

# Ponte Vedra NewsLine

APRIL 2023 Volume 10 Issue 4

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

A Florida NewsLine Publication



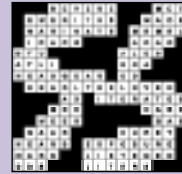
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Photos courtesy Becky Kimball  
Survivors' Walk.

## Relay for Life returns to St. Johns County

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 Lumina 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

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## Sifting the sand: BeBot is ready to clean below the surface

By Tiffany Merlo Phelps  
mail@floridanewslines.com

Keep St. Johns County Beautiful is on a mission to not only keep local beaches clean, but to also educate others to want to do the same.

To that end and in honor of Earth Day this month, three locations in St. Johns County (Mickler’s Beach, Vilano Beach and Crescent Beach), will host a demo by BeBot, the sand sifting, microplastic grabbing robot. BeBot sifts the very surface layer of sand, no more than two inches deep, collecting debris that sometimes goes unnoticed such as cigarette butts, bottle caps, food wrappers, straws and other plastic fragments.

“The beaches might look clean, but once you get past the top level, there are micro plastics underneath,” said Ginger Baker, Keep St. Johns County Beautiful executive director. “We want to use this demo to promote litter prevention, reduce marine debris and underscore sustainability. Basically, we all need to clean up after ourselves.”

BeBot can clean up to 32,000 square feet of beach in an hour, roughly the size of seven basketball courts. About the size of a small golf cart, BeBot runs on a mix of solar and

battery power and operates silently. It is manufactured by Poralu Marine, a world leader in the design and construction of aluminum marinas, and is part of the Searial Cleaners brand.

BeBot, valued at \$68,000, is operated by trained staff using a remote control. Baker said that it is intended to be used by local Florida affiliates such as Keep Florida Beautiful in controlled areas as a way to capture attention and educate the public. BeBot was donated to Keep Florida Beautiful by Surfing’s Evolution and Preservation Foundation, an organization funded by the Endless Summer specialty Florida license plate. Keep St. Johns County Beautiful falls under the umbrella of Keep Florida Beautiful.

Baker said that BeBot is currently on its Florida tour and is not meant to routinely clean beaches or to replace volunteers. Also, she said, BeBot causes no harm to the environment and went through the Department of Environmental Protection permitting process, which ensures there is no disruption to the local



Photos courtesy Ginger Baker

The BeBot demo is open to the public and will take place on Thursday, April 20 from 5 p.m. – 8 p.m. at Mickler’s Beach.

environment and wildlife.

“We plan to have beach clean-ups taking place right alongside the demo,” said Baker. “Often, seeing a demo like this will motivate people to want to clean up as well.”

Monthly clean-ups are planned by Keep St. Johns County Beautiful, and Baker said that roundtable discussions are frequently held with community members to “customize goals for the area.”

Ponte Vedra Beach resident Bob Davenport, also known as “Bucket Bob,” who regularly picks up trash on Mickler’s Beach, has been included in these discussions.

“It truly bothers me to witness the result of apathy towards our treasures — i.e. beaches, green spaces, environment. This is a moral choice to do what’s right for the spaces we occupy at any given time,” said Davenport. “I am most disappointed when I see toys and juice boxes on the beach. Kids knowingly or

Sifting the sand cont. on pg. 2



BeBot sifts the very surface layer of sand collecting debris such as cigarette butts, bottle caps, food wrappers, straws and other plastic fragments.



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**Relay for Life** cont. from pg. 1

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 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. “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



The Color Guard leads the Survivors’ Walk.

participants across the country help support the American Cancer Society’s mission in countless ways — 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](https://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](https://RelayForLife.org/Donate) or donate to your own team today.

Visit [RelayForLife.org/FirstCoastFL](https://RelayForLife.org/FirstCoastFL) to learn more about Relay For Life.

**Sifting the sand** cont. from pg. 1

unknowingly learn by example from their role models (parents/ adults). They learn it’s okay not to be responsible for belongings they leave on the ground. It is an ‘opportunity lost’ to make a child a better person.”

Ponte Vedra Beach resident Elizabeth Joshi has also been a part of the roundtable discussions as she picks up trash along Palm Valley Road on a daily basis.

“It is ironic to me that people love to escape to the beach to enjoy the natural beauty and yet, when they exit that setting, they often leave behind trash that threatens that very environment. When beachgoers leave behind bottles, cans, wrappers, and beach toys, these items can easily be swept into the ocean during high tide or further degrade on the sand and pose a hazard to sea turtles and other wildlife,” said Joshi. “While the use of the BeBot will be

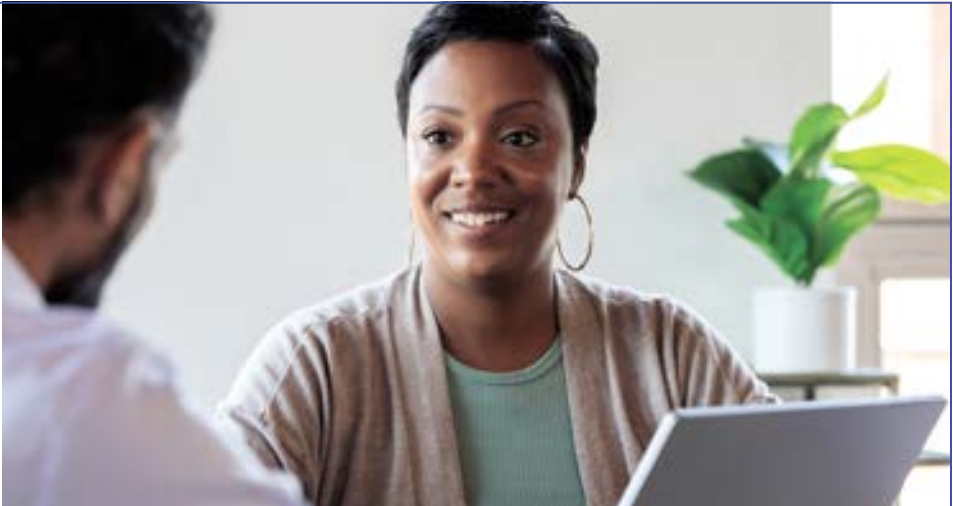
an amazing step forward in cleaning up beach trash while not threatening wildlife like bigger equipment may, it still should be incumbent upon anyone visiting the beach to leave with everything they arrived with or better yet, leave with more than they arrived with such as an extra piece of trash that some other beachgoer may have left behind.”

Baker agreed and welcomed all residents to attend a demonstration at one of the locations and to celebrate Earth Day every day by routinely joining in clean-ups.

