

# Ponte Vedra NewsLine

JUNE 2022 Volume 9 Issue 6

Ponte Vedra, Palm Valley, Nocatee and South Ponte Vedra Beach

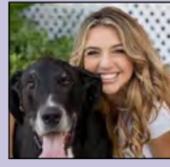
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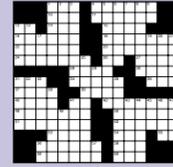
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Photo courtesy Carolee Bertisch  
David Vanlue and Juan Jaramillo  
(son and father) Dining

## Vicar's Landing employees receive 2022 Scholarships

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewline.com

Vicar's Landing Scholarship Committee, funded by members of Vicar's Landing retirement community, has announced that more than \$300,000 will be awarded as scholarships to 87 employees of Vicar's Landing, including 10 children of employees.

James Munson, chairman of the Scholarship Committee, announced the amount to the membership, congratulated the recipients and thanked his committee: Carolee Bertisch, Sallie Ann Hart, Sue Foley, Jim Marx, Laurie Reeves and Dr. John Woodard.

This year there were 77 General  
**Vicar's Landing** cont. on pg. 15

## NEIGHBORHOOD FARMERS MARKET REVITALIZED FOR THE COMMUNITY

By Tiffany Merlo Phelps  
mail@floridanewline.com

Every Tuesday, the Palm Valley Community Center off Canal Boulevard comes alive with local vendors offering their homemade goods, a sense of community and a chance to support small businesses.

The New Palm Valley Market, now held indoors, had its grand opening on March 29 (a farmers market existed at this location prior to Covid, but the organizer of that market moved.)

"We are trying to revitalize the market that everyone loved in the past and make it even better," said Dr. Leslie Taylor with New Day Soap, one of three organizers. "It was a group effort."

Taylor said that she, Fred Cannon, and Lisa Struble responded to the community's request for the market to return.

Cannon of Cannon's Creek sells potted vegetables and herbs as well as bluebird houses, and Struble, a custom jewelry maker, owns LMS Jewelry. New Day Soap, LMS Jewelry, Ferra Bakery, and Serving Humanity Produce are present at every market. In addition, different local vendors will rotate each week, offering candy, tea, honey, flowers, all-natural dog treats, peanut butter and much more.

"I do love this market because it is a great way for the community to get to know one another while providing jobs for the vendors locally," said Taylor. "We feel good about offering something special for the neighbors."

Taylor and her husband, both retired dentists from Virginia, make their soap using only cold-pressed oils in a variety of scents and designs.

Produce vendor Kafil Tunsill said he loves to make healthy food available to everyone and sees that role as his way of serving others. It is one of the driving reasons he created his business, and it is also what brings him and his wife, Monique, to the market every week.



The New Palm Valley Market on a recent Tuesday morning.



Photos courtesy Tiffany Merlo Phelps  
Heidi Foran with The Flower Fool.

"I love to provide fresh produce at an affordable price," said Tunsill, who offers seasonal produce fresh from the field. "I don't like for anyone to rely on a big corporation and have to pay a higher price due to overhead costs."

Ferra Bakery owner Rudy Ferra said he bakes most of his items the morning of the market so that breads, turnovers, cookies, calzones, and other treats arrive warm. Ferra began working in the bakery business with



Dr. Leslie Taylor, New Day Soap owner with her husband, weekly vendor and one of the organizers of The New Palm Valley Market.

his mom in 1998, but took over about six years ago after his mom retired. The Jacksonville-based bakery was once known as Maria's Bakery.

Ferra said that he is trying to build up his business at the Palm Valley Market, so that it is feasible for his employees to work the market every week. He closely watches

which items are most popular, and that determines what will be available each week. Ferra brings his baked goods to five different markets each week.

"This is an opportunity to get bakery fresh items made with the best ingredients right in your backyard," said Ferra, who is from Albania. "I look forward to serving the Palm Valley community."

Eventually, Taylor said the team would like to see more booths set up outside behind the community center and for the market to expand.

Vendor Heidi Foran, owner of The Flower Fool, said this market is the only one she works because it is the perfect spot to share her custom wreaths and florals.

"I love to shop local and support local," said Foran, who has a home studio in Nocatee that is open to clients. "Most of all, I love people."

Taylor said each week brings something new, and that is what makes the market so unique.

"Many weeks we have local honey, free-range eggs and selections from local artists. Sometimes we have a custom furniture maker along with a variety of vendors offering gourmet treats," said Taylor. "That is the beauty of a local market."

[Author's Note: The New Palm Valley Market is open on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., rain or shine. Interested vendors should email [info@NewDaySoap.com](mailto:info@NewDaySoap.com).]

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Photo courtesy St. Johns County Clerk of Court

Local dignitaries participated in a ribbon-cutting ceremony in late April for the new St. Johns County Memorial Garden.

## New Memorial Garden honors victims and survivors of violence

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewsline.com

Members of the community joined local elected officials, judges and law enforcement in a ribbon-cutting ceremony in late April for the new St. Johns County Memorial Garden, a tranquil courtyard garden at the St. Johns County Judicial Center dedicated to victims and survivors of violence.

“The new St. Johns County Memorial Garden is the centerpiece of the judicial complex courtyard and a place for courthouse visitors and staff to pause and reflect,” St. Johns County Clerk of Court and Comptroller Brandon J. Patty said. “With this garden, we remember those in our community who have suffered at the hands of others and offer families and friends a safe, serene place to find comfort and healing.”

The memorial garden project has been a year-long collaborative initiative between the St. Johns County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller, the Seventh Judicial Circuit, St. Johns County and the

Sheriff's Office, State Attorney's Office, St. Augustine and St. Augustine Beach police departments and the Betty Griffin Center.

For a decade, a small garden and monument dedicated to the memory of two members of the St. Johns County community, Stephanie “Theresa” Singleton-Gilliam and Laura Messina, was located outside the courthouse's south entrance. Over the years, the garden had begun to deteriorate, and its location made maintenance difficult, Clerk Patty said.

In addition to moving the garden inside the courthouse walls, the project added a memorial plaque, benches and new landscaping to the courtyard.

Every year, about 10 million people become victims of domestic violence, which equates to around 20 people every minute. Last year, 279 domestic violence injunctions were filed in St. Johns County, and nearly 72,000 were processed statewide. Many of these resulted in temporary and permanent injunctions.



# BKHS 2022



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# BFF Best Furry Friend of the month

## Meet Mocha!



**BREED:**

Maltipoo (Maltese and mini poodle)

**FAVORITE ACTIVITY:**

Barking at the mailman

**FAVORITE TREAT:**

Cheese

**FAVORITE FRIEND:**

My mama!

**HOW YOUR BFF THEIR NAME:**

Mocha's BFF at home got confused on what color "mocha" is!

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 Ponte Vedra NewsLine. Your pet could be our BFF of the month and appear in Ponte Vedra NewsLine! Email editor@floridanewsline.com to enter your pet.

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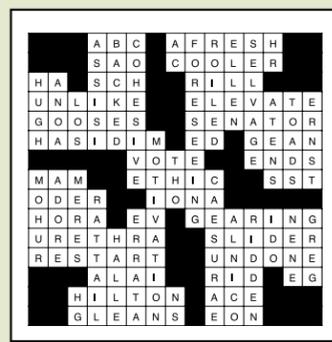
# ST. JOHNS Business Monthly

Are you interested in promoting your business in St. Johns Business Monthly, a feature section included in both The CreekLine and Ponte Vedra NewsLine? Call Linda 904-607-5062

## MYSTERY PHOTO

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

Last month's Mystery Photo was the Ponce de Leon statue located in the northernmost GTM NERR parking lot. Our winner was James Kent. Congratulations!

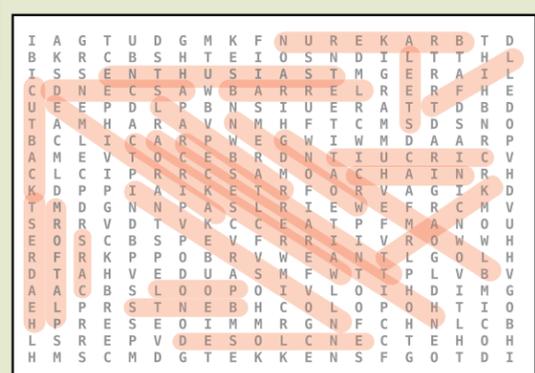


Answers to our Puzzles  
PG 14

### CRYPTO FUN

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Answers: A. drop B. speed C. thrills D. ride



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# June

## Community Calendar What's Happening in Ponte Vedra

**Council on Aging offers interest groups** at the COA Center at Flagler Health+ Village at Nocatee. Meetings are free and self-guided except for the Caregiver's Support Group. Advance registration for clubs and meetings is required; email pbrunell@Stjohnscoa.com or call (904) 819-3234. Tuesday clubs include: Caregiver Support Group, 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.; and Widows and Widowers social group, second and fourth Tuesday of each month, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Wednesday groups include: Community Crafting, 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.; and Genealogy Group, 1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

**1st:** **The Newcomers Alumnae** monthly luncheon will be held on Wednesday, June 1 at 11 a.m. at Marsh Landing Country Club, 25655 Marsh Landing Parkway. The cost of the luncheon is \$23; email bartshar@comcast.net as soon as possible to reserve a seat. Visit [www.newcomersalumnae.fl.wildapricot.org](http://www.newcomersalumnae.fl.wildapricot.org) for more information or to become a member.

**2nd:** **Bingo** will be held at THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center, 175 Landrum Lane, on Thursdays from 1 p.m. – 2 p.m. for five weeks beginning Thursday, June 2. Contact Amanda Jones at (904) 280-3233 or [ajones@coasjc.org](mailto:ajones@coasjc.org) for more information and to register.

**3rd:** **The GTM Research Reserve will hold a new volunteer orientation** on June 3 from 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Learn about volunteer rules and responsibility as well next steps to volunteering. Complete

the volunteer application online ([www.gtmnerr.org](http://www.gtmnerr.org)) before attending. Contact Shannon Rininger at [Shannon.Rininger@FloridaDEP.gov](mailto:Shannon.Rininger@FloridaDEP.gov) to assure that your application was received.

**6th:** **The North Florida Chapter of the National MS Society** and Bike MS cycling team Big Bananas will host the 10th annual Multiple Sclerosis Awareness silent auction on June 6 at Mr. Chubby's Wings, 150 Valley Circle, Ponte Vedra Beach. The event is free to the public and offers more than 250 items from Beaches retailers, restaurants and service providers valued at over \$33,000. There's also a 50-50 drawing. All proceeds benefit the more than 18,000 North Floridians impacted by MS.

**8th:** **The Council on Aging's (COA) THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center** will host an open house to celebrate its 15th anniversary on June 8 from 3 p.m. – 6 p.m. The community is invited to enjoy live entertainment, refreshments and snacks while learning more about the COA offerings at the center, located at 175 Landrum Lane in Ponte Vedra Beach.

