

Mandarin NewsLine

April 2023 Volume 17 Issue 6

A Florida NewsLine Publication



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BFF Best Furry Friend



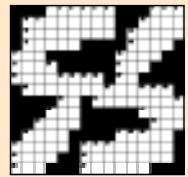
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Q&A with
Lori Hershey



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Get To Know ...
Jack Avery



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Puzzles



Photos courtesy Mandarin Garden Club
Brad and Angie VonDerVellen repair and install
donated greenhouse.

Mandarin Garden Club announces annual Plant Sale

By Juliet Johnson
mail@floridanewsline.com

The Mandarin Garden Club will host its annual Plant Sale on Friday and Saturday, April 28 and 29, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the club, located at 2892 Loretto Road.

Joining the 2023 annual Plant Sale will be the Bonsai Club, the Rose Society, and the Herb Society. Master Gardener Volunteers will be on hand to answer plant questions. The diet-busting café of homemade sweet treats is scheduled, delectable recipes are

Mandarin Garden Club cont. on pg. 9

Easter weekend Mandarin Art Festival to be held under canopy of oaks

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

This year, the Mandarin Community Club is celebrating its 100th anniversary — and as part of the year of celebrations, invites the community to the Mandarin Art Festival on Easter weekend, April 8 and 9, on the grounds of the Mandarin Community Club at 12447 Mandarin Road. The family-friendly event serves as the premier fundraiser of the Mandarin Community Club, a non-profit identified as the oldest civic organization in Jacksonville, with proceeds supporting the club's preservation, education and beautification efforts throughout the Mandarin community.

The Mandarin Art Festival will be open from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. on Saturday, April 8 and from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. on Sunday, April 9. Free parking and shuttle service is available from Albert Field at Orange Picker and Brady roads and at the Mandarin



Photos courtesy Mandarin Art Festival
The Mandarin Art Festival will be held April 8 – 9.

Masonic Lodge on Loretto Road. This is an outdoor, rain or shine event, but no pets are permitted. A \$2 donation per person is requested at the gate.

The largest community event in Mandarin, the Mandarin Art Festival has been an Easter tradition for

generations of families. Over the years, tens of thousands of guests have strolled under the oaks of the historic Mandarin Community Club to peruse the artwork of more than 100 local and nationally-known

Mandarin Art Festival cont. on pg.2

Miss Aggie Day to be held April 15

By Sandy Arpen
mail@floridanewsline.com

The recipient of the 2023 Miss Aggie Award, Susan Ford, will be honored on Miss Aggie Day, which will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, April 15 at the historic 1911 Store and Post Office.

This award is given by the Mandarin Museum & Historical Society annually to a person who has contributed greatly to the community of Mandarin in the areas of business, civic, educational, or charitable accomplishment. It has been given since 2003 in honor of Ms. Agnes Jones, who served as the Postmistress of the Store and Post Office from 1928 – 1964. Residents from that time remember her as a generous and caring woman whose contributions and impact on the community were long lasting.

The 2022 recipient was Yvonne Monroe.

Susan Ford and her husband Todd moved to Mandarin in the early 1980s and became Charter Members when the Mandarin Museum was started and located at the Mandarin Community Club. Ford also was one of the Mandarin Museum & Historical Society team that included her husband Todd Ford, Jim Towart, Carl Davis, and others, who headed up the restoration and opening of the Store and Post Office, through a generous lease agreement (\$1 per year) with the Mandarin Community Club, which owns the building. They literally hammered nails, painted and whatever it took to get that historic building

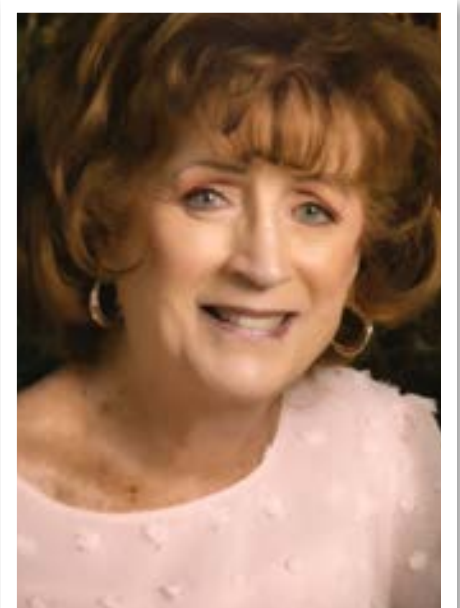


Photo courtesy Olis Garber
Susan Ford.

Miss Aggie cont. on pg.2



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Mandarin Art Festival cont. from pg. 1

artists working in a variety of media. A juried fine art and fine craft show, awards will be given in the categories of Functional Fine Craft, Jewelry, Mixed Media, Painting, Photography, Sculpture and Best in Show.

The Children’s Art Show, a beloved favorite of festival patrons, will display the creations of talented students from area elementary and middle schools. Other features include a Green Market of unique locally sourced and made items, a bake sale with homemade goodies from the kitchens of club members, food vendors providing an array of cuisine and a chance drawing for items contributed by Mandarin area businesses. Live entertainment will be provided and the historic, 100-year-old Post Office

and General Store will be open and manned by the Mandarin Museum and Historical Society so that guests may stroll through its doors and back into history.

Festival chair Susie Scott leads the all-volunteer Mandarin Art Festival planning committee. The festival is made possible, in part, by support from Ackerman Cancer Center and Ackerman Cancer Foundation; Watson Realty Corp. Kathy Akel Realtor; State Farm, Jim Register Agent; Renewal by Andersen; The Bolles School; Hagan Ace; and Hardage-Giddens.

Visit www.mandarinartfestival.org or contact the festival at mandarinartfestival@gmail.com for more information.



The Children’s Art Show is always popular.

Miss Aggie cont. from pg. 1

up and running again — and with a National Register of Historic Places designation in 2001.

Ford became friends with Jean Kennedy Morrow, who was considered Mandarin’s leading historian at the time. That relationship inspired her to learn everything she could about her new community’s history. She started buying books and locating photographs, documents and artwork related to Mandarin, and soon the Fords’ home was filled with these items.

Finally in 2003, after the Mandarin Museum was built in Walter Jones Historical Park, the items were moved to the new museum’s archive room. Not only did she find objects for starting the collection at Mandarin Museum & Historical Society, but she acted as the archivist, diligently recording every single item onto index cards. Later the archive room was dedicated to Susan Ford in

appreciation for her diligence.

In recent years, while a Mandarin Museum & Historical Society board member, Ford decided to approach Arcadia Press about publishing with them, and she began to gather photographs and write text for a book. It took a couple of years, but at the end of 2022, “Images of America: Mandarin” was published. This was a dream of Ford’s for such a long time, and she was finally able to make it a reality.

The Store and Post Office will be open on April 15 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., with the presentation at 11 a.m. Moon Pies and RC Cola will be served. We invite all to come and visit the building at 12471 Mandarin Road and celebrate this year’s worthy recipient.

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 Mandarin Museum & Historical Society information.