*[Author’s note: The BeBot demo is open to the public and will take place on Thursday, April 20 from 5 p.m. – 8 p.m. at Mickler’s Beach; Friday, April 21 from 5 p.m. – 8 p.m. at Vilano Beach and Saturday, April 22 from 9:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the Crescent Beach Pavilion. Visit [ksjcb.org](https://ksjcb.org) for more information about routine clean ups organized by Keep St. Johns Beautiful.]*

**Did you know?**  
**Past issues of Ponte Vedra NewsLine are archived online!**  
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# BFF Best Furry Friend of the month

Meet Penny!



**Breed:**  
Mini-Aussie  
**Favorite Activity:**  
Digging holes  
**Favorite Treat:**  
Chicken sausage  
**Favorite friend:**  
My best bud Jacob!  
**How your BFF got their name:**  
From her beautiful copper color.

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



**Summer Camp and Activities Guide**  
**in this issue!**  
**Page 15**

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When you advertise, you encourage repeat business, create traffic, and attract new customers!

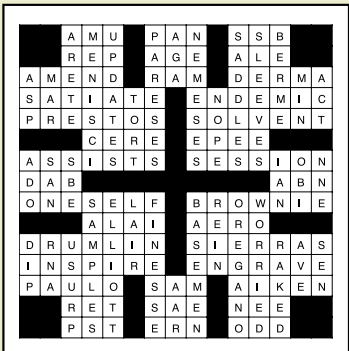
Don't miss our May issue featuring our Summer Camp and Activities Guide  
Deadline 4/19/23

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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 PLAYERS Senior Center.

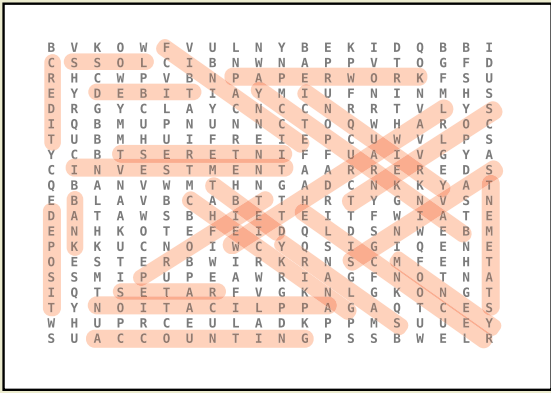


Answers  
Puzzles  
PG 10

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### ST. JOHNS COUNTY PROPERTY APPRAISER

Eddie Creamer

### NOTICE OF CERTIFICATION OF TAX ROLL

Pursuant to Sections 193.122 and 197.323, Florida Statutes, Notice is Hereby Given that the Tax Roll for St. Johns County was Re-Certified to the St. Johns County Tax Collector on the 23rd of March, 2023, for the Collection of 2022 Taxes, to reflect all changes made by the Value Adjustment Board.

**EDDIE CREAMER**  
PROPERTY APPRAISER ST. JOHNS COUNTY

For additional information, please visit our website at www.sjcpa.gov or contact us at (904) 827-5500



April

# Community Calendar

## What's Happening in Ponte Vedra

**Council on Aging** offers interest groups at the COA Center at Flagler Health+ Village at Nocatee. Meetings are free and self-guided except for the Caregiver's Support Group. Advance registration for clubs and meetings is required; email [pbrunell@Stjohnscoa.com](mailto:pbrunell@Stjohnscoa.com) or call (904) 819-3234. Tuesday clubs include: Caregiver Support Group, 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.; and Widows and Widowers social group, second and fourth Tuesday of each month, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Wednesday groups include: Mah Jongg Meet-up, 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.; and Genealogy Group, 1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

**Palm Valley Market** is held inside the Palm Valley Community Center at 148 Canal Road, every Tuesday from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. The market offers fresh produce, baked goods, local honey, tea, seasonal treats, soap, jewelry, plants and more. Visit the Palm Valley Market Facebook page for more information.

**1st: The Northeast Florida Chapter** of Sisters in Crime will meet on April 1 at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library, 101 Library Blvd. (FOL Room). Attendees will hear a dynamic presentation by former CIA operative and noted author, Dr. Edward Mickolus, an expert on CIA-related intrigue. The meeting starts at 10 a.m. Bring your coffee and bring a friend. Visit [www.nefloridasistersincrime.org](http://www.nefloridasistersincrime.org) for more information.

**4th: Vicar's Landing March** Boutique Sale will be held on Tuesday, April 4 from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. at 1000 Vicar's Landing Way. The public is welcome. The sale includes household items and furnishings as well as jewelry and framed art. The Vicar's Employee Scholarship Fund receives all of the proceeds. Cash or checks only please. Contact Beverly Webb at (904) 315-2610 or Rose Murdock at (904) 891-1777 for more information.

**4th: Essential Tremor Support Group** Meeting will be held on April 4 at 11 a.m. at Baptist HealthPlace at Nocatee, 400 Colonnade Drive, #130. Featured speaker Stephen Morio, MHA with Insightec Focused Ultrasound,

Will discuss an incisionless treatment for ET patients who've not responded to medication. Contact Jan Kary at [jkary@verizon.net](mailto:jkary@verizon.net) or (202) 438-6750 for more information.

**5th: Coastal Friends** will host its monthly luncheon on April 5 at Marsh Landing Country Club, 25655 Marsh Landing Pkwy. in Ponte Vedra Beach from 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Guest speaker Dr. Tracy Alloway, a nationally known, award-winning Professor of Psychology at University of North Florida will address "The Five Senses of Memory to Help with the Aging Memory Process." The cost of the luncheon is \$25 and reservations must be made in advance by contacting [bartshar@comcast.net](mailto:bartshar@comcast.net) as soon as possible. Visit <https://coastal-friends.wildapricot.org> for more information.

**6th: Bingo** will be held at THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center, 175 Landrum Lane, on Thursdays from 1 p.m. – 2 p.m. for four weeks beginning Thursday, April 6. Contact Suzanne Duvall at (904) 209-3659 for more information and to register.

**7th: The GTM Research Reserve** will hold a new volunteer orientation on April 7 from 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Learn about volunteer rules and responsibility as well next steps to volunteering. Complete the volunteer application online ([www.gtm-nerr.org](http://www.gtm-nerr.org)) before attending. Contact Abigail Kuhn at [Abigail.Kuhn@FloridaDEP.gov](mailto:Abigail.Kuhn@FloridaDEP.gov) to assure that your application was received.

