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Photo courtesy Mandarin Art Festival

The Mandarin Art Festival will be held Easter weekend, April 8 – 9, at the Mandarin Community Club.

Mandarin Art Festival returns; volunteers needed

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

The clock has started ticking for the spring return of the Mandarin Art Festival! This year the Festival will be held again as a Mandarin Easter weekend tradition on Saturday, April 8 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on Sunday, April 9 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

While always special, this year the host and founding organization, the non-profit Mandarin Community Club, is celebrating its 100th anniversary serving the community. The Festival itself was founded in 1968 and has been a community favorite for decades; it is the largest event within Mandarin.

The Mandarin Art Festival is successful because of its many volunteers and community partners.

Mandarin Art Festival cont. on pg. 9

North Florida Land Trust and the City of Jacksonville have added 4.5 acres to Ferngully Preserve in Mandarin

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

North Florida Land Trust and the City of Jacksonville have purchased and added four-and-a-half acres in danger of development in Mandarin to Ferngully Preserve. North Florida Land Trust helped raise \$62,500 through community donations, and the city then matched the donations to reach the purchase price and acquire the property from the landowner. The land is along Woodside Lane adjacent to the 21-acre Ferngully Preserve, which the city acquired in 2001 through the Preservation Project with

funds from the Better Jacksonville Plan. It is also bordered on the east by property owned by Duval Audubon, which contributed to the fundraising initiative.

“We are thrilled that we could help and are thankful for the community who stepped up to keep this land in its natural state because it is now or never,” said Allison DeFoor, president of North Florida Land Trust. “If this land had been developed, it would have caused significant environmental damage to the area and

North Florida Land Trust cont. on pg. 10



Photo courtesy North Florida Land Trust

Aerial view of Fernquilly Preserve and addition

Third Thursday Lecture: "Recovering and Reclaiming Manhattan Beach"

By Sandy Arpen
mail@floridanewslines.com

In honor of Black History Month, Brittany Cohill, Mandarin resident and instructor of history at Jacksonville University, will present the Third Thursday Lecture on Feb. 16 about the history of Manhattan Beach, Florida's first African American Beach Resort in the segregated South.

With no visible site evidence of this once-vibrant coastal retreat, “Recovering and Reclaiming Manhattan Beach” uses archival sources, oral histories, and a handful of the only known photographs to piece together its timeline (1900 – 1940s). The presentation places the site within the context of Jim Crow segregation while paying special attention to the founding of Manhattan Beach (located at present-day Hanna Park in Jacksonville), the role it played in Jacksonville’s African American community, and the factors that led to its demise.

Brittany will talk about the journey to “reclaiming” Manhattan Beach through the installation and unveiling of a Flori-



Photo courtesy the Eartha M. M. White Collection, Thomas G. Carpenter Library, University of North Florida, Jacksonville, Florida.

da state historical marker. Attendees will also learn of Manhattan Beach's connection to the Mandarin community.

This event is presented by the Mandarin Museum & Historical Society in partnership with and held at the Mandarin Community Club, located at 12447 Mandarin Road. Refreshments begin at 6:30 p.m. with the lecture at 7 p.m.

The lecture is free and all are invited and encouraged to attend. The Mandarin Museum is located at 11964 Mandarin Road in Walter Jones Historical Park. Visit www.mandarinmuseum.net for more information about Mandarin's history and visit www.mandarincommunityclub.org for more information about the Mandarin Community Club.

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The image shows a family of five—two adults and three children—smiling and posing on a set of stone steps outdoors. To their right is a large, black, rectangular outdoor air conditioning unit with the Creeks logo visible. The background features lush greenery and a wooden fence.

"SHE SAVED MY LIFE"

Jacksonville resident Kate M. had been experiencing the painful side effects of Peripheral Neuropathy, "My feet and legs were extremely painful and my doctors told me there was nothing they could do. And that I would have to take Gabapentin for the rest of my life." Then she met Jacksonville's very own Dr. Jann Turpin.

Peripheral Neuropathy is the pain, discomfort and numbness caused by nerve damage of the peripheral nervous system. Kate explained that daily tasks like opening doors and using the bathroom were overwhelmingly painful. "How can you live for the next 30 years when you don't even want to get out of bed to do simple things?"

She was experiencing the burning, numbness, tingling and sharp pains that those suffering with neuropathy often describe. "The way that I would describe it, it's equivalent to walking on glass." Kate hadn't worn socks in five years and was wearing shoes two sizes too big so that nothing would 'touch' her feet.

Unfortunately Kate's story is all too familiar for the over 3 million people in the U.S. suffering from Peripheral Neuropathy.

If you're unfortunate enough to be facing the same disheartening prognosis, you're not sleeping at night because of the burning in your feet. You have difficulty walking, shopping or doing any activity for more than 30 minutes because of the pain. You're struggling with balance and living in fear that you might fall. Your doctor told you to 'just live with the pain' and you're taking medications that aren't working or have uncomfortable side effects.

Fortunately, four months ago Kate read an article about Dr. Jann Turpin and the work she was doing to treat those suffering from Peripheral

Neuropathy, without invasive surgeries or medications

Dr. Turpin, founder of Riverplace Acupuncture Integrative Medicine in Jacksonville, is using the time tested science of Acupuncture and a technology originally developed by NASA that assists in increasing blood flow and expediting recovery and healing to treat this debilitating disease.

"Now when I go to bed at night I don't have those shooting pains. I don't have that burning sensation. I don't have pain coming up my legs," Kate enthusiastically describes life after receiving Dr. Turpin's treatments. "I can wear socks and shoes!"

Kate and her sister now operate a successful dog walking business, sometimes covering up to 5 miles a day.

"It's life altering. As far as I'm concerned Dr. Turpin saved my life!"

Dr. Turpin has been helping the senior community for over 11 years using the most cutting edge and innovative integrative medicine. Specializing in chronic pain cases, specifically those that have been deemed 'hopeless' or 'untreatable', she consistently generates unparalleled results.

What was once a missing link in senior healthcare is now easily accessible to the residents of Jacksonville, Florida.

If you've missed too many tee times because of pain or you've passed on dancing with friends because you're afraid of falling, it's time to call Dr. Turpin and the staff at Riverplace Acupuncture.

It's time you let your golden years BE GOLDEN!

Great news! Dr. Turpin is now accepting new patients again. Unfortunately, she only has room for a limited number of new patients before February 28, 2023 so call (904) 720-8887 now to schedule a consultation.



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BFF Best Furry Friend of the month

Breed:
French Bulldog / Boxer

Favorite Activity:
Playing tug-of-war with her toy and snuggling

Favorite Food:
Dog Cookies

Favorite Friend:
Abby

How did your BFF get her name:
We're not sure, we adopted her and kept her name.



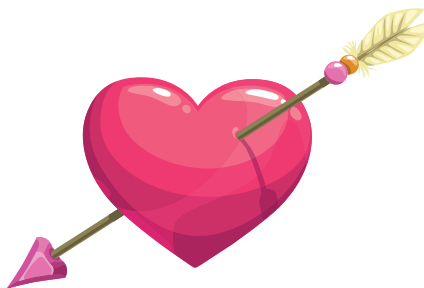
Do you have a cute pet? Send us your pet's picture and the answer to the five questions above before the 10th of the month. Also tell us you saw the BFF contest in Mandarin NewsLine. Your pet could be our BFF of the month and appear in Mandarin NewsLine! Email editor@floridanewsline.com to enter your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



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Happy Valentine's Day!

From your friends at Mandarin NewsLine!

