



The Creek Line

Serving the St. Johns County Community

MEET THE CANDIDATES
Pages 18-23
VOTE

AUGUST 2020 Volume 20 Issue 8

A Florida NewsLine Publication



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BFF Best Furry Friend



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When is flea season in Florida?

Native Sons and Daughters set to launch a new season

By Brian Quirk, Flaming Arrow
mail@floridanewslines.com

The Native Sons and Daughters program is a parent/child program enhanced by a Native American theme and is designed to create lifelong memories between fathers and their children. Founded almost 100 years ago, children aged five to 12 are eligible to join and all activities are age appropriate.



Photo courtesy Brian Quirk

New National Chief Ray "Creaking Oak" Junk with his daughters, Silver Sky and Golden Meadow.

The Jacksonville chapter, known as the Timucuan Longhouse of Jacksonville, is in the planning stages of which events to offer this upcoming season. Previous years have seen the group participate in camping, canoeing, archery, fishing, Frisbee golf, ice skating, nature hikes and community service.

This is a special year for the local organization as Timucuan Longhouse member Ray "Creaking Oak" Junk was elected as the club's National Chief (president) at the recent National Board Meeting. Junk will oversee clubs from South Florida to Southern California. Both of his daughters, Silver Sky

Native Sons and Daughters cont. on pg. 15

Sewing group "The Rippers" keeps busy with handmade projects to help those in need

By Heidi Brosfosky-Weaver
mail@floridanewslines.com

Susan Fischer may not be a marathon runner, but if miles could be measured by stitches made on a sewing machine, she would earn a spot on the winner's list.

"I wonder how many miles of thread she's used," says Peggy Preusler, a member of Fischer's sewing group, The Rippers.



Mary Kathy Mauck works on a duffel bag.

The group meets monthly and primarily creates projects that help those in need. Items include clothes for stillborn babies, turbans for cancer patients, and personal hygiene kits for Days for Girls. In fact, the group's name came about while she was working on a project — ripping apart garments and remaking them with Velcro for wounded soldiers to wear.

"Everything she brings us to sew is a benefit to so many people," says Preusler, who joined the group about eight years ago.

Presently, the focus is on making blue jean duffel bags for homeless students in St. Johns County. There are about 700 to 800 homeless students identified yearly, and each situation is different, according to Michael Israel, St. Johns County School District Homeless Liaison.



Photos courtesy Heidi Brosfosky-Weaver
Susan Fischer working on a duffel bag.

He says it can be challenging locating and helping these students as they often come to school well dressed and conceal their living situations. "Many are hidden in plain sight," Israel says.

Along with Mitchell Moody, Israel works to bring about awareness in the community through the ASSIST program, working closely with guidance counselors and educating people about the homeless population.



Elaine Anderson and Petty Pruesler decorating duffel bags.

Israel says many local residents assist with food drives, clothes collections, and other fundraising events. Fischer's group found an important niche, as well. "They offer a unique service, and we are thankful for what they are doing," says Israel.

The duffel bags are something sustainable that students can call their own, according to Israel. Students know the bags are "made with love by somebody who cares about them," he explains.

The idea for the duffel bags actually

came to Fischer while participating in an Angel Tree gift program at her church. The child she was to buy a gift for simply wanted a Frisbee; so, she decided to wrap it in a duffel bag as a special touch.

So far, Fischer's group has made about 80 duffel bags for the ASSIST program, and donations are needed for them to reach their goal of 800. In addition to gently used, non-stretch jeans in adult sizes, the group is collecting eight-packs of 20 oz. Gatorade and small hygiene items, such as hotel samples to place in the pockets. Items can be dropped off at Swiss Cove Christian Church Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. and Sunday from 8 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.



Some of the masks made by the group.

To lend a hand, Israel suggests reaching out to local schools, faith-based groups, and other community organizations as a majority of volunteer activities focus on supporting students.

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Students can earn community service hours by collecting litter at a park

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewline.com



Photo courtesy Timucuan Parks Foundation

Owen and Dillon Ferenc collect trash at one of the parks.

Timucuan Parks Foundation and its park partners are offering a way for students to earn community service hours this summer. From now through Aug. 12, students can take part in self-guided volunteer events at local city, state and national parks to help clean up the trash around the parks and preserves. Students can earn two hours of community service per cleanup event and will have the chance to win Mayday's Handcrafted Ice Creams gift cards as well as Hydro Flask water bottles.

Events can take place at any of the local city, state or national parks (except for Fort Caroline National Memorial and Kingsley Plantation, which remain closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic). A list of parks can be found at timucuanparks.org/parks/. The Timucuan Parks Foundation suggests students go with a family member or friend and follow social distancing guidelines.

Students will be required to complete a

Student Community Service Form and take pictures to document the event. Pictures can be before and after photos, selfies, pictures of the group working and a final one of with the filled trash bags. Participants should upload photos and the location to social media, including Timucuan Parks Foundation's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/TimucuanParksFoundation/, and use #tpfcleanup or tag @timucuanparks. Photos can also be sent directly to volunteer@timucuanparks.org.

Visit www.timucuanparks.org/volunteer/ to download the service form and to learn more details about what to bring and what to wear. Contact Felicia Boyd at fboyd@timucuanparks.org or call (904) 463-1799 for more information.

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BFF Best Furry Friend of the month

BREED:
Great Dane

FAVORITE ACTIVITY:
Chasing the Frisbee through the waves

FAVORITE TREAT:
A cardboard box to tear up, or a stick to chew!

FAVORITE FRIEND:
Ace, the neighbor's German Shepherd puppy, and every dog and person he sees!

HOW YOUR BFF GOT THEIR NAME:
My son named him the minute he first saw him.



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Do you have a cute pet? Send us your pet's picture and the answers to the five questions above before the 10th of the month. Your pet could be our BFF of the month and you could win a Gift Certificate! Does your business cater to pets? Would you like to sponsor our contest? Email editor@floridanewsline.com to enter your pet or sponsor the BFF contest.

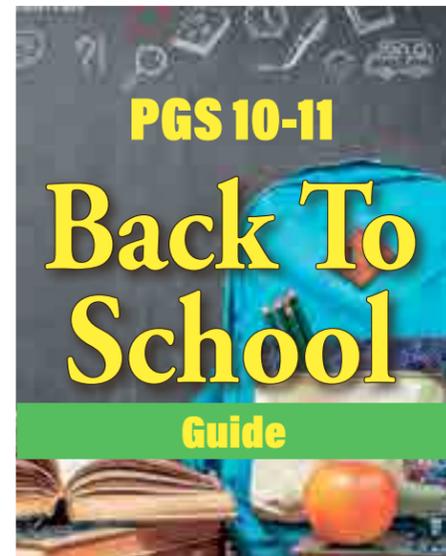


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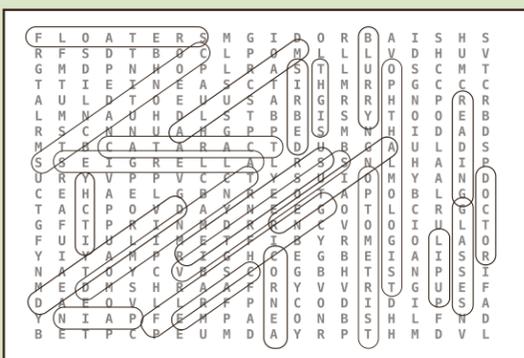
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Answers to our Puzzles PG 16



Answers: A. vision B. retina C. clarity D. distance



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Last month's Mystery Photo was the Cemex facility on US Highway 1 across from Palencia. Our winner was Mitch Bubb. Congratulations!

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**with St. Johns County Property Appraiser
Eddie Creamer**

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

A: It is almost time for TRIM (Truth in Millage) notices to be sent out to property owners. It's important to keep in mind that over the past four years, property values in St. Johns County have increased approximately 43 percent, which translates to higher taxes even without a tax increase.

Q: What can you tell us about TRIM notices?

A: TRIM is the most important document a property owner will get in St. Johns County. They will be mailed by our office on Aug. 14 and are also available online (www.sjcpa.us) as of that date. Within the mailing, property owners will receive a copy of the State of Florida Taxpayer's Bill of Rights and a list of exemptions in addition to the TRIM notice. The TRIM notice also contains the date and time of the budget hearing for each of the taxing authorities, so property owners can attend to learn more.

Q: What will the TRIM notice contain?

A: The TRIM notice shows the market value, the assessed value and the taxable value of your property for 2019 and proposed for 2020. It will also show any exemptions for the property. Make sure you check your TRIM notice for accuracy as to values and exemptions. The taxes are listed by taxable authority and will show what the taxes would be if the county made no changes to the budget. This is called the "rollback rate," essentially what your taxes would be this year to allow the county to collect the same amount of money as last year. TRIM will also show the proposed taxes if the proposed budget is passed; this is what would be on the tax bill.

Beginning on Aug. 3, if you go to our website (www.sjcpa.us) or Facebook page, you can view a video with a detailed explanation of TRIM and the appeals process.

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

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

Q: What can you tell us about property valuation in the time of Covid-19?

A: In Florida, we are required by state statute to assess property as of Jan. 1 of the tax year. We are required to submit our tax roll to the taxing authority on July 1. We assess based on ownership, condition and use. Our assessments are largely based on market values and sales of the previous year, so any effect of Covid-19 on values will be reflected in the 2021 tax year, not this year. Statutorily, we can't make adjustments this year, because we always operate in arrears — and even then adjustments have to be statistically based. We don't know what's going to happen for the rest of this year.

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

A: Our office is located at 4030 Lewis Speedway Ste. 203, (904) 827-5500. It is open Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Also, readers can email me at Eddie@sjcpa.us or call me at (904) 827-5500.



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

Q: There has been a lot of uncertainty about the start of the next school year. What can you tell us has been decided (as of interview date of July 15)?

A: We have four options that we are offering to parents and students for the 2020 – 21 school year. First, a return to school full-time at the brick and mortar school. Secondly, to remain at home and take school based distance learning, which is our teachers delivering instruction to students, either live from their classroom or possibly via a recorded lecture, depending upon the class. Students would stay on a schedule just like the brick and mortar students. This option is available for the first and second nine-weeks of school. Third, students can enroll in either St. Johns Virtual School or Florida Virtual School. This option requires a full semester commitment due to the pace being different from the first two options. Finally, families always have the option of homeschooling their children. [EDITOR'S NOTE: As of July 21, the school calendar for 2020 – 21 has been revised to include a student start date of Aug. 31, 2020 and the extension of the school year into June 2021.]

Q: Will the option for distance learning be extended into the second semester?

A: This is unknown. Only if the emergency order is extended would we be able to extend distance learning, because we would lose too much funding. Absent the emergency order, we would not receive funding for distance learning; we only receive funding for brick

and mortar and St. Johns Virtual School under normal circumstances.

Q: At the school board meeting on July 14, four board members raised the idea of delaying the start of school. What would be the benefit and what would you use this extra time for?

A: The potential to start school later accomplishes a couple of things: first, we can continue to observe the virus spread, but even more importantly, it gives us time to better prepare our teachers to meet the education needs of our students. We have some CARES Act funding to pay for some extra training for our teachers to provide this hybrid model of education. Our expectation this year (which is different from the end of last year when we first implemented distance learning) is that distance learning will proceed at the same pace and vigor as brick and mortar learning.