**10th: The St. Johns County** Civic Roundtable will meet on Monday, April 10 at 12 p.m. at St. Augustine Waterworks building, 184 San Marco Ave. in St. Augustine. The featured speaker will be St. Johns County Administrator Hunter Conrad. Email [info@sjcroundtable.org](mailto:info@sjcroundtable.org) to register for the meeting or visit [www.sjcroundtable.org](http://www.sjcroundtable.org) for more information.

**11th: The Amelia Island Opera** will perform on April 11 at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library as part of the Dr. Gerson Yessin Music Series. The performance, presented by Friends of the Ponte Vedra Beach Library will feature an all star, all female cast of singers performing arias

and ensembles from opera and musical theater as well as popular standards the audience is sure to recognize. The concert is free and open to the public; doors open at 6 p.m.

**15th: The Nocatee Farmers Market** will be held on Saturday, April 15 from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. at Nocatee Station Field. The Farmers Market is open to the public.

**16th: Kids Sing Along featuring** Now is the Time with two vocalists and sponsored by the Friends of the Ponte Vedra Beach Library and Nocatee will be held at Nocatee Station Field on April 16 from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. The event will feature Disney characters, a petting zoo and dessert food trucks. The event is free to the public; bring your own seating.

**18th: Pop historian Scott Grant,** author of "The Merchant of Death is Dead: True Stories of the Progress of Humanity," will present an insight into the lives of famous people such as Alfred Nobel, Tommy Hilfiger, general James Doolittle, golfer Jack Nicklaus and others, as well as famous events at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library on April 18. Doors open at 6 p.m. and the program begins at 6:30 p.m. This program is free and open to the public and sponsored by Friends of the Ponte Vedra Beach Library.

**19th: Ponte Vedra Woman's Club** General Meeting will be held on April 15, from 12 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. at Marsh Landing Country Club. The featured speaker will be one of the club's members, Dr. Erica Siegel, an Acupuncture Physician and owner of Joy Vision Acupuncture, who will discuss eye health. Registration and required lunch payment may be found on the Ponte Vedra Woman's Club website under Events at [www.pontevedrawomansclub.com/eventregistrations.php](http://www.pontevedrawomansclub.com/eventregistrations.php).

**20th - 24th: Ponte Vedra High School** Drama presents "Disney's Descendents The Musical" on April 20, 21, 22, and 24 at 7 p.m. each evening along with a matinee on April 23 at 2 p.m. at the school, located at 460 Davis Park

Road. Imprisoned on the Isle of the Lost, the teenaged children of Maleficent, the Evil Queen, Jafar, and Cruella De Vil have never ventured off the island ... until now. When the four troublemakers are sent to attend prep school alongside the children of beloved Disney heroes, they have a difficult choice to make: should they follow in their parents' wicked footsteps or learn to be good? Tickets cost \$10; visit [www.pvhsdab.com](http://www.pvhsdab.com) for more information.

**22nd: The Ponte Vedra Writers Group** will meet on Saturday, April 22 at 11 a.m. at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library. The group will present the panel discussion "Writing from Life Experiences." Four regional memoirists and nonfiction authors will discuss how their life experiences influenced their writing. The meeting is free and open to members and non-members alike. Visit [www.floridawriters.org](http://www.floridawriters.org) for more information.

**25th: Ponte Vedra Democratic Club** will meet on Tuesday, April 25 at 5:30 p.m. for Chat & Chew before the 6 p.m. meeting at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library. The featured speaker will be Florida Times Union columnist and political observer, Nate Monroe. Email [jkary@verizon.net](mailto:jkary@verizon.net) for more information.

**27th: "Debtors' Rights"** will be presented by St. Johns County Legal Aid's Megan Wall, Managing Attorney, on Thursday, April 27 at 11 a.m. at THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center, 175 Landrum Lane, Ponte Vedra Beach. Call Suzanne Duvall at (904) 209-3659 for more information.

**28th: The Savvy Job Hunters** Ministry Workshop will host a free Zoom workshop, "Your Professional Package and Tools for a Successful Career Search," presented by Dr. Priscilla Berry, owner and president of Berry and Associates, on April 28 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Sign in and networking begin at 9:45 a.m. Email [pottesen66@gmail.com](mailto:pottesen66@gmail.com) to register.

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Guest Column

# Supervisor of Elections Office keeps close eye on legislative session

By St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections Vicky Oakes

In mid-March, the St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections Office met with other Election Supervisors and their staff from across Northeast Florida to reflect on the 2022 elections, talk about processes, and share insight.

During the meeting in Clay County, the supervisors discussed potential changes to election law anticipated to come from the 2023 Legislative Session that will finish May 5, 2023. The supervisors expect possible changes to vote-by-mail and audit procedures, judging by the changes made by Senate Bill 524 in 2022. The session provided invaluable information that will be used by all to grow, innovate, and improve. We will continue to monitor the legislative session and ensure St. Johns County voters are aware of and prepared for any impacts to the voting process.

We're also beginning poll worker recruitment this month. As the county continues to grow, our need for poll workers increases as well. We invite any eligible, interested, and registered St. Johns County voters to visit our website at [www.votesjc.gov](http://www.votesjc.gov).

[votesjc.gov](http://votesjc.gov) to learn more about being a poll worker and poll worker requirements, and to fill out a poll worker application. For questions, please call the Supervisor of Elections Office at (904) 823-2238 or email the Poll Worker Department at [pollworker@votesjc.gov](mailto:pollworker@votesjc.gov).

For those who have already expressed an interest, we are excited to soon re-introduce our Poll Worker Orientation classes. Keep an eye on our website or subscribe to our email newsletter to find out details on the class schedule and curriculum. Our first election of 2024, the Presidential Preference Primary, is less than a year away and we plan to have a highly qualified, well-trained team of poll workers ready to serve our community.

As a friendly reminder, there are no scheduled elections in St. Johns County for 2023. In 2024, we have the Presidential Preference Primary on March 19, 2024, the 2024 Primary Election on Aug. 20, 2024, and the 2024 General Election on Nov. 5, 2024. For more information on the 2024 elections, as well as local offices scheduled for election in 2024, visit [www.votesjc.gov/election-dates](http://www.votesjc.gov/election-dates).



with St. Johns County Commissioner Krista Joseph District 4

**Q: What do you think is the best way for constituents to contact the County Commissioners?**

A: I think the most efficient way is a way that not everyone knows — the three minute general public comment that is a part of each Board of County Commissioners meeting. The general comment period is held at a time-certain 11:30 a.m. at each meeting and for those who don't get a chance to speak then, there is another general comment period at the end of each meeting.