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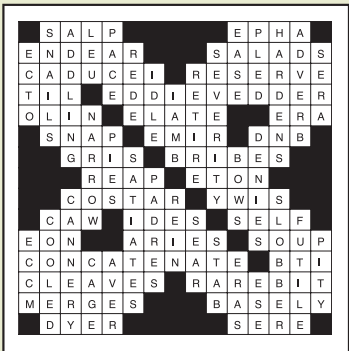
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MYSTERY PHOTO



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

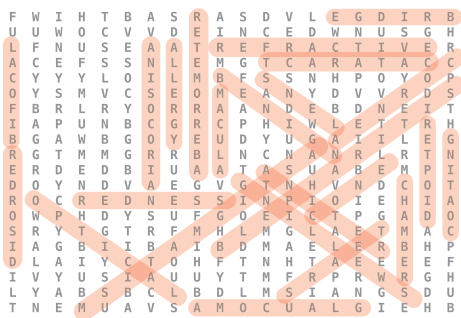
Last month's Mystery Photo was Champion Cycling on San Jose Boulevard.



Answers
Puzzles
PG 10



Answers: A. pancakes B. eggs C. sausage D. toast



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TAX TIP

For 2020 and 2021, the IRS allowed an "above the line" charitable contribution of up to \$600 for married filing joint and \$300 for single. This benefit is gone for the 2022 tax returns. Now, to be able to take any charitable deduction, the taxpayer must be able to itemize. Itemized deductions must exceed the standard deduction which is \$25,900 for married filing joint, \$12,950 for single or married filing separate and \$19,400 for head of household. The standard deduction increases if over 65. If you need assistance with your return, please contact us.

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February

Community Calendar

What's Happening in Mandarin

Shuffleboard is played on Tuesdays at 1:30 p.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.

Toast of Jax Toastmasters meets every Saturday, except on holiday weekends, at 7:30 a.m. at Mandarin Lutheran Church, 11900 San Jose Boulevard. Guests are welcome. The meetings can also be attended online at <https://toastofjax.toastmastersclubs.org/>.

Acoustic Jam Session is held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Kids' Building of Trinity Mandarin, located at 2955 Orange Picker Road. This jam is open to everyone and all levels of ability are welcome. Come to play with the group or just sit back and enjoy the music. For more information, contact Burt Coulliette at (904) 302-0423.

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 Table Cafe, 10391 Old St. Augustine Road. Visit the group's Facebook page (Playing HOOKie) or email playinghookie2022@gmail.com for more information.

4th: The historic buildings of the Mandarin Museum, including the 1875 Webb/Jones farmhouse, 1876 Barn, 1898 St. Joseph's Mission Schoolhouse for African-American Children, and Losco Winery log cabin will be open from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. on Feb. 4 and Feb. 18 in Walter Jones Historical Park, 11964 Mandarin Road. The 1911 Mandarin Store and Post Office will also be open on Feb. 18 from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m at 12471 Mandarin Road, just a mile west of the Walter Jones Historical

Park. This building is on the National Register of Historic Places. Visit www.mandarinmuseum.net or call (904) 268-0784 for more information.

5th: The Under the Oaks community music jam, hosted by the Mandarin Museum & Historical Society and North Florida Folk Network will be held underneath the beautiful trees in front of Mandarin Museum on Sunday, Feb. 5 from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. If you play an acoustic instrument, feel free to join the song circle. If not, just bring a chair and relax and listen. The schoolhouse and gift shop will be open during this time.

6th: Square Dancing is offered every Monday night at 6:30 p.m. at the Mandarin Senior Center, 3848 Hartley Road. The first two sessions are free and then the cost is \$5 per person. Call (904) 255-6750 for more information.

7th: Honeybee Quilters Guild will meet on Tuesday, Feb. 7 at 6:30 p.m. at Mandarin Presbyterian Church in the Loft on the County Dock Road side of the church at 2501 Loretto Road. Annette Paulson will discuss creating Embroidery Cards. Wearing masks is optional. New members/guests welcome. Visit honeybeequilters.org for more information.

8th: Community meeting for a proposed project of approximately 100 townhomes on Livingston Road will be held on Feb. 8 from 6 p.m. – 7 p.m. at the Mandarin Senior Center, 3848 Hartley Road.

11th: Southside Multiple Sclerosis group meets on the second Saturday of each month (this month on Feb. 11) at 2 p.m. at the JCA, 8505 San Jose Blvd. Every other month there is a speaker and on

alternate months there are group discussions on the current situation with our MS. Call group leader Susan Armstron, (904) 396-1082 for more information.

11th: Second Saturday Arts and Farmers Market at First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd. on Feb. 11 from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Visit www.facebook.com/SecondSatMarket/ for more information.

11th: The Southern Genealogist's Exchange Society will meet Saturday, Feb. 11 at 10 a.m. at the Mandarin Library located at 3330 Kori Road. Speaker Joel Warner's presentation will tackle some research problems from four different families. This meeting is free and open to the public. Visit www.sgesjax.org or call (904) 778-1000 for more information.

14th: The Jacksonville Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution will meet in Avondale on Feb. 14 at 11 a.m. Prospective members are welcome to attend. The program is titled "Say it With Fans and Flowers," presented by J. Lenora Bresler, Lakeland Chapter Regent. Contact Jacksonville Chapter Regent Betty Reed at DARJacksonville@gmail.com for more information and to RSVP.

16th: Eating and Growing Local for Good Health will be presented by nutritionist and gardener Diana Openbrier of the Cherokee Rose Circle at the Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Road, on Feb. 16 at 10 a.m.

20th: The All Star Quilters Guild will meet at 9:30 a.m. for socializing prior to the 10 a.m. meeting on Monday, Feb. 20 at the First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd. Georgina Lewis will

present a trunk show. Sew and Tell is always a feature. Guests are welcome. Visit www.allstarquilters.org for more information.


21st: "Surprise Salads" will be presented by retired Extension Agent Tamer Britton at the Mandarin Garden Club on Feb. 21 at 10 a.m.

23rd: Mandarin Women's Club will hold its monthly luncheon at the Ramada Inn, 3130 Hartley Road in Mandarin on Feb. 23. Doors open at 10:30 a.m. and reservations are required. Noah Darmata will be speaking about K9s for Warriors, founded and located in Ponte Vedra. The cost of the luncheon is \$25 and must be received by Feb. 16; to make reservations and obtain payment instructions, contact Susie at spm104@aol.com or (904) 885-8952. Visit www.mandarinwomensclub.com for more information.

23rd: Mandarin Republican Club will meet on Thursday, Feb. 23 at St. Mary's Seafood, 11290 Old St. Augustine Road. Social time begins at 6 p.m. and the meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. First time visitors are welcome.

24th: The Italian American Club of Jacksonville will hold its popular Spaghetti to Go on Friday, Feb. 24 from 5 p.m. – 7 p.m. at the club building, 2838 Westberry Road. Visit www.iacofjacksonville.com or call (904) 586-2700 for more information.


28th: Jacksonville Fine Arts Forum luncheon will be held on Feb. 28 at 11:30 a.m. at the Club Continental 2143 Astor Street in Orange Park. Attendees can meet the artists and view their works. For reservations text Jean at (904) 210-6661. Be sure to include your full name.




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Q&A

with Duval County School Board Member
Lori Hershey, District 7

Q: What information can you share about School Choice applications?

A: We held School Showcase Saturday in early January, a day where interested parents and students could visit both their neighborhood schools and potential schools of choice. If you missed out on this, there is still time and options for research to find the best school for your child for next school year. Be sure to visit <https://dcps.duvalschools.org/Page/32911> for more information about School Choice.

Keep in mind that the deadline to apply for School Choice — including a magnet school or special transfer option — is Feb. 28, 2023.

Q: What research options are still available?

A: The district has a School Choice Hotline, (904) 348-7777, with representatives available to answer questions or assist with the application process Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

We are also offering two virtual Parent Information Sessions in February. The Feb. 2 option is specifically designed for Spanish speaking families and the Feb. 23 session is for all families. Both sessions

are scheduled for 6 p.m. until 7 p.m.; register online at <https://tinyurl.com/e8dz55m8>.

Finally, our 2023 – 24 School Choice Reference Guide is available online at <https://tinyurl.com/3cpzcxhy>. This comprehensive guide contains a list of all schools along with their special programs and offerings. It also includes information about the application process, the lottery, and important dates.