**11th:** **The Northeast Florida Chapter of Sisters in Crime** presents award-winning author Janet Kuchler (aka Janet Cooper) at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library, 101 Library Blvd. (FOL Room), at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, June 11. Bring your coffee and bring a friend. The group welcomes misters and sisters to learn more about writing, promoting, and enjoying

crime fiction. Visit [www.nefloridasistersin-crime.org](http://www.nefloridasistersin-crime.org) for more information.

**13th:** **The St. Johns County Civic Roundtable** will meet on Monday, June 13 at 12 p.m. via Zoom. The meeting will feature guest speaker St. Johns County Sheriff Rob Hardwick. Email [info@sjcroundtable.org](mailto:info@sjcroundtable.org) to register for the meeting or visit [www.sjcroundtable.org](http://www.sjcroundtable.org) for more information about the St. Johns County Civic Roundtable.

**15th:** **Ponte Vedra Woman's Club** will hold its first summer social for current and prospective members on June 15 from 6 p.m. – 7 p.m. at Jovencia Medical Spa at 330 A1A N., Suite 306 in Ponte Vedra Beach. Participants who want to have dinner together afterward will go to Anejo Cocina Ponte Vedra Restaurant at 7:15 p.m. Everyone will order off of the menu. Register for this event at [www.pontevedrawomansclub.com](http://www.pontevedrawomansclub.com).

**16th:** **"Story Surfers" Family Storytime** will be held at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library on June 16 from 11:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. This interactive storytime for the whole family encourages physical, social, and language and literacy development. For toddlers and preschoolers; siblings welcome. RSVP for each child and adult attending the program. Contact Youth Services Librarian Lisa Calvert at [lcalvert@sjcfl.us](mailto:lcalvert@sjcfl.us) for more information.

**18th:** **The Summer Kick Off Nocatee Farmers Market** will be held on Saturday, June 18 from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. at Nocatee Station Field. The Farmers Market is open to the public.

**18th:** **The Ponte Vedra Writers group** will meet on Saturday, June 18 at 2 p.m. at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library. Featured speaker will be writer, branding expert, speaker, and humorist Erik Deckers, who will discuss writing compelling dialogue during his presentation, "He Said, She Said: The Secrets of Writing Solid Dialogue." The meeting is free and open to members and non-members alike. Visit [www.floridawriters.org](http://www.floridawriters.org) for more information.

**21st:** **Ponte Vedra Democratic Club** will meet on Tuesday, June 21 at 6 p.m. for Chat & Chew before the 6:30 p.m. meeting at Christ Episcopal Church, Room 106, 400 San Juan Road. The featured speaker will be Jen Lomberk, Matanzas Riverkeeper. Email [jkary@verizon.net](mailto:jkary@verizon.net) for more information.

**25th:** **GTM Research Reserve will host its monthly Beach Cleanup** on Saturday, June 25 from 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. No registration is required; meet at the Visitor Center, 505 Guana River Road in Ponte Vedra Beach where gloves and trash bags will be provided. Visit [gtmnerr.org](http://gtmnerr.org) for more information.



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**with St. Johns County School Board Member Kelly Barrera, District 4**

**Q: Can you give some insight into the growth that the St. Johns County School District is experiencing?**

**A:** Since 2008, our district has grown by 67 percent, which equates to 19,493 students. To address that, in the last 15 years, we have added 13 new schools and expanded 12 schools. In the last five years, we've added five new schools and had three school expansions.

**Q: What are the current plans for new schools?**

**A:** The district has a five year plan for new schools that we update annually and for which we must receive approval from the Florida Department of Education. In our current five year plan, we have projected for three new K – 8 schools, one new elementary and an expansion to South Woods Elementary.

Over the summer, we plan to evaluate proposals to build perhaps multiple schools at the same time over a two year period and include their bid with the rebid for K – 8 School NN. By building multiple schools we hope to be able to streamline the process and maybe have workforce and supply cost savings.

**Q: How does school financing work in Florida?**

**A:** We get a small percentage of funding (\$1.34 million) from state sources as part of capital outlay. Our local sources include the local discretionary millage (which has decreased from 2.0 mills to 1.5 mills since 2008). We also receive school impact fees from developers and school concurrency proportionate share mitigation payments, which are also from developers, when a project doesn't have available student seats for what the project is expected to produce. Finally, we have our half-cent sales tax, which has helped us tremendously.

**Q: Can you give some insight [as of interview date of May 17] into the upcoming meeting on May 24 to decide if some books are appropriate for school libraries?**

**A:** I believe parents have every right to be aware of books available to their children at school and they have the right to challenge if they feel it necessary. As a parent, before I became a school board member, I challenged a book in our schools.

Our school district, along with other local, state and national organizations and agencies, is reviewing media collections and procurement procedures.

If parents are uncomfortable with any book in our schools, they can complete an online form on our website ([www.stjohns.k12.fl.us](http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us)) that will restrict their child's access to that book. If there is material that a parent thinks isn't appropriate for any student to have access to, there is a Reconsideration Form (also online) that can be filled out. There is then a process where the material would work its way through the school, then

the district, and then to the school board for a final decision. There are legal considerations the school board members must follow to make their decision.

**Q: Do you have anything else to share with District 4?**

**A:** Congratulations to the Class of 2022! And I'd like to wish everyone a happy and safe summer.

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

**A:** They can email me at [kelly.barrera@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:kelly.barrera@stjohns.k12.fl.us) or call me at (904) 547-7510.



**with St. Johns County Commissioner Jeremiah Blocker, District 4**

**Q: Can you give an update on where the county is in the annual budget process at this time [as of interview date of May 12]?**

**A:** We are about to hold the St. Johns County Fiscal Year 2023 Administrator's Budget Workshop later this month (May 23 – 25). This is where we and the community can learn more about and begin to address the county's ongoing budget needs. It's the first step in a process, with detailed presentations given by all the county department heads. We will have additional public comment as usual at our Board of County Commissioners meetings in June.

**Q: Do you anticipate higher costs and budget requests due to the present economy?**

**A:** We're not sure at this point what the long term effects are of the current supply and labor shortages as well as inflation. There have been ups and downs economically through the years and our county has still been able to deliver what the residents need. I've been saying that I expect a full-on rollercoaster ride, but we are trying to be as flexible and proactive as possible.

**Q: As one county commissioner, what are your budget priorities?**

**A:** My personal budget priorities are first, emergency response services, such as

those provided by our first responders and sheriff's office; then Parks and Recreation; and then to continue to manage our infrastructure. We do have some funding opportunities, especially for the latter category. The State of Florida has just passed a historic budget, so we're not all on our own. Keep in mind, too, that this budget we are working on is for next year.

**Q: What is the latest on the FEMA berm?**

**A:** Mickler's Beach should be fully reopened by the time readers see this. The FEMA berm project, though delayed, is now humming along.

**Q: Do you have dates and times for your next local office hours?**

**A:** Yes. I will be available on June 10, July 29 and Aug. 19 from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. each day to meet with St. Johns County residents at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library. Constituents wishing to meet with me need to call my office and schedule a time, as well as let us know the topic they wish to discuss so I can have staff available if necessary.

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

**A:** Readers can email me at [bcc4j-blocker@sjcfl.us](mailto:bcc4j-blocker@sjcfl.us) or call me at (904) 679-2620.

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# 2022 ELECTIONS

**2022 ELECTION DATES**

**Primary Election**  
August 23, 2022

**General Election**  
November 8, 2022

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You can register to vote, update your voter information, or request a new voter card at [www.registertovoteflorida.gov](http://www.registertovoteflorida.gov)

**NEW PRECINCTS AND POLLING LOCATIONS**

Due to the 2020 census and the redistricting process, voting districts, precinct lines, and some election day polling places have changed.

**VOTER INFORMATION CARDS**

New voter information cards are being mailed to all registered voters in St. Johns County. Watch for yours in early June!

For voter registration and election information, call 904.823.2238 or visit [www.votesjc.gov](http://www.votesjc.gov)



## Guest Column

# New website and Citizen's Guide to Voting designed to help voters stay informed

By St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections Vicky Oakes

Have you visited [www.votesjc.gov](http://www.votesjc.gov) lately? We launched a new website in May with a focus on transparency, streamlined navigation, and efficient service delivery. Our new site is designed to assist residents, voters, candidates and elected officials in quickly accessing relevant and timely information regarding a variety of election related topics. It's informative, easy to navigate, and will ensure voters and those running for office have convenient access to the information they need to participate in the democratic process. If you haven't seen it — check it out!

Have you received your 2022 Citizens Guide to Registering and Voting in your mailbox? The guide was mailed to every residential mailbox in St. Johns County at the end of May to help residents prepare for the 2022 elections. The publication is especially important this year as many changes have occurred since the last election in 2020. Due to the 2020 census and the redistricting process, voting districts, precinct lines, and some election day polling locations have changed. The 2022 Citizens Guide to Registering and Voting also serves as pre-notification of the new voter information cards that are being mailed to all registered voters in the county in early June. If you missed the guide, its available on our website at [www.votesjc.gov](http://www.votesjc.gov).

[votesjc.gov](http://votesjc.gov). It's important reading, and worth your time.

Now that the precinct lines and polling places have been finalized for the 2022 elections, new voter information cards will go in the mail the first week of June. Be sure to watch for yours. Your new voter card will replace any other voter cards you have received in the past. When voting in person, you do not need to bring your card. Instead, you must present current and valid photo and signature ID, or you will be required to vote a provisional ballot.

The election season is upon us. Candidates running for office this year must file their qualifying documents with our office or the Division of Elections in Tallahassee by noon on June 17. Once the noon deadline passes, the ballot will be set for the primary election and our staff will move forward with programming the election. The first vote-by-mail ballots go in the mail on July 9. Curious as to who is running for office? Visit our website for up-to-date election information on the upcoming Aug. 23 primary election.

Readers can contact me at the office by calling (904) 823-2238 or emailing me at [voakes@votesjc.gov](mailto:voakes@votesjc.gov). Our website also has a wealth of information, and a sign up form for our newsletter.



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

**Q. Last month we covered your Property Fraud Alert program — how are the signups going? How big of a problem is property fraud in Florida?**

**A.** We doubled the number of subscribers over the last few weeks, so we are getting the word out, thank you! Property fraud is when someone illegally uses your property for financial gain — for instance, someone recording a fraudulent deed, mortgage or lien against your property in the Official Records of the St. Johns County Clerk's Office. Two real-life examples have made news recently in Florida — a South Florida woman sold properties she didn't own in an elaborate scheme that defrauded 45 people across six counties, including Flagler, and an Oviedo man nearly lost his property to an identity thief who used a fraudulent deed to take possession of it. In the second case, it was the county comptroller's office that alerted him to the recording activity.

record it and recognize it as fraudulent, you know to immediately contact law enforcement.

Our service is free, it's safe, and it's easy to sign up at <https://apps.stjohnsclerk.com/Landmark/FraudAlert>.