Those three minutes are a valuable time to address something that is important to you that is not already on the meeting's agenda. It can be any topic — possibly your idea for a park that you'd like to see in your neighborhood or a complaint about traffic on your street. Sometimes these items haven't been brought up before. The three minute comment is a rare opportunity to have the attention of all five commissioners at the same time to make your point known. We commissioners often do follow up with the commenter after the meeting on their issue. Also, there is a comment period after each agenda item if you have an opinion or something you'd like to say about the items on that day's agenda.

**Q: What are some other ways to be in touch with the county commissioners about an issue?**

A: You can also set up in-person meetings with each commissioner individually. By calling the Board of County Commissioners' office, one of our admins will schedule your meetings so that you can meet with all five commissioners in one day. Since you are in person at their office, the commissioner might be able to include some members of the county team, so you might end up also talking to the head of the Growth Management Department or Public Works. When you tell each commissioner your situation, it is very powerful.

**Q: How can you view or attend the Board of County Commissioners meetings?**

A: Our meetings are held the first and third Tuesday of each month at 9 a.m. in the County Auditorium at 500 San Sebastian View. You can attend in person or view the meeting livestream on GTV, which can be accessed via our website [sjcfl.us](http://sjcfl.us). The GTV video is also archived, so you can go back and watch past meetings. This is a very valuable tool and we are lucky to have GTV provided for the taxpayers.

Remember... we work for you!

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

A: Readers can email me at [bcc4kjoseph@sjcfl.us](mailto:bcc4kjoseph@sjcfl.us) or call me at (904) 679-2620.



FlaglerHealth.org/JulingtonCreek

904.819.1005

# JULINGTON CREEK

## Now accepting new patients

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# ST. JOHNS Business Monthly

## Financial planning for a family member with special needs

By Chris Thompson, CFP®, CRPC®  
Having a child with special needs presents unique challenges. You may worry about his or her physical and mental wellbeing. You may also worry about their financial future if their condition limits their ability to earn a living and pay for living expenses upon reaching adulthood. Fortunately, there are steps you can take to help ensure your child has sufficient financial resources along with a dedicated support system:

1. Fund an ABLÉ account. Thanks to The Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act of 2014, families can participate in a tax-advantaged savings program for a family member with a qualifying disability that occurred before age 26. As the owner and designated

beneficiary of the account, your child can withdraw funds tax-free to pay for eligible disability-related expenses. They also may be eligible for a tax credit for contributions you make to the plan. An ABLÉ account is very similar to a 529 college savings plan. Anyone can contribute to the ABLÉ account, including grandparents and non-relatives, up to the annual gift tax exclusion (unless limited by your state). Contributions are made with after-tax dollars and are not tax deductible at the federal level. Not all ABLÉ plans are equal; shop around to find the most advantageous plan for your child's needs.

2. Establish a special needs trust. A special needs trust (SNT) can provide financial security by creating an income

stream to a loved one with special needs. Having funds in this type of trust would not disqualify your child, as beneficiary, from receiving government assistance. Note that he or she would not have direct control over funds in an SNT, which may not be ideal if he or she is capable of managing their own finances. There are several different types of SNTs (first-party, second-party and pooled), each of which is governed by various requirements. Because of their complexity, SNTs are usually prepared by a licensed attorney and may cost several thousand dollars to set up.

3. Buy a life insurance policy. Consider purchasing a whole or term life insurance policy that names your loved one as the beneficiary when you die. To ensure the payout does not

disqualify the recipient for federal and state resources, set up the policy to pay proceeds into a special needs trust.  
4. Ask the courts to appoint a guardian. When an adult family member with special needs has significant assets or property and is unable to manage their own financial affairs, a guardianship may be appropriate. When a guardian of the estate is appointed, all financial matters are managed for the person with disabilities. This person will pay bills and is required by law to maintain detailed records to account for all spending. A family member is often appointed to this role; however, in some cases the court will appoint an unrelated individual.

Financial cont. on pg. 10

Personalized financial advice to help achieve your goals

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**Briefs**

**Clerk’s office to hold special Passport Saturday event on April 1**

The St. Johns County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller will hold a special Passport Saturday event on April 1, from 8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. at the Richard O. Watson Judicial Center, 4010 Lewis Speedway in St. Augustine. The extended business hours make applying for a passport more convenient for those seeking to travel this upcoming season.

The Clerk’s Office’s recording department will be open on April 1 to accept and review applications for first-time passports or new passports for persons whose previous passport was issued more than 15 years ago, minors under age 16, or whose passport was lost, stolen, or damaged.

Other passports must be renewed by mail using Form DS-82, which is available at <https://stjohnsclerk.com/passports/>.

Anyone traveling internationally must have a passport book, including infants, and every applicant for a new passport must appear in person, regardless of age.

Adults must bring a valid driver’s license or state identification card. If your identification was issued within the last six months, a second form of identification is required. You must also bring an original or certified copy of your birth certificate or consular birth abroad certificate with the name of both parents listed and, if applicable, a previously issued, non-damaged passport or passport card or naturalization certificate. Children 15 years or younger must be accompanied by both parents or legal guardians. For 16 or 17-year-olds, one parent or guardian needs to be present.

For more information and details on what is required, visit <https://travel.state.gov> or call the Clerk’s Office Recording Department at (904) 819-3632.

**AAUW St. Augustine presents LUNAFEST 2023**

The St. Augustine branch of the American Association of University Women is hosting LUNAFEST 2023 on

Saturday, April 15, 2023, from 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Lincolnville Museum and Cultural Center, 102 Martin Luther King Ave, St. Augustine. Tickets are \$25 and may be purchased at [www.lunafest.org/screenings/in-person-aauw-st-augustine-fl-041523](http://www.lunafest.org/screenings/in-person-aauw-st-augustine-fl-041523)

Monies raised will go to support AAUW Florida Tech Trek camps for eighth grade girls who have demonstrated an ability in science, technology, engineering, or math. Last year, 23 eighth grade girls from St. Johns County attended virtual Tech Trek camps. The students only pay a \$25 registration fee. This coming June there will be two in person Tech Trek camps.

The branch also raises money for college scholarships for students who have finished one or more years of college and live in St. Johns County. This year the branch is offering four scholarships, one to a nursing student to continue through graduation.

Festival guests will enjoy a dessert bar during intermission. Water is complimentary and wine and beer will be sold by Lincolnville Museum. Tickets for raffle baskets will be sold to be distributed at the end of the evening.