Q: Is it still possible to visit schools of interest?

A: Most schools offer ongoing tours. Parents should call the school they are interested in and inquire and/or make an appointment. I'd like to encourage everyone to also consider visiting their neighborhood school.

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

A: I'd like to congratulate the Mandarin High School boys' soccer team for becoming the Gateway Conference Champions!

Q: How can our readers contact you?

A: They can email me at HersheyL@duvalschools.org or call me at (904) 390-2375.

Q&A

with Jacksonville City Council Member
Michael Boylan, District 6

Q: Do you have an update on the Livingston Road community meeting?

A: The community meeting for this proposed project of more than 100 townhomes will be held on Feb. 8 from 6 p.m. – 7 p.m. at the Mandarin Senior Center, 3848 Hartley Road and I expect there to be a good turnout. The applicant has requested a small-scale land use amendment calling for a medium density residential land use change of 11.49 acres on Livingston Road between Old St. Augustine Road and Pine Acres Road. This meeting will provide an opportunity for residents to hear from the developer and to express their opinions for or against this proposed development.

Q: Have you heard any constituent concerns about this development yet?

A: There appear to be concerns about existing traffic at the intersection of Old St. Augustine Road and Livingston Road. I have also communicated my concern about this issue to the applicant. There are a number of schools in the area that produce traffic backups.

Additionally, I am hearing the general "there is too much development in

Mandarin" remarks. For context, when I checked the residential housing permits filed in Jacksonville in 2022, less than 2 percent of them were in Mandarin ZIP codes 32223 and 32257.

Q: Do you have any Public Works updates?

A: Workers are finishing up the Oak Bluff Bridge as well as much needed sidewalk improvements on Julington Creek Road east of Hood Landing Road.

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

A: The carve-out for the new entranceway to Chick-fil-A on San Jose Boulevard north of Interstate 295 has started construction. This will hopefully minimize the accidents occurring there.

Additionally, I hope Mandarin residents have noticed the landscaping improvements by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) at the San Jose Boulevard and Interstate 295 interchange.

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.

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Tree giveaway aims to keep Mandarin green; volunteers needed

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

The Mandarin Community Club will host its annual Tree Giveaway on Saturday, March 11, from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. This year's tree varieties include Fringe, Eastern Redbud, Dahoon Holly, Riverbirch, Poplar, Live Oak. One tree per household will be allocated.

The Mandarin Community Club launched this giveaway initiative after two years of losses to the tree canopy throughout Mandarin from Hurricanes Matthew and Irma in successive years. It was estimated that thousands of trees were lost based on the staggering amount of tree debris at the collection center off Mandarin Road in 2017, which took many months to collect and disperse.

The Mandarin Community Club's Events Committee needs volunteers to help with the Tree Giveaway. Volunteers are needed for the following duties: unloading (on Friday, March



Photo courtesy Mandarin Community Club
The annual tree giveaway will be held on Saturday, March 11.

10), setup, parking, and cleanup. To sign up, call (904) 268-1622. Volunteers can select their tree prior to the giveaway start time.



Photo courtesy Jacksonville Public Library
The Mandarin libraries are perfect for young readers.

Library Lovers' Day is Feb. 14

By Jeremy Yates
mail@floridanewsline.com

There are many book-related holidays, but the one that's close to our hearts is Feb. 14. That's right, we're talking about Library Lovers' Day, the annual celebration of libraries (and the bookworms who frequent them).

Looking for ways to show your appreciation? Contact one of our Friends Groups and ask to join: jaxpubliclibrary.org/about/friends-groups

Speaking of friends, bring one of yours to the Top Shelf Book Club. The group is discussing "Celestial Bodies" by Jokha Alharthi Saturday, Feb. 4 at 10:30 a.m. at South Mandarin Branch Library.

Want to take advantage of our Digital Library? Learn how to stream free movies and download ebooks, audiobooks and more at 1-on-1 Tech Tutoring at Mandarin Library Tuesday, Feb. 7 from 5 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Do you know a preschooler (aged two to five) with sensory sensitivities? The new Sensory Storytime meets at Mandarin Branch Library Wednesdays at 11 a.m. and combines traditional storytime components with several supportive elements.

Our popular Little Readers

storytime (for ages newborn to five) continues every Friday at the Mandarin Library at 10:15 a.m. and 11 a.m. Or join us for Pop-Up Storytime in the park at South Mandarin Library every Thursday at 10 a.m.

Read with Tenor, our friendly Newfoundland therapy dog at South Mandarin Library Saturday, Feb. 11 at 2:30 p.m. and Wednesday, Feb. 22 at 2:30 p.m. (DCPS early dismissal day).

School age children are encouraged to join us after school at the Mandarin Library for hands-on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)-themed crafts and activities. Junior Scientists (for ages five through eight) meet Wednesdays at 3:30 p.m. Junior Scientists: Engineer Your Adventure Lab (ages nine through 12) continues (through February) on Thursdays at 3:30 p.m.

The South Mandarin Branch will be piloting a new program this month called Homeschool Labs for children (ages 10 – 14) interested in STEM. Join us Fridays at 11 a.m., starting Feb. 3. For the first eight weeks, kids will learn what robots do, how they move and get hands on with some actual robots.

Find more programs and register online at www.jaxpubliclibrary.org/events.

ElderSource Looking for Caring Connections volunteers

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

Duval County resident Carla Furr says she believes in the importance of giving back to her community. It's something that was instilled in her by her mother who believed in the power of good deeds and helping others. After retiring from the computer industry, Furr has spent her time volunteering in different organizations, but found something special with the ElderSource Caring Connections Telephone Reassurance program.

ElderSource's Caring Connections program is an initiative that provides a friendly phone call from a volunteer to an older adult who is living alone, homebound, or wants to receive a friendly call. The program helps to eliminate or reduce some of the concerns homebound older adults face such as isolation, loneliness, depression, and anxiety.

"The calls are not a permanent fix for their loneliness, but it puts that in the background for a while and brightens their day. I can tell for a little while they've been lifted out of their loneliness," Furr said.

The cornerstone of volunteering with Caring Connections is being willing to establish a friendly, caring relationship with older adults over the phone. Volunteers must also have great listening skills, be willing to make

a commitment to call a senior at least once a week for a minimum of six months and pass a background check. Orientation and free training sessions are provided.



Photo courtesy ElderSource
Carla Furr

Now going on her third year with Caring Connections, Furr calls on two different women once a week. The chats with the women vary, but for her it usually is about a two hour a week commitment.

The Caring Connections program is looking for more volunteers. There are currently more than two dozen older adults on the waiting list hoping to connect with a new friend.

An ElderSource staff member learns from each volunteer how many older adults they would like to be matched with and makes introductory calls. Seniors who receive the calls are 65 or older and reside in Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, St. Johns or Volusia County. People interested in becoming an ElderSource Caring Connections volunteer can call (904) 391-6631 or send an email to Volunteers@MyElderSource.org.



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Briefs

St. Johns Riverkeeper launches new recreation website

St. Johns Riverkeeper has launched its new website, exploresthejohns.com. The website is for outdoor enthusiasts and novices alike. Visitors to the site can search various categories such as hiking, kayaking, marinas, dining, places to stay and more, to learn about and plan outings throughout the St. Johns River watershed.

“An important part of our work at St. Johns Riverkeeper is to educate people about the wonders of the St. Johns and introduce them to the many beautiful and special places throughout the river’s watershed,” explained Jimmy Orth, St. Johns Riverkeeper executive director. “The St. Johns is Florida’s longest river and one of the most unique and important waterways in the United States. Our new website is intended to make it easier for the public to get out and explore this national treasure.”

The website serves as a unique space for users to discover places to explore along the 310-mile St. Johns, including the lakes, creeks, tributaries and natural lands that comprise the river’s nearly 9,000 square mile watershed. In addition to parks and outdoor recreation, the site highlights local businesses that are a part of the river community — including waterfront eateries, hotels and fish camps.

