



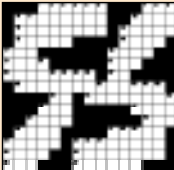
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Photo courtesy Jacksonville Public Library
Friends of Mandarin Library Book Sale will be held June 2 - 3.

Busy spring
at Mandarin
libraries

By Jeremy Yates
mail@floridanewsline.com

This May, we're celebrating mothers, grandmothers and all motherly figures raising the next generation of readers! Drop in at 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 13 for Muffins with Mom at the Mandarin Library for some quality family time.

Our popular Little Readers story-time (for ages birth to five) is great for kids and caregivers! Join us Fridays at the Mandarin Library at 10:15 a.m. and 11 a.m. or Mondays at 1:30 p.m. at South Mandarin Library. Pop-Up Storytime also continues in the park by South Mandarin Library Thursdays at 10 a.m.

New to the Mandarin Library: Sensory Friendly Storytime meets Wednesdays at 11 a.m. (designed for preschoolers aged two to five with sensory sensitivities).


Mandarin libraries cont. on pg. 2

Mandarin Museum & Historical Society honors longtime volunteers

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

On Saturday, April 1, Mandarin Museum & Historical Society honored two of its longtime, dedicated volunteers at its Volunteer Appreciation Reception. Hosted on the museum's front lawn, more than 50 people were in attendance to celebrate the thousands of hours volunteers contribute each year in support of the museum's operations, programming, events, and archives. Special honorees included Donald Bowden and Sandy Arpen.

Bowden, also known in the area as "Frog-man," was recognized with an official resolution from the City of Jacksonville. A life-long resident of Mandarin, Bowden's family roots in the community date to the late 18th century. After retiring from a successful career in the well and pump business, he found a unique way to give back — making and painting concrete frogs and placing them along the rural roads in Mandarin to make people smile. In 2015, Bowden began making frogs to sell to benefit the Mandarin Museum & Historical Society and its renovation and restoration of the historic St. Joseph's Mission Schoolhouse for African-American Children. The frogs became so popular, a must in every Mandarin yard, that he has created and sold more than 10,000 frogs, adding sea turtles and squirrels in recent years. Refusing any compensation for his time and materials, Bowden has raised more than \$150,000 in support of the museum and its mission



Photos courtesy Olis Garber
Sandy Arpen was presented with a custom printed and framed Olis Garber photograph.

Mandarin Museum cont. on pg. 9

Mandarin Art Festival tradition continues

By Susie Scott
mail@floridanewsline.com

Thanks to the hard work of dozens of volunteers over the days, weeks and months leading up to and during the 2023 Mandarin Art Festival, the show came together in rain and shine. Everyone pulled together to fulfill all aspects of the show and ensure the festival was a success. The threat of rain on Saturday never materialized, but there was no denying it was a soggy Sunday. In spite of some drippy weather on Sunday, there were more than 4000 attendees who came through the gates on Mandarin and Brady roads over the weekend.

The show had more than 100 artist exhibitors showcasing their talent in multiple categories from painting, to sculpture to photography to jewelry and more judged by famed artist and Museum Director John Bunker and Ginger Sheridan, an internationally known lecturer and scholar in photography. More than a dozen Green Market vendors participated with their local consumable products for sale. Artists and vendors were fed lunch by Chick-fil-A of Mandarin as a special welcome to our community and its largest event. Krispy Kreme in Mandarin provided doughnuts and the Mandarin Community Club



Photos courtesy Doris Hastings
Local artist Julie Fetzer with this year's Mandarin Art Festival t-shirt.

Mandarin Art cont. on pg. 2



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Mandarin Art cont. from pg. 1

contributed coffee, which kept everyone sweetened and caffeinated to start their mornings.

A dedicated group of volunteers never stopped all week and never slowed down. Volunteers manned the Bake Sale inside the building, while outside the club table sold Mandarin signature merchandise. The Children’s Art Show welcomed the art of 12 local schools for exhibit in the historic Mandarin Community Club building, a show that was judged by local well known artist Pablo Rivera.