LUNAFEST is a traveling film festival celebrating, showcasing, and championing women. It is advised that some material may not be suitable for children under 13. This year’s festival is comprised of seven short films for a running time of 90 minutes. Visit [www.lunafest.org](http://www.lunafest.org) and [www.staugustine-fl.aauw.net](http://www.staugustine-fl.aauw.net) for more information.

**St. Johns CARES announces annual Pet Food Drive**

Not only are animal shelters in great need of pet food, individuals seeking assistance at local food pantries are also concerned about their pets. Unfortunately some are forced to make very hard decisions to give up their furry companions or give part of their own meager food supplies to their pets. Senior citizens in particular are more likely to give up their own food to feed their pets, at the cost of their own

nutritional needs.

St. Johns CARES, Inc. is holding its annual Pet Food Drive from April 1 – April 28. Numerous locations will serve as host donation collection sites including local Public Library Branches, schools, fitness centers and other businesses and organizations. Donations will be distributed to six animal organizations in St. Johns County: Ayla’s Acres, Feline Canopy of Care, S.A.F.E, St. Augustine Humane Society, Swamp Haven and Wags & Whiskers. Donations will also be shared with local food pantries and the Pie in the Sky organization that provides produce and canned goods to homebound elderly in St. Johns County.

Monetary donations to purchase pet food can be made at [www.stjohnscares.org](http://www.stjohnscares.org). Individuals wishing to hold a neighborhood pet food drive should contact [president@st.johnscares.org](mailto:president@st.johnscares.org).

**Newcomers of North St. Johns’ luncheon to feature “Jersey Boys”**

Newcomers of North Saint Johns’ next luncheon is scheduled for Thursday, April 27, 2023. Doors open at 11:15 a.m. at Alhambra Dinner Theatre, 12000 Beach Boulevard in Jacksonville. The event features a delicious lunch and entertainment by the Alhambra Theatre Players with the full four-act presentation of the Tony and Grammy Award-winning show, “Jersey Boys.”

The cost for the luncheon and program is \$45 for members and \$55 for guests. All reservations and payments must be received by April 11. Visit <https://newcomersofnorthstjohns.org> for more information about the luncheon and membership.

The full Alhambra menu will be available for ordering the day of the event with water, iced tea, coffee and hot tea included. A cash bar is also available. Newcomers of North Saint Johns members and guests will be seated in an area especially reserved for the group; seats will be chosen upon arrival.

The Newcomers of North St. Johns offers

a wide variety of activities for you to get acquainted and have fun including smaller lunch groups, Bunco, Canasta, wine socials, golf, Mah Jongg, holiday parties, day trips and cultural events. Visit <https://newcomersofnorthstjohns.org> for more information.

**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.

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](mailto:floridasistersincrime@gmail.com) for more information.

**Ribault Garden Club to present National Garden Club Standard Flower Show**

The Ribault Garden Club, 705 Second Avenue N. in Jacksonville Beach will host a National Garden Club Standard Flower Show, “Holiday Celebrations 2023” on Friday, May 5 from 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. and Saturday, May 6 from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Attendees may observe displays of unique and original floral designs, horticulture, botanical horticulture and educational exhibits. Ribault Garden Club Members have been busy propagating plants, visiting members’ gardens, and potting



Photo courtesy Ribault Garden Club

a variety of native plants, which will be available for purchase.

Designs are submitted by Members of the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs. Ribault Garden Club members



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Get to Know ...

By Tiffany Merlo Phelps  
mail@floridanewsline.com

Molly Ronan

Music has always been a part of Molly Ronan's life. It began at home with her musician father who plays the guitar. In fact, Ronan recalls a picture of her as a baby with her hands on the keys of a piano. "I have never known life without music or instruments. I have always known that it was something that I wanted to do," said Ronan. While the piano ultimately wasn't the right fit for Ronan, the flute and the harp were. Ronan, a Ponte Vedra High and University of Florida graduate, was introduced to the flute at the age of 11 while in band at Landrum Middle School. "That roped me in, and I just fell in love right away. It was one of those magic Harry Potter wand moments," said Ronan, 22. "I have also been blessed with some amazing teachers." Ronan studied classical flute under symphony maestros Laura Dwyer and Rhonda Cassano, eventually studying the Irish wooden folk flute and tin whistle with Christina Dolphin. She added the harp to her skillset at the age of 14, later learning to specialize in the Celtic lever harp under the direction of Elizabeth Landis and Kathy Braswell. With an Irish background and a love for Irish music, Ronan set out to learn the Irish traditional flute in addition to playing the classical flute. She learned by Skyping with a teacher in Ireland.



Photo courtesy Molly Ronan  
Molly Ronan

"There is so much joy expressed in the music," said Ronan, who became a four-time Mid-Atlantic Fleadh champion and eight-time medal holder (Irish Music Championships) in 2022. She also participated in the Fleadh Cheoil (World Irish Music Championships) in Ireland. "I got to play with a lot of local musicians. It was such an amazing experience," said Ronan, who devotes most of her time to performing at events for clients. "What I enjoy most is to be part of a special occasion and to bring joy through live music," she said. "I always try to convey my genuine love for the music to everyone and do the best that I can." Later this year, Ronan will release a harp solo album.

A: I perform at weddings, birthday parties and other gatherings and venues. I am focused on creating the atmosphere and the environment that is catered to that event. I really try to set the tone for how the event is going to feel, and I tailor it to their specific needs. I have been performing solo for two years. Prior to that, I performed as a duo with my dad at various venues.

**Q: Why do you think live music is so important for the community?**

A: I think that is something that we really realized when the world was shut down during COVID: how much we need that interaction. We need music like we need food. Music

is just such a human experience. It is something that we share through different cultures and different ages of time. It is so universal, and it can help connect us. Music is the main expression that allows us to have these lifelong memories.

**Q: How long did you take Irish dancing lessons?**

A: I started Irish dancing when I was six years old and continued until I was 17 years old. It was amazing, and it was definitely a competitive dance world. I had a good time, and I ended up getting to the championship level. It was great growing up because it was like my team sport. It was very hard physically with the cardio level, and we would practice six days a week. That's where I like to say that my discipline was really born. That's where I really decided that I was really going to work for the things that I want. The more you practice, the more you get. So that really bled over into everything else in my life, especially musically.

**Q: What are some of your hobbies?**

A: I love going to the beach, writing poems and stories and eating Publix subs.

**Q: You have a bachelor's degree in anthropology. How did you get interested in this field?**

A: I always had a very strong interest in ancient cultures, civilizations and other foreign cultures and civilizations. When I took my first class at the University of Florida, I fell in love with it. I think studying many different things contributes a lot to my art and makes me a richer person overall.