Photo courtesy Mandarin Museum & Historical Society
Mandarin Store and Post Office.

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BFF

Best Furry Friend of the month

Meet Riley!



Breed:
Domestic Shorthair

Favorite Activity:
Chasing his brothers and sisters, snuggling, and taking selfies for Facebook.

Favorite Treat:
Cat treats

Favorite Friend:
His older sister Rudi

How did your BFF get their name:
From "The Life of Riley"

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.

Summer Camp
and Activities
Guide
in this issue!
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When you advertise, you encourage repeat business, create traffic, and attract new customers!

Don't miss our May issue, featuring our Summer Camp and Activities Guide again!
Deadline 4/19/23

Call Linda Gay today to reserve your space!
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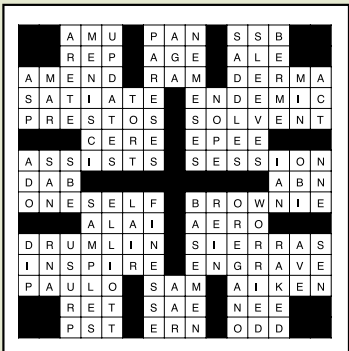
MYSTERY PHOTO

?

?

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

Last month's Mystery Photo was the entrance to the Mandarin Library on Kori Road.

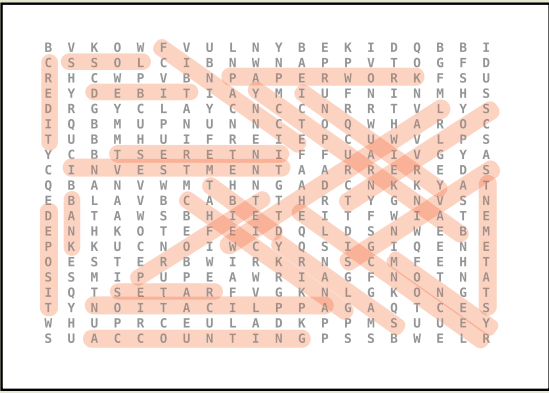


Answers
to our
Puzzles
PG 10

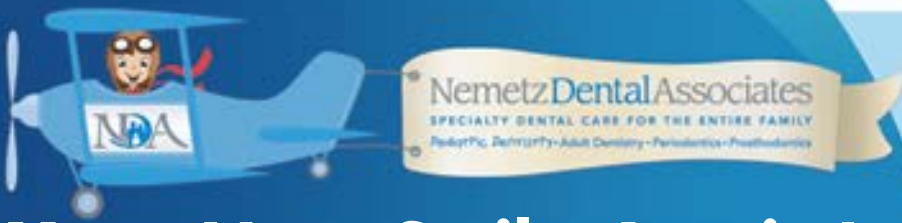
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A. money B. account C. balance D. debit



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April

Community Calendar

What's Happening in Mandarin

Shuffleboard is played on Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. at Mandarin Park. Beginning on Tuesday, April 11, play time will move to 9:30 a.m. for the summer. 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.

1st: 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 April 1 and April 15 in Walter Jones Historical Park, 11964 Mandarin Road. The 1911 Mandarin Store and Post Office will also be open on April 8 and 9 during the Mandarin Art Festival from 11 a.m. – 5 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.

2nd: 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, April 2 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.

3rd: Southside Newcomers Club will host its monthly Monday Breakfast on the first Monday of each month (this month, April 3) at 10 a.m. at iHop, 3250 Hodges Blvd. Ladies who are new to the area, have had a lifestyle change or wish to enlarge their group of friends are invited to attend. Contact sncmembership84@gmail.com or call (904) 683-4170 for more information.

3rd: 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.

4th: Honeybee Quilters Guild will meet on Tuesday, April 4 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. The Tilted Quilters will be demoing at a pop-up shop. Wearing masks is optional. New members/guests welcome. Visit honeybeequilters.org for more information.

8th: Southside Multiple Sclerosis group meets on the second Saturday of each month (this month on April 8) 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.

8th: Second Saturday Arts and Farmers Market at First

Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd. on April 8 from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. This month will feature a Blessing of the Animals; details are on the market and First Christian Church Facebook pages. Visit www.facebook.com/SecondSatMarket/ for more information.

8th: The Southern Genealogist's Exchange Society will meet Saturday, April 8 at 10 a.m. at the Mandarin Branch Library, 3330 Kori Road and online via Zoom. The topic will be a live demonstration and overview of the Family History Guide and how to use it to improve your research. This meeting is free and open to the public. Visit www.sgesjax.org or call (904) 778-1000 for more information and the Zoom link.

8th –9th: Mandarin Art Festival will be held on the grounds of the Mandarin Community Club at 12447 Mandarin Road on Easter weekend, April 8 and 9. This is a juried fine art and fine craft show that features the artwork of more than 100 local and nationally-known artists working in a variety of media. Visit www.mandarinartfestival.org for more information.

15th: "Sew"cial, hosted by Jacksonville Quiltfest and Cinnamon's Quilt Shoppe, will be held on Saturday, April 15 from 1:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. at 4220 Hood Road. The six guilds who host the annual Quiltfest will be on hand to socialize, share information about Quiltfest and their guilds, and provide demos. Visit www.quiltfestjax.com for more information.

15th: Miss Aggie Day presentation will be held at the 1911 Mandarin Store and Post Office, 12471 Mandarin Road, on April 15 at 11 a.m. The 1911 Mandarin Store and Post Office, on the National Register of Historic Places, will be open from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Visit www.mandarinmuseum.net or call (904) 268-0784 for more information.

17th: The All Star Quilters Guild will meet at 9:30 a.m. for socializing prior to the 10 a.m. meeting

on Monday, April 17 at the First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd. Deb Strain will talk about the design process at Moda fabrics. Sew and Tell is always a feature. Guests are welcome. Visit www.allstarquilters.org for more information.

27th: Mandarin Women's Club will hold its monthly luncheon and annual Game Day at the Ramada Inn, 3130 Hartley Road in Mandarin on April 27. Doors open at 9 a.m. and reservations for the luncheon are required. Game Day is for club members only. The cost of the luncheon is \$25 and must be received by April 20; to make reservations and obtain payment instructions, contact Susie at spm104@aol.com or (904) 885-8952. Visit www.mandarinwomensclub.com for more information.

27th: Mandarin Republican Club will meet on Thursday, April 27 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.

28th: The Italian American Club of Jacksonville will hold its popular Spaghetti to Go on Friday, April 28 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 – 29th: Mandarin Garden Club will hold its annual Plant Sale on Friday, April 28 and Saturday, April 29 from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. on both days. A huge variety of low cost, high quality plants and hanging baskets will be offered for sale. Master Gardeners will be available to answer your gardening questions. Cash only is accepted. The event features free parking and admission. The Masons' "Famous" Barbeque lunch will be for sale both days. The Mandarin Garden Club is located at 2892 Loretto Road. Visit mandaringardenclub.org for more information.