Q: What are some of the steps the school district is taking to provide as safe an environment as possible?

A: We are providing PPE for teachers (face shields and masks) and students. Elementary students will have desk shields. We will need to require face masks for all bus riders, since we are unable to accommodate distancing on the buses; there simply are not enough buses or drivers. All students will need to keep their masks on until they have their temperature checked either at an entry point to the school, or in their

Beverly Slough cont. on pg. 5

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Editorial

How to help in the community and earn service hours

By Mary Ann Kriniske
mail@floridanewslines.com

In the current environment of limited social distancing, group drives and collections are not feasible. Non-profit organizations in St. Johns County like St. Johns CARES, serving elderly, veterans, homeless, abused, children and animals, are facing new and ongoing challenges and restrictions.

You can help those in need by holding an independent neighborhood drive.

This is also a great way for students to earn service hour certificates. Visit www.stjohnscares.org for information on the needs of some of the organizations and a guide to documenting and receiving service hour certificates. Types of items that can be accepted is limited at this time.

Email president@stjohnscares.org with any questions.

Beverly Slough cont. from pg.4

classroom. We are providing enough thermometers for each classroom in each school. In hallways, masks must be worn and in cafeterias, we are keeping students separated. In high schools, we are trying to provide multiple food stations and seating areas to encourage students to spread out. Our basic goal is to provide as much separation as possible and require masks when it is not possible.

We have many resources available on our website, including Frequently Asked Questions and videos from various district departments to provide as much information as possible. I recommend that parents check these all out on our website (<https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/>)

Q: Do you have any other news to share with District 1?

A: We have signed a contract for the architectural re-design of High School "III," which will use the basic design

of High School "HHH" and modified for its site. High School "III" will be located on a site donated by Twin Creeks inside the Beachwalk community on County Road 210 and we plan to open it for the 2022 – 2023 school year — just one year after we open High School "HHH." The reason for the rush is that High School "HHH" does not relieve Bartram Trail High School of its overcrowding.

Secondly, I'd like to congratulate both Brennan Asplen and Cathy Mittelstadt on their recent appointments as superintendent of schools in other Florida districts. I am so proud of them, but this will certainly leave a void for us. Superintendent Forson is busy revamping his organizational chart.

Q: How can our readers contact you?

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

In Loving Memory

Hannah Marie Rachel Gall NeeSmith, born June 10, 1989, passed away on July 2, 2020. Hannah was born in Danbury, Conn., and raised in Illinois, Pennsylvania and Florida. She graduated from Bartram Trail High School in 2007.

Hannah was a gold medal Irish Step Dancer at the young age of four. She won second place in an art competition at San Juan del Rio Catholic School in eighth grade. Hannah was a talented singer, performing with many choruses and played the saxophone. She excelled in sports, playing basketball and softball throughout her school years. As an adult she played softball with co-workers and friends.

Hannah had several different jobs. She became a sushi aficionado, a certified bartender, child care teacher and worked in customer service for Holmes Stamp & Sign in Jacksonville and Austin, Texas.

Hannah was fortunate to travel with her family. Grammy, Boomp, Aunt Colleen and cousins, Matt and Chris took her to New York City. She enjoyed the numerous tourist sites, but loved shopping in Chinatown. They took her to Minnesota and visited The Mall of America, which she went through in a few hours. She enjoyed the



many trips to Disney and visiting family in Connecticut.

With a unique talent for extreme couponing, Hannah donated a large portion of her stockpile to people in need, the Humane Society, and many local food banks. She also volunteered at the Sulzbacher Center in Jacksonville. Camp I Am Special in Fruit Cove was another place Hannah offered her time.

Hannah is survived by her mother, Tracey Wixted; father, Steven Gall; stepmother, Robin Lipschutz Gall. James, Sadie, Brandon, and Reed Gall are her siblings. Her grandparents are Carolyn Wixted and Ted and Judy Gall. Hannah's children, TJ, Raylan, and Stella reside with their father and Hannah's best friend, Tyler NeeSmith. She is survived by many aunts and uncles, many cousins and two nieces, Bonnie Gall and Skyler Sardella. Hannah had many others who cared about her including AJ Decker, Vanessa Sardella and Kim DePalma. She is missed and will be in our hearts forever.

There was a small Life Celebration picnic at her children's home on July 10, 2020. Mass will be said in her honor at a later date.



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— Resident Mary M. (with her dog, Jade)

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CHRIS *Strickland*

Why did Historic City News Endorse Chris Strickland for Sheriff?

By Tom Verri
St Johns County, FL

Last month I announced to the readers my endorsement of Chris Strickland for St. Johns County Sheriff. I explained how Chris Strickland's experience as former Director of The St Johns County Sheriff's Office far exceeds that of his opponent who runs a small agency of 21 officers. Read below why Historic City News of Saint Augustine and its Editorial Board endorses Chris Strickland for Sheriff.

Endorsement

It has been 16-years since we made an endorsement for this important constitutional officer and over that time our volunteer editorial board has paid attention to the current officeholder so we could be prepared when this day finally arrived. Historic City News endorsed David Shoar over Glenn Lightsey in 2004, and for the first six years, it looked like it was going to be a good fit.

Unfortunately, following the death of Michelle O'Connell on September 2, 2010, every interaction with Shoar, and later with many departments within the agency, became more and more strained. Shoar expected a "pass" from us on the mishandling of the case as each week brought to light another mistake or negligent step in the investigation.

From that point forward, every press release got fact-checked, we made public records requests to support almost everything his spokesman claimed, and what was reported was not always in lock-step with the sanitized version released by Chuck Mulligan. About three years ago, I was informed that the department would no longer issue me a "press pass" or allow me to make media inquiries because the sheriff would not approve what I was writing.

So, when Shoar came out with his endorsement of Robert Hardwick, I was concerned. It was clear that he would owe Shoar a considerable political debt. The land developers in Duval County started dropping \$1,000 personal donations into the campaign and before long, Hardwick's campaign account was in the six-figure range.

As I skimmed over Hardwick's financial report recently, I noticed that all of the people who played a questionable role in the Michelle O'Connell case were also \$1000 personal donors. A cold chill ran down my back and I knew that the only hope for Hardwick at that point was complete independence from Shoar's influence.

We found that the closer we got to Election Day, the more influence Shoar was exerting over Hardwick. Next Shoar shows up drunk or high at the Republican Club's candidate debate, a crew of ranking deputies in tow. After which a loud verbal disturbance breaks out in the men's room between Shoar and J. B. Burney.

We can find no evidence that the current sheriff will not exercise his influence over the Hardwick, if elected. Anything less than an about face from the unaccountability of the past 16-years is not acceptable. For that reason, the Historic City News Editorial Board endorses Chris Strickland for Sheriff of St Johns County.

It's an impressive read to say the least. It illustrates some simple facts. Sheriff David Shoar wants you to vote for his guy, Rob Hardwick because he knows he will keep the curtain closed, and that the transparency and openness we the people of this county demand will be denied. Rob Hardwick has been backed by hundreds of thousands of dollars of money from outside St. Johns County. Rob Hardwick runs an agency of 21 officers and oversees 6 square miles in a community without schools, critical infrastructure, or serious crime and has never worked for The St Johns County Sheriff's Office. Rob Hardwick has never commanded more than a few people. Chris Strickland rose through the ranks of The St Johns County Sheriff's Office to the highest rank of Director of The Office of Sheriff. Chris Strickland found many broken things at that highest level of the agency and decided to run for sheriff. They want to stop him. Chris Strickland will bring the change, integrity, and honesty back. He will make sure we do not have another embarrassing embezzlement of taxpayer funds, he will not self-investigate on matters of police use of force. He has promised to equip all deputies with body worn cameras. He will restore the image of the office and give the people of this county an office they can be proud of once again. That is why I am behind him 100% and you should be too!

Strickland4Sheriff.com

Paid for by Chris Strickland, Rep. for St Johns County Sheriff



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

Q: What can you tell us about the recent closing of your satellite offices in the Northwest and Ponte Vedra Beach? Will this be permanent?

A: We have had to close our services in each of these annexes due to COVID-19. All services are available at our Main Office on US Highway 1 / Lewis Speedway, including passport services — which was the main service we offered at the annex. Passports may be obtained at the Main Office by appointment only; call (904) 819-3632 to make an appointment. We hope to reopen and expand the services we offer in the Northwest and Ponte Vedra annexes after the pandemic.

Q: What else has been happening in the Clerk's Office?

A: As part of our job as comptroller of St. Johns County, we recently published the annual financial report of St. Johns County. It's a 400 page rundown of the county's finances over the last fiscal year. Our office is part of the checks and balances of the county government to keep the public's trust. For instance, if the Board of County Commissioners authorizes a purchase and sends it to us to pay out, we make sure that we have all the pertinent information needed to have a successful transaction.

This responsibility and others that the Clerk's Office has are featured in a weekly Facebook video series. Visit www.facebook.com/StJohnsClerk to see the series. This is a great way to keep up with our office.

Q: Has funding for your office been impacted by the pandemic?

A: The Clerk's Office receives funding from two sources to reflect the specific functions we perform: from the state, we receive funding due to our court functions and from the county, we receive funding due to our role as comptroller and inspector general. Due to COVID-19 and the reduction of court cases and fees, the state of Florida has cut our funding by about 14 percent; the cut will be implemented in the fourth quarter, which will actually represent about a 40 percent decrease in that quarter's budget.

We are looking at reallocating some funding to cover the cuts and we are on guard for next year. I believe it is a testament to the fiscal conservation of this office for the past several years that we are hopeful to get through this without furloughs or reductions of services to the people of St. Johns County.

Q: Is there a date when jury trials will resume?

A: There is no firm date for a return to jury trials at this time, although other court proceedings continue. Video conferencing is being used at every opportunity possible.

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

A: A lot of questions can be answered by visiting our website, www.stjohnsclerk.com, which is most commonly used to pay traffic citations or search court records. People can also call our main office at (904) 819-3600.

Briefs

Council on Aging announces fundraising golf tournament

Council on Aging (COA) has announced its 17th annual "Champions for Elders" golf tournament, a fundraiser to support critical services for seniors in St. Johns County. The event will take place on Monday, Aug. 10, 2020 at Slammer & Squire, World Golf Village.

Since the COVID-19 crisis began in March, the Council on Aging has been on the front lines serving elders in the community who are most at risk due to the pandemic. Despite the required temporary closures of their senior centers, the Council on Aging's work for seniors has continued unabated. In fact, many older adults in the community are relying upon the council's services more than ever due to quarantine and social distancing requirements.

The current crisis has necessitated the cancellation of the Council on Aging's annual Gala, its biggest fundraiser of the year; however, the organization looks forward to a successful golf tournament campaign to raise funds in support of services to seniors.

The Council on Aging is calling upon members of the community to support the services seniors need by participating in the tournament as Champion for Elders playing teams, or as Elder Guard financial sponsors. Four-person playing team sponsorships are available starting

at a donation of \$2,500. Elder Guard financial sponsorships are available for donations between \$250 and \$15,000. Monthly Elder Guard Sustainer sponsorships are also available in any monthly amount. The Council on Aging will be publicizing the event sponsors to celebrate their commitment to supporting St. Johns County elders.