**Q. You recently announced that St. Johns County received recognition for transparency and financial reporting for 29 consecutive years. Why is this a big deal for St. Johns County?**

**A.** The Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting is the gold standard for reporting, transparency and disclosure about the county's finances. To produce the required information for the auditor's review is a whole-of-government effort by county government and the five constitutional officers each year. The audit process is not easy or quick — it's kicked off in the first quarter of each fiscal year and requires a heavy lift from all agencies and entities. Nonetheless, the process and resulting report is critical to maintaining the public's trust in our stewardship of their tax dollars.

Our free property fraud alert service provides an early warning system for subscribers to take prompt action if they are notified of recording activity in their name. If you know you didn't



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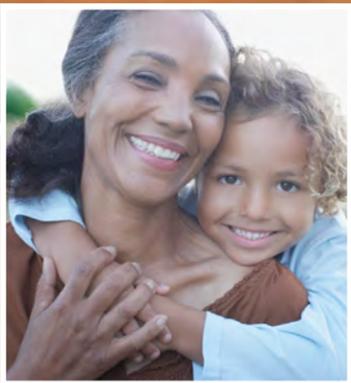
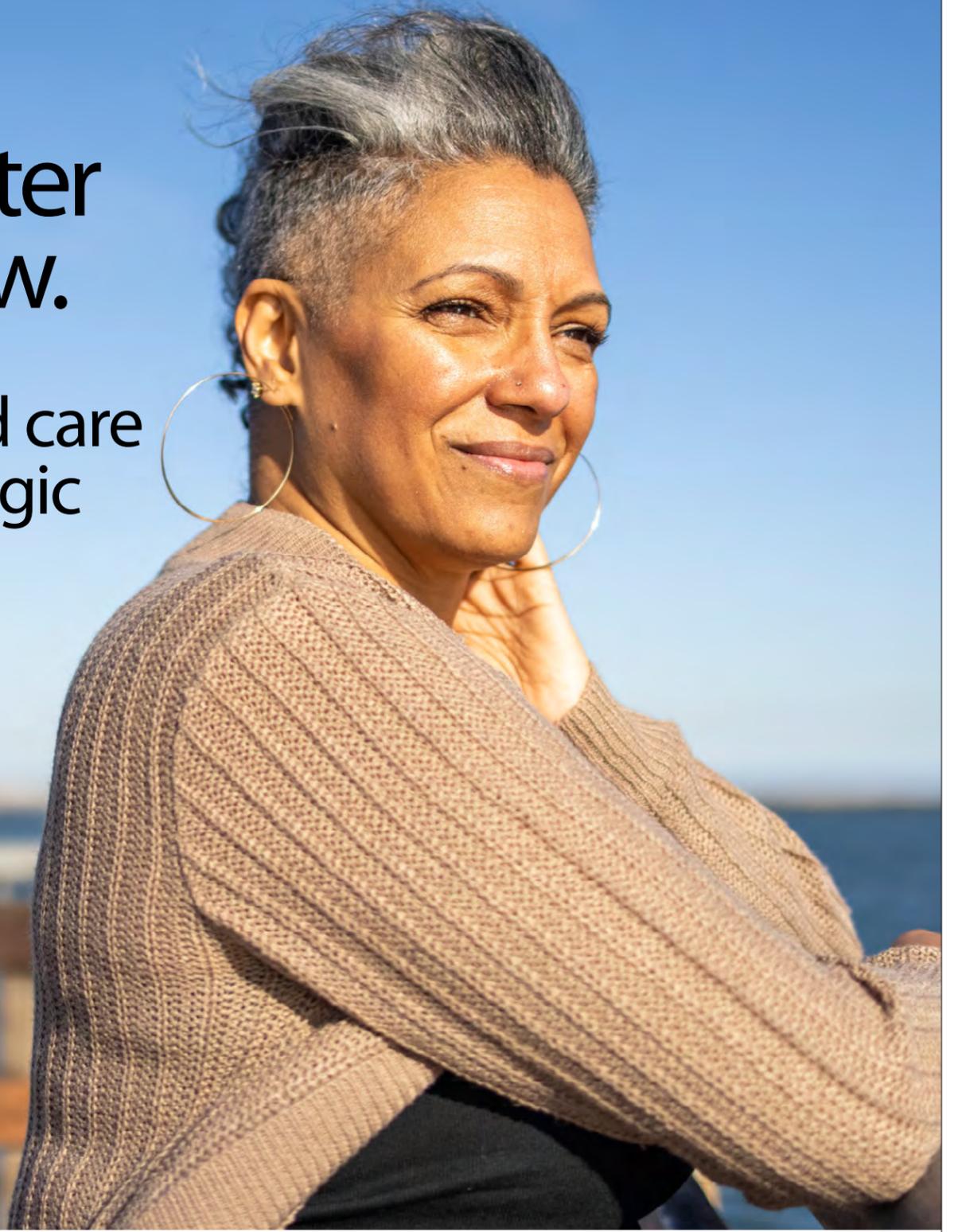
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**Q&A with Brandon Patty** cont. from pg. 6

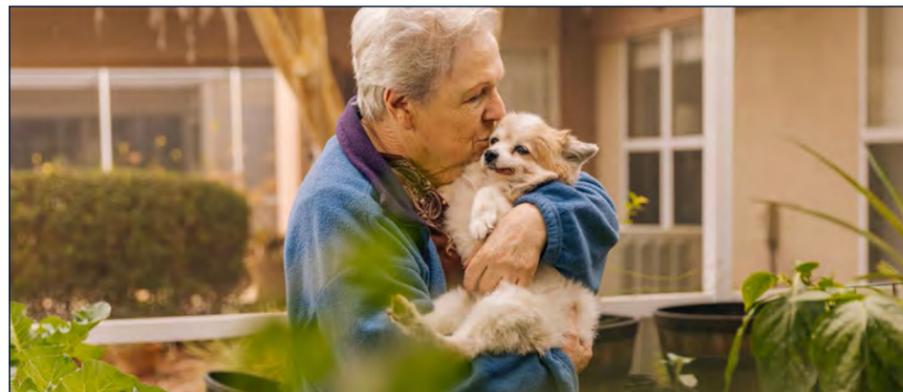
**Q. It's been said that the Clerk and Comptroller's office performs more than a thousand functions and services. How can people learn more about what a clerk and comptroller does?**

**A.** We are soon launching an informational newsletter so residents can learn more about their Clerk and Comptroller's office and the services we offer. Our goal is to be transparent, offer opportunities to access records and information, provide services to St. Johns County residents, and to make sure that we are meeting your needs. Sign up for

our first newsletter at communications@stjohnsclerk.com. We do want to emphasize that if you receive the newsletter and aren't interested, know there is an easy opt-out. You can also email us and let us know what Clerk and Comptroller topics would be helpful to you, your family or your business.

**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. People can also call our main office at (904) 819-3600.



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**with St. Johns County Sheriff  
Rob Hardwick**

**Q: Can you give an update on this year's activities for National Police Week, observed May 11 – 17?**

**A:** This has been a big week and my wife and I just returned from Washington, DC, where we joined others to memorialize our warriors across the nation who died in the line of duty. The highlight event is the engraving of the names of those officers we have lost this year on the walls of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial on the National Mall.

This year, the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, which sponsors the events, identified COVID deaths as in the line of duty deaths, since we police officers continued to protect and serve throughout the pandemic.

**Q: Were there any local law enforcement officers who had their name added to the wall this year?**

**A:** Yes, this year we lost Deputy Jody Hull, Jr., who was a Youth Resource Deputy at St. Augustine High School, to COVID and his name was added to the wall in Washington DC. This was my first in the line of duty death as sheriff or as police chief and it was very humbling. Many families have been affected, including not only the Hull family, but also the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office family and the St. Augustine High School family as well as the community at large. The outpouring of love and support from the community upon his death was overwhelming.

Since it was founded in 1821, the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office has had 10 in the line of duty deputy deaths and one canine.

**Q: How many names were added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial this year?**

**A:** This year, 619 names were added, of which 472 died in 2021 and 319 of those were COVID-related. (Remainder were deaths added prior to this year.) Typically,

the average of names added annually is between 100 and 150.

**Q: What type of support is available to families left behind by these law enforcement officers?**

**A:** One non-profit called C.O.P.S. (Concerns of Police Survivors) really steps up and helps families when they lose a loved one in the line of duty. C.O.P.S. programs for survivors include the National Police Survivors' Conference held each May during National Police Week, scholarships, peer-support at the national, state, and local levels, the "C.O.P.S. Kids" Summer Camp, special retreats for spouses, parents, siblings, adult children, extended family, and co-workers, trial and parole support, and other assistance programs.

**Q: What is done locally to recognize officers who die in the line of duty?**

**A:** Every year, the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office holds our own memorial service to recognize any officer, regardless of agency, killed in the line of duty within St. Johns County. We have a memorial wall outside our office on Lewis Speedway.

Additionally, I am establishing a "Gold Star Family" status, borrowing from the military's idea. We will include even families of deputies who died from health issues or by suicide and don't qualify at the national level in addition to those who died in the line of duty. I think it's important to maintain community with all these families and they will be honorary lifetime members of the SJSO family and invited to attend all of our events, like swearing-ins or picnics.

**Q: What is the best way for our readers to contact you with any questions or suggestions about this article?**

**A:** They can email me at sheriff@sjsso.org or call me at (904) 824-8304. Also, our website, www.sjsso.org has a wealth of resources, from alarm registration to Crime Stoppers to our Neighbors app.

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# ST. JOHNS Business Monthly

## Smart moves to manage an inheritance

By Chris Thompson, CFP®, CRPC®

Losing a loved one can be a painful experience. Even when expected, the finality of death can be difficult to comprehend. It's no wonder that people who are grieving often feel overwhelmed and unable to process information with the same mental clarity that they have under more normal circumstances.

Adding financial decisions into the mix can further complicate matters. For many people, even the welcome news that they are the beneficiaries of a loved one's estate can bring waves of sadness and uncertainty. If you are set to receive money or other assets from a loved one who has passed away, you may benefit from the counsel of a financial advisor, estate attorney and tax expert who can help you determine the best course of action to wisely manage the gift you've been given. Here are some factors you might want to consider with their help:

First, consider the form of inheritance you

received:

- **Cash:** If the assets you inherited are in the form of cash, there tend to be few complications. There is no federal tax on inherited amounts, though a handful of states do apply an inheritance tax.
- **A life insurance settlement:** If the deceased named you as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy, the payment you received is generally not subject to tax. You also may have the option to have the benefit paid out to you over a number of years rather than in one lump sum.
- **A retirement plan:** If you inherited an IRA or an individual's workplace retirement plan, you will have 10 years to withdraw all of the money (this time limit does not apply to spouses or minor children). Failure to do so can result in a significant penalty. Taxes are due on distributions from traditional IRAs or workplace plans.
- **Appreciated stock or other assets:** If you inherited assets such as stock or real estate, the cost basis for the asset is stepped-up to the value at the time of the grantor's passing. That can result in a major tax savings

when you sell the asset.