The St. Johns Riverkeeper team plans to continue to expand the website.

Visit exploresthejohns.com to find a new

place to launch your kayak or boat, walk and enjoy Florida’s winter weather, or join a guided nature tour along the water.

Family history explored at genealogists’ meeting

The Southern Genealogist’s Exchange (SGES) will host Joel Warner at its meeting on Saturday, Feb. 11, at 10 a.m. at the Mandarin Branch Library, 3330 Kori Road. This presentation tackles some research problems from four different families. During a review of each of these cases, Warner will identify interesting flukes, errors and assumptions, which took researchers down some wrong paths. Attendees will also look at the corrective actions which solved some problems and learn that one of the best tools as family history researchers is healthy skepticism.

“My goal in this presentation is to use real cases to demonstrate how perseverance and luck will often help research solve problems,” Warner said. “Some may take patience as more and more records become available. But there is great satisfaction with connecting yourself to the real lives of the real family members who contributed to what and who you are.”

Warner has had interest in family history since he was a boy, due to his mother and grandparents who did family research and shared stories of how his ancestors came to America, the problems they faced and what was left behind. He finds working with others to help them progress is enriching

and fulfilling.

Warner has lived in Jacksonville for about 30 years, finally landing here after living in California, Utah, Ohio, Indiana, Oklahoma, Maryland, Australia, and England. He is a member of the Jacksonville Genealogy Society and the Southern Genealogy Exchange Society and he has served on the planning committee of the North Florida Genealogy Conference.

News from the Friends of South Mandarin Library

The Friends of South Mandarin meet on the second Thursday of each month at 1 p.m. in the South Mandarin Branch Library. The community is invited to join and learn about all the activities.

The Friends have had wonderful donations from patrons. The Honor Shelf has “gently read” best sellers, beautiful coffee table books, and children’s books. Most things are bargain priced at \$2, with paperbacks and children’s books for \$1. All proceeds help to fund programs at the library.

Currently there is great interest in gaming groups — traditional board games as well as video games are popular. Check with the Library Staff for times.

Live theater returns to Mandarin

Did you know that the Mandarin Community Club was reputedly once the home of the longest running amateur theater group in the country known as the Mandarin Players? The Mandarin Players held regular

performances at the Mandarin Community Club for decades on the stage that was added to the historic building in the 1960s. In celebration of the club’s 100th anniversary, live theater is returning with Act II Players.

“Act II Players is excited to bring their shows to the Mandarin Community Club beginning in March,” said Gavin Turner with Act II. “Established in 2019, Act II Players has been bringing shows and workshops to the Mandarin community and are looking forward to partnering with the Mandarin Community Club to utilize their historic facility starting with “Play On!” in March, directed by Ralin Trosclair. Act II Players wants to continue providing an immersive, fun experience for the theatre community in Mandarin.”

Act II Players was established in 2019 and has brought shows including “Pride and Prejudice,” “Coney Island Christmas,” “The Odd Couple” and more to the stage. The non-profit organization also provides workshops and summer camp opportunities for kids.

“We invite everyone to join us in March for ‘Play On!’,” said Turner. “It’s a fun comedy about a community theatre attempting to put on a play and everything that could go wrong does. Everything from the rehearsals and leading up to the hilarious final act when they perform the actual show with hilarious mishaps at every turn. ‘Play On!’ is a hilarious love letter to community theatre.”

Mandarin Women’s Club welcomes K9s for Warriors

By Gail Packard
mail@floridanewslines.com

Members of the Mandarin Women’s Club will learn more about K9s For Warriors at their monthly luncheon on Thursday, Feb. 23, at the Ramada Inn in Mandarin, 3030 Hartley Road. Noah Darmata will be speaking about this organization founded and located in Ponte Vedra. It exists because of a fierce dedication to saving the lives of both veterans and rescue dogs. Since its inception in 2011, the program has rescued more

than 850 dogs and 440 military service members, with an astounding 99 percent program success rate.

Doors open at 10:30 a.m. and reservations for the luncheon are required. The luncheon cost is \$25 and must be received by Thursday, Feb. 16. To make reservations and obtain payment instructions, call Susie at (904) 885-8952 or email her at spm104@aol.com. Visit www.mandarinwomensclub.com for more information on events, photos, and membership forms.



Last year members of the Mandarin Women's Club toured the K9s For Warriors facility in Ponte Vedra.

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Eagle Scout project yields Flag Collection box



Photo courtesy Mandarin Community Club

Mandarin resident Patrick Setzer has completed his Eagle Scout project with the assistance of his troop — the installation of the Flag Collection box in front of the Mandarin Community Club on Mandarin Road. Setzer said that as a younger member of the scout troop, he attended a Flag Retirement at the Mandarin Community Club and participated in the deconstruction of a flag as the speaker from Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) spoke about the history and meaning of all the parts of the US flag. He attended the Flag Retirement held at the club again in February of this year and decided to pursue the collection box as his Eagle Scout project.



“If I were still in my house I would not be doing half of what I’m doing here. And I’ve never had so many friends in my life.”

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

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Photos courtesy Bolles

Upper and middle school students enjoyed Founders' Day cupcakes.

Bolles celebrates 90 years on Founders' Day

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

Students across all four Bolles campuses gathered for a special convocation on Jan. 5 to celebrate Founders' Day, which commemorates the school's establishment 90 years ago on Jan. 5, 1933.

The convocation featured dynamic videos highlighting Bolles' rich history and the enthusiasm surrounding the school's 90th birthday. The students also shared brief histories of their respective campuses and lower school students recited poems about why they love attending Bolles.

Upon dismissal, faculty and staff distributed bracelets to lower school students that read, "Happy 90th Birthday, Bolles," while upper and middle school students enjoyed delicious Founders' Day cupcakes.



Lower school students received bracelets that read, "Happy 90th Birthday, Bolles."

"Reading Under the Stars" at Crown Point



Photo courtesy Mary Eyler

On Thursday, Dec. 15, Crown Point's leadership events team held its second annual "Reading Under the Stars" event. Crown Point Panthers and their families came out to experience the joy of reading holiday books, construct handmade crafts to go along with the stories, and enjoy a night with the whole community. The event was held outside in the school's courtyard. Pictured are second grader Polina and third grader Jane Borysevych using a cut out of their feet to make reindeer.

travel • pantry raiders • gardening
fishing • entertainment • puzzles

Life

Get to Know ...

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewsline.com

Kurt Lanham

Local musician Kurt Lanham grew up in Lake Worth to parents who weren't musically inclined — but who had a copy of the album “Meet the Beatles,” which Lanham said first piqued his musical interest. When he was 13, his grandmother found a guitar in a pawn shop near where she lived in Kentucky and mailed it to him in Lake Worth. By the time he was a freshman in high school, he had a friend named Todd who had played the guitar for a number of years and Kurt learned a great deal from him. One piece of advice Todd gave him was to take lessons, mostly so that he could learn to read music, which Kurt did. After high school, he attended the Art Institute of Atlanta for its Music Business program. “Basically we learned everything about the music business — finances, copyrights, contracts — things you need to know to be a producer,” Kurt said. He went on to play in multiple bands in Atlanta and Birmingham, Alabama before settling in Jacksonville; he now performs acoustic guitar sets in numerous venues. He and his wife Nola, a nursing administrator, live with their eight-year-old daughter and schnoodle dog named Snoodle in Mandarin.

Q: What was it about “Meet the Beatles” that inspired you?

A: This album really resonated with



Photo courtesy Kurt Lanham
Kurt Lanham and family.

me. I was about 10 years old and we really didn't have a lot of music in our house. But there was something about the harmonies and the vocal performance ... to this day, the Beatles are still my favorite band.

Q: How did you meet your wife, Nola?