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Mandarin Museum & Historical Society welcomes new executive director

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

Mandarin Museum & Historical Society has recently announced the hiring of S. Brittany Cohill as executive director. An experienced nonprofit leader, she assumed responsibilities on March 1.

Cohill attended the University of North Florida where she received her Bachelor of Arts (2014) and Master of Arts (2018) in U.S. History. Cohill is an adjunct professor in Jacksonville University's Department of History, a freelance grant writer, and has previously served in a variety of institutional roles, including operations manager and associate director of the Beaches Museum at Jacksonville Beach. Just recently, she was the curator of the BLACK History|Art|Culture pop-up museum at Jacksonville University's Carl S. Swisher Library in partnership with the College of Arts and Sciences. She and her family are long-time Mandarin residents and she is a member of the Rotary Club of Mandarin.

The Mandarin Museum & Historical Society was founded in 1989 by a group of citizens who wanted to preserve and celebrate the rich heritage and history of the area. Due to important partnerships with the Mandarin Community Club and the City of Jacksonville Parks, Recreation and Community Services, the Mandarin Museum & Historical Society is able to share that history with the community through programs and activities at the 1911 Store and Post Office and within the 10-acre Walter Jones Historical Park, both located on Mandarin Road.

Since 2011, the organization has been operated by the volunteer board of directors. Now, as the Mandarin Mu-



Photo courtesy Mandarin Museum & Historical Society
Brittany Cohill

seum & Historical Society is getting close to opening an expanded and renovated Mandarin Museum building, it is the perfect time to hire a professional executive director to help finish that project and lead the organization into the next chapter of its life. Cohill brings the exact experience, skills, energy and passion that is needed. She will be a great asset to the organization and the Mandarin community.

Cohill looks forward to her new role. "The Mandarin Museum board, staff, and volunteers have accomplished absolutely tremendous things over the years under the leadership of volunteer executive director Sandy Arpen," Cohill said. "I'm so fortunate to inherit their successes. It's an exciting time at the museum, and I'm thrilled to lead the team through this transformational period and into the future."

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 Mandarin Museum & Historical Society information.



with Duval County School Board Member
Lori Hershey, District 7

Q: Do you have an update on the pool to be built at Atlantic Coast High School?

A: The pool at Atlantic Coast High School is currently in the design phase. We anticipate groundbreaking in fall 2023. The current timeline has a build time of about a year, so we anticipate completion in fall 2024.

Q: Are any of the funds from the half penny sales tax being used in District 7?

A: In the pipeline, we have the additional wing at Mandarin High School, which is in the design phase. The project should commence in 2024 and take about two years. We anticipate completion in 2026.

The modernization of Loretto Elementary School is also in the design phase. Parts of the campus will be rebuilt, but the original school building will be preserved. The renovation and rebuild will occur to the later-added buildings. Also, the current portable classrooms will be replaced with permanent classroom space.

Q: What are the updates from two committees that have citizens from District 7 serving on them — the school board's Audit Advisory Committee and the Half Penny Referendum Oversight Committee?

A: Paul Numbers is the District 7 representative on the Audit Advisory

Committee and he is currently serving as chair of the committee. He is a Navy veteran and has a business degree with an emphasis on accounting from the University of North Florida. This committee's goal is to ensure transparency between the district and the community. Also, this Audit Advisory Committee will be responsible for overseeing the dollars brought in by the increased millage. They will oversee that the funds are allocated and spent as defined by the superintendent.

Allison Busutil is the District 7 representative on the Half Penny Referendum Oversight Committee. She has represented our district since 2020 and I just extended her term through December 2024. She grew up in the Duval County Public School system and has an engineering degree from the University of Florida. The Half Penny Oversight Committee oversees the projects and assures that the dollars from the half penny sales tax are spent appropriately. There is a dashboard on the district website that shows the status of each project and the amount of money spent (<https://dcps.duvalschools.org/Page/29838>). One thing that this committee did recently was request that charter schools report to the committee as to how their money is being spent.

Q: How can our readers contact you?

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

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Annual Plant Sale

APRIL 28 & 29,
9AM - 2 PM

Cash & Carry

Plants, Crafts, Baked Goods, BBQ and a kids' table with take-homes

Mandarin Garden Club
2892 Loretto Road, 32223

Jim Blond, Jewelry Artist, Best in Show 2022

2023 MANDARIN ART FESTIVAL

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APRIL 8
Saturday • 10am - 5pm

APRIL 9
Sunday • 10am - 4pm

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Briefs

Mandarin Women's Club hosts popular Game Day

On April 27, the Mandarin Women's Club will hold its annual Game Day at the Ramada Inn in Mandarin. Game Day is one of the club's most anticipated events of the year, and members will choose to play either Bunco or Mexican Train. The Game Day event is for members only and affords members an opportunity to make new friends and maybe take home one of the many cash prizes.

Lunch will be served after game play is finished. Doors open at 9 a.m. and reservations for the luncheon are required. The luncheon cost is \$25 and must be received by Thursday, April 20. 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.

Northeast Florida Sisters in Crime to host presentation by former CIA operative

The Northeast Florida Sisters in Crime will meet on April 1 beginning at 10 a.m. at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library.

Attendees will hear a dynamic presentation by former CIA operative and noted author, Dr. Edward Mickolus, an expert on CIA-related intrigue. Dr. Mickolus served in analytical, operational, management, and staff positions at the CIA for 33 years, where he was the CIA's first full-time analyst on international terrorism; analyzed African political, economic, social, military, and leadership issues; wrote political-psychological assessments of world leaders; and managed collection, counterintelligence, and covert action programs against terrorists, drug traffickers, weapons proliferators, and hostile espionage services.

Intelligence is one of the world's oldest professions, and possibly the most misunderstood. This month's speaker promises to reveal the innermost secrets of his chosen profession. Much of what the public believes it understands about espionage in general and the CIA in particular comes from spy fiction (spy-fi): novels, television series, and movies. Sometimes writers get it right. More often, they do not, to the detriment of the public's understanding of what intelligence officers do for our country.

The Northeast Florida Sisters in Crime welcomes misters and sisters to learn more about writing, promoting, and enjoying crime fiction. Contact floridasistersincrime@gmail.com for more information.

Buyers show love for real estate in February

Closed and pending sales for housing in Northeast Florida increased in February, which is rare at this time of the year. The combined number of single-family homes, condos and townhouses in the region rose almost 26 percent from January to February, demonstrating that the housing market within the six-county area is alive and well, despite low inventory and higher prices.

With an active inventory of 4,811 in February, the number of single family homes in the region inched up a mere 2 percent, but showed a 174 percent increase from a year ago. This represents a 3.4-months' supply of homes, a 20.5 percent decrease from January 2023, but a 277.9 percent increase from February 2022 when there was not even a months' worth of inventory on the market.

The median sales price for single-family homes throughout the region remained at \$360,000, the same as the month before, while the median price per square foot of homes slightly decreased to \$196. This is a sign that a different product mix may be selling in the market as larger homes sell for more money but often at a lower dollar amount per square foot.