Get to Know ...

Interested in being featured? Email Martie Thompson at  
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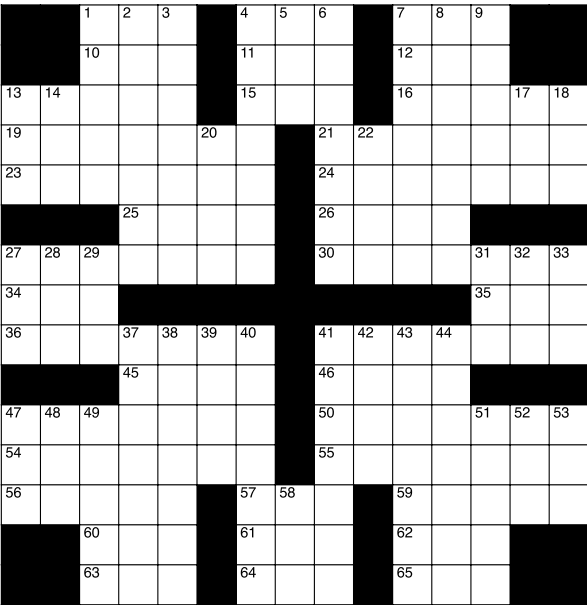
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Puzzles

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



Solve the code to discover words related to financial literacy.  
Each number corresponds to a letter.  
(Hint: 12 = E)

- 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

Financial cont. from pg. 7

5. Watch out for scammers. Individuals with disabilities may be more vulnerable to identify theft and other scams. Monitor credit reports to keep an eye out for unauthorized accounts. Consider enrolling your child in an identity theft protection program. Be aware that phone and internet scammers routinely target recipients of government checks by impersonating government agents.

6. Consult the experts. Talk to your financial advisor for ideas and guidance on ways to safeguard the financial well-being of your special needs child. Your advisor will be able to recommend a qualified attorney if you decide to open a special needs trust. A tax specialist can also be a valuable resource to help with tax planning for you and your child.

Chris Thompson, CFP®, CRPC® is a Managing Director and Associate Manager with Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC. in Jacksonville. He specializes in fee-based financial planning and asset management strategies and has been in practice for 30 years. To contact him, visit [www.ameripriseadvisors.com/chris.thompson](http://www.ameripriseadvisors.com/chris.thompson) or email [chris.thompson@ampf.com](mailto:chris.thompson@ampf.com).

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Briefs cont. from pg. 8


reside throughout the Beaches area, Nocatee, West of the Intracoastal and throughout Florida. Visit https://sites.google.com/site/ribaultgarden/ for more information.

Knights of Columbus host benefit golf tournament

The Knights of Columbus Council 16492 from St. John Paul II Nocatee is hosting its annual Spring Golf Outing on May 5 at the St. Johns Golf & Country Club in St. Johns. Proceeds from the outing, which will include fun, food, and fellowship, will go towards the SJPII Catholic Church new building fund.

The Clyde Johnston-designed 18-hole course at St. Johns Golf & Country Club is a community centerpiece and has been nationally ranked for customer satisfaction and loyalty. The event includes lunch, golf, dinner, prizes, raffles, and various on-course contests and competitions. The day will conclude with an inspirational message by Father Richard Pagano and complimentary beverages.

Sponsorship opportunities are available, and individuals or teams can register online. Sponsors will have their tables featuring adult beverages and giveaways. For advertising, sponsorship, or donation information, contact Pete Falcone at pfalcone5369@gmail.com. Visit www.kofcgo.org to learn more about this event and future events hosted by the Knights of Columbus.



**PopHistory**

By Scott A. Grant  
mail@floridanewsline.com

## The Redemption of Johnny Cash

When Johnny Cash walked into Folsom State Prison in Folsom, California on Jan. 13, 1968, his career was teetering on the brink. He had not had a hit record in four years, and he had only recently recovered from a bout with drug addiction that had almost killed him. Rock and roll had pushed the once popular country and western star off the charts and by the late '60s it seemed he was no longer relevant.

Cash had a plan to revitalize his career. He would record a live album inside a prison. He approached San Quentin and Folsom with the idea. Folsom got back to him first. That proved fortuitous. One of the songs Johnny planned to perform was "Folsom Prison Blues." Johnny had first written the song while serving in the Air Force in 1953. He penned the iconic lyric "I shot a man in Reno, just to watch him die," at Landsberg Air Force Base while trying to imagine the worst possible reason for one person to kill another.

"Folsom Prison Blues" had been released in 1956 to modest success, but it was about to have a second,

far more successful life. Cash invited the Statler Brothers and Carl Perkins to join him on the stage inside the prison. They rehearsed feverishly for the show. The night before the performance, California Governor Ronald Reagan stopped by the El Rancho Motor Lodge to wish them luck.

There were two shows. Carl Perkins opened both with "Blue Suede Shoes." The Statler Brothers followed with two songs. Then Johnny stepped onto the stage. Prisoners were instructed not to cheer or applaud until he announced "Hello! I'm Johnny Cash." Johnny then performed "Folsom Prison Blues." The audience was warned by prison officials not to react too boisterously. The cheers that seemed to greet the line about Reno were added in post-production. To end the show, everyone came back on stage to perform "Greystone Chapel," a song written by Folsom inmate Glen Sherley.

The live album was a huge success, earning Cash his second and third Grammy awards and revitalizing his career. Both the album and the single

charted and were met with critical acclaim. Cash would later tell Rolling Stone Magazine, "That's where things really got started for me again." He would follow the success up with another live prison album from San Quentin. That album hit number one on the pop charts and the single "A Boy Named Sue," reached number two.

Cash became so popular that ABC gave him his own TV show. He would use his newfound fame to lobby for prison reform. Johnny Cash always sympathized with the underdog. He was such a powerful advocate that many thought he had done time himself. He hadn't. Outside of a night in the drunk tank, Johnny Cash had never been in jail — but that did not stop him from recognizing the plight of the prisoner and embracing it as his own.

*Scott A. Grant is a local author and historian. By day he is president of Standfast Asset Management. "Folsom Prison Blues" is his karaoke jam. He welcomes your comments at scottg@standfastic.com*



# First annual “Battle of the Beaches” tennis tournament held

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewslines.com

On Saturday, Feb. 25, Sawgrass hosted the first “Battle of the Beaches” tennis event. Ponte Vedra Inn & Club and Sawgrass Country Club battled for the championship trophy with five lines of doubles in men’s and women’s tennis, along with three lines of mixed doubles for a total of 13 matches. Each match win counted as one point for the team total.