A: I was playing solo acoustic gigs in Tallahassee at the time and had friends who came out to see me play. One of them wanted to join me onstage for a duo, which we did. Then I went to this friend's house for card night. I met Nola at a poker table during card night. We were married about two years later.

Q: How did you come to live in Mandarin?

A: We were living in Dothan, Alabama and decided we wanted to move, but weren't sure where. We had a friend in California and a friend in the military

at Mayport. We ended up choosing Jacksonville because the friend from Mayport offered us his apartment, rent free, while he was on a six-month deployment. We fell in love with Jacksonville. Then Nola got a nursing job here and when our friend returned we moved near the Town Center. A year or so after that, we started looking for a house, and it was the right place, right time that we found our perfect home in Mandarin.

Q: How did you come to enter the NASA Songwriting Contest?

A: I had written a bunch of jingles previously, so my mother-in-law sent the information on this contest to me. It was in 2011 for the final space shuttle mission and I wrote a song called “Just Another Day in Space” and sent it in. I finished in fourth place among a few thousand submissions. The winning song was played to wake up the astronauts one morning on their mission.

Q: What type of places do you play and what's your most popular song?

A: I play most Thursday through Sunday evenings. The great thing about Jacksonville is that with our weather, you can play outdoors nearly year round. I play pretty much anywhere there is a patio or deck and room for an acoustic guitar player, such as Mellow Mushroom, Vs Pizza and Top Dog. I play a mix of mostly covers and some original songs. As for most popular song, you can't go wrong with “Brown Eyed Girl,” “Margaritaville,” or “Here Comes the Sun.” The Jacksonville audiences are very kind and courteous and receptive to live music. They are so appreciative and willing to listen ... and I know from experience that not every place is like that.

Mandarin Art Festival cont. from pg. 1

There are volunteer opportunities for students (minimum age 14), as well as a number of interesting volunteering positions for folks over 18 who enjoy being outside and a part of a well-established, well-attended event. Students can earn community service hours by volunteering. Visit www.mandarinartfestival.org for more information or to sign up. The application deadline is March 31.

Always of interest is the Mandarin Art Festival poster. This year, the 2023 poster will feature beautiful one-of-a-kind jewelry pieces created by jewelry artist Jim Biond, who received the Festival's 2022 Best In Show Award. He will be exhibiting again at this year's Festival.

The Mandarin Art Festival combines the artwork of more than 100 professional artisans with the unique festival setting under the oaks of Mandarin and on the grounds of the historic Mandarin Community Club. All the artists selected have gone through a jurying process to determine eligibility, and a few will be chosen by judges for awards in their category.

The Children's Art Show, which proudly displays the work of elementary and middle school students, will once again be a part of the Festival. The Children's Art Show will be judged by well-known artist, Pablo Rivera, who continues to have success in a number of mediums including sculpture, drawing, photography, and watercolor.

“There will also be other enjoyable activities for children throughout the Festival and live musical entertainment over the weekend,” said Susie Scott, Festival chair. “In addition to live music, some very colorful and exuberant authentic Spanish dancing will take place and sample the tasty food choices from a number of food trucks and vendors.”

A \$2 donation per person at the gate is suggested and helps support this event and the nonprofit Mandarin Community Club. Visit mandarinartfestival.org or mandarincommunityclub.org for more information about the upcoming Mandarin Art Festival.

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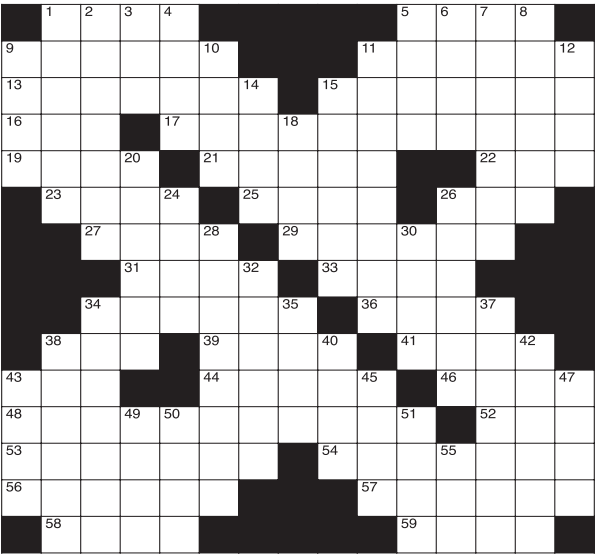
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Puzzles

Answers on page 3
Provided by MetroCreative



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Sea grape
- 5. European public health group (abbr.)
- 9. A way to delight
- 11. Appetizers
- 13. Ancient heralds' wands
- 15. Make a booking
- 16. '___ death do us part
- 17. Pearl Jam frontman
- 19. Spider genus
- 21. Fill with high spirits
- 22. A major division of geological time
- 23. Catch
- 25. An independent ruler or chieftain
- 26. Electronic music style (abbr.)
- 27. Influential Spanish cubist painter
- 29. Illegally persuades
- 31. A way to derive
- 33. British School
- 34. Appear alongside
- 36. Surely (archaic)
- 38. Harsh cry of a crow
- 39. A day in the middle
- 41. Kansas hoops coach Bill
- 43. The longest division of geological time
- 44. The first sign of the zodiac
- 46. Appetizer
- 48. Link together in a chain
- 52. A bacterium
- 53. In a way, forces apart
- 54. Cheese dish
- 56. Combines
- 57. In an inferior way
- 58. Colors clothes
- 59. Dried-up

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Gastropods
- 2. Confusing
- 3. Romanian monetary unit
- 4. The rate at which something proceeds
- 5. A prosperous state of well-being
- 6. Asked for forgiveness
- 7. Makes less soft
- 8. Part of speech
- 9. Outside
- 10. Advice or counsel
- 11. Badness
- 12. Protein-rich liquids
- 14. Not moving
- 15. Call it a career
- 18. Poetry term
- 20. Not wide
- 24. Pastries
- 26. Turns away
- 28. Satisfies
- 30. Gift adornments
- 32. San Diego ballplayers
- 34. Manufacturing plant
- 35. Check or guide
- 37. Dogs do it
- 38. Chilled
- 40. Scorch
- 42. Unproductive of success
- 43. Electronic counter-countermeasures
- 45. Attack with a knife
- 47. Feel bad for
- 49. Enclosure
- 50. Assert
- 51. Geological times
- 55. Midway between east and southeast

VISION CHECK WORD SEARCH

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

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

WORDS

- ABERROMETER
- ALLERGY
- ANISOCORIA
- ASTIGMATISM
- BENIGN
- BIFOCAL
- BLEPHARITIS
- BRIDGE
- CATARACT
- CHAMBER
- COATING
- CONE
- CORNEA
- DIOPTER
- DISORDER
- GLAUCOMA
- LENS
- MACULA
- OPTICAL
- REDNESS
- REFRACTIVE
- RETINA
- SWELLING
- TEARS



Solve the code to discover words related to breakfast time.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 17 = A)

- A. 10 17 18 2 17 16 23 22
Clue: Flapjacks
- B. 23 19 19 22
Clue: From chickens
- C. 22 17 20 22 17 19 23
Clue: Pork product
- D. 7 14 17 22 7
Clue: Heated bread

Did you know?

Cherries are a popular fruit and for good reason. Not only do cherries' blend of sweet-sour flavor entice the taste buds, but cherries also are loaded with essential vitamins and nutrients. Cherries are good sources of fiber and vitamin C.

According to Livestrong.com, Acerola cherries have the most vitamin C of all cherry varieties. A one-cup serving gives you more than 10 times the amount you need in a day. Caution is needed if you eat Acerola cherries and take vitamin C supplements, as kidney stones can arise in such instances. Generally, cherries also are high in potassium, which is needed for nerve function, blood pressure regulation and muscle contraction.

According to Healthline, cherries are full of antioxidant plant compounds, particularly those that offer anti-inflammatory properties. Cherries can help combat oxidative stress, which is a condition that is linked to premature aging and other chronic diseases.