As the median sales price of single-family homes stabilized, so did the Home Affordability Index for single-family residences in the six-county region. In February the index again registered at 76. It shows whether a typical family earns enough to qualify for a mortgage on a typical home, based on current interest rates, median income, and median home prices. A higher number means greater affordability. An index value of 100 means that the average family has exactly enough income to qualify for a mortgage.

In Duval County, the February 2023 median price of single-family housing was \$315,000, a slight 2.4 percent increase from January 2023 when it registered \$307,500. The median days on the market in February was 49, a 1 percent increase over January. Month-to-month, closed sales soared 33 percent to 761, pending sales rose 11.4 percent to 938, and new listings increased 13.1 percent to 1,409. Active inventory for the county was a 3-month supply — 2,317 homes, which is an increase of 4.3 percent from January and a 150.8 percent hike from the year before. In February, the home affordability index showed housing was becoming slightly less affordable by registering at 86, a 2.8 percent drop from the month before.

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Email us today! editor@floridanewsline.com



Summer Camp and Activities Guide!



Fun ways to keep kids occupied over summer break

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

Kids look forward to summer vacation every year. The last day of school gives way to less structured days when kids can spend more time outdoors and less time cracking the books. Summer vacation can be a dilemma for parents, especially in households where both parents work full-time. A pandemic-related increase in remote working has made that problem somewhat more manageable, but even parents working from home must find a fun way for kids to stay occupied until the new school year begins. No two kids are the same, so parents may need to try various activities on for size until they find something their children enjoy doing during the lazy days of summer.

• Day camp: Day camps provide much

of the structure of school without all the homework or time spent indoors. Many parks and recreation departments run summer day camps for kids. Camps can be generalized or specialized. For example, some may offer an array of activities, including sports and nature walks, while others may focus on a single activity, like musical lessons or science-based programs. Camps run by local parks and rec departments do not typically last all summer long, which parents should keep in mind when enrolling youngsters.

• Reading: Parents may be surprised by how much their children enjoy a good book. A recent poll from the National Education Association found that 70 percent of middle school students read more than 10 books a year. The National Literacy Trust reports that roughly 45

percent of children between the ages of eight and 11 enjoy reading "very much." When suggesting to children that they read more this summer, parents can note the many ways that reading for pleasure differs from reading for school. Point out that kids won't have to submit book reports and emphasize that they can choose their own books. Depending on children's ages, introduce kids to a series like "Harry Potter," which is a set of seven fantasy novels that has helped millions of young people across the globe discover and develop a fondness for reading. Weekly visits to the library, where kids can pick from hundreds of books, can get youngsters even more excited about reading.

• Play dates: Play dates are a great way to make kids happy and take a little off of parents' daily plates. Arrange routine summer play dates with children's school friends, neighbors and/or cousins. Parents can alternate hosting responsibilities so they can get work done at home and enjoy a break when it's not their turn to host.

• Find something free: Perhaps in recognition of the need for affordable, family-friendly fare, many communities



Photo courtesy MetroCreative
Parents who don't want summer relaxation to turn into boredom can look to various activities to occupy their children's time until a new school year begins.

now host free events for kids and their parents each week. Weekly movie nights under the stars and concerts in community squares are popular in many communities, but those same towns also may host events specifically for kids during the daytime. A simple internet search of "free events near me" may unveil a host of activities that can keep kids happy and occupied on summer days when their schedules are open. Local libraries can be great resources for free events as well.

Advertise your kid-friendly business in our Summer Camp and Activities Guide!



Contact Linda Gay 904-607-5062 or Linda@FloridaNewsLine.com to find out how!

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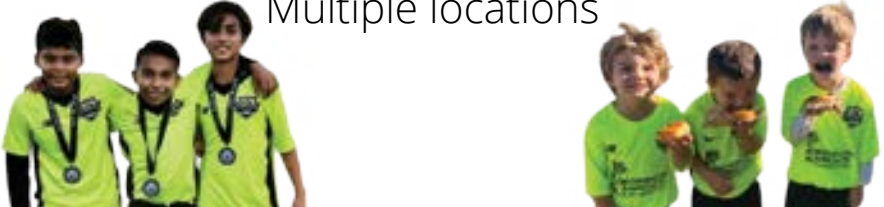


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April events at your Mandarin libraries!

By Jeremy Yates
mail@floridanewsline.com

The Best of Elementary School Art Show is now open at both Mandarin and South Mandarin libraries. The show runs through April 25 and celebrates student artists from nearby Duval County Public Schools.

Are you raising a Junior Artist (ages five through eight)? Join us at South Mandarin Library Tuesdays at 4 p.m. For artists aged nine through 12, there's Junior Artists: Sculpture Lab Wednesdays at 4 p.m.

Are you an artsy adult? Learn how to crochet mini stuffed animals at the South Mandarin Library Saturday, April 8 and April 22 at 3 p.m. They make great gifts. Supplies are limited, but you are welcome to bring your own yarn and hooks if you have them.

New to the Mandarin Library, on Mondays at 3:30 p.m.: STEAM and Stories pairs a hands-on Science, Technology, Engineering Art or Math activity (for ages five through 12) with a themed book.

You can also join us at the Mandarin Library for Junior Scientists (ages five through eight) Wednesdays at 3:30 p.m. Then, on Thursdays at 3:30 p.m. you can train to be a "secret agent" and learn the science of cryptology in Junior Scientists: Spy Lab (ages nine through 12).

For the little ones, 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. and now Mondays at 1:30 p.m. at South Mandarin Library. Pop-Up Storytime will continue in the park at South Mandarin Library every Thursday at 10 a.m., as well.

Do you know a preschooler between the ages of two and five with sensory sensitivities? Help us spread the word about our Sensory Friendly Storytime, meeting Wednesdays at 11 a.m. at Mandarin Library. This is a new program that combines traditional storytime components with supportive elements.

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

Wish there was a library storytime every day of the week? Have you tried our Traveling Tales book bundles and activity kits? They include five to seven books, puppets or other educational manipulatives, songs, games, activities, and a guide so that parents can easily provide quality storytime experiences at home. Get your preschoolers ready to read and ready for school. You can check out up to three at a time; visit <https://jaxpubliclibrary.org/bookbundles> to learn more.

Save the date: The Friends of Mandarin Library Book Sale is back, June 2 – 3 (10 a.m. – 4 p.m. both days). Help your neighbors start their own library at home. To donate gently-used books for the sale, contact tedcenterwall2020@gmail.com.

Jacksonville DAR Chapter brings home the gold

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

The Jacksonville Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) attended the state conference in Orlando in early March. Five chapter officers attended and reported on the achievements of the chapter for the past year. The chapter was acknowledged for their community service and success by being awarded gold status of the Florida State Society, NSDAR Chapter Honor Roll.

The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) was founded on October 11, 1890. One of the four founders, Eugenia Washington, gave focus for the organization by stating, "We want a society founded on service."

