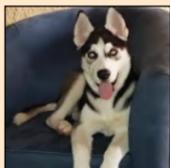


Mandarin NewsLine

September 2021 Volume 15 Issue 11

A Florida NewsLine Publication



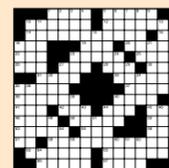
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Photo courtesy Linda McQueen

The introductory meeting for this year's braille volunteer class will be Sept. 23.

Learn Braille to help the blind and visually impaired

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewline.com

For more than 60 years, the Temple Sisterhood at Congregation Ahavath Chesed in Mandarin has sponsored a program to teach Braille, a form of written language designed for the blind and visually impaired. This program teaches volunteers to convert printed books into braille versions used by the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind, other institutions serving the visually impaired, and individuals who make special requests. These services are provided at no cost to all recipients.

During 2020, the program's volunteers contributed more than 20,000 hours, equating to more than \$591,000 in donated value (based on the University of Maryland economic impact calculator.)

Braille volunteer cont. on pg. 9

Duval County students head back to school

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewline.com

The minivans, bikers, and walkers are back, in addition to a sea of yellow buses. School started on Tuesday, Aug. 10 for Duval County Public Schools.

"Teachers and students were excited to be back on campus," said Lori Hershey, Duval County School Board representative for District 7, which includes Mandarin. She spent the day volunteering at Twin Lakes Academy Elementary and Greenland Pines Elementary.

"Unfortunately, it wasn't a return to normal as we had hoped and I know a lot of parents were disappointed in that," Hershey said.

This year, Loretto Elementary School welcomed 980 students to its campus. Principal Tammy Haberman said that as a long time educator, two themes she has learned as models for success in education are commitment and resilience — something that her teachers, staff and students all reaffirmed last year and will likely have to do again this year.

"We all had to dig deep last year, and I



Photo courtesy Mary J. Eyer
Crown Point Elementary kindergarten teacher Andrea Gore reading "Timothy Goes to School" by Rosemary Wells to her class.

am so proud of the Loretto Elementary team for getting it done," Haberman said. "This year will also bring challenges I'm sure, but with the commitment to education and the

Duval County cont. on pg. 6

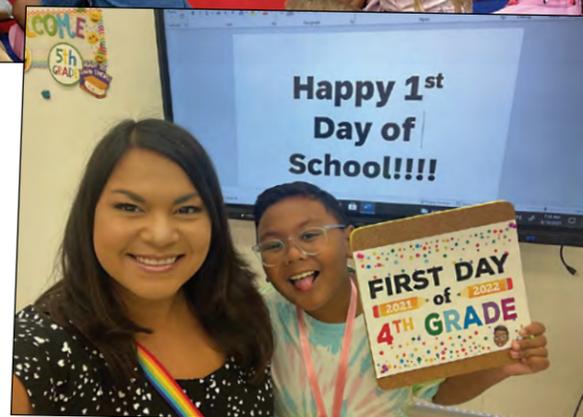


Photo courtesy Tammy Haberman
This fourth grader is excited to be at Loretto Elementary.

Local groups remove invasive plants at Walter Jones Historical Park

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewline.com

This past spring, three local gardening groups worked together to rid the Walter Jones Historical Park, home to the Mandarin Museum and Historical Society, of unwanted invasive plants. Museum board member and volunteer Gabriele Dempsey, also a member of the Late Bloomers Garden Club, drew attention to the situation and was instrumental in the project.

"I had always felt that the park, along with the historic buildings and Mandarin Museum, is a hidden gem. I wanted to expand native plants in the park as we cleared out the invasives, holding a Weed Wrangle in March of this year," said Dempsey.

Leslie Pierpont of the Late Bloomers Garden applied for and received a grant from the Garden Club of America to remove the invasives and replace them with native plants. Members of the Native Plant Society Ixia Chapter and the First Coast Invasive Working Group, who removed numerous camphor stubs, all volunteered their time for the project.

"We improved about 50 yards along a pathway, past the old buildings at the park on the way to the water," Pierpont said. "This is just one section that needs to have invasives pulled and replaced with native plants; other parts of the park could also use removal and replanting. But it's a start."

Invasive plants cont. on pg. 2



Photo courtesy Gabriele Dempsey
Cyndi Schmidt, Susan Smathers, Carol Platt, and Gabriele Dempsey of the Late Bloomers Garden Club

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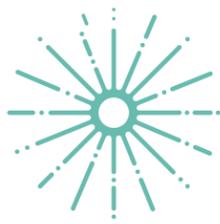
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Mandarin Senior Center reopens



Photo courtesy Margo Crafton
The Mandarin Senior Center has reopened.

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridane.wsline.com

The Mandarin Senior Center on Hartley Road is excited to be open and offering activities in the newly remodeled and expanded center.

The Mandarin Senior Center is open from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday — and all activities and services are free. A cold breakfast is available at 9 a.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays and a warm lunch is offered

daily at 12 p.m.

Seniors can participate in a variety of activities including chair volleyball, chair yoga, bingo, exercise classes, square dancing, knitting, ceramics and wii sports.

Margo Crafton, a member of the Senior Center Advisory Board, said, “Come try it out! There is something for everyone at the Mandarin Senior Center.”

For more information, call the Mandarin Senior Center at (904) 255-6750.



Volunteer John Cooksey helped with planting the native plants.



Photos courtesy Gabriele Dempsey
Native plant Iris Virginia bloom

Invasive plants cont. from pg. 1

Pierpont estimated that hundreds of plants were removed by the volunteers from the Ixia chapter and the Late Bloomers Garden Club, as well as Mandarin neighbors and friends. Invasive plants that were removed included Coral ardisia, smilax, and Virginia creeper. The grant from the Garden Club of America paid for the new native plants, delivery of the plants, and the time and expertise of the owner of the native plant nursery.

The planting of the hundreds of native plants was done on Saturday morning, March 13. The native plants included Red Salvia, Iris Virginia, Marsh hibiscus, Swamp milkweed, Giant Ironweed and Beauty Berry, among others. Volunteers actually started some of the Monarda punctata and Salvia coccinea plants from seed several months before the project began so they, too, could be planted.

