed, or dead-headed. Annuals too can be cleaned up to promote flowering, and benefit from a boost of liquid fertilizer every four to six weeks, since they bloom so profusely — unless you applied a slow-release granular product when planting, more is not always better.

It goes without saying that summer has its challenges. Despite rising temperatures, it is wise to keep on top of basic garden chores as much as possible. Don't slack off watering first-year shrubs and trees. If we get good summer rains that certainly counts as watering, but we can't rely on rainfall alone.

The vegetable garden will need a minimum of an inch of water per week. As a rule of thumb (or index finger), water deeply when the soil is dry to a depth of 1 to 2 inches. As ever, vegetables should be scouted regularly for insects and diseases to keep problems from getting out of control, and soil moisture could be checked at the same time. Fertilize according to your

chosen product's directions to keep crops growing strong and healthy.

Our local nurseries are full of tempting flowering plants. Containerized plants can be installed at most times of the year, but summer heat can be hard on them. If possible, plant them on a cloudy day, or certainly late in the day. Water them in well. Improvise some shelter to give plants in full sun some light shade for a day or two. As well as needing some coddling after having their roots disturbed, they may not be accustomed to full sun, depending on where they were held in the nursery.

Stay cool, and if you enjoy reading, take the summer months to learn more about plants, gardening techniques, landscape design, whatever you fancy. Consider the creatures, welcome or not, with whom you share your landscape; gardening for the benefit of wildlife can be rewarding. This is a time of plenty for wildlife if we have flowering and fruiting plants, and shrubs for food and shelter, as well a clean water supply, in our yards. Young birds will be finding their way around your neighborhoods, and if you supply bird food, bird watching can be a relaxing and delightful pastime. Enjoy.

Mandarin Garden Club hosts St. Augustine Garden Club for tour

The Mandarin Garden Club recently entertained the Shamrock Circle from St. Augustine Garden Club. Master Gardener Mary Forester, second vice president, and Donna Crosby, education and community chair, led a garden tour, which included several areas undergoing a spring refurbishment. Forester shared the history of the club and a peek into the everyday maintenance and upkeep of the gardens, as well tips for raising funds, gathering volunteers and soliciting resources. The tour concluded under the shade of the Magnolia trees with lemonade and a sweet treat.



Photo courtesy Donna Crosby



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Fishing

Capt. David's Fishing Report

By Captain David Lifka
mail@floridanewsline.com

At last summer has arrived and this year's fishing season is starting to come together. Making choices such as where to go, and what to fish for are just some of the pleasurable decisions we are faced with living in our area of the state. With so much freshwater, salt-water, and brackish water around us, our fishing possibilities for the summer season are many.

Whether it is just a short walk to a neighborhood pond, or a quick ride to a nearby creek or lake, the freshwater fishing opportunities around us are abundant. Throughout most of the year, but especially summer, expecting limit catches of panfish that inhabit our area waters is not unreasonable. Good numbers of largemouth bass will also be available in these very same waters. The catfish bite will be strong, along with plenty of mullet in the river all summer long.

The Lower St. Johns River and Intra-coastal Waterway should offer fantastic saltwater fishing all summer long and continue into the fall. Redfish, speckled trout, and flounder will be highly targeted species for that inshore grand slam. Black drum, sheepshead, and even a mangrove snapper or two will be in these same waters for the taking.

For more saltwater fishing, fishing the beach could be a priority for many. Practically anything that swims in the

ocean could end up grabbing your bait. While enjoying your normal catches of whiting, pompano, and sand trout, always be prepared for the really big bite that could end up spooling your reel or dragging your rod and reel off to sea.

Finally we have brackish water which covers most of our area of the St. Johns. Typically this area covers from downtown Jacksonville to Green Cove Springs, but some summers it could extend all the way to Palatka. Usually starting off a little slow, one can expect a steady increase of most any inshore saltwater species to come on with a bang as summer progresses. By late July or early August our annual shrimp run should be running on high gear, with outstanding shrimping and spectacular fishing that will hopefully last well into the fall.