At the end of the tournament, Sawgrass Country Club defeated Ponte

Vedra Inn & Club 8 to 5 to win the “Battle of the Beaches” and bragging rights until next year.



Photo courtesy Lisa Farese

Sawgrass Country Club players take home the win!

# Newcomers of Beaches elect new leadership

The Newcomers of the Beaches monthly March luncheon was held at St Johns Golf and Country Club. The club president spoke about the 2022 – 2023 highlights and accomplishments. Members elected the new board of directors for 2023 – 2024 and enjoyed a musical performance by Gibson Blue. The April club luncheon features the club’s annual fashion show with members modeling styles from Chicos of Sawgrass Village. It will be held at St. Johns Golf and Country

Club on April 12 at 11 a.m. Members and guests can register online at [www.newcomersofthebeaches.com](http://www.newcomersofthebeaches.com)

The club is open to women who have recently moved into the Beaches area or have been recently divorced, widowed, empty nesters or retired. The club is a social group that uses social activities to meet people and make lasting relationships. Visit [www.newcomersofthebeaches.com](http://www.newcomersofthebeaches.com) for more information and a membership form.



Photo courtesy Bonnie Evans



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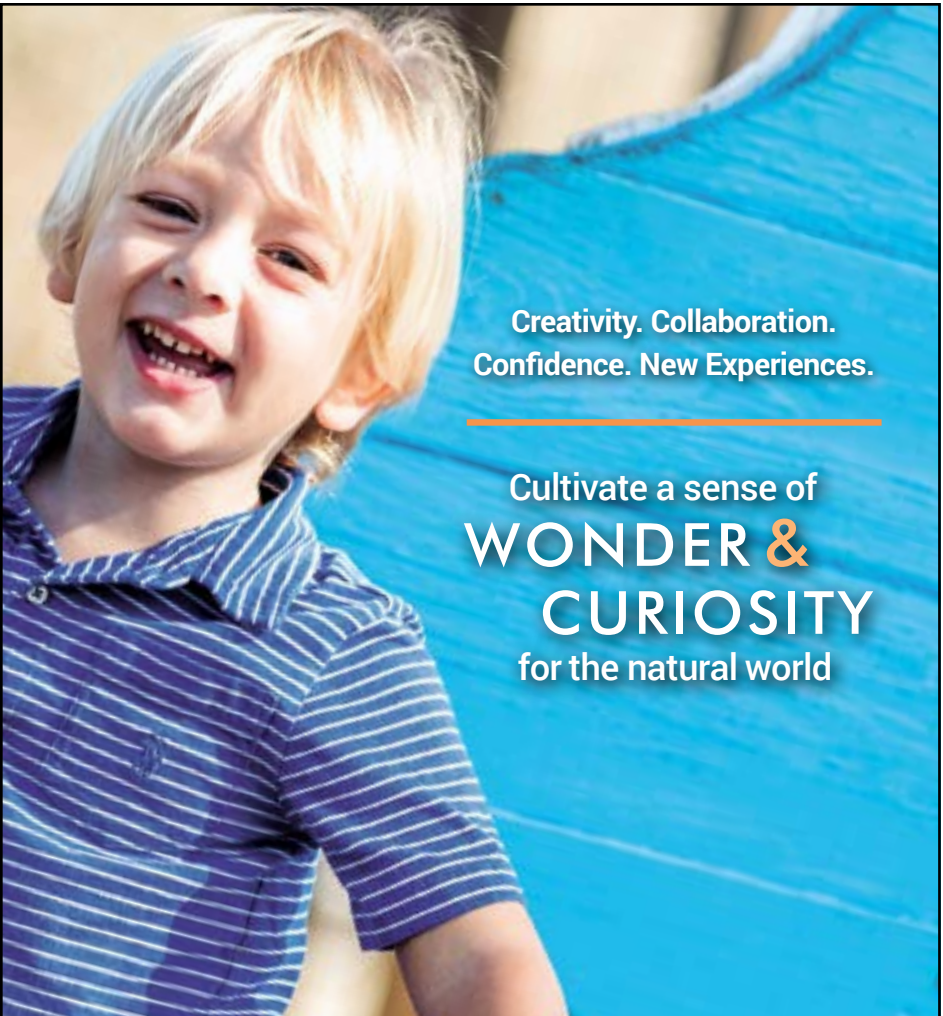
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# Nine years and counting: Nease JROTC is best in northern Florida and Georgia

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewslines.com

Nease Navy JROTC won the Area 12 Drill Championships on March 4 in Douglas, Georgia — winning this championship for the ninth consecutive year and thus earning a trip to the National Championships.

Nease competed against the top 16 Navy high school JROTC drill teams in Area 12, which includes all of northern Florida and the state of Georgia. Sixty-one NJROTC programs competed at local drill meets during the fall and winter with the top 16 advancing to the Area Championships. Nease earned its berth by winning first place at the South Effingham, Mandarin, and Terry Parker high schools’ drill competitions earlier.

In addition to winning the overall drill meet championship, Nease claimed first place in Overall Drill, Unarmed Exhibition, Unarmed Basic, Armed Basic, Color Guard, Overall Athletics, Pushups, Situps and 16x100 Relay; second place in Personnel Inspection; and third place in Armed Exhibition and Academics.

Several cadets also earned individual



The Nease NJROTC Senior Cadets accepting the overall first place trophy at the Area 12 Drill Championships March 5.

medals and awards for achievement including Paul Rukab, second place Individual Drill; Samuel Lewis (147) Pushups; Hailey Pitches (68) Pushups; Emily Chang (66) Pushups; MaCayla Cole-Banner (160) Situps; and Zachary Servello in Academics.

“The cadets really buckled down hard in practice leading up to the championship,” said Naval Science Instructor Master Chief Petty Officer Duane Spears. “Teamwork makes the dream

work.”

Nease will now travel to the Navy National Drill Championships in Pensacola on March 29 – April 1. The Nease NJROTC program is also traveling to Nationals for Orienteering, Regionals in Drone and Brain Brawl. If you’d like to contribute to help offset these travel expenses or become a community partner with this No. 1 ranked program in the country, contact Sabra Sanchez at Pres@NeaseNJROTC.com for more details.

# Ocean Palms sets fundraising aglow at Otterpalooza

On March 4, the families of Ocean Palms Elementary enjoyed an evening of glow-in-the-dark putt-putt golf, a closest-to-the-pin competition, and corn hole games, all on a perfect spring night where the notes of the Sada Davidson Band were carried with the evening breeze. Here, at The Yards, parents could relax among the fire pits and catering by 3 Palms Grille, and enjoy the company of fellow Otter families. The silent auction featured everything from trips to

Asheville, to handbags, to teacher experiences and more. By the time the last of the desserts were plucked from the tray and the final song was played, the Ocean Palms community raised more than \$50,000 for school improvements, technology, and other educational needs.