“The Late Bloomers Garden Club has come many times to Walter Jones Historical Park to plant trees, remove invasive species and recently to introduce more native plants into the landscape,” said Sandy Arpen, president of the board of directors of the Mandarin Museum & Historical Society. “They are

always thinking of new ways to beautify the park for the enjoyment and education of our visitors. Mandarin Museum & Historical Society and the City of Jacksonville are very grateful for their hard work and dedication to preserving and improving our natural resources here in Mandarin.”

Pierpont said her group plans to apply for another grant to cover the signage for the identification of native plants as well as credit the project. She also said that since there was more work to be done, future projects are planned to remove more invasives and replace them with natives.

“Since Covid, and citizens’ desire to be out of doors, we have never seen so many people come to the park. Many had never been before,” Dempsey said. “It is my hope to uncover ‘our Mandarin community jewel’ with the expansion of the museum with a permanent Maple Leaf room and enlarged archive room and an enhanced park experience with more native plants. Our location on the banks of the St. Johns River, with our historic buildings and the County Dock, offer a unique experience that is free to the public; we do accept donations to help fund our mission.”

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BFF Best Furry Friend of the month

Meet Brandi!



Breed:
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Favorite activity:
Playing tug of war with big brother Bart (235 lb Great Dane).

Favorite treat:
Bologna

Favorite friend:
Big brother Bart

How your BFF got her name:
We decided to name her Brandi based on the song. She is definitely a fine girl.

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

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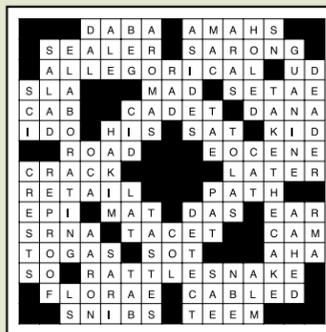


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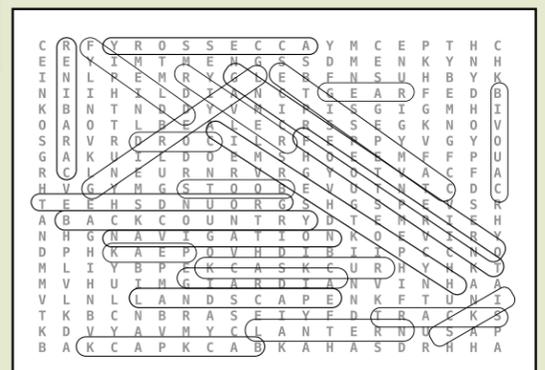
Last month's Mystery Photo was the dock at Walter Jones Historical Park. Our winner was Kristi Stokes. Congratulations!



Answers to our Puzzles
PG 10

CRYPTO FUN

Determine the code to reveal the answer!
Answers: A. animals B. forest C. nature D. explore



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In loving memory of
John Lee Haines

In loving memory of...

JOHN LEE HAINES
John Lee Haines, formerly of Rockport, Ind., passed on December 21, 2020 at his home in Orlando, Fla., surrounded by his loving family after losing his battle with cancer. He was preceded in death by his mother Marjorie passed in 1982 and his father John W. Haines who passed in 1948 husband and father. His survivors include his wife of 56 years, Ann Carter Haines; his brother, David Haines (Dinah), of Louisville, Ind.; six children: Lee Ann Dalton of Naples, Fla.; Mark Pettus (Callery) of Havana, Fla.; John D. Murphy (Kin) of Orlando, Fla.; Matthew Pettus (Josh), of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.; Jeremy Pettus (Angela) of Coral Springs, Fla.; Tim Pettus of Jacksonville, Fla.; Jeremy Pettus (Josh), of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.; 16 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren. He graduated from Rockport High School 1958 and was later a partner in H&B Customs (stands for Haines & Bythe), a local car repair and customization facility. A memorial is planned at a later date in his hometown of Rockport and following his wishes place on the banks of the Ohio River, which he loved.

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Fall is our October Focus
Craft festivals, fall carnivals and church Trick or Trunks!
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October 1&2, 9 am - 1 pm

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with Duval County School Board Member Lori Hershey, District 7

Q: Can you give us your thoughts on the first day of school on Aug. 10?

A: On the first day of school, I was at Twin Lakes Academy Elementary, helping with students’ arrival. I witnessed the traffic issues that they are experiencing. I also spent time at Greenland Pines Elementary and helped staff put tags on backpacks that are intended to help identify dismissal time.

On the second day, I substituted in a first grade classroom for part of the day. It was interesting for me, as a former middle school teacher, that this was my first time in a classroom with English language learners.

My observation was that at these schools, faculties, staff and principals were working hard to ensure that the first day of school was a success.

Q: Do you have any insight into the traffic issues [as of interview date of Aug. 16]?

A: We are aware of these issues with traffic and are hopeful that in time

they will work themselves out. When I was a Twin Lakes Academy Elementary, I saw the line of cars still out on Point Meadows drive at 9 a.m. (school starts at 8:10 a.m.) It seems that for the first few days there were not as many bus riders and more parents dropping off and picking up their students, which increases traffic. This happens during the first few days of school each year and then levels off, so we are hopeful that will happen this year as well once everyone gets into their routine.

Q: Do you have anything else to share with District 7?

A: We plan to hold another Farm Share food sharing event in October at Twin Lakes Academy Elementary. The date is to be announced, hopefully in this column next month.

Q: How can our readers contact you?

A: They can email me at HersheyL@duvalschools.org or call me at (904) 316-360.

Internet safety tips to start the new school year

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

As a new school year begins, Attorney General Ashley Moody reminds parents to keep students safe online. With cybercrime accounting for approximately \$445 billion in losses per year, a child’s access to the internet can be costly and damaging to a family — not to mention the threat of human trafficking or sexual exploitation. Parental controls can help protect children from online predators, identity thieves and harmful material.

Moody said, “As a parent, I worry about the amount of time children spend online and with whom they might be communicating. With kids back in school, we want to make sure they stay safe — especially with parents not around to monitor online activity. Parental controls are a great way to enhance a child’s online safety and can be easily activated using your mobile phone.”