The Jacksonville DAR has been involved with community service since it was founded in Jacksonville in 1895. It is the state's oldest DAR chapter. After the Jacksonville fire the Jacksonville Chapter DAR helped fund and provide a much

needed water fountain at the end of Main Street near the ferry. The chapter has also marked many historic sites around the city and has given scholarships to local students.

The Jacksonville Chapter DAR received other awards from the state conference in the areas of lineage research, historic documentation indexing, supporting Constitution Week, outstanding service in historic preservation, supporting schools, awarding scholarships, Americanism, supporting America's women veterans, participating in the American Heritage contest, supporting active duty military, conservation, literacy and women's issues.

Chapter Regent Betty Reed said, "At 128 years old, this organization is thriving in serving the community and we plan to do so for many more years."

Visit www.JacksonvilleDAR.org if you are interested in learning more about how DAR supports and serves the community and/or membership.



Photo courtesy Jacksonville Chapter DAR
Jacksonville Chapter DAR was acknowledged for their community service and success by being awarded gold status

travel • pantry raiders • gardening
fishing • entertainment • puzzles

Get to Know ...

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewsline.com

Jack Avery

Mandarin resident Jack Avery is celebrating his 15th year participating in the Fight For Air Climb, an annual event to support the American Lung Association's mission to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease. During the event, participants climb to the top of the Bank of America tower. Avery said he "climbs for those who can't" and is thankful that he is still able to participate in the event at the spry age of 80. "It's amazing how as you age, it takes longer to get up the stairs," he said in jest, pointing out that his times have ranged from 12:59 minutes his first climb to 22 minutes last year. This year, he is preparing for his 15th climb on March 18 and said that, "God willing," his 16th climb would be after that.



Photo courtesy Jack Avery
Jack Avery

Q: When were you diagnosed with COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)?

A: After the first Fight For Air Climb, I developed a cough that I couldn't get rid of. I went to a pulmonologist for tests and he made the diagnosis and said I had 60 percent lung capacity. My first question to him was, "Can I still climb?" and he said yes, he thought that would be good for me. Two years of practicing and climbing events later, I had 80 percent lung capacity.

Q: What is your training regimen?

A: I'm part of a climbing team and we climb the stairs at the Bank of America tower a couple of nights a week for about three months prior to each annual climb event. In the off season, I go to the gym and always do some work on the stairmaster. It's not quite the same, but it's close.

Q: What is your favorite part of participating in the Fight For Air Climb?

A: I'd say my favorite part is knowing that I can do it! I also like being part of my team; I call them my "Climb Family." Each one of them cares about the Climb and the reason for it. Altogether we have raised \$107,000 in the past 15 years for the American Lung Association, which ranked us No. 14 last year nationally out of 2,500 fundraising teams. What really impresses me about the American Lung Association is that 90 cents of every dollar goes to research and education. The American Lung Association has so many free resources; I encourage everyone to visit lung.org to learn more.

[Editor's Note: Visit climbjax.org for more information about the annual Fight For Air Climb.]

A: She worked in a sandwich shop and I guess I caught her eye. We've been married 50 years as of last December. We have four children, seven grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Q: How did you first get involved in the Fight For Air Climb?

A: A colleague at the bank I worked for found out about it and asked me if I wanted to participate. I thought it sounded like fun. So we went to the first practice at the Bank of America tower (they open up the tower a couple of nights a week in the months prior to the climb for participants to practice). I walked up 20 flights of stairs and said, "I'm done." But we kept practicing. In the four months practicing before the event, I lost 20 pounds and two inches in the waist. I fell in love with stair climbing. I had a bad knee and wore knee braces all the time. On the day of the first climb event, I forgot to put the knee braces on and had to do the climb without them. I haven't worn them since.

Q: How long have you lived in Jacksonville?

A: I say that I've lived here longer than most natives. I was raised in Jacksonville since my father was in the Navy. I went to Bishop Kenny High School and Jacksonville University. I took a brief stint away from the area as I worked as a bank examiner in Belleview, but my wife and I moved back to the area to our home in Mandarin when I worked for American National Bank. I worked for a number of banks, always in Mandarin, and retired as a branch manager.

Q: How did you meet your wife, Maggie?

Get to Know ...

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

Mandarin Garden Club cont. from pg. 1

being shared and the Masons next door plan to offer their BBQ yums, as usual. The Masons are kindly sharing their front lawn for additional parking. Local high school students looking for additional community service hours, are welcomed to load plant hauls into vehicles, among other plant-related activities.

Thanks to the club's newly donated greenhouse, members can now nurture an even greater variety of plants to share. The 10 x 12' greenhouse was generously donated by Jim Robertson of Mandarin. Brad and Angie VonDerVellen took care of the precarious transport and have refurbished the structure with new plexiglass and custom-built shelving. It is an inspiring addition to the nursery, and a soothing place for everyone.

Other recent donations include a set of raised beds from a relocating family, and some unusual native milkweed plants from Live Oak circle member, Sarah Webb. The club's gardens are offering much to see and there will be lush plants for sale at the Plant Sale.



Photos courtesy Mandarin Garden Club

Jan Duncan (Bromeliads), Angie VonDerVellen (Arrangements) Myrna Hedges (Dish Gardens), Linda Cavalho (Nursery and Club VP), Karen Stanley (Rental Agent) and Karen Bridgham (Succulents) with the new greenhouse at Mandarin Garden Club.

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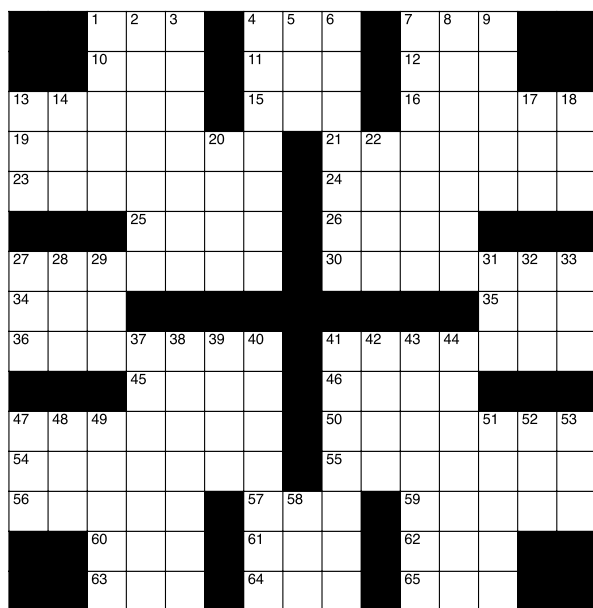
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Answers on page 3
Provided by MetroCreative



CLUES ACROSS

1. Atomic mass unit
4. Criticize mightily
7. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
10. Stand in for
11. Everyone has one
12. Brew
13. Rectify
15. Popular Dodge truck model
16. Beef or chicken intestine
19. Satisfy
21. Of a particular people or localized region
23. Movements in quick tempos
24. Able to pay one's debts
25. Fleshy bird beak covering
26. Dueling sword
27. Helps
30. Court is in it
34. Touch lightly
35. Airborne (abbr.)
36. Of one
41. Baked good
45. Jai __, sport
46. About aviation
47. Low oval mound
50. Rugged mountain ranges
54. Compel to do something
55. A way to carve
56. Sao __, city in Brazil
57. Mustachioed actor Elliott
59. American Idol runner-up Clay
60. A way to soak
61. Car mechanics group
62. Born of
63. Time zone
64. Sea eagle
65. Even's opposite