Parents enjoy a night of camaraderie among fellow OPE families to support the educational needs of the school at The Yards.

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Travel

The Magic of Monarchs

By Debi Lander  
mail@floridanewslines.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 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



Photos courtesy Debi Lander  
Hiking to see the Monarchs.

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

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# Summer Camp and Activities Guide!



## Nease summer sports camps provide health, social and academic benefits

By Susan Rieger  
mail@floridanewsline.com

As summer approaches, many parents seek ways to keep their school-aged children active and engaged during the break. One popular option is enrolling kids in summer sports camps, which offer a range of benefits beyond just physical exercise.

According to a recent study, children who participate in sports camps during the summer experience improved physical health, increased social skills, and even academic benefits. The study found that children who attended summer sports camps had higher physical activity levels and better physical fitness than those who did not participate.

In addition, sports camps provide opportunities for children to develop important social skills, such as teamwork, communication, and leadership. These skills can help children build confidence and develop positive peer relationships.

Sports camps can also have a positive impact on academic performance. The study found that children who participated in sports camps during the summer had higher academic achievement than those who did not. This may be because physical activity has been shown to improve cognitive function and academic performance.

Nease athletic sports camps offer students a wide range of activities, including football, basketball, soccer, wrestling, and more. The camps offer specialized programs for specific sports or skill



Nease offers a variety of summer camps this summer.

levels, allowing children to develop their abilities and gain a deeper understanding of the game. Save the date for Summer Camps 2023 for more information and links to all the camps can be found on the individual sport website, [www.neaseathletics.com](http://www.neaseathletics.com)

June 5 – July 28: Football Summer Camp, rising ninth graders – 12th graders

June 6 – 8: Girls' and Boys' Basketball Camp, third through ninth graders, multiple dates and times

June 19 – 22: Girls' Soccer Camp

June 19 – 21: Mini Pantherette Dance

July 11,12,13: Green and Gold Youth Football Camp, kindergarten through eighth grade

July 17 – 20: Boys' Lacrosse

July 18 – 20: Cheerleading Cub Camp

Nease camps are staffed by trained and experienced teachers in working with children and providing a safe and supportive environment.

## Outdoor movie night essentials

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewsline.com

Outdoor movie nights can be a great way to spend warm evenings with friends and loved ones. The guest list is only limited by the seating you have, and even then, movie watchers can easily sit on picnic blankets, making it simple to host a crowd. Movie nights outdoors may be different than those in a theater or living room, but certain must-have items are no less important. No movie night under the stars is complete without these essentials.

**Projector and screen:** A screen and a way to project the movie are must-haves for any outdoor movie night. Projectors should be small enough that they can be carried outside, but large enough to emit enough light to fill the screen. Options range anywhere from \$400 and up for quality projectors.

**Screens** run the gamut from inflatable and free-standing options to white sheets hung from a clothesline. A dedicated screen will be more stable and look better, but it all comes down to budget.

**Portable speaker:** A portable speaker can be moved anywhere you need it. A speaker with an auxiliary input enables you to hook it up to your video source so that the audio-video synchronization is top notch. After all, wireless connections may lag. The speaker will be functional for movie nights as well as music and entertainment for any outdoor event

going forward. If your yard is large, you may need more than one speaker.

**Media source:** Individuals have various options for media players. Small players can plug directly into projectors and are the easiest sources for backyard movies if the Wi-Fi signal in the yard is strong. You also may be able to connect a mobile phone or laptop/tablet into the projector, relying on those devices to stream content.

**Seating:** Folding camp chairs are portable and can be stored for guests who prefer being off the ground for movie nights. Otherwise, thick, waterproof blankets enable guests to spread out while watching movies outdoors. They're also great for kids who are liable to spend a portion of the time watching the movie, but much of it running around the yard.

**Theater-style popcorn maker:** Kernels, oil and heat are the perfect combination for producing movie-theater-worthy popcorn. Place plenty of reusable popcorn containers nearby so guests can bring their bounty back to their seats. Canned beverages with straws also are portable and pair well with popcorn for a great movie experience.

**Lighting:** Outdoor stringed lighting adds ambiance and safety to a space; however, you also may want to consider using some solar-powered staked lights on the ground to map out aisles and make it easier for guests to navigate the yard in the dark.



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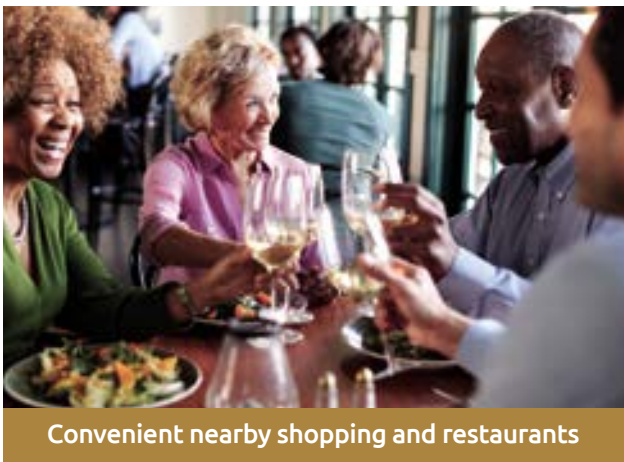




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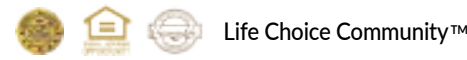
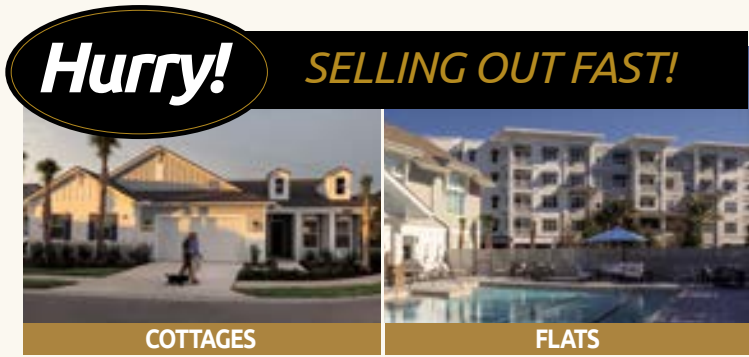
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