Parental controls can be extremely useful tools for those looking to protect children online. Tips to safeguard children’s online activity include:

- Limit search engines to keep results age appropriate;
- Manage screen time on certain apps,

or the device as a whole;

- Place approval requirements when downloading apps so that a parent can choose whether or not to approve the download;
- Monitor what a child is viewing on social media or through other platforms; and
- Know all user accounts and passwords your child has.

Most devices have parental control guides and walk-through videos providing step-by-step instructions on how to set up the features with ease.

Parents can access parental control guides for mobile devices from Android (Google Play Store) and Apple iPhones; video game console companies Microsoft (Xbox), Sony (PlayStation) and Nintendo (Switch); and for computers and televisions, including Samsung TV, Windows 10 and Apple.

Google recently created a resource with tools to ensure children’s safety while exploring the internet (<https://beinternetawesome.withgoogle.com/>). The resource includes tips for parents and children, an online game that teaches digital safety and classroom lesson plans for teachers.

Rogers Park undergoes name change

On Saturday, July 31, Chuck Rogers Park in Mandarin was changed to Rogers Park in an effort led by City Councilmembers Michael Boyland and Tommy Hazouri to honor both father (Chuck Rogers) and son (Corky Rogers). Members of the Rogers family also attended the ceremony.



Photo courtesy Michael Boylan



with Jacksonville City Council Member
Michael Boylan, District 6

Q: Can you give the latest update [as of interview date of Aug. 18] on the status of yard waste pick up?

A: There has been a concerted effort here in Mandarin to address the lack of yard waste pick up. The City of Jacksonville brought in contractor J.B. Coxwell to take over some of the routes to get caught up. They worked from July 24 through Aug. 14 and I've been posting daily on Nextdoor to let people know which neighborhoods they were working in and which were concluded. Waste Pro (the contractor for our city's solid waste management department) picked up their routes again on Aug. 17, but are still having trouble maintaining their schedule. Unfortunately, we expect the delay in pick ups to be ongoing and I will do my best to continue to communicate via Nextdoor and email. We will continue to work to hopefully prevent getting too far behind again.

Q: What can you tell us about the proposed Daybreak Market, coming to the old Golden Corral on San Jose Boulevard?

A: The Florida Department of Transportation has advised us of a new median configuration in front of the property. The existing full access median opening does not meet current spacing requirements to accommodate new construction, so the median opening will be modified to a directionalized median opening, allowing southbound right turns only from the site.

Q: Can you give an update on the Time Out Sports Bar, to be located at the old Village Inn property?

A: On Aug. 17, the Land Use and Zoning Committee (LUZ) supported the Planning Commission and the appeal brought forth by neighbors was denied in a 5 – 2 vote. So, all systems are go for this business as pertains to their ability

to serve hard liquor at this location. I was in the minority as I supported the appeal and not the decision of the Planning Commission, as I would rather err on the side of caution. I'll be meeting with the owner of the establishment to ensure they live up to the terms and conditions required as well as monitor traffic, specifically to make sure there is no parking on the streets of the neighborhood.

Q: Do you have any budget updates for the city?

A: I serve on the Finance Committee this year and we are presently vetting the budget. It's not a hardship year this year; there is a lot of emphasis in the budget on quality of life organizations, such as social services, arts, education and career training. The budget will go to the city council for approval at our last meeting in September and I don't anticipate any rollback in millage rates this year. We are trying to serve the rank and file, taxpaying constituents and meet their basic needs.

Q: Do you have anything else to share with District 6?

A: There were federal dollars from the American Rescue Plan of 2021 allocated to each city council member to give to organizations to support post-Covid efforts. I was purposeful that the money I had stayed in Mandarin. Four organizations in Mandarin will each receive a grant of \$25,000: the Mandarin Community Club, the Mandarin Museum & Historical Society, the Mandarin Garden Club and the Florida Elite Soccer Academy.

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

A: Community members can email me at MBoylan@coj.net or call (904) 255-5206.

September

What's Going On in Mandarin?
A modified calendar of events

Community Calendar

Shuffleboard is played on Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. at Mandarin Park. The courts are at the park entrance next to the tennis courts. Try to get there a few minutes early for court assignments. Beginners are welcome. Just show up (a few minutes before playing time), unless it rains.

The Rotary Club of Northeast Florida Duval Dinner Team meets every Tuesday evening at 6 p.m. in the private room at The Athenian Owl Restaurant, located at 9551 Baymeadows Road. There is always an interesting speaker as listed on our webpage: nefrotaryduvaldinnerteam.com. Each person pays for their own meal and guests are welcome.

Playing HOOKie, a group for those who enjoy knitting, crocheting and looming (with all items donated to charity) meets every Wednesday from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the outside eating area at Panera Bread in the RiverPlace Shopping Center, 11111 San Jose Blvd. Visit the group's Facebook page (Playing HOOKie) or email playinghookie31@gmail.com for more information.

The Italian American Club of Jacksonville announces a Board of Directors meeting on Sept. 1 at 6:30 p.m., its club social on Sept. 6 at 1 p.m., a membership dinner meeting on Sept. 12 at 1 p.m., a Club Cocktail

Dance on Sept. 17 at 6 p.m. and the ever-popular Spaghetti to Go returns on Sept. 24 from 5 p.m. – 7 p.m. All activities are at the club building, 2838 Westberry Road. Visit www.iacofjacksonville.com or call (904) 586-2700 for more information.

The Jacksonville Camera Club will feature results of the recent print contest at its meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 1. The Sept. 16 meeting will be the results of the monochrome print contest. Visit jax.jaxcameraclub.com for more information and meeting location updates.

The Honeybee Quilters Guild will meet on Tuesday, Sept. 7 at 7 p.m. after a 6:30 p.m. social at Mandarin Presbyterian Church's front lobby, 2501 Mandarin Road. Melanie from Bee's Quilt Shop and Studio will be teaching about sewing machine maintenance. Masks are optional due to the larger meeting space. New members/guests welcome. Visit honeybeequilters.org for more information.

The All Star Quilters Guild will meet at 10 a.m. on Monday, Sept. 20 at the First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd. The program is a live auction featuring fabrics and quilting supplies. Guests are welcome and masks are optional. Visit www.allstarquilters.org for more information.

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Duval County cont. from pg. 1
resilience I've witnessed, I'm very confident this is going to be a great year."