Individuals, businesses and organizations interested in participating as players and/or sponsors should contact the Council on Aging's Sandy Hollett at (904) 209-3686 or shollett@coasjc.org, or visit the event website at <https://bit.ly/Golf-COA2020>.

Newcomers Alumnae launches new website

Newcomers Alumnae was formed more than 22 years ago to give graduates of newcomer groups an opportunity to continue growing in the community and to foster friendships through social activities.

"Even though the pandemic has temporarily forced us to cancel most of our functions, we are still continuing to reach out to our members," said Brooke Freeman, Membership Chair of Newcomers Alumnae. "We have more than 200 members from Ponte Vedra Beach, Nocatee, Jacksonville, Atlantic Beach, Jacksonville Beach, Neptune Beach and St. Augustine and we're proud to unveil our new website



with St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections Vicky Oakes

Q: What can you tell us about the Voter Election Protection Standards, recently adopted by your office?

A: This addresses concerns about voting during COVID-19 and outlines the responsibilities of both elections office staff and voters.

Here's what voters can expect from my staff and poll workers:

- My office will provide mask, face shields, gloves, hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes for workers at the polls.
- We will provide clean voting locations, including check-in and voting booths.
- We will provide hand sanitizer for all voters entering the voting locations.
- We will provide clean pens for check-in and marking your ballot.
- We will provide quick access to ballots and voting booths to spend limited time within the voting location.
- An adequate number of voting booths will be provided inside the polling room to allow for social distancing.

Q: What should voters plan to do?

A: The voter's responsibilities are:

- You should call the Elections Office at (904) 823-2238 in advance if you need to update your information or have any questions before going to vote.
- Before arriving to vote, make sure your address is current, study your sample ballot, mark it, bring it with you so that we can meet the goal of casting your ballot as efficiently as possible.
- Sanitize your hands upon arrival, and do not touch your mouth or face inside the polling room as you move through the voting process.
- Limit discussion inside the polling room to protect all in the room.
- Face coverings are encouraged to protect yourself and others. Masks will be available at the polling locations for voters upon request.

- Keep in mind that social distancing is everyone's responsibility. Be respectful of others' space while waiting in line and inside the polling room.

Q: Do you have any updates about early voting, which will take place Aug. 6 - Aug. 15, from 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. daily?

A: I am excited about two new polling locations for early voting. One is the former Earth Fare store on County Road 210. It is huge — a former grocery store — and we will really be able to spread people out. The second new location, also large with plenty of room to spread out, is the Convention Center at World Golf Village.

Q: What can you tell us about Voting By Mail?

A: First of all, if you need a Vote by Mail ballot and haven't yet requested one, there is still a little bit of time — these ballots must be requested by 5 p.m. on Aug. 8.

If you do choose to Vote by Mail, remember that all ballots are due in our office no later than 7 p.m. on Primary Election Day, Aug. 18, to be counted. If they arrive later than that, they will not be counted. There are also Red Drop Boxes located only in the early voting locations, during early voting hours, 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. daily. Did you know that you can track your Vote by Mail ballot on our website? You can see when we send it to you, when we receive it back and when the vote is counted.

Q: Looking ahead to the General Election in November, do you have any preliminary news to share?

A: My goal is to have two additional Early Voting locations above the eight we are offering in the Primary Election. Additionally, I would encourage voters to check the elections office website for any last minute polling location changes due to COVID -19 for the General Election.

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

A: Readers can email me at voakes@votesjc.com or call me at (904) 823-2238. Our website, www.votesjc.com also has a wealth of information.



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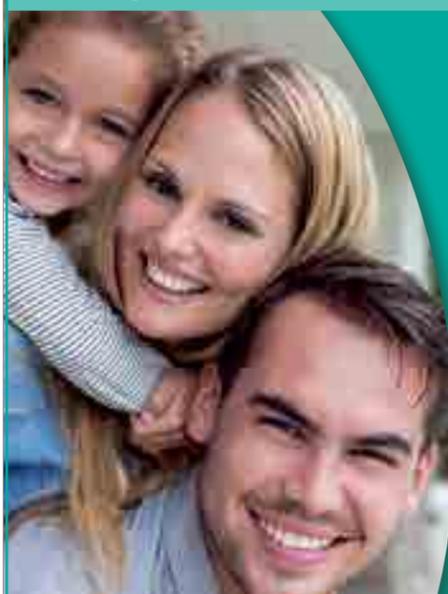
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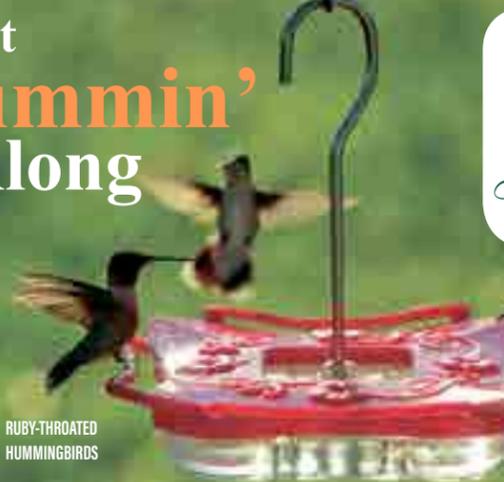
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Briefs cont. from pg. 6

where the public can get more information about our club.”

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June real estate: Most monthly sales since July 2019

While COVID-19 continued to be the hot topic of discussion, Northeast Florida’s real estate market sizzled as well, according to a recent report released by the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors.

Spiking up from 2,337 sales in May, 3,021 homes changed hands in June, just three sales fewer than June 2019. June’s closed sales were also the greatest number of monthly sales since 3,035 sales in July 2019.

Sales prices were equally hot, with a median of \$255,000 (up 5.4 percent from a year ago) and average of \$310,822 (up 4.4 percent from a year ago).

Fewer homeowners opted to become sellers in June, with 3,515 new listings being added (down 1.2 percent from a year ago).

Demand for homes continues to be strong. There was a 21.9 percent increase in pending sales from a year ago, equating to 3,626 contracts to buy a home being signed that did not yet close.

With demand strong, and fewer sellers entering the market, inventory tumbled to 7,545, a 24.1 percent plunge from a year ago. While inventory has been particularly low for several years, 7,545 is less inventory than any month since some point prior to 2009 (NEFAR’s reports documenting inventory levels by month extend back through 2009).

Months’ supply of home dropped to just 2.8, which is 26.3 percent less than June 2019. A balanced market is considered to be between five- and six-months of inventory. Days on market average for the month was 70, up from 64 days a year ago.

2020 NEFAR President Ron Harris said, “Despite COVID-19, consumers are demonstrating pent-up demand for homes and taking advantage of low interest rates. Sellers are capitalizing on robust sales prices and the lowest inventory in years, with 13.5 percent of June sales going for more than the original listing price.”

Groundwater levels and spring flows increased in June

Groundwater levels across the St. Johns River Water Management District rebounded slightly in June after a late spring downward trend, while rainfall varied with above-average rainfall in the north and western portions and below-average totals in coastal and southern regions. A full report outlining hydrological conditions was presented at the district’s July Governing Board meeting. Highlights included:

Rainfall

June rainfall varied geographically, with a flip flop from May’s rainfall trend.

The district’s western and northern counties received above-average rainfall last month, while in May those areas were drier. Coastal and southern counties received below-average rainfall in June, while those areas were the wet areas of the district during the previous month.

Counties with the highest June rainfall were Nassau, with 10.6 inches, Baker and Duval, which received 9.5 inches.

Flagler County had the least rainfall, with 5.7 inches.

Districtwide, the cumulative rainfall total over the last 12 months is 48.3 inches, which is 2.7 inches below the long-term average.

Counties with the greatest rainfall deficit through June were Putnam, Flagler and St. Johns counties, which continue to have a 12-month rainfall deficit of more than 10 inches. These counties have maintained this deficit since March.

Groundwater

Upper Floridan aquifer conditions (groundwater levels) at the end of June were mostly in the normal range throughout most of the district, increasing consistently across the district in June and reversing the downward trend of the previous month.

Groundwater levels are at the 56th percentile districtwide (up from the 39th percentile in May). This means that since 1980, about 44 percent of the time aquifer levels have been higher than they are now.

Visit sjrwmd.com to learn more about rainfall totals and other hydrologic data collected. The district’s summertime water conservation message reminds water users to “Watch the Weather. Wait to Water.” Visit the district’s Water Less campaign webpage at WaterLessFlorida.com and follow the district on social media to learn ways to conserve water outdoors.

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ST. JOHNS Business Monthly



Market Insight

The Greatest Sports Deal of All Time

By Scott Grant
ScottGrant@StJohnsBusinessMonthly.com

The American Basketball Association or ABA operated for about a decade in the 1960s and '70s. The new league offered exciting new rules designed to attract fans; the red, white, and blue ball, the three-pointer, and the slam dunk were distinctive features of the old ABA. The league also offered jobs to players who had not yet finished college. The older NBA did not do this, requiring that its players be four years out of high school before they could join.

The ABA created a "hardship rule" that allowed teams to sign younger players and one of those players was Julius Erving, popularly known as Dr. J. The ABA was also known for paying big contracts to star players. Local legend Artis Gilmore, who led Jacksonville University to NCAA finals in 1970, was one. The 7-foot 4-inch center signed with the Kentucky Colonels in 1971 for \$2.5 million.

As the '70s dragged on, the NBA increasingly coveted some of the ABA players, especially Dr. J and it became increasingly obvious that the two leagues would merge. The Silna brothers, Ozzie and Daniel, had made a fortune manufacturing polyester, which was very popular at the time. They wanted an NBA franchise, but none were for sale, so they fixed on the idea of buying an ABA team and having that team merged into the NBA.

They bought the Carolina Cougars in 1974 and then moved the team to St. Louis. They renamed the team the Spirits of St. Louis, a reference to Charles Lindbergh's plane, which he used for his famous solo crossing of the Atlantic in 1927. In 1976, the two leagues merged, but the Spirits were left out. Only four of the remaining seven teams, the Indiana

Pacers, the NY Nets, the San Antonio Spurs, and the Denver Nuggets, were allowed to make the leap to the NBA. The Virginia Squires folded outright, and the Kentucky Colonels' owners were paid \$3.3 million to go away.

The Silna brothers held out, turning down an offer of \$5 million. They eventually settled on a deal that would go down in the annals of sports history. The former Spirits owners would be paid one-seventh of the TV revenues from each of the four teams that made the NBA leap in perpetuity. That would ultimately add up to 2 percent of the NBA's TV revenues. The first year's check was for \$521,749. Checks kept arriving every year and kept going up. The annual payments rose to \$4 million and then to over \$17 million over the next several decades. Finally, in 2014, the Silnas agreed to forego a portion of their future TV revenue in exchange for half a billion dollars.

The story has become a sports legend that has nothing to do with winning games. The Silna brothers' deal is one of the most lucrative in history, netting the pair around a billion dollars. The story deserves a happy ending, but does not get one. Apparently, the Silnas invested a large quantity of money with Bernie Madoff, the legendary Ponzi-schemer and crook. How much money the brothers lost in the scam is unclear, but the government was seeking to recover \$24 million of fake profits that Madoff distributed to the brothers as part of his nefarious scheme.