CLUES DOWN

1. Sharp mountain ridge
2. Thin, fibrous cartilages
3. Provides new details
4. Muscular weaknesses
5. Ottoman military title
6. Banes
7. Horse-riding seats
8. Arms of a shirt
9. Narrow path along a road edge
13. Viper
14. Disfigure
17. Variety of Chinese language
18. Portray in a show
20. Wrongful act
22. No (slang)
27. State of agitation
28. ___ Diego
29. One point east of due south
31. 007's creator
32. The NBA's Toppin
33. Midway between north and northeast
37. Examples
38. ___ Gould, actor
39. The habitat of wild animals
40. Artful subtlety
41. Infielders
42. Keep under control
43. Herb
44. Distressed
47. A way to go down
48. Type of acid
49. Take by force
51. Collected fallen leaves
52. Shout of welcome or farewell
53. Monetary unit
58. Swiss river

MONEY & FINANCE WORD SEARCH

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

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

WORDS

ACCOUNTING
APPLICATION
BANK
BANKRUPTCY
CHECKING
CREDIT
DEBIT
DEBT
DEPOSIT
FINANCE
INQUIRY
INTEREST
INVESTMENT
LOSS
MONEY
PAPERWORK
PROFIT
RATES
RECONCILE
SALARY
SAVINGS
SOLVENT
STATEMENT
WITHDRAWAL



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- A. 18 5 23 12 21**
Clue: Currency
- B. 4 6 6 5 2 23 13**
Clue: Banking relationship
- C. 14 4 22 4 23 6 12**
Clue: Make even
- D. 20 12 14 16 13**
Clue: Payment made or owed

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Math Night held at Crown Point Elementary



Photos courtesy Mary Eyer
Susan Lawson with a group of second graders measuring sharks.

By Mary Eyer
mail@floridanewslines.com

Crown Point Elementary teachers and staff hosted a Family Math Night on Thursday, Feb. 9. The students and their families engaged in a variety of hands-on math games and activities. Students from all grade levels worked on counting numbers, breaking numbers using number bonds, filling hundred charts, and performing a variety of number-based activities.

Second graders enjoyed measuring sharks of various sizes. Third graders played Valentine multiplication bingo, where there were lots of winners. Fourth graders and their parents competed on Kahoot to answer math questions, while fifth graders played fraction golf by making and comparing fractions.



Angela Stephenson with a group of third graders playing Valentine Bingo.

Countdown to 100 Years! A glance at the 1990s

By Emily Lisska
mail@floridanewslines.com

Three months remain in the countdown to the Mandarin Community Club's 100th birthday. The club's centennial celebration 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.

In the 1990s, the Mandarin Community Club reached 70 years and its historic building, the old Mandarin School, turned 120 years old. Mandarin native Tracey Arpen led the decade, serving as president in 1989 and 1990. During his term, long range planning set the club's course and underscored a mission of community service, education and commitment to the club's historic property and area history preservation.

He was followed by George Koury in 1991, who focused on fundraising to help propel the mission. Carl Davis led the club in 1992 with a special interest in establishing a permanent Mandarin history museum facility. Emily Lisska, president in 1993 through 1995, secured a state restoration grant for the club's historic building (the Mandarin School) invigorating building use and creating a renewed revenue source. During her presidency, the club celebrated the 25th Mandarin Art Festival and its

70th birthday. A 1993 parade down Mandarin Road culminated at an all-day "1923 Fair" at the club with silhouette artists, barbershop performers, a native plant sale and roll-back prices for crafts, foods and "paddlewheel" boat rides on the St. Johns.

In August 1993, the Mandarin Community Club, in a determined fundraising effort, purchased the 1911 Mandarin Store and Post Office, immediately adjacent to its property. The structure served as Mandarin's post office for a half century, and later as a newspaper publishing headquarters, an antique shop and rental bungalow. A lease was signed for a dollar a year with the Mandarin Museum for the building's use and maintenance — a relationship that continues today.

Mike Garvin served in 1996 and William H. Jeter, Mandarin native, held two terms, 1997 and 1998. During Jeter's terms, emphasis was placed on continued historic preservation projects, securing state grant funding for the Mandarin Post Office and Store restoration and purchase of the adjoining Billard property on Brady Road. During his term, a 125th edition of Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Palmetto Leaves" was published with a foreword written by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Joan Hedrick.

Sheryl Biermann and Ruth Daniel ended the decade sharing a term. President Daniel also led the club into the year 2000.

Relay for Life returns to NE Florida

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewslines.com

“Lights, Camera, Cure! Take Action Against Cancer” will be the theme of Relay for Life of the First Coast, scheduled for Saturday, April 22, from 4 p.m. – 10 p.m. at Nease High School. Sponsored by the American Cancer Society, Relay for Life’s mission

is to end cancer as we know it, for everyone. The entire community is welcome and encouraged to attend the family-friendly event.

The event will kick off with an opening ceremony and there will be a survivor and caregiver reception with games and activities. Attendees will enjoy

entertainment, food, and fun. The evening will conclude with a beautiful Luminaria Ceremony where loved ones touched by cancer will be honored.

Relay For Life is a volunteer-led experience that unites communities across the world to celebrate cancer survivors, remember loved ones lost to cancer, and raise funds to improve the lives of people with cancer and their families through advocacy, research, and patient support, to ensure everyone has an opportunity to prevent, detect, treat, and survive cancer.

“We share a passion to save lives, celebrate lives, and work to end cancer as we know it — for everyone,” said Becky Kimball. “In 2023, more than 1.9 million new cancer cases will be diagnosed in the United States and more

“We’re partnering with our local Jacksonville Hope Lodge to let our community know how their donations make a difference in the lives of cancer patients and their families by providing a home away from home while receiving life-saving treatments,” Kimball said. “We are asking our supporters to bring canned goods and supplies to Relay For Life to help support our local Hope Lodge.”

Since 1985, Relay For Life has raised \$6.8 billion, allowing the American Cancer Society to invest \$3.1 billion in cancer research, contributing to 3.5 million fewer cancer deaths. Dollars raised each year by more than 250,000 Relay participants across the country help support the American Cancer Society’s mission in countless ways —



Maundy Thursday Service -
Thursday, April 6th, 7:30pm - Sanctuary, Loretto Road Campus

Join us for a unique worship experience that will allow you to connect with Christ's sacrifice in an intimate way. A separate event for kids will be available for kids 1st - 5th grades and nursery will be available for kindergarten or younger. Email wgreer@mandarinpres.com to register your child.

The Sanctuary will remain open for 1 hour following the Maundy Thursday Service. For your safety, deacons will be in the Lobby and can escort you to your car.