The Mandarin Community Club was honored by local artist Julie Fetzer who designed the 2023 Art Festival tee shirts and 100th Anniversary tee shirts sold by the club. Fetzer further supported the Art Festival and the Club’s 100th by personally signing a limited number of items upon request on Saturday.

Activities included an appearance by the Chick-fil-A cow to thrill kids and adults alike and the Spanish Association had authentic and live flamenco dance performances. Local musicians from the Under the Oaks Music Jam at the Walter Jones Park performed live for those dining under the tent. The historic Post Office and General Store manned by the Mandarin Museum was open to



Children's Art Show and Bake Sale at this year's festival.

all for a step back in time. Members of the Mandarin Masonic Lodge hosted a sand search and Child ID program and Rotary of Mandarin manned the gates for both days to support this event.

There are many heroes who make the Festival possible this and every year since its inception in 1968 and it has grown to become the largest event in Mandarin. See the full list of the many business partners and sponsors on the club’s website at mandarinartfestival.org.

The Mandarin Community Club wishes to thank all for their support as guests and visitors, and those who proved their dedication, commitment, and genuine love for what the Art Fest means to Mandarin. We hope to see you next year for a sunny and successful 2024 Mandarin Art Festival!



Mandarin libraries cont. from pg. 1

Do you have reluctant readers? Build their reading confidence with the help of two cute dogs! Read to Trey the Sheltie on Saturday, May 6. He visits Mandarin Library at 1 p.m. and South Mandarin Library at 3 p.m. Tenor the Newfoundland therapy dog will visit South Mandarin Library on Saturday, May 13 at 2:30 p.m. and Mandarin Library Saturday, May 27 at 2:30 p.m.

Check out “STEAM & Stories” (for ages five through 12) at the Mandarin Library Mondays at 3:30 p.m. Each story is paired with a fun hands-on activity from the exciting world of Science, Technology, Engineering Art and Math. Explore more STEM concepts at Mandarin Library in Junior Scientists (ages five through eight) Wednesdays at 3:30 p.m. Then, Thursdays at 3:30 p.m., experiment with fizzing, foaming and fun chemical reactions in Junior Scientists: Mad Science Lab (ages nine through 12).

Junior Artists (ages five through eight)

should join us at South Mandarin Library Tuesdays at 4 p.m. For artists aged nine through 12, there’s a new five-week long Junior Artists: Textile Studio Lab Wednesdays at 4 p.m. covering the basics of weaving, fabric painting, sewing and felting.

Visit www.jaxpubliclibrary.org/events to find more programs.

The Friends of the South Mandarin Branch Library Book Sale returns Thursday and Friday, June 1 – 2 (10 a.m. – 5 p.m.) and Saturday June 3 (10 a.m. – 3 p.m.) at 12125 San Jose Blvd. Deals include: Fill a plastic bag for \$5 or paper bag for \$10 or \$1 per individual item.

The Friends of Mandarin Library Book Sale is back Friday and Saturday June 2 – 3 (10 a.m. – 4 p.m. both days) at 3330 Kori Road. Deals include: Fill a paper grocery bag for \$10, \$5 or less for individual items.

Both sales are cash only with proceeds benefiting their respective library. Bags are provided.

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BFF

Best Furry Friend
of the month

Meet Finn!



Breed:
Brittany Spaniel
Favorite Activity:
Swimming in the pool
Favorite Food:
Milk Bone treats
Favorite Friend:
Sawyer (our other Brittany Spaniel)
How did your BFF get his name:
Finn, after Huck Finn

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!
Pages 12-13

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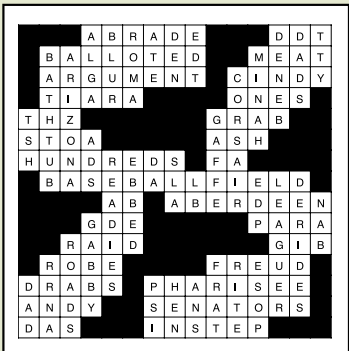
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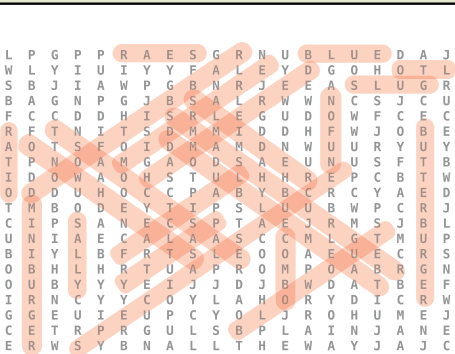
Last month's Mystery Photo was outside the Muse Bar on San Jose Boulevard.