Scott A. Grant is a local author, historian, columnist, and speaker. He is president of Standfast Asset Management in Ponte Vedra Beach. He welcomes your comments or questions at scottg@standfast.com.

St. Johns County approves CARES Act Funding Program

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

The St. Johns Board of County Commissioners approved Phase I of a \$46 million CARES Act funding program on July 14, 2020 that focuses on small business recovery, resident assistance, and non-profit organizations.

County staff contacted community stakeholders to conduct a needs assessment and gather feedback to fund programs essential to recovery efforts. With \$10 million allocated to an expanded Back to Business Grant Program, the funding reinforces St. Johns County's commitment to ensuring small businesses remain at the forefront of the economic recovery effort. Launched in May and funded by the Community Development Block Grant, the Back to Business Grant Program provided short-term financial assistance to St. Johns County businesses that suffered a disruption in operations or a loss of revenue as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. CARES Act funding will allow the county to expand the Back to Business Grant Program and decrease program criteria to assist additional businesses.

The new St. Johns County CARES Act Funding Program also allocated \$3 million to individual resident assistance programs that helped with mortgage payments, rent, and per-

sonal expenses incurred due to COVID-19. The new funding will allow the continuation of the program that was funded by state grant funds, which have been depleted. The program will provide qualified residents with the necessary assistance to remain in their homes and continue on a path to economic recovery. In addition, the county will begin actively soliciting proposals from local nonprofit agencies that have suffered from COVID-19 to apply for a portion of \$5 million of the funding. The Board of County Commissioners recognizes that nonprofit organizations are an integral part of our community and their services are vital for the county's vulnerable residents.

Expanded COVID-19 testing and contact tracing efforts were also bolstered with \$2.5 million, and social distancing and decontamination programs received \$1.5 million in funding. The program also allocates \$1.5 million in funding to the City of St. Augustine and \$125,000 to the City of St. Augustine Beach for COVID-related expenditures.

All allocations will undergo a needs assessment and will be subjected to a thorough vetting process to ensure expenditures are in compliance with all local, state, and federal regulations.

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Back To School

2020 - 2021 St. Johns County School Calendar

August 2020				
M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				



Keep devices in top shape and running well

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewline.com

The need for reliable technology has never been more apparent. When the world hit the proverbial pause button in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak, technology was crucial to keeping people connected to the world around them, helping people maintain some semblance of normalcy as it pertained to work and education.

Students and families who have invested in various electronics to help keep their household running should understand that maintenance is required to keep these devices running effectively. These tips can help keep gadgets in tip-top shape.

- Protect devices from extreme temperatures. Electronic devices are designed to operate under an array of conditions, but pushing those conditions can result in damage. Most devices are fine between temperatures of 32 F and 90 F. But don't leave electronics in the car, in a sunny window or outdoors.

- Clean devices regularly. Refer to the user's manual for the proper ways to clean the devices you rely on each day. Some may require a specific cleaner or a particular fabric to help ensure the device isn't scratched or damaged. Spray cleaners on a cloth and then wipe off devices, rather than spraying cleaners directly on electronics. Try a can of compressed air to remove dust from crevices or vents.

- Invest in a surge protector. While surge protector power strips multiply the number of available outlets, they also serve a more important purpose. These devices will cut off power to plugged-in electronics if there is a power surge, helping to prevent damage.

- Don't overcharge. It's essential to have gadgets charged and ready to go, but overcharging can reduce battery life. Do not leave devices charging overnight. Battery University[®], a free educational website offering battery information, says that nickel- and lithium-based batteries should be stored with a 40 percent state-of-charge. This level minimizes age-related capacity loss and keeps the battery in good condition.

- Use protective cases. Cases can prevent damage if devices are dropped and also may safeguard against scratched screens. Cases and covers also minimize dust and dirt on devices.

- Keep software up-to-date. Security issues may arise when software is not updated, and programs may not run effectively or be compatible with others. Along the same vein, routinely clean out unused files to free up space, and clear cookies and browser histories to maintain speed and efficiency.

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Back To School

How to prepare kids to go back to school

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

The end of summer can be a bittersweet time for students. While many students look forward to seeing their friends, few want to say goodbye to the relaxing days of summer. Parents know that getting their children back in the school day swing of things can be a challenge. The following are some ways to make that transition go smoothly.

- Introduce more structure as summer vacation winds down. The chance to unwind in a structure-free setting can benefit students at the onset of summer vacation. Many parents grapple with the notion that their children's lives are over-scheduled, and the Cleveland Clinic notes that limiting organized activities clears up downtime for kids to play and relax and spend time with their families. So it's important that parents afford their children this down time during summer vacation, only gradually introducing more structure as the school year draws closer. In the weeks before the school year is slated to begin, start waking kids up a little earlier and reintroducing bedtimes for younger children who may have been staying up later over the last couple of months. This can be an effective way to begin slowly preparing youngsters for the structure of the school year.
- Encourage children to read throughout

the summer. A report from the education publishing company Scholastic found that 47 percent of parents are unaware of the "summer slide," which refers to the loss of academic skills that occurs when school is not in session. Scholastic notes that the slide is largely attributed to a lack of reading when school is not in session. By encouraging kids to read during their summer vacations, parents can make sure youngsters' brains stay sharp and are ready to learn once the school year begins.

- Focus on the positive. Even kids who love school may be apprehensive about returning to the classroom. After all, summer vacation is fun. Parents can confront that apprehension by focusing on the positives of returning to school. Emphasize the chance to see friends every day or participate in a beloved extracurricular activity, like sports, band or a favorite academic club.
- Let kids do some of their own back-to-school shopping. The items that constitute back to school supplies may have changed since parents were in school. But many parents still take their children on back-to-school clothes shopping excursions. Let kids choose their own clothes, as an opportunity to wear clothes they picked themselves might make them excited for the new school year.

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Fishing

Capt. David's Fishing Report

By Captain David Lifka
mail@floridanewsline.com

What to do, what to do?

We have now reached the time of year when fishing on the St. Johns River is really beginning to turn up a notch or two — or three. We have shrimp in the river, and we have fish that feed on the shrimp in the river. Sometimes trying to decide whether to fish, shrimp, or fish and shrimp can be difficult. Making the right call could be the difference in coming home with a full or empty cooler.

To avoid a “feast or famine” type situation on your next trip out, think like a boy scout and “be prepared.” If you are going shrimping, bring fishing rods. If you are going fishing, bring your cast net.

The best shrimping (like fishing) is often tidal.

When the tide is not right, shrimping can be a lot of

work with minimal results. When this happens, try taking off for an hour or so to your favorite nearby fishing spot. Set the rods out, relax and rehydrate. If the fish are biting, take advantage and keep on fishing.

The same can be done if you are fishing first. Try a few throws of your cast net before you fish just to catch bait. If you just happen to get on them really well (like dozens per throw), then take advantage and load up. After getting enough shrimp for a dinner or two and bait, continue on with your fishing plans.



Photo courtesy Bill Edwards
Jim Bagnardi caught a 21" flounder in the Intracoastal Waterway near the St. Augustine inlet on July 10.

Through the month of August and into September we can expect shrimping and fishing to continue to improve. We can also expect the shrimp to get larger as the season progresses. Weather often plays an important role in the length and quality of our shrimping season, and the fishing that coincides. Let's hope that this year's weather mix delivers the proper formula needed for a long and prosperous shrimping (fishing) season.

Just a thought. Often when culling our bycatch of smaller shrimp, we are tossing back shrimp that have already died. Keeping these same “toss backs” in the mix of your five-gallon bucket has been for many, a money saving practice. By saving these smaller shrimp for future fishing trips, the need and hassle to purchase bait is eliminated.

Fishing Report: Reds, drum, croakers (all cousins) being caught from Buckman to Green Cove. Shrimp from Doctor's Lake to Green Cove. Still decent size whiting in surf at area beaches.

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

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

Gardening

Summer - Bugs and More

By Master Gardener Volunteer Lesley Arrandale
mail@floridanewsline.com

I have had a small potted citrus tree — shrub, really — for quite a few years. It's a limequat, a cross between a kumquat and a Key lime. This year it began flowering a few months ago and I had hopes of some fruit, but all the flowers fell. It was then I noticed that some leaves had been chewed ragged, and I found the culprit was a bright green American grasshopper (*Schistocerca americana*). It wasn't an insect that I had seen before, but I found a second one a few weeks later in among my tomato plants. This creature varies in color before it reaches its adult stage, depending on the number of them in proximity, and thankfully green ones don't occur in



Photos courtesy Metro Creative

large numbers: http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/field/american_grasshopper.htm. When you see multicolored grasshoppers, the population will be larger and you should be vigilant to protect your plants. I caught both of mine and disposed of them — underneath a brick!

Watching zebra longwing butterflies in my yard has been a wonderful diversion, but I hadn't given their lifecycle much thought. Yes, they lay tiny yellow eggs on young passion vine shoots, which hatch into white caterpillars with black spines that then pupate and form dark crinkly chrysalides with appendages like horns at the bottom. When they emerge, or eclose, the new butterflies rest while their wings expand fully and then they go on their way, to breed, lay eggs, and so on: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/IN/IN80500.pdf>. Most butterflies' lives follow the same pattern, but the food for their caterpillars will vary from species to species. It wasn't until my husband asked me how long they live that I took a closer look, and I was

surprised to learn that zebra longwings can live up to six weeks, and the reason is that their diet includes nutrient-rich pollen as well as nectar, which is highly unusual. One chrysalis formed outside my kitchen window and my attention was drawn to it by the behavior of other zebra longwings: two or three at a time would flutter around it, as if they were checking it out, and further research told me that they probably were. Males of the species are known to mate with females while they are still in their chrysalides. Finally I saw two butterflies resting on each side of the chrysalis, and they remained there for several hours at least, so perhaps the female had emerged to join her mate: www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/100years/zebra-longwing/.

It's truly summer, with temperatures in the '90s and high humidity, and when our days are rainy it's great not to have to water so much. This is a gentle reminder, particularly for anyone with an automated irrigation system, to make sure it is operating efficiently, and preferably employs a soil moisture meter to prevent the system coming on unnecessarily: <https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/care/irrigation/>. Overwatering is a major cause of lawns succumbing to disease, overgrowth of weeds, and even insect damage. Visual signs to indicate a thirsty lawn can include a slightly blue cast, folded leaf blades, and the impression of footprints remaining when it's walked on. It's also worth noting that lawns have different needs for water than do shrubs and flowerbeds, so make sure an irrigation system runs in zones accordingly.

Check out the latest New Leaf – Yard and Garden newsletter (<https://tinyurl.com/yxuhw2qq>) for topical information and advice.

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Nutrition Check: Want to feel great? It's all in the plate!