Fishing Report: June 11 is the start of a 40-day Red Snapper season — well worth a fishing trip by your own boat, charter boat, or party boat. Croaker are beginning to show in the river at the usual spots. They're running a little small right now but definitely tastier. Bream are a good bet at any local freshwater location. Try crickets, worms, or bread, and get the kids outside for some for some outdoor fun.

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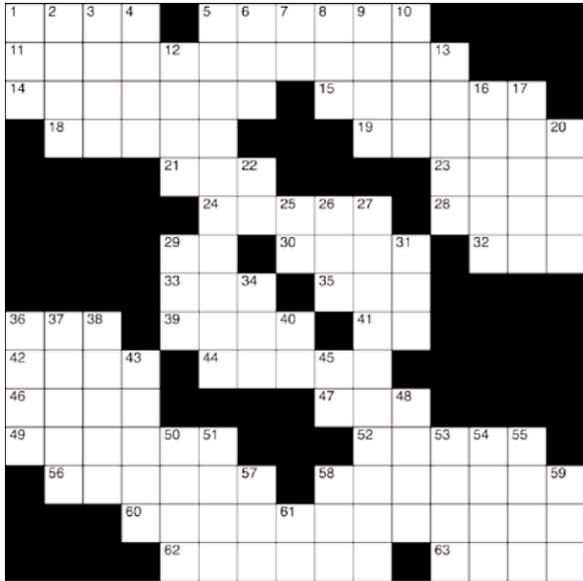
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Answers to puzzles on page 2
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- 1. Absence of difficulty
- 5. Preserve a dead body
- 11. Gratitude
- 14. Grads may attend one
- 15. Less difficult
- 18. Visionaries
- 19. Fish-eating bird
- 21. Indicates near
- 23. '69 World Series hero
- 24. Scandinavian mythology source
- 28. Pop
- 29. Rapper __ Hammer
- 30. Senses of self-esteem
- 32. Hormone that stimulates the thyroid
- 33. __ Farrow, actress
- 35. Electronic data processing
- 36. Baby talk (abbr.)
- 39. Slender, snake-like fish
- 41. Air Force
- 42. Computers
- 44. Ecological stage

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Body part
- 2. Large primates
- 3. Retch (archaic)
- 4. Sea eagle
- 5. Genetically distinct geographic variety
- 6. Category of spoken Chinese
- 7. Barium
- 8. Consumed
- 9. Chinese dynasty

- 10. NFL great Randy
- 12. Ireland
- 13. Palm trees
- 16. Fungal disease
- 17. Tall plants with slender leaves
- 20. Affirmative! (slang)
- 22. Potato state
- 25. Delaware
- 26. A way to develop
- 27. Associations
- 29. Woman (French)
- 31. Sunscreen rating
- 34. Brew
- 36. One who leads prayers
- 37. Indigo bush
- 38. Burn with a hot liquid
- 40. Citizen (senior)
- 43. Scads
- 45. Morning
- 48. Straight line passing from side to side (abbr.)

- 50. S-shaped line
- 51. Small, thin bunch
- 53. Worn by exposure to the weather
- 54. Mars crater
- 55. Humanities
- 57. Of the ears
- 58. "The __ Degree"
- 59. Type of residue
- 61. Keeps you cool



Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to surfing.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 1 = a)