According to statistics provided by Duval County Public Schools, this year more than 7,800 teachers will instruct 105,195 students who are enrolled in grades kindergarten through 12 in 160 schools (excluding charter schools). Another 2,823 are enrolled virtually in the Duval Virtual Instructional Academy. Mandarin's student count stands

at approximately 6,000 in kindergarten through 12th grade. All Mandarin elementary and middle schools have achieved an "A" grade from the Florida Department of Education and Mandarin High School has achieved the grade of "B." For the 2021 – 2022 school year, every student will receive free breakfast and lunch, regardless of financial ability.

This year, Duval County Public Schools strongly recommends face masks during the school day and at school-related events.

Students not wearing a mask pursuant to this policy must, through their parent or guardian, complete the opt-out process. Face masks are required in schools and district facilities through Friday, Sept. 3 for employees, district vendors, and visitors.

Additionally, daily cleaning and disinfecting of high touch point surfaces in schools and district offices will continue. Visit the district's Health and Safety webpage at <https://dcps.duvalschools.org/Page/30581> for the most up to date information.

[Editor's Note: This information is up to date as of press date.]

In a nutshell, the district's webpage recommends: "Wear a mask. Wash your hands often. Cover coughs and sneezes.

Stay six feet away from others outside of classrooms and three feet inside classrooms while with classmates. Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces regularly. Monitor your health daily. Stay home if you are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19:



Photo courtesy Mary J. Eyles
Temperatures were checked as the students entered Crown Point Elementary School.

Fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea."

See more back to school photos on page 10.

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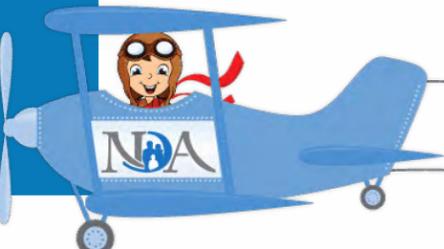
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Briefs

Learn about bonsai at workshop

The North Florida Bonsai Club will host a three day class introducing participants to bonsai on Sept. 6, 13, and 20 from 7 p.m. – 10 p.m. at the Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Road. Each day will focus on a different skill. By the end of the class each participant should have a fair understanding of how to maintain, train and grow their own bonsai tree.

Each workshop seat includes the three day course, bonsai tree and a training pot. Participants will leave with a styled and potted bonsai tree. The workshop will utilize *harlandii* boxwood.

For the first time a tiered workshop is being offered, with two different sizes of tree available. The cost of the entry level tree is \$30.

Those who would like a slightly larger or more developed piece of material to work will have that option at a slightly higher cost.

Email Tristan at Yodasworkshop@aol.com or Josh at JoshuaReubenBrown1@yahoo.com to register or for more information.

Going once, going twice, sold!

Experience the thrill of a live auction and snag a fabric bargain at the All Star Quilters' Guild general meeting on Monday, Sept. 20 at First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd. Starting at 9:30 a.m., bidders will have a chance to preview the amazing collection of fabrics along with two sewing machines, a serger, sewing tools like scissors, rotary cutters and bias tape

makers, quilt project kits, a craft table, quilt tops and more. Fabric lots include Kaffe Fasset charm packs, Moda cottons, batiks, Thimbleberry fat quarters, and several miscellaneous lots.

Fabric and sewing expert, Bruce Wilkerson, owner of Scrappy Rooster in Kingsland, Ga., will be the auctioneer. Bidders will be asked to register for a paddle number in advance and may pay with cash, check or credit card for winning bids. In addition, a Christmas themed quilt will be on display with raffle tickets for sale at \$1 each. The winner's name will be drawn on Dec. 13, just in time for Christmas.

Images of the raffle items are available at Visit www.allstarsquilters.org for images of the raffle items and contact Sondie Frus at (904) 422-2599 or sfrus@comcast.net for more information.

in furniture, fabric, and accessories. The Hugo Family looks forward to its young fifth generation continuing as purveyors of taste, quality furnishings, and beautiful accessories.

The Hugos also give back to the community with volunteer participation in The American Cancer Society, The Women's Board of Wolfson Children's Hospital, The Rotary Club, Community Hospice and Palliative Care, and other organizations.

Jacksonville Children's Chorus artistic director celebrates 15 years

In August 2006, the Jacksonville Children's Chorus' board of directors appointed Darren Dailey to the position of artistic and executive director. In 2016, during his 10th anniversary with The Chorus, he was then appointed to the role of president and artistic director. This year, Dailey enters his 15th year of leadership and inspiring young singers through choral music education.

As founding artistic director of the Boston Children's Chorus, Dailey was able to begin and grow their participation to nearly 300 in just three years. After being recruited to Jacksonville, he was inspired by Jacksonville's arts community and its potential.

"Jacksonville's arts community is incredibly collaborative and this drew me to lead the Jacksonville Children's Chorus several years ago," says Dailey. Upon entering an audition room, children are first asked, "Do you love to sing?" Having children of his own, Dailey understands how important music education is for their development, and that the skills they take away from The Chorus, along with their love of singing, last a lifetime.

Through Dailey's leadership, the Jacksonville Children's Chorus programs have expanded, serving thousands of children across Northeast Florida and reaching families internationally with virtual outreach programs. He has introduced opportunities for young singers to perform with guest artists such as Amy Grant, Kristen Chenoweth and Audra McDonald, and even the chance to perform internationally across Europe.

Senior living facility sets vaccine mandate in motion for employees

River Garden Chief Executive Officer Mauri Mizrahi announced in early August that she will make the COVID-19 vaccine mandatory for all River Garden personnel. River Garden is taking this necessary step to keep the residents it serves safe and to best protect its employees.

River Garden currently has the highest vaccination rate (greater than 80percent) among skilled nursing facilities in northeast Florida, according to an AARP study published in late July. Effective immediately, River Garden will require vaccination for all newly hired employees. Existing employees will have approximately eight weeks to become fully vaccinated.

"We want to be a safe place for healthcare workers to work and for patients to receive care. Ensuring everyone has some level of protection against the virus is an obvious step in the right direction. The vaccine is a game-changer," Mizrahi said.