Answers
to our
Puzzles
PG 10



A. toppings B. grill C. fat D. buns



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May

Community Calendar

What's Happening in Mandarin

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

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 Maple Street Biscuit Company, 1627 Race Track Road in St. Johns. Visit the group's Facebook page (Playing HOOKie) or email playing-hookie2022@gmail.com for more information.

1st: Southside Newcomers Club will host its monthly Monday Breakfast on the first Monday of each month (this month, May 1) at 10 a.m. at iHop, 3250 Hodges Blvd. Ladies who are new to the area, have had a life-

style 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.

2nd: Honeybee Quilters Guild will meet on Tuesday, May 2 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. This meeting will feature the traditional "Ugly" Auction of member-provided sewing related items (not magazines). Bring a checkbook for your new treasures. Wearing masks is optional. New members/guests welcome. Visit honeybeequilters.org for more information.

6th: 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 May 6 and May 20 in Walter Jones Historical Park, 11964 Mandarin Road. Visit www.mandarinmuseum.net or call (904) 268-0784 for more information.

6th: Paint party at Mandarin Museum will be held on May 6 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Come to the museum, located at 11964 Mandarin Road to purchase, paint, and take home a Mandarin Frog (or sea turtle or squirrel). The cost is \$22 (\$24 for a squirrel) and advance registration is required; email info@mandarinmuseum.org to sign up.

7th: 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, May 7 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.

8th: 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.

13th: Southside Multiple Sclerosis group meets on the second Saturday of each month (this month on May 13) 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.

13th: Second Saturday Arts and Farmers Market at First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd. on May 13 from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Visit www.facebook.com/SecondSat-Market/ for more information.

13th: The Southern Genealogist's Exchange Society will meet Saturday, May 13 at 10 a.m. at the Mandarin Branch Library, 3330 Kori Road and online via Zoom. The speaker will be John Strasburg, who will discuss the topic, "Stop battling with military records." Visit www.sges-

jax.org or call (904) 778-1000 for more information and the Zoom link.

15th: The All Star Quilters Guild will meet at 9:30 a.m. for socializing prior to the 10 a.m. meeting on Monday, May 15 at the First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd. Linda Sill of Creative Quilting will present "A Quilter's Journey." Sew and Tell is always a feature. Guests are welcome. Visit www.allstarquilters.org for more information.

25th: Mandarin Women's Club will hold its monthly luncheon at the Ramada Inn, 3130 Hartley Road in Mandarin on May 25. Doors open at 10:30 a.m. and reservations for the luncheon are required. Local news anchor Tenikka Hughes will be the guest speaker. The cost of the luncheon is \$25 and must be received by May 18; to make reservations and obtain payment instructions, contact Susie at spm104@aol.com or (904) 885-8952. Visit www.mandarinwomen-sclub.com for more information.

25th: Mandarin Republican Club will meet on Thursday, May 25 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.

26th: The Italian American Club of Jacksonville will hold its popular Spaghetti to Go on Friday, May 26 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.

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Peripheral Neuropathy Breakthrough!

***"My feet feel like they're on fire."
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"I live in constant fear that I'll fall."
"I can't sleep, my hands and feet tingle all night."***

What do all of these people have in common? They suffer from **peripheral neuropathy**. It's estimated that more than 20 million people in the United States have peripheral neuropathy. Unfortunately this figure may be significantly higher as the disease is often misdiagnosed because of its wide array of symptoms.