Another benefit to cherries is their effect on sleep. The Cleveland Clinic says that cherries are good sources of melatonin and also contain tryptophan, the hormones involved in sleep regulation. Studies have shown that eating the fruit or drinking tart cherry juice before bed can increase sleep time and overall sleep efficiency.

North Florida Land Trust cont. from pg.1

ruined habitats for endangered wildlife and plant species. This is why we do what we do. We will continue to work hard to protect our natural spaces.”

The four-and-a-half acres are primarily wetlands that help regulate the area’s water flow and prevent flooding. In addition, it serves as a habitat for threatened or endangered wildlife species, including the wood stork and gopher tortoise. It is also home to important endangered

plant habitats.

District 6 City Council Member Michael Boylan, along with City Council Member Matt Carlucci and the city’s assistant general counsel, reached out to North Florida Land Trust and asked the nonprofit land conservation organization to help them with funding to purchase the land and keep it from becoming developed.

“I am so very pleased and proud to learn

of the completion of the purchase of the property that will be added to the Ferngully Preserve,” Boylan said. “Without the willing participation of the North Florida Land Trust in partnership with the city’s Parks and Recreation Department, the administration, and the approval of my colleagues on City Council in supporting the appropriation of the matching funds, it would not have been possible. Another great example of the public and nonprofit sectors working together for the benefit of our citizens.”

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Countdown to 100 Years: A glance at the 1980s

By Emily Lisska
mail@floridanewsline.com

Countdown to the Mandarin Community Club centennial began with a 99th anniversary kick-off in July, recognizing the 1923 date a group of area citizens transitioned from their former World War I role as a Liberty League to a civic organization enhancing Mandarin community life.

By 1980, the organization neared 60 years and its historic building, the old Mandarin School, had long passed the century mark. The club was overwhelmed with new concerns as developments of all sizes — commercial and residential — sprang up in the area. Traffic began to worsen, yet many amenities, such as public high schools and middle schools were non-existent. Wolfson was the nearest public high school, and for middle school students, a trip to duPont was required. Beauclerc and Loretto elementary schools educated Mandarin’s youngest students, but in 1980 Crown Point Elementary was added for Mandarin’s booming baby population.

Carolyn MacDonald served as 1980 club president followed by Mel K. Arthur in 1981, Harry Gillian in 1982 and Jeffrey P. Anderson in 1983. The club continued as home of the Mandarin Players theater group and as a well-baby clinic site. By the end of the decade, the club’s signature project, the Mandarin Art Festival, celebrated 20 years.

Noted Mandarin artist Lucinda

Halsema was elected 1984 president. Mary Ann Southwell, multi-year chair of the growing Mandarin Art Festival, served as president in 1985 and ‘86, and a little more than a decade later she represented Mandarin on the Jacksonville City Council. Jessie Mayberry presided in 1987 and ‘88, when dramatic storms felled majestic trees along Mandarin Road and nearby areas. Tracey L. Arpen, Jr. was elected president in 1989 and again in 1990.

As the decade neared an end, Mandarin, along with other parts of the city, experienced its first White Christmas in recorded history. As snow began to fall on Dec. 23 and again on Dec. 24, the usual holiday preparations and last minute shopping halted, and Mandarin children eagerly played in the unfamiliar snow.

Suddenly, one more gift or another side dish at Christmas dinner took a backseat to the beauty and wonder of the season — not to mention the safety as many Southerners had no idea how to drive in snow. For the first time in the booming ‘80s decade, Mandarin was perfectly still. Most residents were forced to park their cars and enjoy the quiet beauty of the holiday.

Every bridge in Jacksonville was closed except the 1921 Acosta Bridge — now demolished. Even Mandarin’s mammoth Buckman Bridge was silenced as the temperatures dropped to 26 degrees and the precipitation turned to sleet and snow.

Find Your Frugal: Keeping produce fresh

By Stella Canfield, UF/IFAS
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With inflation continuing to rise and the holidays just around the corner, keeping produce fresh is essential to making the most of grocery store trips.

“Learning how to keep produce fresh not only saves money but allows people to minimize food waste,” said Tie Liu, a UF/IFAS assistant professor in the department of horticultural sciences.

Liu shares a few strategies for keeping produce fresh, from selecting it at the grocery store to storing at home:

Inspect your produce. At the grocery store, look for produce that is brightly colored and has other visible signs of freshness, such as crisp leaves and firm feel. With all produce, check everywhere for wilting, decay or damage.

Buy local produce when possible. Check to see where a fruit or vegetable was grown. Produce that travels long distances between farm and retailer is going to be less fresh than produce grown closer to where it’s purchased. If you live in Florida, the “Fresh from Florida” label indicates the produce was grown in the Sunshine State.

Fridge or no fridge? Most vegetables can be

stored in the fridge for a while, including broccoli and squash; however, some tropical and subtropical produce like avocados and pineapples are better left out on the counter. Other produce like strawberries and tomatoes



Vegetables in a fridge door.

should be left out until they’re totally ripe. Produce that is sensitive to cold may become discolored or bruised if put in the fridge. This may cause the produce to lose flavor and wilt, ultimately risking its freshness.

Use your fridge drawers. Using your fridge’s drawers is a great way to separate fruit and vegetables to prevent premature ripening. According to Liu, some kinds of produce release ethylene, a hormone that may cause neighboring produce to ripen, so you want to store produce that produces ethylene away from produce

Keeping produce fresh cont. on pg. 13

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Nutrition Check

Foods that boost your mood

By Kristen Hicks-Roof PhD, RD and Rayonna Hills BS
mail@floridanewsline.com

The month of February is known as the month of love by many. For some, this means receiving and giving love to a spouse or friend, but this can also mean giving love to yourself. It may be hard to believe, but there has been scientific evidence that reveals eating specific foods can have a positive impact on your mood. This is possible due to food being able to promote dopamine and serotonin. (Cleveland Clinic)

Dopamine is a neurotransmitter in your brain that plays a role as a “reward center” in:

- motivation
- movement
- attention
- memory, and more.

Serotonin is a neurotransmitter that plays a key role in body functions such as:

- mood
- sleep
- happiness
- influencing learning

Foods that we consume daily can unlock your body’s natural happiness. Some complex carbs that are important for stabilizing your mood include brown rice, beans, whole grain pasta, oats, and legumes. Another great source of food that is packed with healthy fats and protein that contrib-

ute to healthy brain function and protect against depression are eggs. Other sources include whole grains, red meat, dairy, bananas, green vegetables, and beetroot.

Omega-3 fats are also important for brain function and the communication of dopamine and serotonin. These foods include oily fish such as sardines, salmon, trout, mackerel, and pilchards. Seafood like the fish mentioned above provides zinc to the body, which also is suggested to reduce anger and depression.

When dopamine and serotonin levels are low, you may experience a depressed mood, lack of motivation, fatigue, and difficulty concentrating. (Mayo Clinic) There are many food options that are shown to promote dopamine and serotonin and send positive vibes to the brain. Next time you’re in the mood for a mood booster, give one of these foods a try.

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.

The Pantry Raiders

This hearty meal chases away the chill

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

February may be known as the shortest month of the year, but it also can be among the coldest. When cooking during this time of year, whether it's a family meal or a romantic dinner for two on Valentine's Day, foods that take the cold weather into consideration are the best bets.

Cottage pie is a meal traditionally served in areas of Great Britain and Ireland. The name is sometimes used interchangeably with shepherd's pie, but that's a mistake. While shepherd's pie uses lamb in the recipe, cottage pie contains beef. Cottage pie features a layer of meat and vegetables topped with potatoes. Some people opt for a mashed potato topping, others arrange thin slices of potatoes to look like "shingles" on the cottage. This recipe for "Cottage Pies" from "Real Simple Dinner Tonight: Done" (Time Home Entertainment) from the editors of Real Simple prepares the pies into individual servings. They can be prepared up to two days in advance and then baked straight from the refrigerator as needed.