In anticipation of FDA approval of COVID-19 vaccines this fall, River Garden has set its deadline for full vaccination for Oct. 1, 2021. In the event that the COVID-19 vaccine is not approved as expected, the timeline may be adjusted to coordinate with approval.

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Photo courtesy Sondie Frus
Raffle item for All Star Quilters Guild

Furniture store celebrates 100 years and four generations

Hugo's Interiors is proud to celebrate 100 years (1921 – 2021) of a family tradition of providing quality services and selection to generations in the Southeast. Famous for North Florida's largest selection of fine furnishings and accessories, the Hugo Family and its extension of more than 55 talented artisan craftspeople continue a family tradition. Their American-made business resonates with quality and style with their finely crafted home furnishings, including their signature brand (Crosby Designs) of fine upholstered furniture, along with accessories for homes and businesses.

In 1921, Albert Hugo, a German-trained "tapezierer" or decorator skilled at paper hanging, cabinet making, upholstery, and other crafts, came by train to Jacksonville. Albert and Euna set up shop in the dock house of Arthur and Ninah Cummer's mansion on Riverside Avenue. He traded their furnishings expertise for workspace to begin Albert Hugo and Associates. His clients grew to include other internationally known families such as Alfred and Jessie DuPont for their mansion, Epping Forest. As Albert Hugo Associates expanded, they moved to the present Philips Highway site in 1947.

Following in their footsteps at Albert Hugo Associates were sons Edward and Charles. Grandson Richard, trained in furniture styles, periods, and the use of color and textiles, took over. Then came his children, Mathew, Jennie, John, and Paul – the fourth generation.

Today, Hugo's Interiors maintains its leadership role in providing fine design in home furnishings and accessories for people with discerning tastes interested in new trends

Life

travel • pantry raiders • gardening
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Get to Know ...

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewslines.com

Rudy and Raye Williams

Rudy and Raye Williams' marriage might have had an unconventional beginning, but 76 years later, they're convinced it was God's plan. They are very strong in their faith and have always been active with a church, wherever they have lived. At one point, they drove 80 miles one way to attend their favored church. Presently, they are members of Fruit Cove Baptist Church. Raye is retired from State Farm, where she worked as an underwriting specialist and Rudy is retired from Mobile Paints, where he was the general manager of the Florida division. Today, he calls himself the "chief cook and bottlewasher" as he tends to Raye's care. They have three children (two living; the loss of their middle child due to cancer they deem the worst thing they have experienced), four grandchildren, eight great grandchildren and one great great grandchild.



Photo courtesy Steve Williams
Rudy and Raye Williams

Georgia. Before we left, we called my mother and told her what we were doing. She told me that I could have a nice church wedding like my sister if I just came home first, but she was ok with us getting married because she knew Rudy and his family. She did ask Rudy, "Is Raye making you do this?" So we went to Georgia and early on Easter Sunday morning, we found a judge and he performed the wedding.

(Rudy): In later years, we asked ourselves, why did we do such a thing? The only conclusion we came to is it was God's plan. We have lived a Christian life together for 76 years.

Q: What did you do when you retired?

A: (Rudy): We both retired in our early 60s. We bought a motorhome and made a five-and-a-half month trip out West. Then we made another four month trip after that. We have been to every state.

We have a very close family since we were young parents. We had our children between 11 months and six years after we were married. We love to play games and spend time with our family.

Q: What advice would you give to people getting married today?

A: (Rudy): Communication is the best thing you can give anyone. One of the biggest problems people have is finances. Here especially, you need to communicate with your spouse. Also, we committed to each other that if there was something we didn't want the other person to do, like smoke or drink, that we wouldn't do it ourselves either. We are certainly not perfect.

(Raye): I wouldn't trade him for the world.

So we went to a drive-in on Atlantic Boulevard in Rudy's dad's car and then to a drive-in eatery, the kind where the servers wore roller skates, and had some food. That was our first date.

Q: How did you decide to get married?

A: On our date, Rudy said his cousin was taking his girlfriend to Georgia the next day to see her grandmother for the Easter weekend. (Sunday was Easter.) He said we should go too so we could keep his cousin company. And he said we could get married while we were there.

Q: What did you say?

A: I was in shock and I didn't say yes or no. So on Saturday afternoon, he asked me if I was ready to go to

Q: How did you two meet?

A: (Raye): I lived in Lake City and Rudy lived in Jacksonville, but he had an aunt and uncle and cousin Lillian, who was a very good friend of mine, who lived in Lake City. So he would come to visit them and I had seen him before. One weekend when we were in high school, Lillian asked me to come to Jacksonville with her to do some shopping. We took the bus on Thursday afternoon and stayed with Rudy's family. After dinner on Thursday night, we stayed up talking and Rudy asked me to go to a movie on Friday night.

Braille volunteer cont. from pg. 1

The 2021 – 22 class of braille volunteers is forming now. It is open to both men and women of all faiths. An introductory meeting will be held at 10 a.m. on Thursday, Sept. 23 at Congregation Ahavath Chesed/The Temple, 8727 San Jose Blvd. Braille classes will start on Sept. 30 and continue every Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. This is a nine-month program on transcribing text into braille, or converting illustrations into tactile graphics.

Course materials are provided to the volunteers at no cost. While no computer is needed for tactile graphics, braille transcribers must have their own Windows computer. Course graduates can go on to be certified as braille transcribers by the US Library of Congress.

For more information, contact Pam Wiker at (904) 610-6733 or wikerpl@gmail.com; Holly Cleveland at (904) 463-0357 or holly.cleveland@att.net; or Nancy Cohen at (248) 250-2406 or r4cohen@gmail.com.

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New option for cookies now in Mandarin

Tik Tok sensation Crumbl Cookies has arrived in Mandarin in the Mandarin Oaks shopping center. Use the app to place your order or stop in to try their sensational cookies. Flavors change weekly, but milk chocolate chip is always available. The staff can't wait to welcome you and recommend a cookie. Don't forget the milk.



Photo courtesy Rebecca Thomson

Celebrate September by getting a library card

By Jeremy Yates
mail@floridanewsline.com

There's nothing more empowering than getting your own library card. It gives you access to books, technology, resources, and services to pursue your passions and dreams.