By Kristen Hicks-Roof PhD, RDN, LDN and Marissa Schwam BS
mail@floridanewsline.com

Wanting to obtain a healthy lifestyle has become quite popular over the last decades; however, there is a lot of misleading information that people have been utilizing in order to obtain their goal of becoming healthier. There are countless "fad diets" that promise quick fixes, rapid weight loss, and even detoxification. The truth is, obtaining a healthy lifestyle doesn't mean you need to restrict food groups or starve yourself to lose weight. It's all about how you build your plate. Every plate we make is a building block for a healthier lifestyle, so it is important that we include all food groups as a part of our meals and snacks. Here are some easy steps to help you build your plate and obtain the goal of a healthier you.

1. Aim to make half of your plate full of fruits and vegetables. Fruits and vegetables are full of nutrients that support healthy functioning of your brain, cells, skin, and everything in between. Try to include all different colors such as orange, red, purple, white and green.

2. Don't forget whole grains. Try to make at least half of your grains whole. Whole grains are a great source of B vitamins and natural fiber, which helps

reduce cholesterol and helps keep you regular. Try some ancient whole grains including barley, bulgur, quinoa, sorghum, or wild rice.

3. Protein should take up the last quarter of your plate. Choosing lean or plant proteins will help you reduce your intake of saturated fat, which has been shown to increase your risk for heart disease and strokes. Lean or plant proteins include chicken, turkey, nuts, beans, tofu, and even some cuts of beef such as flank or strip steak.

4. Switch it up by trying to add in some "new" foods to your regular routine. Keep mealtime fun by picking out foods you or your family have never tried before like chia seeds, lentils, brussel sprouts, cauliflower, or edamame.

5. Don't ignore your cravings. If you have a sweet tooth, you can always satisfy this craving in a healthy way. You can always do fresh fruit parfait with whipped topping, yogurt or some mini white chocolate morsels. If you like hot desserts, then you can try baking apples or peaches.

Bartram Trail Branch Library updates

By Donna Braasch
mail@floridanewsline.com

The Bartram Trail Branch Library remains open for Grab and Go service. There is no seating at this time. If you are uncomfortable coming inside for your materials, we can provide curbside service on request. Library staff is committed to providing safe service to all.

The library's online tracking app, READSquared, has been well received. If you are not using this program, there is still time to register and enjoy it.

The library system is also making use of Zoom to hold book clubs and other programs at all levels. Visit sjcpls.org and choose the Book Club tab to see how to register.

The Bartram Trail Branch Friends of the Library have been busy funding READSquared, SAT/ACT, and purchasing supplies to support functions during the different opening phases. The community's support is still needed and new members are welcome to joining the Friends.

Since the group's monthly book sales are presently suspended, the Friends of the Library is planning Pop Up sales outside, which will be promoted via Facebook. Join both the Friends and the St. Johns County Facebook pages for all the updates and announcements.

Donna Braasch is Reference Assistant at the Bartram Trail Branch Library.



Photo courtesy Stephanie Thompson

Julington Creek Slammers win USSSA World Series

The 2020 8u Julington Creek Slammers won the USSSA World Series in Sarasota the week of June 23. The team's record in the tournament was 6 – 1, which resulted in the team winning its first World Series. Pictured are Johnny Degrado, Tyson Jordan, Mark Thompson, Logan Griner, Blake Soures, Walker Hall, Hayden Crouse, Will Campbell, Pete Dempsey, Tyler North, Ryker Underwood, Easton Taft and coaches Travis Crouse, Mikel Taft and David Hall. The team's manager is Chris Thompson.

The Pantry Raiders

Turn your grill into a pizza maker

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

Some say an outdoor kitchen isn't complete without a pizza oven. A delicious pie straight out of a blazing hot oven can be delectable when dining al fresco, but pizza also can be made right on the grill.

This recipe for "The Chicagoan" from Craig W. Priebe's "Grilled Pizzas & Piadinas" (DK) utilizes grilled beef and sliced potatoes to give this grilled pizza a steakhouse flavor. Use a homemade dough or your favorite premade variety available at your local grocery store.

The Chicagoan

(Makes a 12-inch pizza)

1 russet potato, peeled and sliced about ¼
-inch thick
3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
1 tsp. salt
½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
8 oz. top sirloin or strip steak
½ tsp. salt
Freshly ground black pepper
1 grilled pizza crust
1 tbsp. grated Parmesan
1 cup shredded mozzarella
½ cup shredded cheddar
1 cup chunky tomato sauce
½ cup thinly sliced red onions
¼ cup sour cream
2 tbsp. minced fresh chives



Photo courtesy MetroCreative
The Chicagoan

Preheat the oven to 400 F. Place the sliced potato in a large bowl and toss with two tablespoons olive oil, salt and pepper. Line a baking sheet with foil and spread the slices in a single layer. Bake for about 15 minutes, until the potato is golden and tender. While still hot, loosen the slices with a spatula so they don't stick.

Prepare a grill for direct cooking over high heat. Season the steak liberally on both sides with the salt and pepper. Grill the steak over the hottest part of the fire for 4 minutes. Turn and grill for 4 minutes longer, until the steak is medium-rare and well charred. Remove and let sit for 5 minutes. Slice thinly.

Brush the grilled side of the pizza crust with the remaining one tablespoon olive oil and dust with the Parmesan. Sprinkle the mozzarella and cheddar on top. Drop spoonfuls of the chunky tomato sauce onto the pizza. Top with the potato, red onion and the steak.

Grill the pizza with indirect heat. If your grill is still hot, move coals to one side or turn off one burner and allow the pizza to cook on the side without a direct flame. Grill the pizza for 5 to 8 minutes, or until the crust is crisp and brown. The bottom may have a few black spots from charring.

Before serving, drop teaspoons of the sour cream onto the pizza, and garnish with the fresh chives.

(Grilling the crust: To grill a pizza crust for this recipe, roll out to a 12-inch circle and place on a cookie sheet. Adjust the grill to reach a temperature of 400 F. Slide the dough onto the grill. The dough should take about 3 minutes to cook. Watch for bubbles. The crust will be soft at first and tear easily. To check doneness, lift the underside. It should be an even light brown with brown grill marks. Pick up the crust using tongs and place it on your cookie sheet. Flip it over so the grilled side is face up. This browned side becomes the top of your pizza.

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Travel

Road Trip: Sarasota

By Debi Lander
mail@floridanewline.com

Road trips have become the way to travel this summer, especially those within our own state and those offering a variety of outdoor activities. Sarasota fits the bill, lying south of Tampa on the Gulf Coast, about a four-hour drive.



Photos courtesy Debi Lander
The Ringling Mansion, Ca D'Zan.

Sarasota prides itself on its white-sand beaches with Siesta Key beach appearing annually on "Top Beaches in the U.S." lists. Siesta Key Beach lies on a crescent-shaped barrier island and runs eight miles long. Visitors and residents also enjoy Longboat Key and Lido Key beaches. Venice earned the nickname the Shark's Tooth Capital of the World, due to the thousands of fossilized teeth that wash up each year on this south Sarasota County beach.

John Ringling made Sarasota his winter home as well as that of the circus during the early 1900s through 1959. The lush tropical grounds of the Ringling Museums are free to the public, but you need to buy a ticket to go into the Circus Museum or Ca D'Zan, Ringling's former home that looks like a Venetian palace fronting Sarasota Bay.

The Ringling Museum of Art (on the same grounds) offers complimentary admission on Mondays. Ringling left his treasured collection of Medieval, Renaissance, Greek, Roman, and Cypriot antiquities to the state of Florida upon his death. The luscious pink building with a Renaissance façade stands as Florida's official art museum. The courtyard in the center ranks as my favorite spot in the city. Columned walkways, fountains, flowers, and statues, including an exact copy of Michelangelo's David, lie scat-

tered within the space, a calm respite any day.

Marie Selby Gardens, an outdoor botanical garden in the downtown area, makes what I'd consider a somewhat COVID-safe destination. Specialty orchids flourish here with more than 4,000 live specimens. Selby's sister property, Historic Spanish Point, lies 11 miles south of the city center. I recently visited and discovered another oasis with canopy covered trails. It resembled an Ad-



Yellow orchid at Marie Selby Gardens.

dack style camp from a past era, except with palm trees. A cottage used by socialite Mrs. Potter Palmer overlooks the water with a formal sunken garden, pool, and pergola. Further along, a fern garden and a butterfly garden include imaginative statuary that captivated my interest.

Children (and photographers) love Jungle Gardens, featuring the chance



Ringling Museum of Art Courtyard.

to get close and/or feed pink flamingos. Reptiles and tropical birds thrive amongst other creatures in this 10-acre outdoor setting. Those interested in marine life should visit the Mote Marine Aquarium, where you will find a 135,000-gallon shark habitat, resident manatees, and sea turtles. Those looking for more exotic species can visit the Big Cat Habitat.

Myakka River State Park offers a chance to kayak through a mangrove forest tunnel or bike along its 20 miles of trails. Florida's mangrove forests form shady canals where larger boats can't go.

Most Sarasota restaurants offer outdoor dining and covered terraces. The Columbia of Armand's Circle pleases many, or try Ophelia's on the Bay on Longboat Key.

If you go: VisitSarasota.com

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



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Get to Know . . .

Kimberly Mullins

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewsline.com

Born and raised in Ohio, Kimberly Mullins said even as a young girl she loved math and science. When she started college at the University of Akron, her original intent was to obtain a degree in computer engineering, like her mother; however, upon learning that chemical engineering was one of the top paying professions (which she felt would be helpful to repay her student debt), she changed her major — only to find that there was not a lot of work available in the field. So, she fell back on her computer science background and became an automation engineer. She said she held four different jobs for four different companies over four years before deciding that she might not be the best fit for the structure of Fortune 500 companies. “I challenged the status quo because I always wanted to make improvements,” she said. Mullins has been self-employed in a number of positions where she said she has followed her passion for growing and getting better since 2000. Currently, she is the owner of Tutoring Club of St. Johns.

Q: How did you come to live in the Jacksonville area?

A: I had a successful network marketing company in the early 2000s and I lived overseas in the Netherlands. I eventually moved back to the United States and one time as I was driving from Savannah to Orlando, I drove across the blue bridge in downtown Jacksonville. Something about it called out to me. I always knew I wanted to live outside of Ohio, I just didn't know where. So I

moved to Jacksonville in 2008. When my daughter was in first grade, I knew she needed extra help with school and so I built a house in Nocatee so she could attend St. Johns County schools. I met my second husband, David, shortly after I moved in to my “single life” house in Nocatee. He was everything I could ask for — also a successful businessperson and most importantly, a Christian. We married in 2019 in Jamaica.

Q: How did you become the owner of Tutoring Club of St. Johns?

A: While my daughter was young, I decided to become a business broker because I needed a job with less travel than my previous job as a professional speaker. The Tutoring Club of St. Johns was owned by the owner of the location in Mandarin and she contacted me to sell it in 2018, which I did. The person who bought it was ready to sell within a year. My husband and I decided to buy it because we have a passion for learning and also because we both have successfully run businesses before. In September 2019, we started looking for a second location since the first location was going so well. We contracted to open a location off of County Road 210. It was supposed to open in March 2020, but was delayed by the coronavirus. We had a soft opening in mid-July and plan to have a grand opening in mid-August.

Q: What are you doing differently at the Tutoring Club because of the coronavirus?