A. 7 1 25 9 11

Clue: Curling water

B. 11 3 8 21 4 20 1 8 17

Clue: A surfer's best friend

C. 4 1 6 1 13 22 9

Clue: Hold steady

D. 7 19 24 9 20 3 26

Clue: Fall off

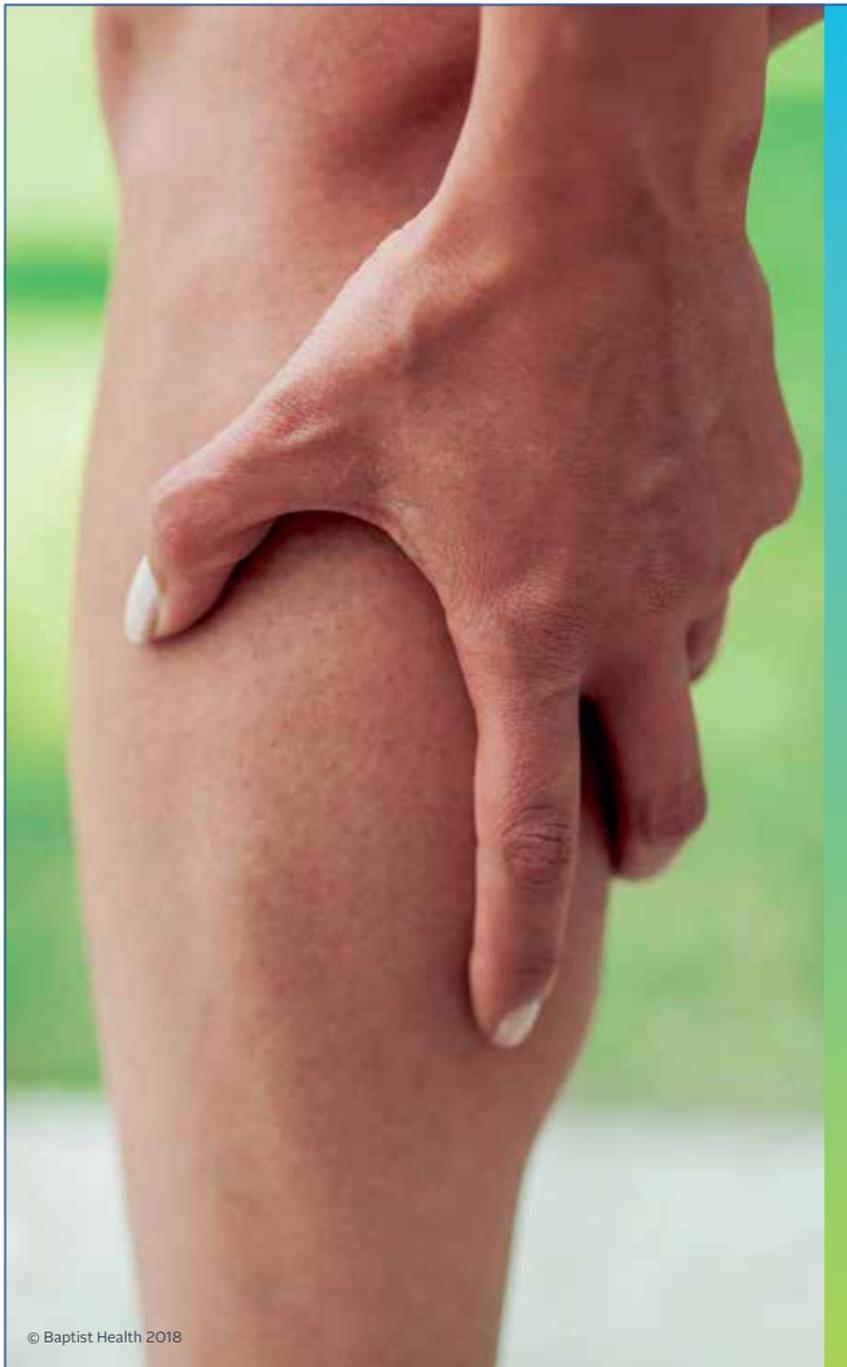
HANG TEN WORD SEARCH

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

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

WORDS

- AERIAL
- ALOHA
- BACKWASH
- BARREL
- BELLYBOARD
- BODYSURF
- BOMBORA
- CAREFREE
- CREST
- CURRENT
- EPOXY
- FIN
- FLATS
- FOOT
- GROUND SWELL
- HANG LOOSE
- KAHUNA
- KICKOUT
- MANEUVER
- NEOPRENE
- PADDLING
- PEAK
- RASH GUARD
- REEF
- RIDING
- RIP
- SHORTBOARD
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- WAX
- WETSUIT
- WHITewater
- WIND



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Travel

Aiken, S.C.: History, Horses and Music

By Debi Lander
mail@floridanewline.com

In the late 19th century, the Rockefellers, Vanderbilts, Carnegies, Pulitzers, Morgans, and Astors epitomized America's "Gilded Age." These Captains of Industry financed the industrial age and established many non-profit organizations. The millionaires frequently gathered to party in mansions they built in prime areas along the coast — sprinkling luxuriant estates in Newport, R.I., "camps" in the Adirondack Mountains of New York, grand railroad resort hotels up and down the East Coast, a secretive compound in Jekyll Island, Ga., and a winter colony in Aiken, S.C.