September is National Library Card Sign-Up Month. Celebrate by getting your own library card and take that first step toward academic achievement, lifelong learning and community involvement.

Top five reasons to get a library card:

1. You can read, watch, and listen to popular, new material. Libraries aren't big buildings filled with musty, old books. They are community centers with a flourishing and ever-changing collection of materials and resources. In addition to the latest bestsellers and celebrity book club picks, you'll find cookbooks, comics, blockbuster DVD movies, music and audiobooks on CD, and much more.
2. Download or stream digital content instantly. The Jacksonville Public Library has an entire digital library offering e-books, audiobooks, movies, music, and magazines. Get the library's app or visit the website to see what's available.
3. Great online and in-person programs and services. We offer everything from storytimes for children, Art Kits for



Photo courtesy Jacksonville Public Library
Get your library card today.

school age kids, Teen Advisory Board and other volunteer opportunities for young adults, classes to help you prepare for the GED Test® or to learn English, book clubs, author chats, writing and publishing workshops, and more.

There are even digitization stations at the Main Library that'll help you convert old photos and movies.

4. The Jacksonville Public Library is open to all. We want everyone to feel welcome and included in our buildings and through our collections. As the American Library Association states, "We celebrate and preserve our democratic society by making available the widest possible range of viewpoints, opinions and ideas, so that all individuals have the opportunity to become lifelong learners — informed, literate, educated, and culturally enriched." The more support and engagement you give your local library, the more resources the library will receive to serve the entire community.

5. It's all totally free. Local libraries are truly a wonderful resource that every member in the community should utilize, but if nothing else, using your local library is a great way to cut costs at home.

Duval County residents who don't have a library card can sign up for free at any of the library's 21 locations or apply for an eCard on our website. The library even offers Educator Cards for teachers and homeschoolers. Visit jaxpubliclibrary.org/services/get-library-card or stop by for more information.

Jeremy Yates is with the Jacksonville Public Library.

Historic 1855 Mandarin bell saga continues

By Susie Scott
mail@floridanewsline.com

The bell discovered in the belfry of the Mandarin Community Club has travelled through time from 1855 to the present with the support and dedication of many. It is believed that the bell was acquired through a letter writing appeal by none other than Harriet Beecher Stowe for the Mandarin Schoolhouse as the Mandarin

Community Club was once known. It was discovered a couple years ago in the bell tower and fundraising efforts were initiated to save this piece of Mandarin history. The bell was removed and transported to Charleston, S.C., for meticulous restoration by the Christoph Paccard Bell Foundry. In June, the club hosted an event to celebrate its 98th anniversary and officially unveil the restored artifact.

The club was very lucky to have a local skilled carpenter and wood craftsman, Andrew Miller, build a custom moveable display for the bell so it can be showcased for the world to see. Miller took on the task with pride.

"While it's not every day you get to design and build something for your hometown that will present a true piece of history, I was super honored and thankful for the opportunity to construct the base to support the Mandarin Community Club's 1855 bell," Miller said. "My idea was to craft a display stand that would complement the newly restored bronze-beauty; the top of the piece is made from quarter sawn curly maple with a sleek tapered edge profile all the way around and the bottom portion features four handmade red oak butcher block tops, wrapping the four sides, each trimmed out in locally harvested live oak."

Miller went on to say that with the fully assembled base and bell each weighing more than 200 pounds respectively, the piece also sits atop four caster wheels which allow for safekeeping when not being presented for display.

"I am very proud of the way this project



Photo courtesy Mandarin Community Club
The restored historic 1855 Mandarin bell.

turned out and I hope the community of Mandarin can enjoy it for many years to come," Miller said.

Visit Andrew Miller's Instagram @MilledByMiller to view part of the process of building the display stand as well as his other work.



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Fishing

Capt. David's Fishing Report

By Captain David Lifka
mail@floridanewsline.com

It's recovery time in the St. Johns River as it continues to drain all the additional freshwater from heavy summer rains received in the past weeks. Hopefully, we will finish the summer with a little less rain and our fishing season will finish where it started — with a bang.

Shrimping continues to be slow, but has steadily been improving. Good-sized shrimp are now being caught easily enough for bait, but five gallon buckets are happening with a little bit of searching. Doctor's Lake and Mandarin Point seem to be the best locations at this time. Don't be afraid to try various depths, shallow and deep, when trying to find them.

The croaker bite has also continued to be on the up, after a little bit of a slow down following some of our heavy rainfall. Good size croakers have been seemingly biting more on the shallow side of sandbars and points, rather than the deeper drop offs. Most likely they are just following the shrimp, and that is where the shrimp happen to be.

Redfish are bothered less by the abundance of the extra freshwater than some other species of saltwater fish. Docks and pilings should still be holding slot-sized reds, while schooling reds have been running the channels; unfortunately most are under slot. Whether fishing docks on a jig head or float rig, or the deeper holes with a bottom rig, fresh caught, live, river shrimp should be your bait of choice.

The recent slow down of the bite has

made catching the tide at the right time a bigger factor. Fishing through the tide changes and waiting for the bite can sometimes be more productive than changing spots. Having to fish through the catfish and stingrays to wait for the right bite is usually a painful and boring process, but often worth the wait. When you finally find the bite at a certain tidal stage, more than likely that same bite will be back at that same spot, at the same stage of the tide when you return the next trip.

As long as we still have shrimp in the river, there is going to be a quality bite to be found somewhere. With autumn quickly approaching, we just need a little less rain to finish this year's fishing season with the bang it started with. Let's hope for the best.

Fishing Report: Shrimp are the best right now, as we are at what would be normally the peak of the season. Reds around docks and pilings, and croakers on sandbars or just off them. Sheepshead are a good possibility this time of year around docks and pilings.

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.

Pantry Raiders

Healthy soup offers many different benefits

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

Food is a critical component of healthy living, helping people to reduce their risk for illnesses and even helping them to overcome colds and other ailments. The properties of soup, for example, can chase away chills and offer other benefits. Soup is hydrating, and the ingredients included in the recipe may be able to do everything from tame coughs to reduce mucus to boost the immune system.