A: We are working to make everything as safe as possible in this time of coronavirus. Only students are allowed in the center and we have limited the number



Photo courtesy Kimberly Mullins
Kimberly Mullins and family: husband Dave, daughter Kathryn and cat, Gabe.

of people in the center to less than 50 percent capacity. Everyone wears a mask and we do wipedowns hourly. Our third center is actually our online center and more than half of our students are taking advantage of this. It is live and interactive, with a tutor and the same curriculum and homework help available as at the centers — just not face to face.

Q: What is one study tip that you could offer to parents?

A: My number one tip would be to get your children reading! Every day, especially during the summer. Studies show that students lose between 25 and 30 percent of their learning gains during the summer and with the pandemic this year, it is predicted that the losses will be even more. Reading is the only learning skill that you get better at by doing, over and over.

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

A: Our family loves to go boating and we enjoy traveling. We had planned to go to the UK in September, but that will likely be postponed. In the past, we have enjoyed trips to Las Vegas, Greece, California and of course, Jamaica, where we were married.

Native Sons and Daughters cont. from pg. 1

and Golden Meadow have enjoyed the program with their father.

Junk said, “I was amazed to watch my daughters grow in confidence and make lifelong friends.”

Once school is back in session, the club schedules events for just the dads/daughters and then just for the fathers/sons. This unique format allows a father to enjoy one-on-one time with each of his children and witness first hand the special qualities each child offers. Group events are scattered in during the program year as well.

Campouts are always a big hit with the group. Typically, the club hosts a fall, a spring and a family campout. The Longhouse also participates in the Sunshine State Pow Wow, which is a gathering of Native Sons and Daughters clubs throughout the state. This event is usually held in March. This year, leadership is discussing how to carry out social distancing while still enjoying each other's camaraderie.

Future events such as Costume Bowling, the Monster Jam, and outings to Jacksonville Icemen and Jumbo Shrimp games are all contingent on executive orders.

The Timucuan Longhouse is a friendly group of fathers who seek to spend exceptional quality time with their children. As the program teaches, “You only have 18 summers to make a difference in your child's life.” Native Sons and Daughters members accomplish this one outing at a time.

“Each of us has had to learn resilience, preparedness and about what and whom is truly important in our lives,” Junk said. “Capture these moments, learn from them and together we can continue on the long legacy of building positive parent/child relationships”.

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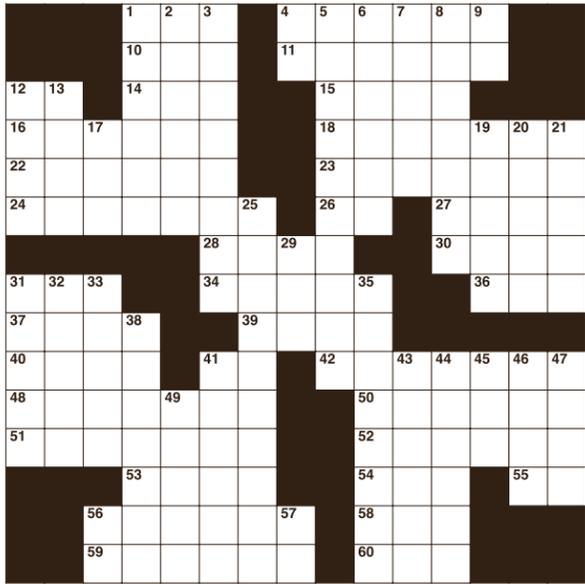
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Puzzles

Answers on page 3
Provided by MetroCreative



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Opposite of on
- 4. Creator
- 10. No seats available
- 11. About springtime
- 12. Flagship ESPN show (abbr.)
- 14. Automobile
- 15. A matchup
- 16. Porous volcanic rock
- 18. Utter repeatedly
- 22. Not written in any key
- 23. Revolved
- 24. Archival
- 26. Within
- 27. Smoker's accessory
- 28. Disfigure
- 30. Primordial matter
- 31. Thrust horse power (abbr.)
- 34. Kisses

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Passerine birds
- 2. Noisy quarrel
- 3. The front arm or leg of an animal
- 4. Early multimedia
- 5. Golden years
- 6. Large mollusk
- 7. Small arm of the sea
- 8. Persian jurisdiction
- 9. Atomic #81
- 12. From end to end
- 13. Adorable
- 17. Ma
- 19. Nearly falling
- 20. Portable conical tent
- 21. Excessive fluid accumulation in tissues
- 25. Fish with high dorsal fins

CLUES DOWN

- 29. Equal (prefix)
- 31. Aquatic plant genus
- 32. Choppers
- 33. Hand parts
- 35. Region bordering the sea
- 38. Well-liked
- 41. Nap
- 43. It's used to make beer
- 44. Related on the father's side
- 45. Senior officer
- 46. Delicacy (archaic)
- 47. Figures
- 49. A way to take away
- 56. Beloved sandwich __&J
- 57. Symptom typical of withdrawal (abbr.)



Solve the code to discover words related to eye health and safety. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 15 = I)

A. 26 15 17 15 2 4
Clue: Ability to see

B. 21 10 18 15 4 24
Clue: Part of the eye

C. 3 6 24 21 15 18 7
Clue: Sharpness of image

D. 19 15 17 18 24 4 3 10
Clue: Length between objects

EYE HEALTH WORD SEARCH

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

WORDS

- ALLERGIES
- BLURRY
- CARE
- CATARACT
- CONTACTS
- CORNEA
- DEBRIS
- DILATED
- DOCTOR
- DOMINANT
- FLASHING
- FLOATERS
- GLASSES
- ITCHY
- MACULA
- OPHTHALMOLOGIST
- OPTOMETRIST
- PAIN
- PUPIL
- READING
- REDNESS
- RETINA
- SIGHT
- VITREOUS

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

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## Meet your local candidates

By Martie Thompson  
editor@floridanewline.com

In advance of the Primary Election to be held on Tuesday, Aug. 18, The CreekLine invited each of the candidates that will appear on northern St. Johns County voters' ballots for US Congress District 4, St. Johns County Sheriff, County Commission District 1, Public Defender 7th Judicial Circuit, and School Board District 2 to submit a statement for this election section.

The CreekLine offered this opportunity to all candidates for these Primary Election races as a community service; no purchase of advertising was required. The content of the statements was left up to each candidate; the only stipulation was that the statement could not exceed 200 words. No editing of the statements took place. Each statement is printed in its entirety, as submitted by the candidate.

### US Congress District 4

#### Erick J. Aguilar (Rep.)

I am a Republican candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives, Florida 4th District consisting of Nassau, East Duval, and St. Johns counties. Born in Honduras, raised in Brooklyn, NY, and have resided in Jacksonville since 2000 while stationed in HSL-48 at NS Mayport. Married with five children (two sons and three daughters), one more on the way. Earned five advanced degrees in business, leadership, IT, and history. I served in the U.S. Navy; retired as a Navy Chief in 2016 after 20 years of

honorable and dedicated service. I have been teaching as a professor in business, history, and IT for 14 years, private consultant, and stock trader. My campaign is about Advancing America's Families! Top issues: Economy, Education, Public Safety, Military/Veterans. My staff is composed of at least 70 percent veterans ready to continue to win for the people! The campaign is focused on results! I am self-funded; keep your money, I am asking for your vote! My team will bring solutions where others failed! I am ready to serve our country at another level as your next Congressional Representa-

tive in our beloved U.S. Congressional Florida 4th District.

#### John Rutherford (Rep.)

Did not submit a statement.

#### St. Johns County Sheriff

#### Rob Hardwick (Rep.)

My name is Rob Hardwick and I am running to be your next St. Johns County Sheriff. I'm a combat veteran who served 25 years in the United States Army and the Florida National Guard where I completed two combat tours

overseas. In addition, I have worked in law enforcement all of my adult life in several agencies. As Chief of Police, I took a department that was crippled by inefficiencies and quickly turned it around. Finally, I am active in many community organizations and am proud to mentor our youth through athletic programs as a coach.

As your next Sheriff, I am committed to ensuring that local law enforcement remains a positive community partner. I want to try to address our problems head-on by having conversations with

Meet your local candidates cont. on pg. 19



## Vote on August 18th

**RE-ELECT**  **MIKE ORFINGER**  
Circuit <sup>for</sup> Judge

**"I will serve the people of our community with honor. I will uphold the law with common sense and integrity."**

Every day when I walk into the courtroom, I am reminded of the responsibility I have to the law and to the people of St. Johns, Volusia, Flagler, and Putnam Counties. I am reminded of the responsibility to serve with honor and integrity, to uphold the law with common sense, and not to legislate from the bench.

I have been privileged to serve you for the past five years. I would be grateful for your vote so I can continue to serve you.

 @ReElectOrfinger  
**ReElectOrfinger.com**

  
Judge Mike Orfinger

Political Advertisement, Paid for and Approved by Mike Orfinger for Circuit Judge

# MEET THE CANDIDATES

Meet your local candidates cont. from pg. 18

the community on various topics. It is equally important for law enforcement to promote accountability and transparency. I would also like to continue to invest in the latest technology and crime-fighting tactics to keep us safe and save taxpayer dollars. Lastly, an issue that is near and dear to my heart is the mental health of our community. Please vote for me, Rob Hardwick, for St. Johns County Sheriff on Aug. 18.

**Chris Strickland (Rep.)**

I am honored and grateful to be able to run for Sheriff of St. Johns County. I began my law enforcement career as a deputy sheriff at age 19 and during my 30-year career at the SJCSO, I rose through the ranks from deputy to Sergeant, Lieutenant, Commander and finally Director of the Office of Sheriff. When elected, I will bring a revitalized energy to the Sheriff's Office and a new sense of direction. I will build an office structured on accountability and excellent community relations. I will conduct an immediate review of use of force policies currently in place and adhere to the guidelines listed in President Trump's Executive Order.

I will protect all our residents and visitors and keep our streets and communities safe from violent groups. I will outfit all deputies with body-worn cameras. I will not self-investigate. In any situation where an officer uses deadly force, the resulting investigation will be conducted by Florida Department of Law Enforcement. As a constitutional sheriff I will strenuously defend your right to keep and bear arms as guaranteed by our Second Amendment. The future of our county depends on proper leadership. I ask for your vote on Aug. 18.

**County Commissioner District 1**

**Jimmy Johns (Rep.)**

I was raised in Northeast Florida and educated in local schools. In college I earned degrees in Applied Physics from

Jacksonville University and Civil Engineering from the University of Florida. In 2004 I founded Solid Rock Engineering Consultants, a full service engineering firm which serves clients across the Southeast. Kathy and I raised our family in Julington Creek. As a business owner, I understand how to balance multiple demands and how to identify and adapt to multiple challenges. Serving you is an honor and I have worked hard to help protect your quality of life. In four years we have built three new fire stations, increased funding for our first responders, paved over 1000 miles of roads and built new recreational facilities. All of this was done without raising your taxes. Last year we had a \$16 million budget surplus.

As your County Commissioner my biggest challenges have been restoring our county after two major hurricanes. This prepared me for the current unique issues that we face with the global pandemic. Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me. I look forward to hearing from you and would appreciate your vote, Because Experience Matters.