I had the chance to explore Aiken on a recent road trip to South Carolina. My discovery of its treasures began with a stay at The Wilcox — a white-columned hotel. The "Queen of Aiken" has hosted Winston Churchill, Harold Vanderbilt, Elizabeth Arden, Joseph Pulitzer, the Duke of Windsor and according to local lore, Franklin D. Roosevelt and his special lady. Even if you don't stay there, but I'd highly recommend you do so, check out the lobby and hallways and their historical photos and period pieces. A spirit of warmth and hospitality fills the corridors.

Aiken first achieved fame as a health retreat for those with breathing troubles. Coastal residents from Charleston would come to escape malaria and yellow fever. New York horsemen Eustis and Hitchcock bought their horses, along with their well-heeled friends



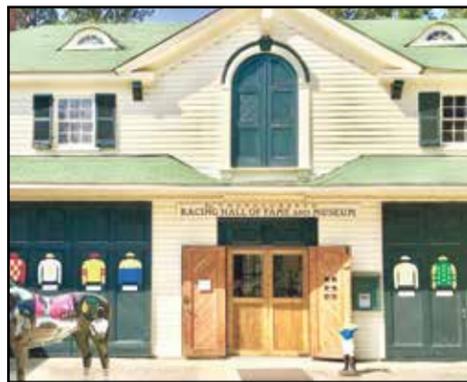
Photos courtesy Debi Lander.
Polo at Flat Out Polo Farms.

from the north to extend the equestrian season. They laid the foundations for the city's passion for riding, racing, foxhunting and polo. Today, there are more than 80 polo fields around Aiken.

I started exploring with a trolley tour that breezed me past captivating landmarks, homes and "Aiken cottages" (each with at least 22 rooms) on horse-friendly dirt roads. I heard named dropping tales of Winter Colony visitors like Evelyn Walsh McLean, the last known owner of the Hope Diamond, who sometimes placed it on the collar of her Great Dane. Other famous residents included Fred Astaire, who danced up and down the steps of the post office, and Andy Williams, the Moon River singer, who owned a nine-acre property with a 13-room house, a barn and stables, butler's cottage, laundry house, carriage house, greenhouse and a children's brick dollhouse.

The trolley tour stops at Hopelands Gardens for a meander through the peaceful park and the Thoroughbred Racing Hall of Fame, a two-story museum featuring memorabilia, plus a reference library for breeders.

Later, I drove to Flat Out Polo Farms to try my hand at arena polo. Owner Ken Cresswell gave me a polo lesson, but let's just say this fast-paced sport was more



The Thoroughbred Racing Hall of Fame at Hopelands Gardens.

than I could muster. Watching a game was thrilling.

Next day I toured Redcliffe Plantation State Historic Site, once the home of Henry Hammond, three generations of his descendants, and numerous African American families who worked as slaves and later as freemen and women. Hammond was a congressman, governor, and senator from South Carolina.

Both weekend evenings I attended a concert as part of the 10-year annual

Joye in Aiken Festival. The shows bring famed NYC Juilliard students, faculty and alumni to Aiken for music, dance, and drama performances for the public and teach in the area school. I listened to a night of soulful jazz and an unexpectedly exciting organ concert by Grammy winner Paul Jacobs.

I missed Aiken's Triple Crown, a three-week series of racing, steeplechase, polo and foxhunting events. Aiken ranks with Ocala and Louisville as one of the best horse towns in the country.