This recipe for "Navy Bean and Collard Greens Soup" courtesy of John La Puma, M.D., ChefMD, includes collard greens. When one chops or chews collard greens, he or she gets the powerful, helpful chemicals isothiocyanates and indole-3-carbinol. They can help the liver produce enzymes that detoxify cancer-causing toxins in the body. In addition, the soup includes tofu, which will adopt the flavor of other ingredients and add a form of lean protein along with the beans.

Navy Bean and Collard Greens Soup

Serves 4

- 3 cups vegetable broth
- 4 cups coarsely chopped stemmed collard greens, preferably organic (1 bunch 10 to 12 ounces)
- 1 ½ cup packaged julienned (matchstick) carrots

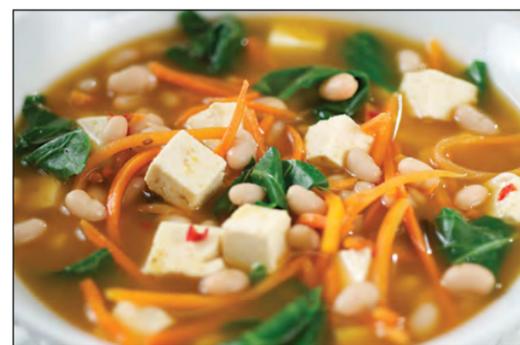


Photo courtesy MetroCreative
Navy Bean and Collard Greens Soup

- 1 ½ tsp. chili garlic puree or chili paste with garlic
- 1 (12 oz.) package extra firm tofu, cubed in bite size pieces
- 1 (16 oz.) can unsalted navy beans, drained
- ¼ cup grated Romano cheese

Combine broth, collard greens, carrots, and chili garlic puree in a large saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 10 to 12 minutes or until greens are nearly tender. Stir in tofu and beans; cover and simmer 5 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Ladle into shallow bowls; top with cheese.

Tips: Great northern or cannellini beans may replace the navy beans and Swiss chard may replace the collard greens if desired. Also, look for chili garlic puree or chili paste with garlic in the ethnic section of the supermarket. Because the beans are unsalted, there is no need to rinse them before adding to the soup.

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Travel

Escape to the Mountains: Blue Ridge, Georgia

By Debi Lander
mail@floridanewslines.com

The railroad's arrival in 1886 brought the sleepy little town of Blue Ridge, Ga., to life. Located about 90 minutes north of Atlanta, Blue Ridge continued to grow and today, the gem offers refined yet rustic appeal. It's a welcoming place for a getaway to a cabin in the woods or a luxury downtown condo.



Open air cars on the Blue Ridge Scenic Railroad.

Over the years, railroad traffic decreased, so the city decided to save the train. Blue Ridge's own Scenic Railway makes just one run a day. The hour-long trip takes passengers to the developing river-town of McCaysville. Adults love riding in vintage cars, but kids prefer the open-air ones. The tracks run through the Chatahoochee National Forest and alongside the Toccoa River, where you'll likely see fishermen and people tubing along.



The author goes fly fishing.

Before the train returns, passengers enjoy lunch and shopping in McCaysville and the adjacent town, Copperhill, Tenn. Be sure to take a quirky photo straddling the Georgia/Tennessee state line.

Fly fishing reigns big in Blue Ridge, the Trout Capital of the state. Coldwater streams provide ideal conditions for the fish. The catch and release rules help sustain the environment. If you need equipment or a fly fishing lesson, stop by Cohutta Outfitters. I did and signed up for a guided session that even included waders. My pro soon had me casting a line in an idyllic mountain stream.

North Georgia area features 16 photoworthy waterfalls.

For the visitor desiring some pampering, look no further than the Serenity Spa. The owners designed the complex to incorporate the log cabin look — but they offer the latest treatments and products. You can even reserve a massage in one of their treehouse rooms.

An actual vacation means dining out, and Blue Ridge presents plenty of options. Pick from casual, down-home eateries to white tablecloth gourmet meals. Try the Fightingtown Tavern or Maseria Kitchen and Bar for casual dining. A gala evening might start with cocktails overlooking downtown from the new Hampton Inn rooftop bar. Then walk to indulge in a luscious repast at Black

In 1930, Blue Ridge acquired a lake when the dam was built for hydropower. You'll find a mix of log cabins and luxury homes overlooking the 11-mile long crystal clear beauty. Many make popular vacation rentals while the marina offers pontoon boat rentals, ideal for cruising with family and friends. For a more energetic outing, rent a kayak or canoe.

Hikers and bikers take to the mountains on more than 300 miles of trails. The



Photos courtesy Debi Lander
Mountain view from Mercier Orchards.



The river town of McCaysville.

Sheep and perhaps an after dinner drink at Whiskey and Water.

Fun afternoons and evenings call for a stop into Grumpy Old Men, an authentic local brewery and hangout. Those who prefer wine can check out the lovely grounds of Bear Claw or Serenberry Vineyards. Shopping on Main Street brings surprises you don't find in chain stores. Look for country furniture and accessories, outdoor attire, boutique clothing, art galleries, antiques, and specialty gift shops.

Entertainment beyond the ordinary includes a pinball arcade, the nearby Bigfoot Museum (seriously), or a chance to drive a tank at Tank Town. (I went

on my first visit to Blue Ridge, and it remains an often talked about memory.) You might consider visiting recused research chimps in their retirement village at Project Chimps or pick apples at Mercier Orchards.

Seriously, if all that isn't enough, just grab a cup of coffee or glass of wine, and sit on a porch and rock. Blue Ridge lets you escape but won't let you be bored.

Get a free trip app at Visit Blue Ridge, GA. The drive from Jacksonville to Blue Ridge is about seven hours.

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

Looking for a Meaningful Volunteer Opportunity?

Be a Friend to a Senior



The ElderSource Caring Connections Telephone Reassurance Program needs volunteers to make friendly phone calls to seniors who are living alone or are homebound. Your call can go a long way to help someone who might be feeling lonely or isolated.

Caring Connections volunteers are trained, background screened and then matched with a special friend. Hours are flexible as you and your senior will set days and times convenient for you.