Dr. Jann Turpin of Riverplace Acupuncture Integrative Health in Jacksonville shares this belief. "I've been treating neuropathy, in all its various forms, for over one decade and so often my patients come to me because of the symptoms, not because of the diagnosis. They saw one of my newspaper ads, or read the testimonial of another patient, or spoke to another patient and said to themselves, 'hey, I feel the same thing'."

Lisa B. testified to this. "Pain doesn't wake me at night anymore and I can walk as much as I want to all day without pain. I'm going to start exercising on the treadmill, for the first time in years. These are things I couldn't do before seeing Dr. Jann and getting acupuncture!"

Fortunately, Lisa heard about Dr. Jann Turpin and how she offers a real solution at Riverplace Acupuncture.

"Almost all of our patients come to us with a story similar to Lisa's. They've been everywhere else. They've been told there's no hope. They've been told 'it's just a part of getting older'." shares Jessi, Patient Care Coordinator at Riverplace Acupuncture. "It just breaks my heart but I know how much we can help people like Lisa so I'm always so happy when they walk through our door."

Those diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy often face a very grim reality; Western medicine declares that there is no solution while most alternative therapies carry large price tags and offer little to no resolve. Which is why Dr. Turpin and the staff at Riverplace Acupuncture pride themselves on being 'the last resort with the best results'.

Peripheral neuropathy is a result of damage to the nerves and this damage is commonly caused by lack of blood flow in the hands and feet. A lack of blood flow results in a lack of nutrients; the nerves then begin to degenerate and die which causes pain ranging from discomfort to debilitating. Because neuropathy is a degenerative condition, once those nerves begin to deteriorate they will continue to do so until they are completely expired, leaving those suffering with crippling balance issues. "In this case, the absence of pain is not necessarily a good thing," shares Dr. Turpin. "This usually indicates that your nerves are hanging on by a fragile thread."

So how exactly is Dr. Turpin able to reverse the effects of this degenerative disease? "Acupuncture has been used to increase blood flow for thousands of years which helps to get the necessary nutrients to the affected nerves. But the real magic happens when I integrate ATP Resonance BioTherapy™. This is tech that was originally developed by NASA to expedite recovering and healing."

"I just can't say enough about Dr. Jann," Lisa shared through tears of joy. "My husband and I moved here 3 years ago and he's gone to the beach almost every day. I always stayed home because of the pain and discomfort. Yesterday I walked on the beach with him! And next week we're starting ballroom dancing lessons. I am truly living life these days."

According to Lisa's test results, she has seen a 72% improvement in pain and functionality, which is on par with many of our patients, shares Jessi.

"But more important than those test results is the joy she's expressed being here and hearing about all the amazing things she's able to do because she feels great!"

By seamlessly blending the ancient science of acupuncture with modern medical solutions, Dr. Turpin has achieved a 90% success rate in reversing the effects of neuropathy. She starts each patient with an initial consultation during which a sensory exam is performed. "This not only aids in making a proper diagnosis but it helps to define just how much nerve damage has occurred," tells the doctor. "This is important because if a patient has suffered more than 95%, there is little that I can do to help them. I'm familiar with the medical miracle but I know my limits as a practitioner and the limits of my medicine."

When it comes to treating peripheral neuropathy, regardless of its origin, early detection greatly improves your chances of a full recovery.

If you or someone you love is suffering with chronic pain that presents as burning, tingling or 'pins and needles' or you've recently been diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy, it's important to know that there are options. There is hope!

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Q & A

Q & A with Duval County School Board Member Lori Hershey, District 7

Q: Do you have an update on Duval Ready?

A: We are coming up on our first opportunity this school year to have students graduate with this seal on their diploma for CTE (Career and Technical Education). Duval Ready is a diploma certification earned during grades eight through 12 for students who want to go directly to the workforce upon graduation. They study a workforce curriculum, to include professionalism, communication, teamwork, and problem solving, and then complete a final capstone experience to earn their Duval Ready designation. I'm excited for the work that the district has done to create this certification because the soft skills that are being acquired by the students have been identified by the local business community as very needed.

Q: Can you share graduation dates?