Easter Sunday -
Sunday, April 9th

This Easter season we will have the following services available:

Sunrise - 6:30am - Mandarin Cemetery.

Traditional Service - 9:00am with music led by the Sanctuary Choir & Brass.

Contemporary Service - 10:30am with music by the Worship Team.

Nursery and kid's programs are available for Traditional & Contemporary services.

A shuttle service is available from the Loretto Road Campus for the sunrise service beginning at 6:00am and from the Mandarin Road Campus from 8:30 to Noon for the Traditional and Contemporary services.

Visit mandarinpres.com for more information



Office (Mandarin Road Campus): 11844 Mandarin Road, Jacksonville, FL 32223
Church (Loretto Road Campus): 2501 Loretto Road, Jacksonville, FL 32223
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Photos courtesy Becky Kimball
The Color Guard leads the Survivors' Walk.



Survivors' Walk.

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than 600,000 Americans will die from cancer. Being there for anyone impacted by cancer is year-round work, and we're excited to kick-off the Relay season for 2023.”

Relay for Life of the First Coast raised more than \$90,000 for the American Cancer Society’s mission in 2022 and this year’s goal is to raise \$60,000.

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providing education and advocating for the needs of cancer patients and their families and providing essential services throughout their cancer journey.

“On the First Coast, Relayers come together because of a shared passion for ending cancer as we know it. No matter how cancer has impacted your life and how you want to get involved, you have a team here, ready to welcome you,” said Jaclyn Rodriguez, senior development manager of the Southeast Region for the American Cancer Society.

There are many ways to get involved.

- Join a Relay community to connect with survivors, caregivers, and others impacted by cancer in your local community. Visit RelayForLife.org to sign up for Relay and join your community in the fight against cancer.
- Donate: Your donation fuels the American Cancer Society’s fight against cancer. Visit RelayForLife.org/Donate or donate to your own team today.

Visit RelayForLife.org/FirstCoastFL to learn more about Relay For Life.



Jimmy's Fishing Report

By Jimmy Tomazinis
mail@floridanewsline.com

I hope everyone is doing well and enjoying the wonderful weather we've been having. I might break a record for days fished in shorts this year since we got such an early warm up. It's going to be really interesting to see how that affects the fishing the rest of the year.

As for right now the redfish have piled into the river in great numbers, but size might be a little on the small side. They'll grow and larger ones will show up more each day. If you want to throw artificials for them try a rattle trap or your favorite soft plastic jigs. Dark colors with a chartreuse highlight work well. Crab, mullet, and dead shrimp will have you covered on the natural bait side of things.

Stripers are biting around the bridges on fresh dead shrimp. You might also find them around bait schools on calm days. Keep an eye out for birds. They were one of the most consistent bites last year, so we'll see what happens this year.

Sheepshead will be showing up after their exploits near the inlet and offshore. While most people think of sheepshead being a wintertime thing, here our sheepshead fishing in the

river is best April – November and pretty much nonexistent outside of those months. April can be exceptional since the fish can be very hungry after spawning. I caught my biggest sheepshead to date in April which weighed 12 lbs. Fiddlers, clams, and blue crab will entice most of them. You can also catch some giant bream at the same time.

Whiting and pompano are in the surf if you need more of a reason to enjoy a nice day at the beach. Just remember to find the most favorable conditions before staking your claim on the sand. Water clarity is the biggest thing I look for because you can't necessarily walk down the beach to find cleaner water but you can usually hit multiple troughs and bars in one stretch of beach after you find clear water there. Keep moving until you find fish or roll the dice on them finding you.

My gut tells me we're in for some good fishing since everything got an early start, but I'm hoping that doesn't mean we're in for an early end to our warm fishing season. Time will tell, but I'm excited to see where it goes either way. Be safe out there and until next time, tight lines.

Mandarin Community Club membership drive continues



Photo courtesy Mandarin Community Club

New members are always welcome at the Mandarin Community Club, 12447 Mandarin Road. The club now offers enhanced online membership services through their website, www.mandarincommunityclub.org. Various membership levels are offered with annual dues starting at \$35. The Mandarin Community Club will celebrate its 100th anniversary in July, making this an exciting year to be a member.



Nutrition Check

Benefits of Gardening

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

The month of April is recognized as National Gardening Month. Many people think about starting their own garden, but feel that it will be too much maintenance. While it may require maintenance, the result of planting a seed and watching it grow through different stages into its full potential can be very rewarding. In addition to adding nutritious fresh fruits and vegetables to your kitchen, gardening offers a variety of health benefits. To name a few:

- **Healthy Eating:** Having access to freshly grown produce, or “farm-to-table” produce is a great way to have healthier options at your disposal. It is a simple way to get more fruits, vegetables, herbs and spices into your diet. UF IFAS Extension put together a North Florida Gardening Calendar that will help you determine what and when to grow: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/EP451>
- **Vitamin D Exposure:** Vitamin D increases calcium levels and positively affects our bones and our immune system. Exposure to sunlight helps everyone, especially older adults, to achieve adequate amounts of vitamin D.
- **Aerobic Exercise:** Gardening is a form of exercise and all muscle groups are involved. It requires you to move, get your heart pumping, pump your blood quickly throughout your body, and allow your lungs to

take in more oxygen.

- **Reduces Stress:** Studies conducted have shown that people have reported having better moods and blood tests showed lower levels of the stress hormone, cortisol, after gardening.

You can garden from inside or outside, as long as you have the necessary items. If you are interested, all you need is a form of sunlight (window or fluorescent light), potting soil, containers or ground level space, and specific supplies relating to what you decide to grow. If interested, step out of your comfort zone, and start by growing something small. Gardening is good for the mind and body. If you live close to UNF, you can learn more by touring the UNF Ogier Gardens and even participating in volunteering or some workshops. Visit www.unf.edu/recwell/ogiergardens/index.html for more information.

As a Registered Dietitian and mother, I also wrote this simple children's book to encourage parents and children to garden together and try new foods; feel free to check it out: <https://tinyurl.com/2dnstxb>.

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.

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Gardening

Welcome to Spring

By Master Gardener Volunteer Lesley Arrandale
mail@floridanewsline.com

Spring seemed to come early. Just as our clocks changed, we had a little more rain and cooler weather. But as I write, we have a frost warning, which is consistent with our last average frost date.

The Extension Service bimonthly newsletter, A New Leaf – Yard and Garden, is always worth checking for timely tips: <https://tinyurl.com/42rc3axu>. Another good resource, The Neighborhood Gardener, <https://>



Blanket flower

tinyurl.com/yc7bdh4d, also gives access to our educational webinars. They cover a variety of topics which you may find interesting.

In my backyard, there is a large patch of pink shrimp plant (*Justicia brandegeana*) near a firebush top-killed by the freezes, where I regularly see a male ruby-throated hummingbird either feeding on the shrimp flowers or perching on a slender twig. He might be waiting for a potential mate.