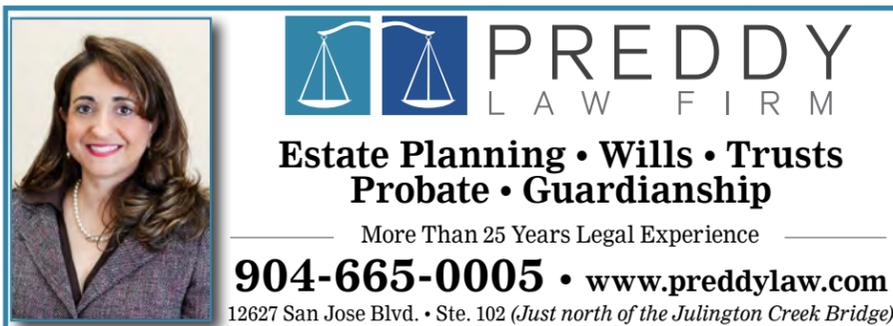
Particularly if you're in a state of heightened emotion, don't feel rushed into making decisions about what to do with the money. Slow down, seek advice and consider your options within the context of your overall financial situation and goals for the future.

If you were in a comfortable financial position before you received the inheritance, perhaps you'd like to spend some of the money on a family trip or to purchase a major item in memory of your loved one. On the other hand, if you want to put part or all of the money toward funding your major financial goals, there are myriad ways to do so and honor the legacy of your loved one in the process. Perhaps you want to set up a 529 plan to help pay for your children's college education in memory of the deceased. Alternatively, the money may be useful in making a down payment on a home or a cash infusion into your diversified portfolio that you'll one day lean on in retirement.

It's not uncommon to experience some challenges or complications if an inheritance has arrived or is coming your way. This is all the more reason to consider consulting with a financial advisor, estate and tax professional to make sure you understand what you've received and how to best put it to work. They can bring a sense of clarity and calm that you may be in need of as you grieve the loss of your loved one.

Chris Thompson, CFP®, CRPC® is an Associate Manager and Financial Advisor with Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC. in Jacksonville. He specializes in fee-based financial planning and asset management strategies and has been in practice for 29 years. To contact him, visit [www.ameripriseadvisors.com/chris.thompson](http://www.ameripriseadvisors.com/chris.thompson) or email [chris.thompson@ampf.com](mailto:chris.thompson@ampf.com).

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## Guest Column

### Legislative wrap-up: Some lesser known but important bills passed

By Rep. Cyndi Stevenson

This session we passed a large amount of public policy bills. Of the thousands of bills that were filed by legislators, just 285 bills passed the House and Senate and have been sent to the governor. Some of them were doomed from the start because the member that filed it failed to get a companion bill filed in the Senate or the House. House members are generally able to file six policy bills each year. There is no limit to the number of bills that can be filed in the Senate. Of the 285 bills we passed, many have already been considered and signed into law. Some are still subject to approval or veto by Gov. Ron DeSantis.

There were a cluster of bills passed again this year that were shaped by our experience with COVID. This includes adding Pharmacy Technicians to the medical professionals who can administer vaccines in Florida, a bill extending Covid 19 liability protection to health care providers, giving flexibility to nursing homes on ways to meet daily direct care needs of patients, expanding authority for telehealth services

while balancing patient safety and the No Patient Left Alone Act that ensures visitation rights for patients facing critical situations.

In Pre-K – 12 education, we had record per student funding that enables more money to sustain past teacher pay and additional funding to increase them. For St. Johns County, we were awarded \$9.7 million to assist the district with the high rate of growth. We also replaced the outdated statewide end of year Florida Standard Assessment (FSA) with performance monitoring to support the unique needs and goals of students and gives teachers and parents timely feedback throughout the year. Beginning with ninth graders in the 2023 – 24 school year, students will be required to earn a half credit in personal financial literacy.

We passed a law raising fines for public adjusters who fail to comply with investigations to prevent insurance fraud and added requirements that insurance companies report fraudulent acts to the state for

investigation and prosecution.

We passed a consumer protection bill that ensures that service contracts with an automatic renewal provision can be canceled in the same manner that they were entered.

To curtail those pesky vehicle warranty calls, they are now required to state their name, license number and telephone number if they call you.

We updated Florida law to keep up with rapid development of new technologies including “deepfakes,” which are realistic images or videos that are created using artificial intelligence that can depict a real person saying something that they did not say or engaging in behaviors they did not engage in, blurring the lines between reality and fiction.

We passed legislation that offers qualifying juveniles a second chance — while protecting the public. This is a one time chance by authorizing an expungement of their qualifying arrest records after completing a diversion program.

From May 28 to June 10, there will be a disaster preparedness sales tax holiday on certain items including coolers, radios, batteries and flashlights, generators priced at \$1,000 or less, pet supplies, carbon monoxide and smoke detectors and fire extinguishers.

Florida has term limits for governor, state representatives, state senators, the lieutenant governor, and Florida cabinet members. This year the state added 12 year term limits for school board members.

This is by no means a comprehensive list of all the bills passed, but merely some of the highlights of some of the lesser-known bills.

I have a legislative newsletter that I use to help keep people up to date. When we get our final budget approved, I will send a newsletter with both summary and detailed information that may be of interest to you, along with reminders of upcoming tax holidays and items of interest. Contact my office at (904) 823-2300 if you'd like to get on the mailing list.



**Rebecca Thomson**  
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# Community celebrates first playground designed for children of all abilities

By Martie Thompson  
 editor@floridanewsline.com

The St. Johns County community came together on Saturday, April 30 to celebrate the opening of the Field of Dreams Playground. In attendance were multiple county commissioners, Sheriff Rob Hardwick and representatives from St. Johns County Parks and Rec, the NW Tower Committee and the Cunningham Creek Elementary PTO. But according to George Vancore, one of the five founding fathers of Field of Dreams baseball, the most important attendees were the Field of Dreams baseball players and their buddies, who took time between games on this Saturday morning to celebrate the playground's opening.

"I was so happy to see these kids going from playing baseball to then going over to play on the new playground," Vancore said.

It's important to note that no tax dollars were spent to build and outfit the park. All the money was raised by the community and the county was instrumental in coordinating bids and getting the



Photo courtesy Ericka Brandt



Photo courtesy St. Johns County Parks and Rec

work done. According to Vancore, it was a true community effort.

"After about the fifth year of playing Field of Dreams baseball, we realized we were not only covering our costs but we had a surplus, since 'all things are free at Field of Dreams' and people regularly make donations," Vancore said. "So we decided to go 'beyond the white lines' and build a playground for children with special needs."

During his opening remarks, Vancore described some of the unique donations

that contributed to the \$350,000 cost of building the playground — from the 10-year-old boy who resold used golf balls on the Julington Creek Plantation golf course to his own granddaughter, who donated money she had received for good grades to the cause.

At the Field of Dreams Playground at Aberdeen Park, all children have the opportunity to play regardless of their physical abilities. This is St. Johns County Parks and Recreation's first-ever all-inclusive playground, which is customized with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible play. It includes an all-inclusive whirl, ADA swings, a sensory dome, musical pieces, and cantata chimes for sound. The play areas are wheelchair-accessible, with wide paths and ramps. The playground is surrounded by mature trees and offers shaded areas and a pavilion nearby. Children of all abilities can experience creative play through motion, sensory, and socialization that encourages everyone to come together.

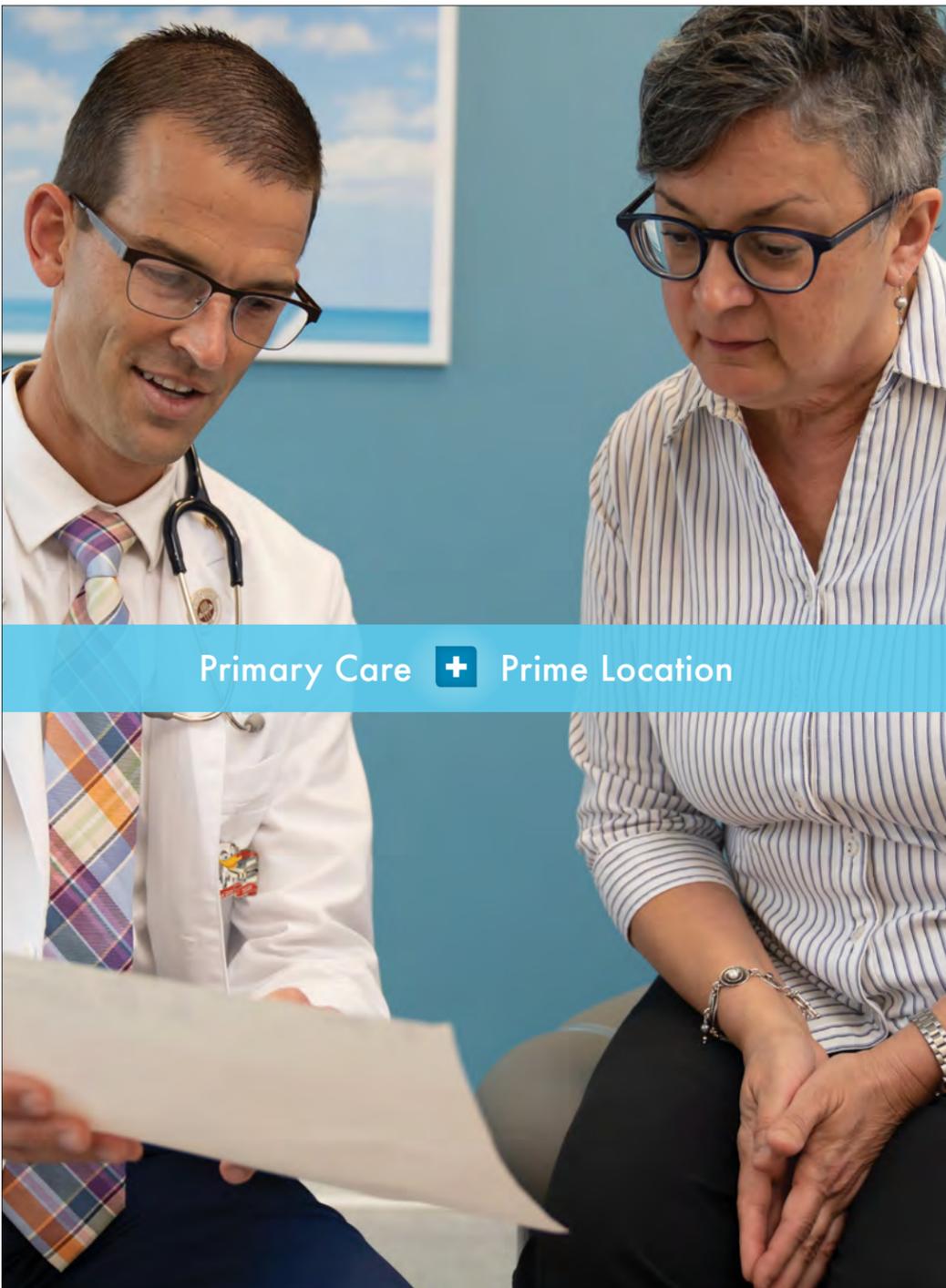


Photo courtesy Brian Wilson

The all-inclusive playground was made possible thanks to the collaboration of St. Johns County Parks and Recreation, Northwest Tower Committee, the Field of Dreams Board of Directors, members of the Creeks Athletics Association, parents, coaches, and volunteers.