A: It's hard to believe we are nearing the end of this school year. Graduation ceremonies have been set for our high schools. Atlantic Coast High School will graduate its seniors on June 1 at 1 p.m. and Mandarin High School will hold its ceremony on June 2 at 5 p.m. Both ceremonies will be held at the VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena in downtown Jacksonville. I'd like to say congratulations to all of our graduates and commend them for their hard work.

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

A: We have some exciting and historic news at Atlantic Coast High School. For the first time in Duval County Public Schools' history, a female coach will coach a boys' basketball team. Atlantic Coast has hired former Bishop Kenny girls' coach and University of North Florida women's basketball assistant coach Charlesea Clark to coach the Stingrays boys basketball team. I'd like to welcome her to our district.

Q: How can our readers contact you?

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

Q & A

Q & A with Jacksonville City Council Member Michael Boylan, District 6

Q: Can you bring us up to date [as of interview date of April 18] with some of the rezoning requests in Mandarin?

A: There are four rezoning actions of substance to discuss:

Aladdin/Marbon Road: To recap, this application originally came to us as a rezoning, but we asked the applicant to resubmit as a PUD to address and codify conditions from the neighbors. It is scheduled for the Planning Commission on April 20 and if it is approved, will appear before LUZ on May 2.

Reed Avenue/Hawk's Hollow: This is on a similar track as the above property, just a bit later timeline. The applicant is in the process of submitting a new plan which reduces the number of units and adds a small park. This project should appear before the Planning Commission on approximately May 4 and if approved, will appear before LUZ shortly thereafter.

Livingston Road: I have not yet seen a revised site plan or written description for this project, but I've been told they plan to decrease the number of units requested and make the units detached. It's not likely to appear before the Planning Commission until mid-May or early June.

County Dock Road: This application to rezone 10.34 acres has just now been submitted for a second reading at LUZ. It's in the very early stages of consideration and our office is doing its due diligence to keep the public informed. This application requests 70-foot lots, which are smaller than the previously proposed 90-foot lots. Also, the entrance to the development will be off of Loretto Road, not County Dock Road as previously proposed.

Q: Can you go over some of the road closures in Mandarin?

A: We have a couple of significant road closures in our area. There will be a lengthy road closure for bridge repairs, from late April to mid July, along Julington Creek Road from Aladdin Road to Hood Landing Road. Motorists will have to use Loretto Road as a detour between these two points and patience will certainly be required, especially during school start and end times.

Also scheduled to begin in late April is construction along Haley Road in the Pickwick Park and Fixel Forest areas. This is a JEA construction project.

Q: What is the latest on the Alberts Field/dog park project?

A: Our office has received lots of inquiries about this project. The Orange Picker Road project is expected to start construction in May. We expect the road realignment and parking lot improvements to be complete by the end of the year. The park improvements, including the dog park, will be completed in early 2024.

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

A: I'm grateful for the support of District 6 constituents in the recent election and I'm looking forward to welcoming new neighbors along Bartram Park Boulevard to our district. Feel free to reach out to our office with any questions and also to sign up for our bi-monthly emails, which contain a lot of helpful and updated information.

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

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

Quilters guild members help community

By Sondie Frus
mail@floridanewsline.com

Quilters have extra big hearts and All Star Quilters’ Guild members exemplify this in many ways. Their purpose for existing includes words like “providing a sensitive and caring atmosphere,” “fostering goodwill and fellowship,” and “having a positive impact on the lives of those its quilts and projects touch.”

Four times a year the monthly gathering of All Star Quilters’ Guild becomes “Food Bank Monday.” On their way into the meeting, quilters stop by an open car trunk and donate food and money to be immediately delivered to the Mandarin Food Bank. This ritual has existed since 1994. “All Star” members make and donate hundreds of quilts and other sewn products annually, but everyone reaches into their pockets and pantries for this extra special dose of caring for the hungry.

The Mandarin Food Bank is a busy place. The cars lined up to receive food can stretch out the long driveway to the main road, a testimony to the food insecurity that exists. It is open every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., operated by volunteers as a mission of the St. Joseph Catholic Church. Anyone residing in the Mandarin community, regardless



Photos courtesy Sondie Frus
Quilters donating.

of religious affiliation, is eligible to be served. It is located at 11730 Old St. Augustine Road and can be reached at (904) 292-1675.