**Christian Whitehurst (Rep.)**

I'm Christian Whitehurst, candidate for St. Johns County Commission, District 1. I moved to St. Johns County 22 years ago, graduated from Nease High School and live in Julington Creek with my wife Courtney and our two daughters. My background is in business and I'm very passionate about the future of St. Johns because we need a strong, decisive leader on our County Commission. St. Johns must have a strong, thriving economy, where we create opportunities for businesses to succeed and an atmosphere to attract new businesses. We must prioritize the safety and security of children and ensure law enforcement has the support they need to keep us safe. I will always stand with our veterans. Their service and sacrifice must be honored and I will ensure veterans

Meet your local candidates cont. on pg. 20



★ Jimmy **JOHNS**  
for St. Johns County Commissioner

## JIMMY JOHNS FOR ST JOHNS COUNTY COMMISSIONER

**BECAUSE EXPERIENCE MATTERS**

"I am dedicated to continuing the excellent lifestyle we enjoy in St. Johns County. I helped lead the recovery following two major hurricanes and have used these experiences to effectively manage the COVID-19 Pandemic in St. Johns County. As your County Commissioner, I have always voted for increased budgets for our St. Johns County Sheriff's Office. All of this has been accomplished without raising your taxes and has led to a \$16 million surplus in our most recent budget. With your help, I will work to make sure that you and your family will continue to live in a thriving, vibrant community with the best quality of life in Florida"

**WE CAN CONTINUE TO GET POSITIVE RESULTS FOR ST. JOHNS COUNTY:**

- ★ Help small businesses re-open quickly and safely
- ★ Support our county sheriff's officers and first responders
- ★ Protect our Parks, Rivers and Trails
- ★ Create jobs and cut wasteful spending

f VOTEJOHNS.COM

**VOTE JIMMY JOHNS**  
VOTE AUGUST 18<sup>TH</sup> | EARLY VOTING: AUGUST 6<sup>TH</sup>-15<sup>TH</sup>

PAID FOR AND APPROVED BY JIMMY JOHNS FOR ST. JOHNS COUNTY COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT 1, REPUBLICAN



**Meet your local candidates** cont. from pg. 19

are provided the services and attention they deserve. I will fight to protect our environment and ensure our beautiful beaches are preserved for our kids and grandkids.

I believe smart managed growth is the best path forward for St. Johns. That means projects must provide a net-benefit to our community and our environment. I look forward to earning your vote on Aug. 18.

**Public Defender, 7th Judicial Circuit**

**George Burden (Rep.)**

While serving overseas, I learned firsthand what an UN-just system of laws looks like, feels like, and does to its people.

It's no surprise, my first civilian job was with the Public Defender's Office. Thirty years later, I've earned the distinction of being "Capital Qualified" in trials and appeals and currently head a division that serves 13 counties.

My legal experience ranges from misdemeanors to capital offenses, from first appearances to arguing 41 cases before Florida's Supreme Court. I've led the

Trial and Appellate Divisions, served as Chief Assistant, and held two governor appointments on the Judicial Nominating Commission.

In eight years as a City Commissioner, I rolled back taxes seven times. I've held leadership positions on the Housing Authority, Volusia County Water Alliance, the Race and Recreation Facility District, and worked with government agencies to secure funding for capital improvements, environmental projects like Breakers Oceanfront Park, and a Hope 6 Grant for low income housing. As an Air Force veteran, a seasoned attorney, a small business owner, and the father of four sons I know Experience Matters! I have the experience needed to be your Public Defender. I'd be honored to have your vote.

**Anne Marie Gennusa (Rep.)**

I received my law degree from Temple University and dual master's certificates from Villanova University in Government Contracting and Human Resource management. I began my legal career in 1994 as a "public defender" in Bronx, NY. I am admitted to practice law before the United States Supreme Court, Florida, New York and the Middle District in Florida. I relocated my family to

Florida in 1999.

During my 25+ legal career, I have been a public defender, criminal defense attorney, assistant state attorney and private practitioner with a concentration in criminal and family law for over 20 years. I have been rated AV-Preeminent, which is the highest possible rating an attorney can receive based on legal ability and ethical standards. I have held various leadership positions including president of the St. Johns County Bar Association, chair of Florida Bar's Grievance Committee and president of the Creekside H.S. Booster Club. I have provided thousands of hours of free legal work to the disabled, veterans and elderly.

I am married to Robert "Bob" Lindsey, a retired Sergeant with SJSO and an honorably discharged Army veteran. I am mom/bonus mom to five, "Glamma" to Nora, and fur mom to Dixie and Ali.

**Matt Metz (Rep.)**

I have been working at the Public Defender's office for a decade and for the last four years I have managed the largest trial division in four counties, while maintaining a caseload averaging over 450 cases per year. In this role, I manage

20 other employees, including 12 felony trial attorneys. While I juggle my own cases, I am coordinating time-off, mentoring younger attorneys, helping create office policy with our current Public Defender James Purdy, and resolving attorney-client issues. I am the only candidate currently supervising 10+ employees. I am the only Board Certified Criminal Trial Attorney in this race. My undergraduate degree in Business Management from the University of Florida has helped prepare me for projects I have assisted in, such as transitioning the office to a paperless system. I have been at the office long enough to know how our system works, what works within that system, and I still have the energy and vision to change the things that don't. I was born and raised in this Circuit and am currently raising a family here. Success for our community means success for mine too. I look forward to serving you!

**St. Johns County School Board District 2 (if you live in District 2)**

**Anthony "Tony" Coleman (N/P)**  
I grew up on the dirt roads of a small

Meet your local candidates cont. on pg. 22

**ON NOVEMBER 3, BRING BALANCE TO ST. JOHNS COUNTY!**

**VOTE FOR SMART GROWTH, COASTAL RESTORATION, AND SUSTAINABLE JOBS**

For many of us runaway development has meant overcrowded roads and schools and loss of natural resources at a cost of our quality of life. Joe will work for **Smart Growth**, growth that balances development and conservation.

From Duval County to Flagler County, our ENTIRE coastline is a source of enjoyment and natural wonder. Our County needs sustainable plans to preserve and protect our ENTIRE coastline, and Joe will work towards adequate **Coastal Restoration** funding.

Current County decisions favor sprawling residential and retail development with low-paying jobs. We can learn from Palm Beach County where planning there has attracted new companies employing over 23,000 at an average salary of \$88,000/year. Our County needs higher-paying **Sustainable Jobs** to keep our families close to home.



Joe is a Julington Creek resident and retired architect with 40 years of experience in building codes and development standards.

As an experienced professional, he will fight to protect our community and BRING BALANCE to St. Johns County through smart growth, coastal restoration, and sustainable jobs.

ELECT  NOVEMBER 3



LEARN MORE OR DONATE AT [ELECTJOEMACK.COM](http://ELECTJOEMACK.COM)

Joe McAnarney  
 [electjoemack@gmail.com](mailto:electjoemack@gmail.com)

PAID FOR BY JOE MCANARNEY, DEMOCRAT, FOR ST. JOHNS COUNTY COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 1

**VOTE DR. ERICK AGUILAR**

**"For America's Future!"**

REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE  
U.S. HOUSE, FL 4<sup>th</sup> DISTRICT



**U.S. NAVY  
RETIRED**

**ELECTION DAY: AUGUST 18<sup>th</sup>**  
**EARLY VOTING: AUGUST 6<sup>th</sup> THRU 15<sup>th</sup>**

[ErickForCongress.com](http://ErickForCongress.com) (Podcast available)

Approved by Dr. Erick Aguilar. Paid for by Erick Aguilar Congressional Race Candidate



**Rob Hardwick**

For St. Johns County Sheriff

**COMBAT VETERAN ★ CHIEF OF POLICE**  
**★ COMMUNITY LEADER ★**

**VOTE FOR ROB HARDWICK**

ON PRIMARY ELECTION DAY  
**TUESDAY, AUGUST 18**

Paid by Robert Hardwick, Republican, for St. Johns County Sheriff. Use of pictures in uniform does not imply the endorsement or support of any law enforcement organization.



**VOTEHARDWICK.COM**

# PRIMARY ELECTION ★ August 18, 2020

OPEN TO ALL REGISTERED VOTERS IN ST JOHNS COUNTY



**For info on voting during COVID-19 See the VOTER ELECTION PROTECTION STANDARDS available at [votesjc.com](http://votesjc.com)**

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[www.votesjc.com](http://www.votesjc.com)

*We are here to serve you. Please visit our office, call or use our online forms and resources to help you prepare for Election Day.*

## ON OUR WEBSITE [www.votesjc.com](http://www.votesjc.com)

- Register to vote
- Check your voter status
- Change your address before you vote
- Verify your polling place
- Track the mailing and receipt of your vote by mail ballot
- View and print your sample ballot

## FLORIDA IS A CLOSED PRIMARY STATE

- Democrats receive a Democratic ballot
- Republicans receive a Republican ballot
- Voters registered with no party affiliation or a minor party receive a nonpartisan ballot

## Vote: It's Your Choice!

Call 823-2238 for your vote by mail ballot today! You can also use the online request form on our website [www.votesjc.com](http://www.votesjc.com). Deadline to request a ballot to be mailed is 5 PM August 8th.

Make sure your vote counts!

Has your signature changed? If your signature on your voter record and signature on the vote by mail ballot certificate envelope do not match, your vote by mail ballot may not count. Update your signature using a Florida voter registration application.

Drop your mail ballot in a red box at any early voting site during the hours of voting. Your voted mail ballot is due in the Elections Office no later than 7 PM on election day. If it is late, it will not count.

## ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF ID WHEN VOTING IN PERSON

Voter information cards are not a valid form of identification when voting. Be sure to bring a current and valid photo ID when voting in person. If the photo ID does not contain your signature, an additional ID that includes your signature shall be required. Example: Photo on Student ID and signature on a library card are acceptable. If you do not bring any ID, you will be allowed to vote a provisional ballot.

- Florida Driver License
- Florida ID Card issued by DMV
- United States Passport
- Debit or Credit Card
- Military ID
- Student ID
- Retirement Center ID
- Neighborhood Association ID
- Public Assistance ID
- Veteran Health ID
- Concealed Weapon ID or Firearm License ID
- Government Employee ID

## EARLY VOTING LOCATIONS

★ DATES & TIMES ~ August 6th – 15th    ★ Hours: 9 AM – 6 PM Daily At All Locations

### New Site

|                                                                                     |                                                                        |                                                                                       |                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Shoppes of St. Johns Parkway (Earth Fare)<br>120 Shops Blvd.<br>St. Johns, FL 32259 | Julington Creek Annex<br>725 Flora Branch Blvd.<br>St. Johns, FL 32259 | Supervisor of Elections Office<br>4455 Avenue A, Suite 101<br>St. Augustine, FL 32095 | Southeast Branch Library<br>6670 US 1 South<br>St. Augustine, FL 32086 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### New Site

|                                                                                                    |                                                                                |                                                                            |                                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| St. Johns Convention Center At World Golf Village<br>500 S. Legacy Trl.<br>St. Augustine, FL 32092 | Ponte Vedra Branch Library<br>101 Library Blvd.<br>Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082 | St. Augustine Beach City Hall<br>2200 A1A South<br>St. Augustine, FL 32080 | Hastings Branch Library<br>6795 S. Main St.<br>Hastings, FL 32145 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|

## ELECTION DAY

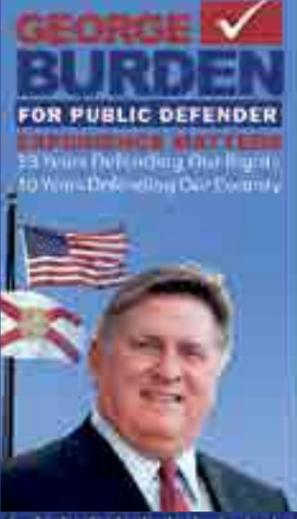
- ★ Tuesday, August 18, 2020
- ★ Polls are open 7 AM – 7 PM
- ★ When voting on Election Day you **MUST** vote at the precinct of your legal residence.