"It may be a small city, but they have as much history as Churchill Downs," said my guide.

Aiken evokes the city's opulent past but doesn't require a Pulitzer's purse to make for one grand getaway.

Visit www.bylandersea.com to read more of local travel writer Debi Lander's stories and travel tips.



The Wilcox — a white-columned hotel known as the "Queen of Aiken."

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Tree Giveaway cont. from pg. 1

This is the second year the community club has hosted a tree giveaway in an effort to help residents of Mandarin replant from devastating tree losses incurred from Hurricane Matthew in 2016 and Hurricane Irma in 2017. A major focus of the club over its many years has been the beautification and preservation of Mandarin as part of their larger mission to promote and insure the preservation, beautification and environmental well-being of Mandarin.

Additionally, the Mandarin Community Club joined representatives in October from Greenscape, Scenic Jacksonville,

the City of Jacksonville and others to discuss plans for rehabbing and replanting Mandarin Road after the shocking devastation from Hurricane Irma. All parties committed to moving forward with a plan. That effort will be supported through the commitment of private donors and through funds made available by a settlement involving Tree Mitigation funds from the City of Jacksonville. Currently, a preliminary survey of the damage along the length of Mandarin Road and recommendations where rehabilitation and replacement is needed is underway.

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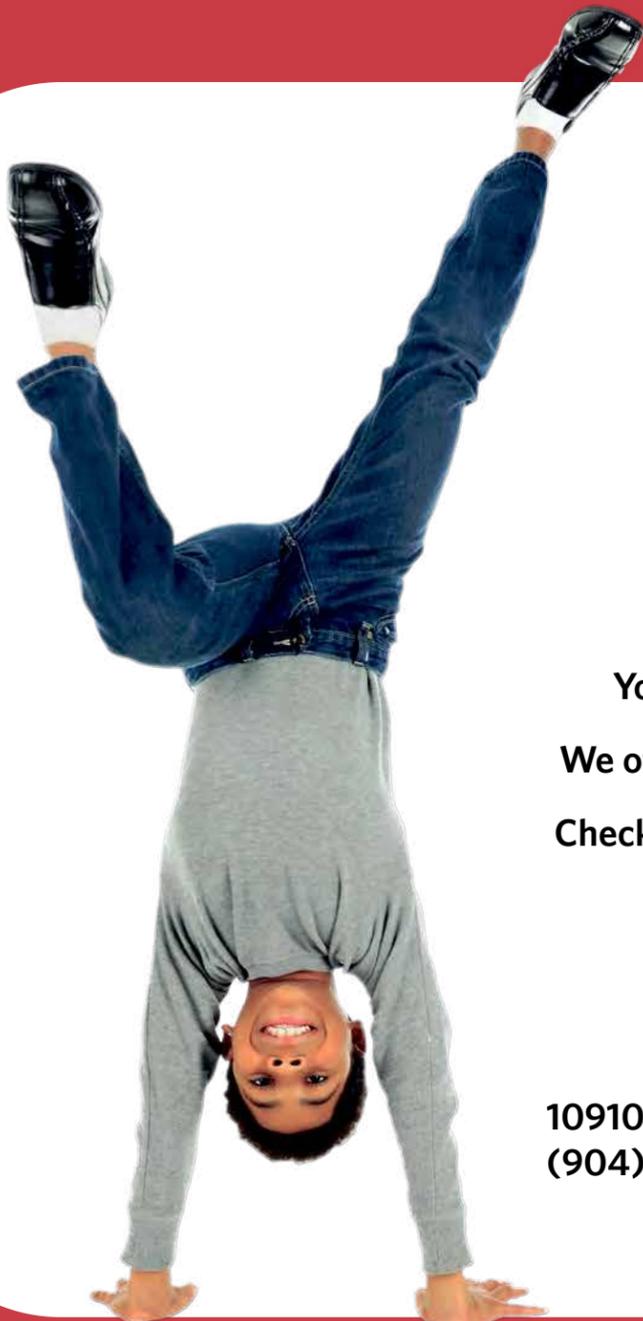
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