All Star Quilters’ Guild meets at the First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd. on the third Monday of each month. Check-in and social time are at 9:30 a.m. with the meeting beginning at 10 a.m. Visitors are welcome. Visit www.allstarquilters.org for more information.

Local Rotary and Angel Flight volunteers coordinate tornado relief

By Marsha Peacock
mail@floridanewsline.com

Rotarian Becky Beeson with the Satellite Evening Club of Southpoint Rotary and Angel Flight first responder Malcolm Thompson with his wife Melanie recently worked together to help the tornado victims in Rolling Fork, Mississippi.

The collection effort grew so large as to require truck transportation. Rentokil North America, Inc., owners of Florida Pest Control and Terminix, graciously offered the use of one of their 32 foot long diesel box trucks along with fuel for the the 1,300 mile round trip Mississippi relief effort. Members of the Satellite Evening Club of Southpoint Rotary Club also coordinated with Windsor Pointe Retirement Commu- nity. An estimated \$8,260 in donated



Photo courtesy Marsha Peacock
Loading the truck with relief supplies for tornado victims in Rolling Fork, Mississippi.

or purchased supplies were gathered, including 210 cans of powdered baby formula, baby diapers, bottled water, non-perishable food, personal hygiene products, flashlights and batteries, bug spray, adult socks and gift cards.

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Briefs

Chief financial officer at senior living facility receives Professional of the Year award

Betty Sorna, River Garden Senior Services' chief financial officer and senior associate administrator, was named the Association of Jewish Aging Services (AJAS) Professional of the Year during the 2023 AJAS Annual Conference. This award is given to honor and recognize an outstanding AJAS professional who reflects the highest standards of knowledge and expertise; has shown exceptional leadership and is highly respected by the staff, residents and families served.

“Betty Sorna is a colleague who can be counted upon, all of the time. Over the last 27 years, Betty has worked with three of the four CEOs of River Garden and led the agency through multiple complex financing projects. Betty has always stayed laser-focused on River Garden and its mission, and she has guided our financial and operational programs with a steady hand,” said Mauri Mizrahi, chief executive officer of River Garden.

Sorna holds a Bachelor of Business Administration and a Master of Accountancy from the University of North Florida. She is also a Certified Public Accountant. She has chaired the Medicaid Reimbursement Committee of LeadingAge Florida and has also served as a resource to many colleagues in the field. She has prepared testimony for presentation to the Florida Legislature, which has been effective in helping direct additional funding to high quality Florida nursing homes.

As River Garden's chief financial officer, Sorna has responsibilities that span four interrelated not-for-profit corporations: River Garden Senior Services, River Garden Hebrew Home, The Coves at River Garden and River Garden Foundation. She also has operational responsibilities for Admissions and Human Resources within the 180-bed skilled nursing facility. As chief financial officer, Sorna is responsible for development and implementation of annual budgets in excess of \$30 million, and oversees a staff of more than 300.




Photo courtesy River Garden Senior Services
Betty Sorna.

Grant funding available for Northeast Florida nonprofits

The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida has opened its spring competitive grantmaking process and invites nonprofit organizations working in the six-county Northeast Florida region to apply for funding in areas detailed below. Last year, The Community Foundation awarded more than \$2 million in grants through its Founda-

tion-directed grantmaking, supporting organizations large and small across a breadth of issue areas, including young children, aging adults, individual artists, and more. A complete list of competitive grants made last year is available at www.jaxcf.org.

Program Support Grants (Now open)

- Purpose: Support for launching, expanding or improving services that support vulnerable populations and address unmet community needs.
- Amount: Up to \$25,000
- Location: Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, St. Johns and Putnam counties.