Photo courtesy Toni Chadwell



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# PVHS Happenings: Sharks take first place in state competition



Photo courtesy Sade Goodridge  
Andrew Liu, Alex Vorobjov, Yan Li, Ally Lu, and Charlotte King.

By Sade Goodridge  
mail@floridanewsline.com

On March 28, 2022, the Ponte Vedra High School Chinese program won first place in the 2022 Florida Statewide Chinese Competition creative category. In this category, high school students were asked to create a short film that aligned with a specific theme. As the students were in Level 4, they were required to put together a video on a Chinese invention or technology.

In an effort to be unique and hopefully ensure a win, students Charlotte King, Andrew Liu, Ally Lu, and Alex Vorobjov produced an amusing film on a relatively unknown product: the Chinese invention of the Facekini. The Facekini is a mask designed for swimmers and

beachgoers which covers the head and reveals only the eyes, nose, and mouth. It was invented by Zhang Shifan 2004, a former accountant from the coastal Chinese city of Qingdao which became the hometown of this fashion trend.

Thus, on a cold February morning, with the help of extras Maya Conway, Jace Lim, Grace Nuri, Hazel Parent, and Anna Wilson and a script written by Sade Goodridge, the actors filmed their video on the novel product entirely in Chinese.

Their heady gamble paid off. The combination of both an obscure product and the intent of creating a video with a humorous tilt named "Facekini!!" was a winning combination.

## Ocean Palms' Otterpalooza Makes Some Noise

The PTO at Ocean Palms Elementary School hosted the school's inaugural Otterpalooza event on April 23 at the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall. This music festival, complete with good food, good music and good gifts via virtual and live auctions, hit just the right note by raising \$33,000 to put toward technology for the school.

Attendees enjoyed music by the band Blonde Ambition and food by Chef's Dinner Table, with emcee Katie Jeffries from First Coast News. Title sponsors included Fishman Pediatric Dentistry,

Beaches Orthodontics and the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall. Additionally, community sponsors consisted of Cyndi King with Berkshire Hathaway, Atlantic Plumbing and Ansbacher Law.

And, like any true palooza, this is a party where the fun never ends. That's right, from local getaways and gifts, to student experiences with teachers, families are now cashing in on their auction items. After all, who wouldn't want to eat pizza and play games with the principal?



Photos courtesy Lisa Farese  
OPE parents enjoyed music, food and friends as they raised funds for school technology.

## Nease summer camps announced

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewsline.com

The sweet days of summer are approaching; do you have a plan in mind for how to fill the time? Nease High School has the answer — summer camps. Here's a look at what's happening in June and July:

Basketball boys and girls camp: June 6 – June 10; June 13 – June 17; June 20 – June 24; July 11 – July 15; July 25 – July 29.

Green and Gold Youth Camp: June 21, 22, 23 and July 12, 13, 14, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Football Camp: June 13 – June 29; July 12, 13, 14, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. for ninth – 12th graders,

Dance Camp: June 27 – 29 for kindergarteners – fifth graders

Soccer girls camp: June 20 – 23, 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. for kindergarteners – eighth graders

CyberCamp: July 11 – July 15, 9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. for ninth – 12th graders

Lacrosse Camp: July 11 – July 14, 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

Cheer Cub Camp: July 20 – July 22, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. for kindergarteners – fifth graders

These camps are used as fundraisers for their prospective sport. Visit [www-nhs.stjohns.k12.fl.us/panther-press](http://www-nhs.stjohns.k12.fl.us/panther-press) for more information.

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**John**, Resident at Westminster St. Augustine

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**Briefs**

**Summer reading volunteer opportunities available**

RSVP of St. Johns County is looking for community members to assist once a week in the summer reading or algebra programs in the St. Johns County School District. Hours are flexible. If you are traveling this summer, you can help out while you are in town.

Orientation for volunteers will be Thursday, June 16 from 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. at the Fullerwood Auditorium, 10 Hildreth Drive in St. Augustine.

“There are students who can greatly benefit from the help of those willing to give just a small amount of their time,” said Cheryl Freeman, RSVP director. “Assistance from community volunteers can make all the difference in helping these students succeed.”

To make a training reservation or for more information, contact RSVP at (904) 547-3952 or Cheryl.Freeman@stjohns.k12.fl.us.

**2022 Point in Time Count shows decrease in county homelessness**

Each year a survey is conducted to gauge the amount of homeless individuals within St. Johns County. The Point in Time (PIT) Count is a count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night. The PIT Count is traditionally held in January, but due to challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year it was held on February 28.

The St. Johns County Continuum of Care, led by Flagler Health+, conducts

the PIT Count as a requirement of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for those who seek federal funds. The goal is to have an accurate depiction of all those who are utilizing temporary housing including emergency shelters and transitional, plus persons who are living in places not meant for human habitation including cars, parks, and other similar locations.

This year’s PIT Count was a community effort with volunteer staff from Care Connect+ (a program of Flagler Health+), Alpha-Omega Miracle Home, Department of Health & Human Services, Veterans Administration, St. Francis House, Wildflower Clinic, and the SOS Street Outreach Services team. The teams started at 7 a.m. and canvassed all of St. Johns County with a focus on areas identified by street outreach teams where they commonly interact with people experiencing homelessness. Surveys were conducted interview-style on tablets.

The PIT Count results showed that on Feb. 28 there were 349 individuals experiencing homelessness in St. Johns County. Of those, 242 were experiencing unsheltered homelessness and 107 were residing in shelter. This total was a decrease of 17 percent from the 419 individuals who were experiencing homelessness on the day of the 2021 count. Overall the number of homeless decreased year-over-year, but there was a 16 percent increase in the number of those who were chronically homeless.

While the PIT represents a one-day snap-

shot, the St. Johns County Continuum of Care works year round in an effort to prevent and end homelessness, bringing together resources and partnerships to make homelessness rare, brief and one time.

In 2021, there were 6,682 people who were served by all programs within the Care Connect+ Information Network, a decrease of 20 percent from 2020. Of those, 27 percent of adults reported that they were literally homeless at the time of requesting assistance.

Additionally, it should be noted that homeless school children are counted by the St. Johns County School District using a different homeless definition under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. To date, in 2022, the St. Johns County School District has identified 780 Homeless Children and Youth in our schools. This total changes daily as new students are identified and is an on-going count until the end of the school year.

**St. Johns County urges beachgoers to take precautions to protect sea turtle nests**

Sea turtle nesting season is officially underway in St. Johns County through Oct. 31. Residents, visitors, and businesses are asked to help protect natural sea turtle habitats by observing all nesting season laws and regulations.

Vehicular beach traffic is only allowed from 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. All beachfront properties must reduce their impact by eliminating interior and exterior lights that may disrupt nesting sea turtles. Volleyball court lights at St. Johns County Ocean Pier Park will turn on at sunset and turn off at 9 p.m. during sea turtle nesting season.

Beachgoers can also have a positive impact on nesting sea turtles by taking the following precautions:

- Refrain from using fireworks and open fires.
- Remove ruts and sandcastles.
- Flashlights are strongly discouraged as they can harm sea turtles.
- Avoid entering dunes and conservation zones (15 feet seaward of the dune line).
- Refrain from releasing balloons or sky lanterns, as they can fall into the ocean and harm marine life.
- Never approach sea turtles emerging from or returning to the sea. Nesting sea turtles are vulnerable, timid, and can be easily frightened.
- Leave only your footprints at the beach.

Never push an injured animal back into the ocean. If an injured, sick, or deceased sea turtle is located, call the St. Johns County Sheriff’s Office non-emergency dispatch line at (904) 824-8304. For more information, call St. Johns County Habitat Conservation and Beach Management at (904) 209-3740 or visit [www.sjcf.us/hcp](http://www.sjcf.us/hcp).

**Ponte Vedra Women’s Civic Alliance accepting grant applications**

The Ponte Vedra Women’s Civic Alliance (PVWCA) is accepting applications through June 30, 2022 for its \$10,000 grant.

The grant will be awarded to a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization located in St. Johns County or to an organization that serves the Beaches area including Ponte Vedra

Beach, Jacksonville Beach, Neptune Beach and Atlantic Beach.

Visit [www.pvwca.com](http://www.pvwca.com) to request an application and to review the grant guidelines.

**Elder abuse: It’s more than scams**

June 15 is National World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Elder abuse affects one in 10 adults over the age of 60, yet only one in 24 cases are reported to authorities. It’s estimated that up to five million older Americans are abused every year totaling a loss of at least \$36.6 billion.

ElderSource and six other Florida Area Agencies on Aging are presenting “Elder Abuse: It’s More Than Scams,” a free virtual workshop on Wednesday, June 15, from 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. The free workshop features several experts providing information and tips on how to report elder abuse, how to protect yourself against cybercrimes and how to uncover the unsuspecting traps of financial scammers.

The purpose of this workshop is to provide older adults with the information they need to make informed decisions to protect themselves and others against elder abuse. While this silent problem can often rob older adults of their dignity and independence, this workshop will help empower them instead.

The workshop is presented in collaboration with Senior Connection Center, Area Agency on Aging for Southwest Florida, Area Agency on Aging Palm Beach/Treasure Coast Inc., Advantage Aging Solutions, Area Agency on Aging of Broward County Inc., and Area Agency of Pasco-Pinellas Inc.

Visit <https://bit.ly/3rFNSaY> to sign up for the workshop.

**Local home care company changes name**

Nearly nine years after Ponte Vedra Home Care opened its doors to serve the local community, Ponte Vedra Home Care changed its corporate name to Beaches Home Care effective May 10.

Beaches Home Care has specialized in offering solutions to families by providing the highest quality of care for those who wish to age in place, recover in the comfort of their home after surgery, or desire a companion to help aid in loneliness and isolation.

Seth Movsovit, CEO of Beaches Home Care, said that the company had been planning this name change along with other strategy changes.

“We have been honored to provide compassionate care to thousands of Ponte Vedra seniors,” Movsovit said. “This change brings more awareness to the bigger community we serve as our top priority.”

Along with the name change comes an exclusive new proprietary program, Dementia with Love,™ which involves caregivers receiving live training on special dementia techniques to foster better relationships and care, striving for engaging hands-on activity for at least 30 minutes a day, free consultations upon request for families with a dementia practitioner, and the company’s caregiver and senior perfect match method.

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



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# Life

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fishing · entertainment · puzzles

## Get to Know ...

By Tiffany Merlo Phelps  
mail@floridanewsline.com

### Caroline Hughes

When Ponte Vedra High School student Caroline Hughes needed a first period class for her modified senior schedule, she selected a weightlifting class to get stronger for the many sports she plays; however, it was reserved for the football team only. Hughes' first question: "How do I join the football team?" The next day she was on the football field in pads and jumped in as a kicker. With that, Hughes became the first female at Ponte Vedra High to play on the football team. It was a natural fit for Hughes, who had played soccer her whole life and boys' lacrosse in middle school. When she made her first kick and came off the field, all the players hit her helmet and gave her fist bumps as they would with any other player. "The adrenaline rush that overcame me when I made my first kick felt unreal. It was great knowing that not only had I made history at my school, but every single one of my teammates was there cheering for me to do so," said Hughes, who would practice before school and after practice every day. While on the football field kicking and throwing, Hughes caught the eye of the track coach who asked if she had ever thrown a javelin. "I had no idea what that even was," said Hughes. In less than 12 weeks from throwing her first javelin, she took first place in Districts, third place in Regionals and continued onto State. All the while, Hughes maintains a 4.26 GPA, works multiple jobs and belongs to a variety of clubs.