Cottage Pies

Serves 4

- 1 ½ pounds Yukon gold potatoes (about 3), peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- ½ cup whole milk
- 2 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1/3 cup ketchup
- 1 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 ½ cups frozen peas and carrots

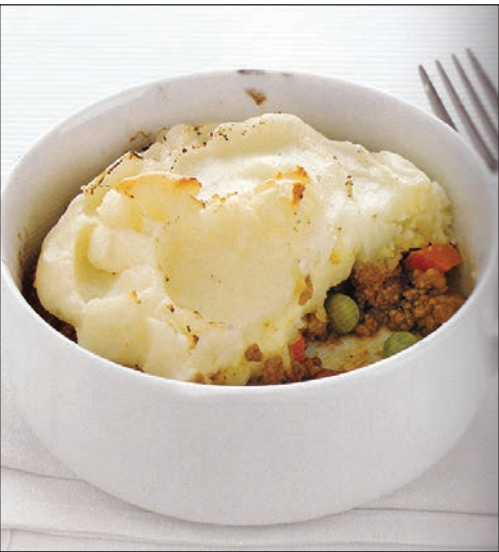


Photo courtesy MetroCreative
Cottage Pies

Heat oven to 425 F. Place the potatoes in a large pot and add enough cold water to cover. Bring to a boil and add 2 teaspoons salt. Reduce heat and simmer until just tender, 15 to 18 minutes. Drain the potatoes and return them to the pot. Add the milk, butter, and 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper and mash to the desired consistency.

Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the beef and cook, breaking it up with a spoon, until no longer pink, 5 to 6 minutes. Stir in the ketchup, Worcestershire sauce, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Fold in the peas and carrots.

Transfer the beef mixture to 4 individual baking dishes and top with the mashed potatoes. Bake until golden brown, 15 to 20 minutes.

Fishing

Jimmy's Fishing Report

By Jimmy Tomazinis
mail@floridanewsline.com

I hope everyone is having a great winter season and staying warm throughout. Other than the three-day cold snap in December, we've continued to have some comfortable weather to fish in. Water temperatures have been trending from 55 to 62 degrees, though I'm sure they dipped lower than that in December. Unfortunately I wasn't able to fish those days.

I heard about and saw some fish that

weren't able to make it through the cold water temperatures including a small tarpon in Doctors Lake. I've seen armored catfish and tilapia floating around Julington Creek. These two species are considered invasive and seasonal cold weather provides much needed relief to limit their encroachment on our native fishes.

Specks continue to be the best bite in

the river and local creeks. Larger fish have still been in the main river but the increasing numbers of quality fish in the creeks seem to be indicating they're coming in preparing to spawn. Many of them already show signs of fattening up with roe. Jigs and minnows are still productive for them around structure and deeper holes.

While I understand that specks are

considered excellent table fare and not necessarily a popular catch and release species, I would like to introduce a little selfish conservation plug. Specks and many other fish can easily be caught in high numbers when spawning or preparing to spawn since they congregate in relatively small areas. Females tend to be the larger fish caught and more often kept because of this. One egg-laden female can produce thousands upon thousands of eggs so the more females we can keep in the water to spawn, the more fish we'll have next year. Specks and all fish are resources we share as anglers. Our actions will affect the quantity and quality of those fisheries.

I haven't caught a shrimp since December and wouldn't expect to luck into any until next month — and with that probably a few more saltwater fish. Sheepshead, redfish, and flounder will start to fill in with them. We'll talk more about that next month. Surf fishing for whiting is still an option for you this month as well as fishing inshore waters like I mentioned in last month's report. Until then, we've almost made it through the cold, so stay warm, stay safe, and tight lines.

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Gardening

Early spring planning

By Master Gardener Volunteer Lesley Arrandale
mail@floridanewsline.com

It's just two weeks into the New Year as I write, and I'm already looking forward to spring. Not because I don't enjoy this quieter time of the year in the garden, but because I am planning what I might plant and enjoy in the coming months.

Some small perennials need repotting and fertilizing if they are to make good sized garden plants this year. A dilute solution of liquid fertilizer every week or two should work. There are volunteers that I might venture to move. I've been slow to sow wildflower seeds, but though the seeds may not be as fertile as they were when fresh, I do expect some small successes. There are a few shrubs to go in before the warmer weather arrives. With the freezes knocking back some of my more tender plants, like Indian shot cannas (*Canna indica*) and firespike (*Odontonema cuspidatum*), it's clear I need to install evergreen shrubs or small trees to screen the neighbors' yards. Possibilities include female yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria*), rusty lyonia (*Lyonia ferruginea*), Simpson's stopper (*Myrcianthes fragrans*), and maybe Walter's viburnum (*Viburnum obovatum*). I have some sabal palms (*Sabal palmetto*) dotted around the yard and these plants could fit in well. I also have some wild coffee shrubs (*Psychotria nervosa*) to add into the mix, but after our recent hard freezes I may keep these in pots as they aren't fully hardy in zone 9. These plants would all supply food and shelter for birds and insects, including butterflies, which is a big consideration, and are suited to our well-draining sandy soil, once established. It only remains to fill in lower layers of a design with plenty of flowers and subshrubs, either native or Florida-Friendly.

For information on these and other trees and shrubs, check out this comprehensive website: <https://tinyurl.com/>

k9vj9xfa. And this is another useful website, specifically for "bee-friendly" plants: <https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/bees/>.

The Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide (<https://tinyurl.com/5pe3hx84>) will be useful in the coming weeks while planning the early spring and summer garden. Our winter garden includes mainly broccoli, collards, red and green heading cabbages, and a few rutabaga (or "swede" to those of us with British roots, no pun intended). It's not too late to start beets, arugula, and lettuce, to name just a few, and not too early to start peas. Check the guide. Tomato growers need time sowing their seed indoors to about six weeks before the last average frost date, which makes that early February.

I was reminded of the importance of wildflowers, while watching two female painted buntings feeding on the seeds of a native red salvia, *Salvia coccinea*, just outside my front door. There are also males around, looking just like miniature parrots, they are so colorful (<https://tinyurl.com/bdzk63vp>). Some native broomsedge grasses (*Andropogon virginicus*) fed a small flock of chipping sparrows just before the freezes. And a dozen or so other species were flocking to my feeders as if they knew exactly what was coming. The robins, harbingers of spring, have returned, but it feels too early. I hope they find the food they need to sustain them before they continue northwards to breed.

As a reminder, the city of Jacksonville has a great tree planting program. If you are a homeowner with property next to a right of way, you can apply to have a tree planted there for free. For more information, visit <https://tinyurl.com/ykcby3u>, and click on 630 CITY Program Guide, where you can find out how the scheme could work for you.

Young gardeners learn about shade gardening



Photo courtesy Juliet Johnson
Master Gardener Juliet Johnson introduced Clara and Camille Kins to shade gardening at the Mandarin Garden Club in January 2023.

Keeping produce fresh cont. from pg. 11

that is sensitive to the hormone. Some examples of ethylene-releasing produce are apples, kiwi, peaches, mangoes, and tomatoes. Some examples of ethylene-sensitive produce include carrots, green beans, cucumbers, spinach, watermelon, and peppers. That said, it's a good rule of thumb to keep your fruits and vegetables separate unless you want something to ripen quickly.

Mitigate moisture. To keep produce fresh, it's important to mitigate as much moisture as possible. When moisture levels are high, fungi and bacteria can easily affect produce. You can tell if your produce is too damp if it shrivels or shrinks. Mold may also be a sign that your produce is too damp. There are a few ways to mitigate mois-

ture. One way is to separate produce into smaller containers. Produce can also be stored in boxes with holes to increase the airflow. Or, produce can be placed in a container with a paper towel to absorb the moisture.