If a likely female appears, there is a chance that he will begin his mating “dance.” Swooping up and down again repeatedly, in a pattern specific to the species, he’ll finish by darting back and forth in front of her in short arcs. I’d love to see him in action!

With the early heat and a little rain, some plants are already looking very lush. My dwarf Simpson’s stoppers (*Myricianthes fragrans*) have lots of flower buds on new growth, which should be beautiful, if the cold weather doesn’t damage them. The crossvine (*Bignonia capreolata*), which clambers through a couple of large old beautyberry shrubs, has almost finished its flush of trumpet flowers. Every spring the bees take advantage of its early blooms. Some larger species cannot squeeze into the tubular flowers, and pierce them at the base, robbing the nectar within. It’s the smaller bees and other pollinators which are doing the work.

My native Darrow’s blueberries (*Vaccinium darrowii*) have seen plenty of bee action. Hopefully it will mean a good supply of fruit for the birds, but it also looks like some of their flowers have been robbed.

Also a native, the trumpet honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*), is proving to be happy where I planted it last year, climbing an obelisk. I’ll probably need to prune it quite heavily to prevent it



Photos courtesy Lesley Arrandale
Lanceleaf coreopsis

becoming too heavy for its support, but I like the look so far.

I have some wild phlox (*Phlox drummondii*) blooming too. If you drive out of town at this time of year, you’ve probably seen great swathes of pink and yellow along the roadsides, courtesy of the FDOT. That’s what my husband asked me to try to achieve at the front of our very modest yard! This year just a few phlox are flowering



Phlox

near a clump of lanceleaf coreopsis (*Coreopsis lanceolata*) and some Virginia spiderwort (*Tradescantia ohiensis*). And blanket flowers (*Gaillardia sp.*) are also blooming. Small triumphs, but I do need to establish more plants to make a real show.

As the year unfolds there are always things in the yard to grab my attention and remind me that a garden is not static. I check on my wildflowers and shrubs almost every morning, watching their progress. They produce their buds, flowers, fruits, and seeds, and each stage is a delight. The insects they attract can be “good” or “bad,” but they are all part of the natural world and if there is a semblance of balance I am grateful. I hope you enjoy your labors, wherever your gardening journey takes you.




Trumpet honeysuckle

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"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 April 30, 2023 so call (904) 720-8887 now to schedule a consultation.



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Travel

The Magic of Monarchs

By Debi Lander
mail@floridanewsline.com

Gazing at millions of monarch butterflies fluttering around their remote Mexican winter sanctuaries becomes an incredible dream-like encounter, an adventure I'll never forget.

Monarchs are one of the most recognizable butterflies. Surprisingly, the fragile insects' migration location remained a mystery until 1975. Researchers knew they flew south to Texas and on into Mexico, but exactly where no one knew. A program to tag the monarch's wings led to the previously hidden habitat.

Every fall, as the weather turns cooler and the sun's angle dips, the monarch butterflies start their 2,800 - mile journey from eastern North America to the sanctuaries in Mexico. The monarchs cluster in the oyamel fir forests in the volcanic mountains of Central Mexico, not a place easily accessible.

The late summer migrating generation of the monarchs is known as



Beautiful Monarchs.

Methuselah after the biblical man who lived for 987 years. These butterflies live five to eight times as long as their parents and grandparents. They develop flight muscles and store lipids for their hazardous journey to the ideal high mountain habitat. They do not reproduce until the following spring.

Mexico now protects these tiny creatures in the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve. From November to April, the Reserve provides a rare opportunity to immerse yourself in the monarch's world.

My journey with Craftours started in Mexico City and involved a multi-hour drive up switch-backed mountain roads to an altitude of around 7,000 feet.

Upon arrival at the sanctuary, I climbed on a horse and let him do the huffing and puffing up the steep incline. Very fit men lead the tethered horses up and down the trail. The approximate 15-minute ride follows a path into the canopy of oyamel trees that only grow at very high altitudes. Then, a required sanctuary guide leads the way to the best viewing spots, possibly hiking another 2,000 feet higher.

If the temperature at this altitude reaches around 60 degrees, listen for the soft fluttering of gossamer wings as thousands of butterflies search for nectar and water. The sight, a popcorn-like explosion, brings some to tears. Others



Photos courtesy Debi Lander
Hiking to see the Monarchs.

ers say they feel they have stepped into a National Geographic documentary. I looked down at the dirt trail and saw shadows dancing like jumping polka dots. I looked up and was mesmerized by the sheer beauty of the mountains in the distance and the colorful flutter-bys (as my toddler son used to call them).

If the temperature drops below 55 degrees or the sky is cloudy or misty, the butterflies cluster together, one on top of another, with tightly closed wings that appear black. High up in the fir trees, the branches bend downward with what resembles a dangling, giant termite nest or a swollen beehive. The butterflies snuggle and remain motionless with the exceptional arrival or departure of one of the species. The butterfly groups blanketing the tree trunks look more like rusty autumn leaves. The overall sight

is mystifying but slightly disappointing compared to witnessing the confetti-like flitting of monarchs on a warm day.

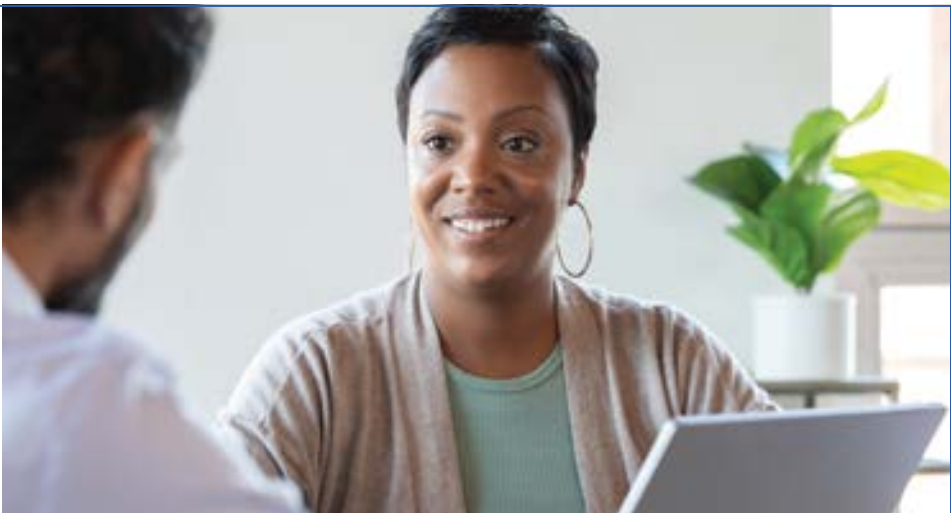
The strenuous climb and guided tour allowed me and others to observe one of nature's most magical sights. Comments overheard on the trail were, "a once-in-a-lifetime-moment, simply stunning, a miracle of wonder, being one with nature, and exhausting but excellent."

Now that I'm home, I long to return for another hour in swirling butterfly heaven.

Craftours: <https://craftours.com/tour/mexico-monarch/>

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

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