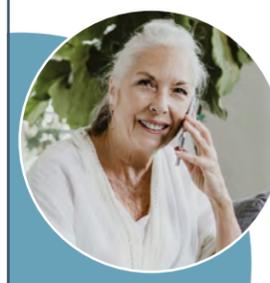
"Phone calls from my volunteer Toni, helped me mentally and physically during the pandemic. Now I am feeling more like myself." – Ms. Kim, Telephone Reassurance Program Participant

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Visit: MyElderSource.org/about/volunteer-opportunities

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Gardening

A summer hiatus and forward planning

By Master Gardener Volunteer Lesley Arrandale
mail@floridanewslines.com

I feel as if I've taken a break from gardening now that my main activity is tending the new native plant bed — our insect haven or insectary — in our front yard. A gentle amble around to check for any wayward weeds, testing the soil moisture around the plants when we've had too little rain ... it's really not arduous, even in the heat of summer.

Of course, that's not the whole story. The okra plants are dropping leaves, but two of them are branching out from low down, so I'll cut off the main stems and hope those new shoots will fill out and keep producing. There are aphids on some of the buds and leaves, but there's also a ladybug or two around, and I'm hoping they will keep the aphids in check, along with some squishing and hard sprays of water.

I've disposed of our tomato plants, which were no longer looking promising. (There were some green fruits left on the vines, so my husband made some green tomato chutney.) The chili plants are still doing well, and while the sweet pepper plants aren't producing right now, having been shaded out by the tomatoes, they do have some tiny flower buds. I find it hard to decide when to discard plants that are past their best, and unless they really decline after some TLC, I will probably let them hang on until I need to prepare the beds for our cool season crops.

The rest of the yard is still burgeoning —

busting at the seams with green growth — with shrubs and vines threatening to overtake paths and spaces they don't deserve. This is a problem currently, as the city is struggling to collect yard waste regularly, and our street is often lined with containers and plastic sacks full of debris. Yards hereabouts are modest in size and it's not always practical to compost every last bit of plant material, so the city service is invaluable.

Happily, we are not in drought, and NOAA doesn't predict drought conditions in the months up to October; however, we can expect higher than average summer temperatures, which sadly seems to be the norm nowadays. If you would like more details, check out the NOAA Climate Prediction Center, at <https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/>.

Being aware of longer-range forecasts can help in planning when to plant cool season vegetables. Lettuces, for example, are notorious for bolting quickly in the heat so an early direct sowing would be pointless; however, sowing in more controlled conditions can overcome this problem, but it means setting up an indoor growing area for seedlings, either on a very sunny windowsill or under a grow light. Germinating seeds can be easily monitored until they sprout, and then moved to the light right away. They may need potting into larger containers, depending on how you start them, to be planted out when the weather is just right. (See the Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide,

<https://tinyurl.com/86m742yb>.)

If you have tender perennials or shrubs you are fond of, now could be a good time to take cuttings to root in case they are lost over winter. This isn't as hard as it may seem, and I encourage you to check out this publication: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/MG108>. If you have a desire for native perennials that are sometimes hard to come by, autumn is the most natural time to start some seeds. The Florida Wildflower Cooperative has some useful information about timing (<https://tinyurl.com/s27ajryj>), as well as seeds for sale (<https://tinyurl.com/4bkfrukx>).

[com/4bkfrukx](https://tinyurl.com/4bkfrukx).)

For more information on what to do this month in your yard and garden, check out the "North Florida Gardening Calendar" (<https://tinyurl.com/efxfzcr>) and "A New Leaf – Yard and Garden" newsletter (<https://tinyurl.com/4zpx4c5x>), both of which are particularly useful locally. I also highly recommend the "Neighborhood Gardener" (<https://tinyurl.com/4jcn8ryy>), which includes a calendar of events from around the state, many of which are presented online. That should be enough to get you through for a while. Stay cool!

Mandarin Garden Club news



Photo courtesy Joann Butler
New officers were inaugurated in May.

By Joann Butler
mail@floridanewslines.com

Coming in October, the Mandarin Garden Club will host its annual Trash to Treasure Sale on Oct. 1 and Oct. 2 from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. each day. The sale will feature household items, electronics, small accent furniture, glassware, kitchen items, pictures, books, lamps, toys, crafts, baskets, small tools and appliances and gardening tools, all generously donated by club members. There will also be a "Treasure" section that will feature fine china, crystal, signed pottery, one of a kind pieces and fine art, as well as a pop up plant sale for garden lovers. The Masons will be cooking their famous BBQ on both days and club members will be selling some home-made baked goods.

A new leadership team for the Mandarin Garden Club was installed for the upcoming 2021 – 2022 year. The officers

were installed by Fredi Olson, chaplain, at the May 26 Annual Meeting. Bonnie Myers is the new president; Sandra Varner is the new first vice president; the second vice president is Linda Carvalho; recording secretary is Betty Waldrep; and Jeanne Hendricks is the treasurer.

In September the various Mandarin Garden Club Circles will start their monthly meetings. There are three daytime and one evening Circle. The club is the perfect place to make friends, get involved with the community and learn about gardening and environmental issues. There also is a game day once a month for members only, which is a great time to meet more people in the club. Various crafts are also worked on monthly from September – May by the Crafty Ladies group. Visit www.mandaringardenclub.org for more information, including how to rent the garden club for parties, reunions and special occasions.



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Is it mobile responsive?	Yes.	Additional \$\$\$ Most web designers charge extra for a mobile site
How much for ongoing updates?	Easily make updates yourself, or we will do it for you.	\$75/hour (approx.) Average hourly rate for web designers
What about SEO? (Search Engine Optimization)	Included.	\$100-300/hour (approx.) Average hourly rate for SEO
How long until my new website is live?	Go live in as little as 1 week!	60 - 90 days (approx.)
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5 symptoms you shouldn't ignore

You like to stay active, but sometimes hip or knee pain gets in the way. How do you know when it's time to see a doctor?

The experts at Jacksonville Orthopaedic Institute (JOI) offer **innovative new options** to relieve your pain and get you back to doing the things you love.

If you have any of these symptoms, you could be making your hip or knee worse by waiting:

- 1 Unable to maintain an active lifestyle
- 2 Pain that gets worse at night and interferes with sleep
- 3 Catching, popping or locking
- 4 Difficulty putting on shoes and socks
- 5 Swelling

Why live with hip or knee pain?

Schedule an appointment today.

904-JOI-2000 (564-2000)

hipkneejax.com



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