Hughes will head to the United States Naval Academy in the fall where she will be on the school's

#### Get to Know ...

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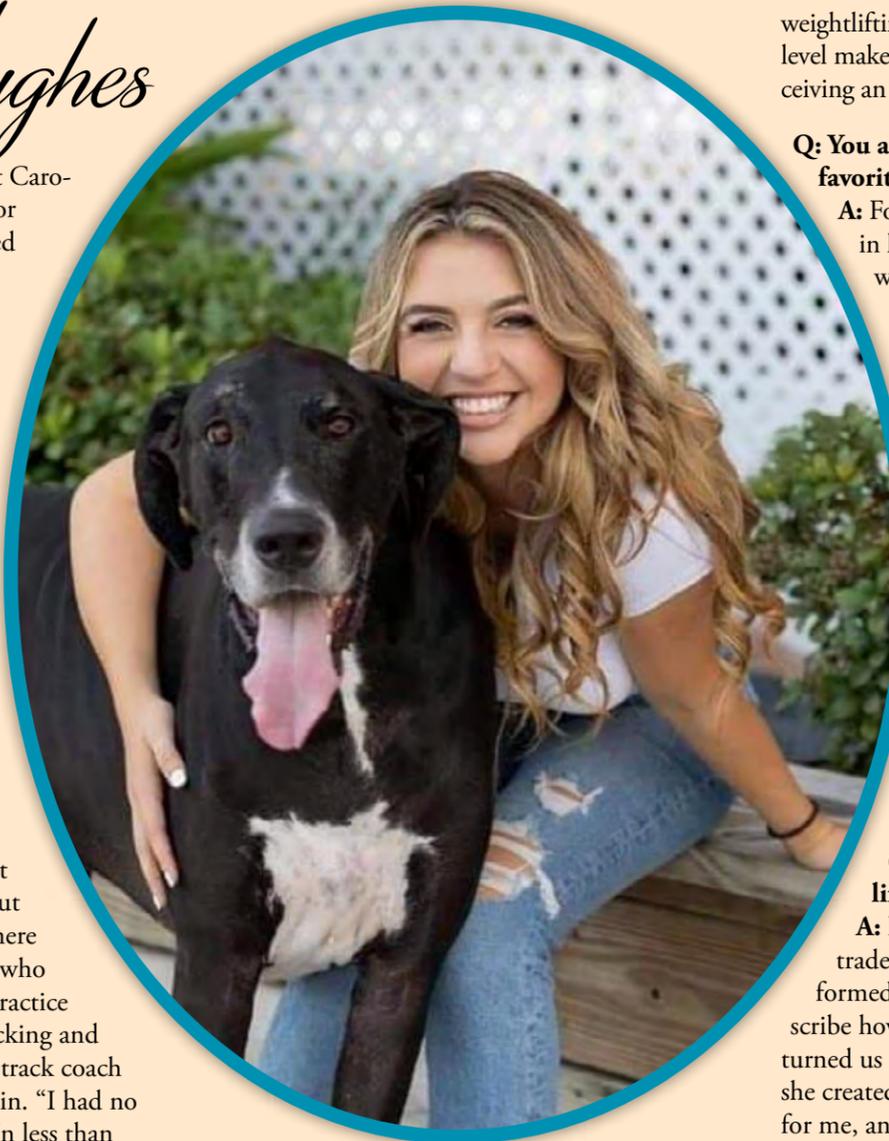


Photo courtesy Karen Hughes  
Caroline Hughes

track and field team for javelin. Her dream job is to become a pilot.

#### Q: Which high school accomplishments stand out the most to you?

A: As far as athletics, the accomplishments that I am most proud of would be qualifying for the State Championship events in three different sports and being the first female to play football at my high school. To make State in one sport is challenging enough, but to have had the opportunity to compete in wrestling,

weightlifting, and track at the State Championship level makes me so proud. Academically, it would be receiving an official appointment to the Naval Academy.

#### Q: You are a five-sport athlete. Do you have a favorite sport?

A: For each sport I do, there's also a reason I fell in love with it. I loved football because of the way the boys took me under their wing and treated me like another guy on the team. I loved track because it pushed me out of my comfort zone. I loved wrestling for the work and practice it took. I loved soccer because it was one of the only sports I've stuck with my entire childhood; however, in the end, I will always favor weightlifting. I love weightlifting because of my girls, my coach, the screaming at every meet, the energy that radiates throughout the platforms (whether you're on the rival team or not), and the fact that you aren't there to beat other people, but rather to become a better version of yourself.

#### Q: What was it like to have your mom (Coach Karen Hughes) as your weightlifting coach?

A: I truly loved the experience, and I wouldn't trade it for anything. She completely transformed my lifting, and I can't even begin to describe how amazing she was as a coach this year. She turned us into a tight-knit family. The environment she created in that weight room is a core memory for me, and I wish it wasn't my time to graduate just yet. She gave me a lot of advice and fixed my form, but at the end of the day I have to thank her for just being my mom. I cannot thank my mom enough for everything she did this season. Not only for me, but for the other 30 plus daughters that now see her as an empowered woman in their lives. Ponte Vedra High went from never having a female lifter make it to state to having five girls qualify this year.

#### Q: What inspires you to work so hard?

A: I have always been a hard working kid. I pretty much took the "middle child" status and ran with it. I don't think I am ever satisfied with where I am, so I keep striving to be better.

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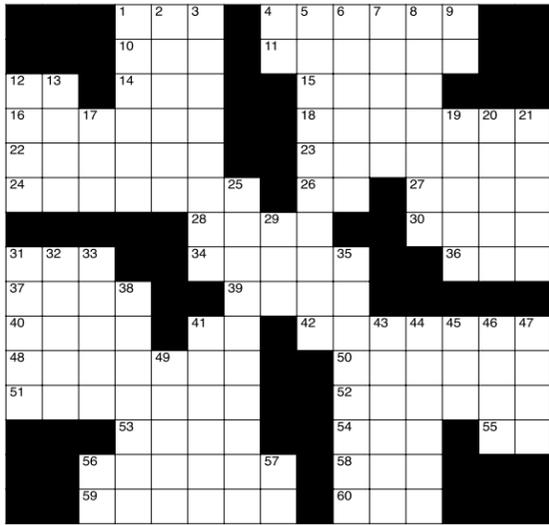
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BEACHES HOME CARE

# Puzzles

Answers on page 3  
Provided by MetroCreative



## CLUES ACROSS

1. Basics
4. In a new way
10. \_\_ Paulo, city
11. Jailhouse
12. Expresses surprise
14. Trigraph
15. A small stream
16. Dissimilar
18. Promote
22. Gives a boost
23. Lawmaker
24. Orthodox Jews
26. Actor Harris
27. Wild cherry
28. Participate in democracy
30. Opposite of begins
31. A Brit's mother
34. Set of moral principles
36. Very fast airplane
37. Czech river
39. Private school in New York
40. Israeli dance
41. Electron volt
42. Adjusting
48. Duct by the bladder
50. Small burger
51. Begin again
52. Unstuck
53. Jai \_\_, sport
54. Get free of
55. For instance
56. Hotel chain
58. A team's best pitcher
59. Extracts from various sources
60. Indefinite period of time

## CLUES DOWN

1. St. Francis of \_\_
2. Supported
3. United in working
4. It cools your home
5. Predicting
6. Irritated
7. Popular talk show host
8. Fabric edge
9. A resource for employees
12. Broadway's Jackman
13. Small water buffalo
17. City of Angels: \_\_ Angeles
19. Asteroids
20. Tailless amphibians
21. German expressionist painter
25. What drives you
29. N. Vietnamese ethnic group
31. Gold coin used in British India
32. Have deep affection for
33. Ponds
35. Breaks between words
38. Hairstyle
41. Print errors
43. Family of iron alloys
44. Sidelined in bed
45. Many couples say it
46. Brazilian hoopster
47. Allman Brothers late frontman
49. German city
56. One hundred grams (abbr.)
57. One billionth of a second (abbr)

## ROLLER COASTER WORD SEARCH

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

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

### WORDS

- ACCELERATION
- AIRTIME
- ASCEND
- BARREL
- BENTS
- BOOMERANG
- BRAKE RUN
- CARS
- CHAIN
- CIRCUIT
- CORKSCREW
- CUTBACK
- ENCLOSED
- ENTHUSIAST
- HEADREST
- INVERSION
- LAPBAR
- LIFT
- LOOP
- PLATFORM
- RESTRAINT
- STEEL
- TRACK
- WOODEN



Solve the code to discover words related to roller coasters.  
Each number corresponds to a letter.  
(Hint: 12 = D)

- A. 12 6 1 16  
Clue: Fall vertically
- B. 9 16 14 14 12  
Clue: Velocity
- C. 17 10 6 25 19 19 9  
Clue: Exciting experiences
- D. 6 25 12 14  
Clue: Amusement structure

# Gardening

## Consider the soil

By Master Gardener Volunteer Lesley ArrandalE  
mail@floridanewslines.com

It's early May and I've been watching the ground become parched. Our rain gauge measures zero for the past week's total, which is miserable enough, but it has been even longer without rain. I've been hand-watering the Simpson's stoppers (*Myrcianthes fragrans*) and Darrow's blueberries (*Vaccinium darrowii*), which were planted less than a year ago. A length of soaker hose around the Shumard oak (*Quercus shumardii*), which has been in the ground a little longer, will give it a long slow drink when needed. Last year's perennial wildflowers are holding their own with just a little help and I'm delighted to see them growing so well, but plants installed this spring need close attention. It's a trade-off between using potable water in a landscape that I've been hoping will be able to survive drought periods and losing precious plants that would be costly to replace.

Some wildflowers that have volunteered unexpectedly in my garden are the sort that probably get overlooked. They have small flowers and delicate foliage but are pretty nonetheless. Blue toadflax (*Linaria canadensis*, [www.flawildflowers.org/flower-friday-linaria-canadensis](http://www.flawildflowers.org/flower-friday-linaria-canadensis)) first caught my eye about 25 years ago, flowering in the grounds of my daughter's primary school. About a foot tall, it covered the field in a haze of lavender blue. About the same time, I found clasping Venus' looking glass (*Triodanis perfoliata*, [www.flawildflowers.org/flower-friday-triodanis-perfoliata](http://www.flawildflowers.org/flower-friday-triodanis-perfoliata)) while browsing in a native plant nursery. It wasn't for sale, but growing quite happily in a small display garden; the owner seemed to think I was a bit sad, for finding it so lovely! Oakleaf fleabane (*Erigeron quercifolius*) is a diminutive member of the aster family that I would also like to see in my yard. Its flowers can be white or lavender, with a yellow center, but the lavender is most appealing. These wildflowers are hosts and nectar sources for insects that we barely notice, but which are all part of a balanced ecosystem.