## KNOW WHERE TO VOTE BEFORE YOU GO

To locate your polling place visit [www.votesjc.com](http://www.votesjc.com) or call the Elections Office at 823-2238.

# MEET THE CANDIDATES





**30 Years** as an Assistant Public Defender

**41 Appearances** before Florida's Supreme Court

**2 Governor Appointments** Judicial Nominating Commission

**10 Years Military Service USAF**

**20 Years** as a Small Business Owner

**25 Years** of service on 5 Community Boards

**And much more!**

Visit our website for the whole story  
[BurdenForPublicDefender.com](http://BurdenForPublicDefender.com)

**On August 18th, Vote for EXPERIENCE in the Public Defenders' Office. VOTE BURDEN**

Paid political advertisement, George Burden, Rep. For Public Defender



Meet your local candidates cont. from pg. 20

farming community in Hastings. I learned that nothing comes free and you must work for everything you have. I want our children to know they must work hard to succeed, but we must provide them with tools for success.

I will advocate for common sense curriculum. We have to get back to the basics and our schools must provide career pathways to graduation. We must expand our academies to include more vocational training.

We must do everything to give our kids a chance to prosper — whether it be college or the trades.

I spent 20 years in our classroom as a school resource deputy. I was awarded the St. Johns County School District Lifetime Achievement Award for my service to our schools. I know what our children need to succeed because I've seen it firsthand. I promise to fight for our kids without fear and to keep "politics as usual" out of the classroom.

I promise to spend your tax dollars wisely for the benefit of all. Our kids are too precious for politics. Will you join me in protecting our future?

**Nick Graham (N/P)**

I grew up in NW St. Johns County and I am a graduate of Bartram Trail High. I have over 10 years experience working for the St. Johns County School District as an IT Administrator. I have also worked other school-based positions including teaching Web Design and TV Production at BTHS and Hickory Creek Elementary. I have countless volunteer hours with our school system as well. I serve on the St. Johns River State College Computer Education Advisory Board and was a court appointed Child Advocate with the Florida Guardian Ad Litem Program. I now am a small business owner of an IT consulting firm in St. Augustine.

I am the only conservative on the school board ballot and I am endorsed by the St. Johns County Republican Party. As your elected school board representative, I will bring conservative values into policy making decisions. My background in IT, Educational Leadership and working with youth will play a vital role when implementing a safe and strategic plan for our children's continuing education. I love our community and I want to keep our school district great! I am working hard for our children and I am asking for your support. Thank you!

## Keep Judge Bryan R. Rendzio

Judge Bryan Rendzio was appointed Circuit Court Judge by the Governor to fill a vacancy. Now he is running for election to the office. He is widely respected for his knowledge of the law and his judicial demeanor. As Circuit Court Judge he serves us well, presiding over Unified Family Court cases in St. Johns County. Judge Rendzio and his wife, Stacy live in St. Johns County. They are active community citizens and have two sons who attend our public schools.

Whether you vote by mail, vote early or vote in person, please vote to *keep* Judge Bryan Rendzio.

For more information  
[keepjudgebryan.com](http://keepjudgebryan.com)

**ELECTION DAY  
 TUESDAY  
 AUGUST 18**




  
**Keep**  
**JUDGE**  
**BRYAN R.**  
**RENDZIO**  
**7TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT**

Bryan Rendzio for Circuit Judge  
 130 Corridor Rd. • P.O. Box 154 • Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida 32004

Political advertisement paid for and approved by Bryan Rendzio, nonpartisan candidate for Circuit Judge, Seventh Judicial Circuit, Group 27

**CHRIS**



**Strickland** (Rep)

for **ST JOHNS COUNTY SHERIFF**

**The Chris Strickland Platform:  
 When I am elected Sheriff I will;**

- 1. Begin equipping ALL deputies with body worn cameras.**
- 2. Protect all our communities, residents and visitors and keep our streets safe from violent groups.**
- 3. Restoring and maintaining integrity, openness, and honesty.**
- 4. Set up strong protocols for budgetary and fiscal management and responsibility and prevent another embarrassing embezzlement of tax-payer dollars.**
- 5. We will not self-investigate. Any situation where an officer uses deadly force, the resulting investigation will be conducted by Florida Department of Law Enforcement.**
- 6. Conduct a Domestic violence policy review to include procedures for handling officers involved in domestic incidents. Update policies and procedures that oversee reporting of sexual harassment and misconduct in the workplace.**
- 7. Establish protocols to deal with mental health calls for service utilizing mental health professionals accompanying deputies to the scene.**
- 8. Work hand in hand and build a good working relationship with the County Commission to examine and fulfill the needs of Saint Johns County.**

Our next sheriff has to be able to navigate through changing times and have an extensive background with this particular sheriff's office and our community. As your Sheriff my goal for the upcoming term is to provide transparency to our community. I will restore the reputation of the Saint Johns County Sheriff's Office and we will be an example to follow throughout the United States.



**Strickland4Sheriff.com**

Paid for by Chris Strickland, Rep. for St Johns County Sheriff

# MEET THE CANDIDATES



**Christian WHITEHURST**

**Faith. Family. Conservative.**

ST. JOHNS COUNTY NEEDS CONSERVATIVE  
**CHRISTIAN WHITEHURST**  
FIGHTING FOR US ON THE COUNTY COMMISSION!

**CHRISTIAN WHITEHURST IS...**

- Fiscal Conservative
- Family-Focused Values
- Business Owner & Job Creator

[ElectWhitehurst.com](http://ElectWhitehurst.com)

**MaryEllen OSTERNDORF**

**For Circuit Judge Circuit 7, Group 14**

**Volusia - Flagler Putnam - St. Johns**

**VOTE AUGUST 18**

[www.MaryEllenForJudge.com](http://www.MaryEllenForJudge.com)

**Pol. Adv. paid for by the Committee of Responsible Persons to Elect MaryEllen Osterndorf Circuit Judge, Circuit 7, Group 14**

## When is flea season in Florida?

By Jennifer Lockwood, DVM and Liz Bigelow, CVT

Fleas are active January through December. A common myth is that fleas are only in the environment during the hotter times of the year. Florida's subtropical climate allows for fleas to feed and reproduce year-round, and if you are seeing adult fleas on your pets, it's only the tip of the iceberg. Adult fleas make up only 5 percent of the total population, and other life stages such as flea eggs, larvae, and pupae can also exist in the environment. And worse yet, female adult fleas can lay up to 50 microscopic eggs daily that incubate and hatch in your carpets and on your furniture. An adult flea has the potential to lay thousands of eggs within a lifetime, with a new generation emerging every few weeks.



Photos courtesy METROCREATIVE

Indoor only pets are also at risk. Fleas love to hitchhike on your socks, shoes, and pant legs. So while you are outside enjoying the fresh air, fleas are obtaining free admission into your home.

These are the many reasons that veterinarians recommend your furry family members stay on flea prevention year-round. Skipping just one month can put your family at risk. Don't be fooled by natural remedies or over-

the-counter flea medications; many of these are ineffective against all stages of the flea life cycle. Some over-the-counter medications can even cause toxicities in felines.

Is your pet in need of flea prevention? Your veterinarian can help by discussing and recommending the prevention that best suits your and your pet's lifestyle. Effective treatment includes treating not only your pets, but also your environment. Your veterinarian can discuss ways to best treat your household and environment to break the lifecycle.

*Jennifer Lockwood, DVM is owner and veterinarian of Crosswinds Veterinary Hospital. Email [crosswindsvet@gmail.com](mailto:crosswindsvet@gmail.com) for more information.*

What is a flea's favorite food? Blood! Severe infestations of fleas can cause anemia in our four-legged friends. Did you know that adult fleas also have the potential to carry tapeworm larva? If your dog or cat ingests only one flea, it puts them at risk for tapeworm infections. Fleas can also cause allergic reactions and skin issues in your pets, leading to scratching and secondary skin infections.

## St. Johns County offers bus operators increased compensation

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewslines.com

Did you know that out of 67 counties, St. Johns County School District's Transportation Department bus operators are now amongst the highest paid in the State of Florida? With an 11 percent wage increase, full-time St. Johns County bus operators now make between \$16 and \$23.93 per hour. That's on top of benefits such as the Florida Retirement System (FRS) and sign-on bonuses in the amounts of \$1,000 and \$3,000.

"We are currently hiring for nearly 300 full-time operator positions with several of those positions available immediately," said Alfred A. Pantano, Director of Transportation for St. Johns County School District. "Transporting our kids safely to and from school is of the utmost importance. That's why we offer our bus operators competitive compensation for a job that carries with it great responsibility."

St. Johns County School District's Transportation Department is actively recruiting new bus operators. While candidates must adhere to a strict list of requirements, a generous bonus structure adds incentive to qualified employees. For those with a current CDL Class B with P&S Endorsements, candidates are eligible for a \$3,000 sign-on bonus after 75 days of solo driving. Other candidates are eligible for a \$1,000 sign-on



Photo courtesy Justin Snavely  
St. Johns County bus operators receive 11 percent pay increase.

bonus after 60 days of solo driving.

"One of the most exciting benefits that we offer our bus operators is that after eight years of working full-time for the school district, employees are 100 percent vested in the Florida Retirement System (FRS), which is one of the largest public retirement plans in the United States," said Pantano.

St. Johns County School District's Transportation Department is accepting applications for full-time school bus operators. Training programs are held regularly throughout the year. For more information, visit [www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/transportation/jobs](http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/transportation/jobs) or contact Monica Thurston at [monica.thurston@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:monica.thurston@stjohns.k12.fl.us) or (904) 547-8814.

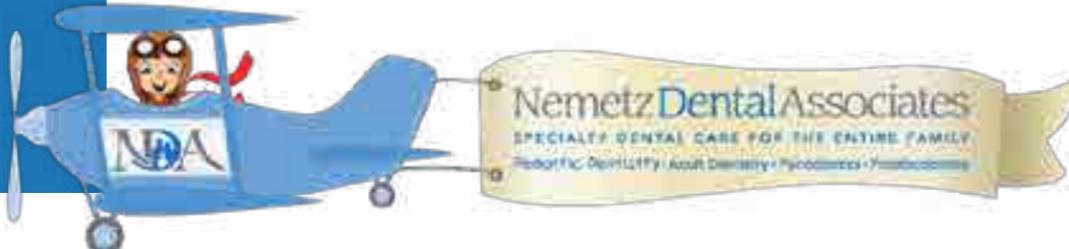
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