Plan ahead. The easiest way to minimize food waste is to plan what you're going to eat during the week and buy accordingly. Limiting over purchasing can also reduce food waste; however, if you already purchased produce, and it's ripening too quickly for you, consider donating it to a local food bank. Donations not only limit food waste but help feed someone in need. For overripe produce, consider recycling it into compost. Compost takes the nutrients from produce and turns it into nutrient-rich fertilizer, so nothing goes to waste.



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The Adult Day Program at River Garden offers a purposeful, safe environment for seniors who require extra support. Each day features a variety of activities designed to engage clients' physical, social, occupational and intellectual needs. It also provides a worry-free time during the week for caregivers to work, relax or tend to their own needs.



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Travel

Walk Van Gogh’s final days in France

By Debi Lander
mail@floridanewsline.com



Photos courtesy Debi Lander
Beautiful village of Auvers.



Eglise Notre-Dame-de-l'Assomption.

Unless you are a devoted fan of Vincent Van Gogh, you probably haven't heard of Auvers-sur-Oise. The village, located in Normandy, France, near Vernon, rests about an hour's train ride from Paris. The picturesque spot inspired many Impressionist Masters: Van Gogh, Camille Pissarro, and Paul Cézanne. They all variously lived and worked in Auvers-sur-Oise.

My Viking Seine River and Normandy Cruise included an excursion to the small town. Being curious, I signed on. Now, I am so thankful I took the opportunity to visit this town and learn about its history.

Auvers is where Vincent Van Gogh lived the last two months of his life in 1890. The area gave him such a source of creativity that he completed 80 paintings in 70 days.

When my group arrived, I spotted City Hall, called Hotel in Ville in France. The building looked like someone decorated it for Bastille Day with red, white, and blue French flags. As I gazed around, the entire village seemed frozen in time, a 19th-century time capsule.

A guide met my group and began to lead us along. Before strolling down residential cobblestone streets, we passed a few cutesy shops and restaurants. Then, we came upon shuttered homes with lace curtains hanging in the windows



Van Gogh's painting of the church.

and flower boxes in bloom outside.

We traveled along a discreetly marked Van Gogh Trail and stopped at the Eglise Notre-Dame-de-l'Assomption, the church Van Gogh famously painted. The interior seemed somewhat drab, but it held a copy of the well-known painting. I loved comparing the Gothic, 13th-century building to the artwork. In a letter to his sister, Van Gogh described the church saying, "the building appears to be violet-hued against a sky of simple deep blue color, pure cobalt; the stained-glass windows appear as ultramarine blotches, the roof is violet and partly orange. In the foreground, some green plants in bloom, and sand with the pink flow of sunshine in it."



Ivy-covered graves of Vincent Van Gogh and his brother Theo.

The Viking tour group continued up a hill to the town cemetery, where we found the ivy-covered graves of Vincent and his brother Theo. Mystery surrounds Vincent's death, but the prevailing thought is suicide since he suffered from mental problems. He was supposed to be under a doctor's care. History says he shot himself in the fields and made it back to his room in the auberge (a French inn that provides meals). His brother was called and came from Paris. Vincent died soon afterward. Theo wanted to organize a funeral in the church at Auvers, but the priest refused as Vincent was protestant and committed suicide.

As the tour left the graveyard, we noted the fields that inspired another Van Gogh masterpiece: The Wheatfield and Crows.

We proceeded on to Auberge Ravoux,


the artist's final home. Only two or three people at a time could enter his tiny, dingy, rented attic bedroom. It was barely large enough to fit a small cot and seemed filled with an aura of sadness. Hard to think of such a colorful artist living in cramped and drab quarters.

The tour at Auberge Ravoux also included an excellent video/slideshow of his art from the region. After seeing the area, I found it easy to imagine the scenes through the artist's eyes.

The way Vincent died doesn't truly matter; what matters is that the world lost the creative genius who gave us "Starry Night" and "Sunflowers." Vincent was only 37 years old. RIP.

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

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The most popular Valentine's Day gifts

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

Valentine's Day sparks one of the busiest shopping seasons of the year. Though it might not inspire the masses quite like Black Friday, Valentine's Day compels millions of people to find gifts for that special someone in their lives each

February. In fact, the National Retail Federation's Annual 2022 Valentine's Day Spending Survey found that the average person expected to devote \$175 to Valentine's Day spending in 2022. In a survey, the National Retail Federation found that these go-to gifts maintained their status as the most popular

items for individuals to show their love for that special someone:

- Candy: Fifty-six percent of survey respondents indicated they planned to buy candy for their sweetheart on Valentine's Day. Though any candy can suffice, chocolates inside a heart-shaped box tend to be especially popular in mid-February.
- Greeting cards: Greeting cards will likely never go out of style, as 40 percent of respondents indicated they would give a card in 2022.
- Flowers: The appeal of a bouquet is undeniable, prompting 37 percent of

- shoppers to give flowers on Valentine's Day.
- A night out: A romantic night out is perhaps as meaningful as ever in a world still emerging from the pandemic. So it's no surprise that 31 percent of respondents indicated they planned to take their sweethearts out for a night on the town in 2022.
- Jewelry: Though it might rank below the others on this list, jewelry remains a go-to gift on Valentine's Day. And with total Valentine's Day spending on jewelry estimated at more than \$6 billion in 2022, this could be where most Valentine's Day dollars go this February.

4 facts about St. Valentine

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

Saint Valentine is the patron saint of lovers and engaged and married couples. He also is the name behind the holiday that inspires images of red hearts and rose petals in the middle of February. Not much is actually known about St. Valentine because records are sparse; however, these facts have emerged.



he's also the patron saint of epilepsy, watching over those who experience seizures associated with the disease.

- Visitors to the Basilica of Santa Maria in Rome can find the flower-adorned skull of St. Valentine on display. Other parts of St. Valentine's skeleton are on display in the Czech Republic, England, France, and Ireland.

- St. Valentine could be one of at least three individuals who were martyred. In fact, some believe there were about a dozen St. Valentines.
- Of course St. Valentine is known for presiding over lovers; however,

- Some people think Geoffrey Chaucer may have invented Valentine's Day. In his "Parlement of Foules," he speaks of a tradition of courtly love with the celebration of St. Valentine's Day. This association became more established after Chaucer's poem received widespread attention.

Countdown to Valentine's Day with week-long fun

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

Millions of people eagerly await the arrival of the shortest month of the year for the opportunity to show their spouses, girlfriends, boyfriends, companions, and many other special people in their lives how much they are loved. Even though Valentine's Day is just one day a year, that doesn't mean it should be the only time one expresses his or her love for a special someone.

With this in mind, you can count down the days to Valentine's Day with these daily events that precede the day of love.

February 7: Rose Day

Celebrate love with a vase filled with roses. Red symbolizes love, and many other colors represent heartfelt emotions. The flowers will add to home decor and ambiance.

February 8: Proposal Day

Couples ready to tie the knot can use this day as an opportunity to propose. Those already engaged or married can spend Proposal Day celebrating the events that led up to their own engagement or betrothal, and toast how their relationships have evolved.

February 9: Chocolate Day

Lavish a loved one with all the decadent treats they enjoy. These can include

store-purchased chocolates, chocolate fudge sundaes or warm brownies fresh out of the oven.

February 10: Teddy Day

This day can be interpreted in different ways. Couples adding spice to their relationships can celebrate Teddy Day with the lingerie of the same name. Those looking for a more G-rated experience can gift each other with an adorable stuffed bear. Make-your-own stuffed animal retailers at nearby malls are a place to turn for customizable teddy bears.

February 11: Promise Day

Promise Day provides an opportunity to make promises to each other that are specific to couples' relationships. These can include being more patient, traveling more or spending more time together.

February 12: Hug Day

On this day the world celebrates the uplifting and comforting power of hugs, which can be powerful expressions of love.

February 13: Kiss Day

Couples can pucker up and spend a few extra moments showing their affection with some kisses. The lips are quite sensitive to touch, and kissing is one of the more renowned expressions of intimacy.

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