Drought is a potent reminder to add compost and replenish mulch to enhance the ability of soil to hold water. Adding organic matter also supports the "SFV," or the soil food web. If you're unfamiliar with the term, it refers to myriad organisms that dwell in healthy soils. This article gives a very clear explanation, and I encourage you to check it out: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/ss664>.

During Earth Month I discovered a movie called "Kiss the Ground," about regenerative farming. It was heartening to see how some farmers have employed techniques, including no-till sowing, to turn their businesses around. Back in the '90s, one farmer in the rural heartland suffered catastrophic crop losses for three or four consecutive years and decided things had to change. Now he runs a profitable mixed farm, takes no government subsidies, and has beautiful fertile living soil which enables him to do so. His land is also home to innumerable birds and other wildlife, as well as native plants. No mean feat. The answer is in the soil.

For the homeowner, composting, mulching, leaving fallen leaves in place and grass cuttings on the lawn go a long way to building up soil. But, as with regenerative farming, an important step is to cut way back on chemical use and avoid physically disturbing the soil unnecessarily. Every assault on the soil, which includes pesticide applications, reduces the numbers and the health of soil-dwelling organisms. Bacteria and fungi, as well as the tiny animals living in soil, together make it healthy and supremely able to support healthy plants. And healthy soils keep carbon in the ground — which is an absolute

necessity if we are to rein in rising global temperatures. Rethinking gardening from the soil up is fundamentally what we all need to do.

As always, timely advice is available in "A New Leaf – Yard and Garden": <https://tinyurl.com/2p899u5c>, and the Master Gardener Volunteer newsletter, "The Neighborhood Gardener": <https://tinyurl.com/2p8bmafj>. And there is also the UF/IFAS gardening calendar, <https://tinyurl.com/3fyzv79w>, to keep us moving along.

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**Nutrition Check**

**Celebrating fruits and vegetables**

By Kristen Hicks-Roof PhD, RDN and Caroline Jury BS  
 mail@floridanewsline.com

Let us celebrate National Fruits and Vegetable month by putting the rainbow on our plates.

Both fruits and vegetables are excellent sources of vitamins and minerals, fiber, and even water. Adding produce will make the plate more colorful, add a great taste, and provide additional health benefits. The challenge most individuals have these days is to get themselves and their families to eat these nutrient-dense foods. Here are some tips to encourage them:

1. Be a good example. Both adults and children learn more by observing their caregivers/peers; another person is more likely to eat them if they see you enjoying fruits and vegetables.
2. If you take your child(ren) grocery shopping, let them help you pick one or two vegetables or fruits for the week. This allows them to have shared decision making for meals and snacks that include produce. It may take a bit longer than your usual grocery run, but this will give your child(ren) a new appreciation of these healthy treats.
3. Eating fruits and vegetables for snacks, why not? Some examples include:
  1. Celery sticks, carrots, bell peppers, broccoli, cauliflower, squash slices or peas with natural peanut butter, hummus or a salad dressing of your choice. To add some sweetness, add some raisins in the mix.

2. Fruit slices or whole fruits (apples, bananas, avocado, mango, pineapple, papaya, melon)

4. Provide positive reinforcement by praising your child, friend, and family members when they eat fruit/vegetables, especially if they try something new.

5. Try a new vegetable or fruit every time you go to the grocery store, or you can make it one to two a week. Another option is to visit a non-chain grocery store to see what varieties you may try. Some non-chain grocery stores include international markets (African, Caribbean, Spanish, Asian etc.)

Exploring the different colors of fruits and vegetables is an excellent way to put the rainbow on your plate. It adds color with a bonus of much-needed nutrients like vitamins and minerals to help our bodies be in their best condition, regardless of our age. So what color are you going to try today? You can also visit Florida Medical Association's Healthy Living Toolkit to get more ideas of fruits and vegetable colors and their benefits: [www.flmedical.org/Florida/Florida\\_Public/Docs/Healthy-Living-Toolkit.pdf](http://www.flmedical.org/Florida/Florida_Public/Docs/Healthy-Living-Toolkit.pdf)

*Kristen Hicks-Roof PhD, RDN, LDN, CLC, FAND is an assistant professor in the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Brooks College of Health, University of North Florida.*

**Vicar's Landing** cont. from pg. 1

Scholarships, 36 Member Special Scholarships and 12 Named Scholarships. General Scholarships, Member Special and Named Scholarships have been donated specifically by residents of Vicar's Landing. Employees were eligible for General Awards of \$2,500, plus Special Awards of \$1,000 to \$3,000 for qualified expenses related to colleges, trade schools, English as a Second Language, nursing schools and others. Vicar's Landing departments represented were Dining, Health, Administration, Housekeeping, Wellness and Activities.

Vicar's Landing Boutique, although restricted by Covid to only one public sale, raised more than \$60,000, which was donated to the Scholarship Fund. Many thanks to the committee, co-chaired by Rose Murdock and Ginny Elliot, and members Sue Foley and Yvonne Goldsmith (Art), Sherri Russell (Christmas), Kay Zolezzi (Jewelry), and Sandra Burnaman, Mary Ann



Photo courtesy Carolee Bertisch  
 Griffin Marcy, Persbacker Award

Stone, Jean Cowell, Lyn Cabrera and Ken O'Hara.

Scholarship winners will receive certificates and brochures honoring them.

Briefs cont. from pg. 12

**Newcomers Alumnae has big news**

Newcomers Alumnae, a women's social club that accepts new members throughout the year, will be installing its new slate of officers at the next monthly luncheon on June 1 at Marsh Landing Country Club from 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Newcomers Alumnae will also be unveiling their new name, which was unanimously voted on at the May luncheon.

Marsh Landing Country Club is located at 25655 Marsh Landing Parkway, Ponte Vedra Beach. The luncheon will consist of Chicken Marsala with the chef's choice of sides, warm

rolls and butter, and dessert. The cost to attend the luncheon is \$23 and reservations must be made by contacting bartshar@comcast.net as soon as possible to reserve a seat.

Formed in 1998, Newcomers Alumnae covers Ponte Vedra Beach, Nocatee, Jacksonville, Jacksonville Beach, Atlantic Beach, Neptune Beach, St. Augustine and the surrounding area. Some of the activities offered are adventures and outings, book club, Bunco, canasta, happy hour, lunch out, mah jongg and wine socials. For more information about the club, visit [www.newcomeralumnae.wildapricot.org](http://www.newcomeralumnae.wildapricot.org) or email [brookemeister@msn.com](mailto:brookemeister@msn.com).

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By Scott A. Grant  
mail@floridanewsline.com

## PopHistory

### Remembering the SS Gulfamerica

On April 10, 1942, a US oil tanker, the SS Gulfamerica, was cruising north along the Florida coast on her maiden voyage. She was en route from Port Arthur, Texas to New York City laden with 90,000 barrels of heating oil. She sailed past Jacksonville Beach just before 9:30 p.m. on a Friday night. The beach was lit up like any other Friday night. People were riding the roller coaster, merry go round, and Ferris wheel. Some were dancing on the pier to the music of the Rusty Allen Orchestra.

No doubt, some of the seaman on the merchant ship looked out wistfully to the well-lit beach and imagined they were dancing on the pier or one of the rooftops or just walking down the boardwalk arm-in-arm with a pretty girl. They had no idea they were being hunted. For the past 45 minutes, a German U-Boat, the U-123, had been chasing the ship up the coast. As she drew abreast of the city, the commander of the Nazi submarine, who was already famous in Germany and about to become more so, made a fateful decision. He would launch one of his last torpedoes at a desperate angle in an attempt to bring down the ship in front of the crowded beach.

At the extreme range the torpedo took four minutes to find its target, but when it did it created a huge explosion that rattled windows on shore and could be seen up and down the coast for miles. Everyone ran to the boardwalk to see what had happened. At first, people on shore thought it was an accident of some sort. The idea that a Nazi submarine had come this close to our coast was incomprehensible. Aboard the ship, they knew what had happened and they knew they were sinking. The Gulfamerica listed hard to starboard and began to go down by the stern. The crew began an orderly

effort to abandon ship.

At this point, the commander, Reinhard Hardegen, did something that has created controversy ever since. He took his boat to the landward side of the stricken tanker so that everyone on shore could see the outline of his sub as he shelled the Gulfamerica with his 10.5 cm deck gun a dozen times. Simultaneously, they opened up with their machine gun to take out Gulfamerica's radio antenna so she could not send a distress signal.

What had started as an orderly effort to abandon ship now devolved into utter chaos. Men jumped off the ship into the burning water. Lifeboat No. 2 capsized. Everyone on the ship was in a panic. Many thought the Germans were trying to kill them. On shore, the tourists and locals watched in horror. Rescue efforts would take several hours to make their way out to the sinking ship. Nineteen brave Americans died in the attack.

Eighteen died that night. One survived for more than 30 hours before finally succumbing to his wounds. They say that when they pulled William Glenn Rhodes' burnt and blackened body from the ocean that the skin literally peeled off his arm. Because of wartime security, no one in his family knew he was injured and suffering.

Several years ago, the Daughters of the American Revolution and the City of Jacksonville Beach joined forces to install a memorial honoring those 19 dead American heroes. It is located at Oceanfront Park.

*Scott A. Grant is a local historian and author. By day, he is a fiduciary asset manager with Standfast Asset Mgmt. He welcomes your comments at scottg@standfastic.com.*

## Tunnel To Towers director speaks at Newcomers Alumnae luncheon



Photo courtesy Brooke Freeman

On May 4, 2022, Patty Trousdel, volunteer event director for Tunnel to Towers Foundation, was the guest speaker at the monthly Newcomers Alumnae luncheon held at Marsh Landing Country Club, Ponte Vedra Beach. The mission of the Tunnel to Towers Foundation is to honor the sacrifice of firefighter Stephen Siller who laid down his life to save others on Sept. 11, 2001. They also honor the military and first responders who continue to make the supreme sacrifice of life and limb for our country. In addition to the many programs they offer, they have committed more than \$150 million in support of our nation's greatest heroes and their families. On Sept. 11, 2022, their 5K Run and Walk will be held at the World Golf Village, and serves as an opportunity to bring the community together to honor first responders and military service members. The event raises funds to support their Building for America's Bravest program that builds smart homes for the most catastrophically injured service members returning home. Visit [www.t2t.org](http://www.t2t.org) for more information.

# The Pantry Raiders

## Dad's Day dining he's bound to love

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewsline.com

Father's Day is an opportunity to shower Dad with extra love and attention. Special outings and heartfelt gifts typically are part of the celebration. Some children may want to go above and beyond by whipping up a meal that Dad is sure to enjoy — particularly a father who spends his fair share of time by the stove or in front of the grill.

Individuals may be quick to think steaks or chicken when considering grilled fare, and these foods certainly can be delicious offerings; however, juicy and flavorful lamb also tastes great when cooked on the grill. This recipe for "Lamb Chop Lollipops with Jalapeño Mustard" from "Jon Bonnell's Texas Favorites" (Gibbs Smith) can be eaten by hand right off the bone when tailgating with Dad or served more traditionally at home with the family.

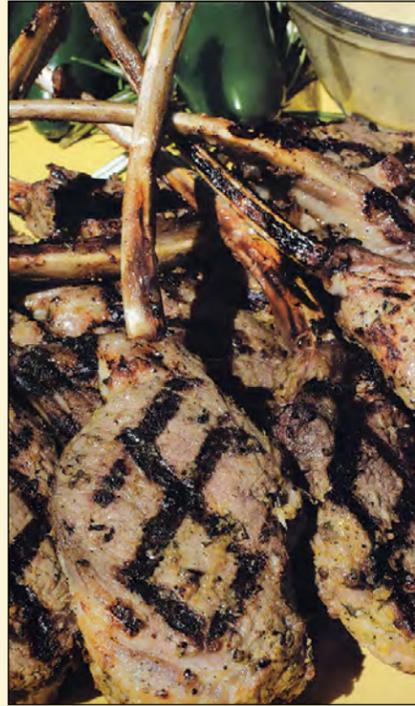
### Lamb Chop Lollipops with Jalapeño Mustard

Serves 6-8

- 2 frenched\* racks of lamb (8 bones each)
- 1 sprig fresh rosemary
- 2 tbsp. Chinese hot mustard
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 ½ tsp. kosher salt
- ½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp. olive oil

### Jalapeño Mustard

- 1 sprig fresh rosemary
- 8 tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 fresh jalapeño, seeded and diced
- Juice of 1 lemon
- \* Frenched refers to meat cut away to expose part of the bone.



Rinse the racks of lamb lightly under cold water. Pat dry with paper towels, then cut into individual chops by cutting between the bones. Strip the rosemary leaves from the stem and chop; discard the stem. Combine the hot mustard with the garlic, salt, pepper, oil, and half of the chopped rosemary. Rub the lamb chops with this mixture and let them marinate in the fridge for 2 hours before grilling. Grill or broil the lamb chops quickly to desired doneness. Serve hot with Jalapeño Mustard as a dipping sauce.

For the Jalapeño Mustard: Strip the rosemary leaves from the stem and chop; discard the stem. Combine the rosemary with the Dijon mustard, jalapeño, and lemon juice.

# Explore the history of salsa

The term "salsa" not only refers to a Latin style of dance, but it also doubles as the name of one of the world's most popular condiments. "Salsa" is the Spanish and Italian word for sauce, and the salsa that many people enjoy can be used as a sauce, topping, dip, or flavoring for many types of foods.

Although salsa has been America's favorite condiment since 2000, its popularity can be traced back thousands of years. The wild tomato, the main component of many salsas, is indigenous to South America; however, Central American nations were some of the first to domesticate the tomato and mix it with other ingredients to produce tasty salsa combinations. It is believed that the salsa we know today originated with the Incan people. Incan lords are purported to have combined tomatoes with chili peppers and ground squash seeds and consumed their salsa primarily as a condiment served on turkey, venison, lobster, and fish. Mayans and Aztecs likely had their interpretations of salsa as well.

Hot peppers were an important component of many salsas, and in the early 20th century, food manufacturers began offering hot sauces in the United States. Some were geared to and named for Louisiana and Creole regions, where spicy foods were the norm and enjoyed regularly.

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# Hear her voice: Finding hope for military women

By Tiffany Merlo Phelps  
mail@floridanewslines.com

When Lynn Geiser left the military in 2004, she found herself homeless, unemployed, and lacking in resources. She fought for years to get healthy and finally reclaim her life.

“I lost my voice, my integrity, but I did not lose my dignity,” said Geiser, who served in the U.S. Army from 1993 – 2004.

She discovered a new purpose — helping other military women find help and, most importantly, hope.

Geiser started the St. Augustine-based not-for-profit organization called Hope 4 Veterans three years ago. The organization assists military women in seven Northeast Florida counties, helping both active and inactive military women, with 250 women served in the last two years.

“We want to give hope to our military women,” said Geiser, Hope 4 Veterans CEO. “We are not a mental health provider. Our goal is to bring women out of isolation, prevent suicide and preserve honor. We connect with our sisters, and then they start to tell us what is really wrong and what they need.”

Hope 4 Veterans serves women through three programs: Peer 2 Peer Sister, Laptop, and Financial Assistance. The Peer 2 Peer Sister Program uses mentors — other military women — to help participants learn about self-care, resources and just being a sister. Refurbished laptops are provided to women veterans in the state of Florida seeking technology for school or business or if they are just isolated from resources. Financial assistance is offered through grocery gift cards in collaboration with food banks along with gas gift cards and utility assistance.



Photos courtesy Lynn Geiser

Hope 4 Veterans sponsors gatherings to support each other.

Geiser said the response she receives from those helped by the assistance is heartwarming and cathartic.

One woman, who wished to remain anonymous, said that Hope 4 Veterans got her family through a very difficult situation.

“The support received not only eased the burden we were facing, but the simple fact of knowing someone was there and happy to help was the greatest gift of all.”

Military veteran Lizajo Montgomery said last November she spent the last of her savings to move herself and her grandchildren to the Jacksonville area. The children had been living with her for about eight months prior to the move. Christmas was nearing, and Montgomery said she needed help with toys and food. She learned about Hope 4 Veterans from her sister, so she

reached out.

“I would have never imagined all the wonderful gifts that were given to the children, including clothing, toys, and shoes. These are things that I could not afford with the move,” said Montgomery. “And the awesome thing about them is that they keep on giving. They email, text, and even call to check on the kids; the support has never stopped.”

Geiser said Hope 4 Veterans will soon start a therapeutic art program that will be offered every two weeks for three months and cooking classes. This will include a meet and greet, wine tastings and art shows.

Upcoming events include the Women’s Veteran Conference on June 4 and a Soldiers Freedom Outdoor event on June 25 for Military Family Day in Melrose from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. This will include outdoor activities such as boat-



Lynn Geiser collecting clothing to bring to military women in need.

ing, skiing, swimming, and kayaking plus games for children and breakout sessions for adults. Everything is free except for horseback riding (\$25 per person) and the optional food truck. Hope 4 Veterans will sponsor the food and drinks for this event.

For more information, contact Geiser at [lgeiser@hope4veterans.org](mailto:lgeiser@hope4veterans.org) or call (920) 471-2119.

*[Author’s note: Geiser said that Hope 4 Veterans is always in need of baby supplies, household goods especially tall dressers, upgradeable laptops and family support/donations at Christmas (sponsor a family). Each year, Hope 4 Veterans puts together a very personalized donation package for each family. Last year, there were five sponsors and 17 families.]*

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# Travel

## Finding Florida's Forgotten Coast

By Debi Lander  
mail@floridanewsline.com

I'm always excited to discover new destinations, especially in my home state. Florida's Forgotten Coast remains a relatively quiet, under-developed region on the southern tip of the Panhandle, below Panama City and Mexico Beaches. "Forgotten" because travelers bypassed the area due to the smelly paper mill. In 1999, the St. Joe mill curtailed operations, the smell disappeared, and the town reinvented itself.

Today, you'll find 244 miles of coastal shores, nearly empty powdery-soft beaches, and many water activities in Gulf County. While the drive from Jacksonville takes about five hours, it's worth the effort. Gulf County makes an ideal place to relax and unwind.

Cape San Blas, located on St. Joseph Peninsula, rests on a 750-acre narrow stretch of land. It extends out from Port St. Joe and curves around St. Joseph Bay. The nine-mile-long state park offers some of the most dramatic sand dunes I've seen — towering about 15-foot high. Follow the path through the dunes on soft, sugar sand to reach the rolling waves of the Gulf of Mexico. The shimmering bay lies on the opposite side of this skinny land strip. Cabins and an RV park are currently being remodeled after the hard-hitting Hurricane Michael in 2018. Surf fishing is another popular option, as are the park's hiking and nature trails.

I stayed in a rental property named



The dunes.

The Grove on Indian Pass, eight miles beyond Port St. Joe. The location allowed both sunrise and sunset views and an easy walk to the beach. The "Old Florida" feel of the place provided a refreshing stay with all the comforts imaginable. The complex made me wish my extended family could join me.

Any beginner kayaker or child will feel safe on the shallow waters of St. Joseph Bay. The bottom is clearly visible, and I spied scallops, whelks, starfish, and a ray among the seagrass. Also, off-road biking trails stretch along the bayfront.

Those interested in horseback riding can trot along the beach during a sunset ride. The horses don't go into the water, but the experience is undoubtedly memorable.

Roasting marshmallows over an open

fire ranks as tradition on many family vacations. As the sun sets, enjoy a beach bonfire without doing any work. Light Up Your Night crew will set up, light the fire, and return for clean-up. S'mores ingredients included!

The 1884 Cape San Blas Lighthouse was moved to Port St. Joe in 2014 due to its precarious position on the peninsula. Climb the 85-foot high metal structure to get some birds-eye views of the coast. While in Port St. Joe, try some fantastic restaurants famous for their local oysters and fresh-caught fish.

I made a short drive to Wewahitchka, a small town with a Seminole name, and took a pontoon boat ride on the Dead Lakes. Thousands of stumps were left in the water when the cypress trees were cut for the paper mill. Naturally, new trees grew around them, resulting in a



Photos courtesy Debi Lander  
Cape San Blas Lighthouse in Port St. Joe.

haunting, mystical scene. Many trees reminded me of overgrown bonsai with artistically arranged branches supporting delicate foliage.

Also in Wewa, as the locals call it, you'll find local tupelo honey. The white tupelo tree's blooms produce the most pleasing taste, and many of those trees grow in the Dead Lakes. Visit an apiary, talk to a beekeeper or watch the liquid gold bottled.

Water is the theme of Gulf County, and it's always close. If you're looking for a beach, fishing, or boating vacation, your desires will be fulfilled.

For info: VisitGulf.com

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



"The staff are wonderful and there are lots of activities. It feels like I am at a resort — the pool is beautiful and big. I am happy I'm here and it's perfect for me."  
- Dorothy



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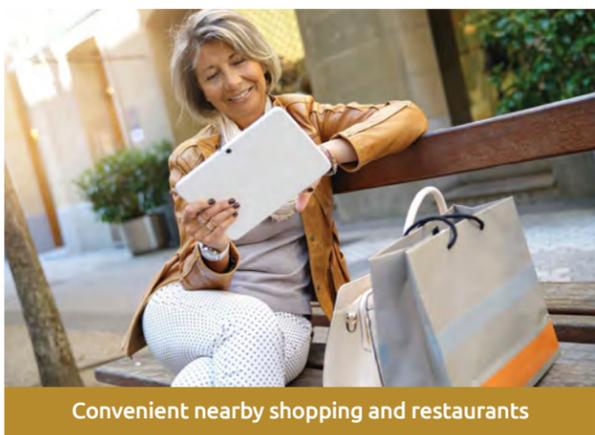
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