Capacity Building Grants (Now open)

- Purpose: Help organizations better achieve their missions, promote continuous improvement and increase effectiveness.
- Amount: Up to \$10,000
- Location: Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, and St. Johns counties

Individual Artist Grants (Opening May 1)

- Purpose: Individual Artist Grants are designed to help Northeast Florida artists emerge to the next level of their artistic careers.
- Amount: Up to \$5,000
- Location: Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, Putnam or St. Johns County

LGBTQ Community Fund Grants (Opening May 1)

- Purpose: The LGBTQ Community Fund makes grants to nonprofit organizations in Northeast Florida that build greater togetherness within LGBTQ communities and support Northeast Florida welcoming and celebrating its LGBTQ population.
- Location: Duval, Nassau, Baker, Clay and St. Johns counties
- Amount: Up to \$25,000

Small organization grants and Beaches Community Fund grants have already closed for the year. Visit www.jaxcf.org for more information about the above grant opportunities.

Third Thursday Lecture to feature Dr. Wayne Wood

The Third Thursday Lecture hosted by the Mandarin Museum & Historical Society in partnership with and held at the Mandarin Community Club, located at 12447 Mandarin Road, will be held on May 18. Refreshments begin at 6:30 p.m. and the program is from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. This is a free event; donations support the operations and programming at the Mandarin Museum.

Dr. Wayne Wood will present “Jacksonville's Architectural Heritage,” an intriguing slide presentation that will include highlights from Wood's new book, “Jacksonville's Architectural Heritage: Bicentennial Edition,” as well as stories and little-known facts

Briefs cont. on pg. 11

travel • pantry raiders • gardening
fishing • entertainment • puzzles

Get to Know ...

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewsline.com

Colleen Rodriguez

Mandarin resident Colleen Rodriguez is celebrating her 25th year with The LJD Jewish Family & Community Services (JFCS), and 12th year as CEO. Raised in South Florida, she did her undergraduate work at Palm Beach Atlantic College before attending Florida State University for her master's degree in social work. She is a licensed clinical social worker who started her career at Stilwell Middle School in Jacksonville, working with a focus on juvenile delinquents. In an effort to affect wider change within the community, she joined JFCS. She said she worked in every department over the years, eventually moving up to the lead role of CEO. She has been married to Eddie Rodriguez, with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, for 15 years. They have two sons and a German shepherd named Roxy.

Q: Why did you first move to Jacksonville?

A: My mother is a Jacksonville native and she and my father moved back to this area to be near my sister's children when I was in college. During my last semester of working on my master's degree at FSU, I took an internship here in Jacksonville since everybody was in the area. Once I graduated, I was hired by the same organization that I had the internship with — Communities in Schools.

Q: How did you meet your husband?

Get to Know ...

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



Photo courtesy Colleen Rodriguez
Colleen Rodriguez at this year's JFCS annual spring fundraising event, "Wrapping Ourselves Around the Community."

A: By then I was working for JFCS. We had the same hairdresser, who set us up. We've been together for 20 years and married for 15. I have a bonus son, Jake, who was four years old when Eddie and I married. Now he is a US Marine and Nathan, our younger son, is in sixth grade.

Q: Tell us about what JFCS does.

A: JFCS is a 106-year-old organization and one of the oldest nonprofits in Northeast Florida. It is uniquely and intentionally designed to wrap services around the more than 26,000 people who come through our doors each year. We serve the entire community; 80 percent of our clients are not Jewish. In fact, I am not Jewish!

Q: What services does JFCS offer?

A: Our services basically fit in two

categories: first, for basic needs, we offer the Max Block Food Pantry (in 2021 we provided more than 136,000 meals) and financial assistance. Secondly, for higher needs, we offer mental health services (both in school and in the community), we are the largest child welfare provider in Northeast Florida with custody of approximately 470 children on any given day, and we also have the privilege of serving the Jewish community, including approximately 100 Holocaust survivors who live in the area. We provide meals and transportation for seniors and always need volunteers! Also, did you know that the only Holocaust gallery on the East Coast between Atlanta and Miami is located in our building?

Q: What is your favorite part of your job?

A: I really like to see that even when people come to us in crisis, we can meet people where they are. We see what I call the "resilience of human spirit" on a daily basis. When people accept help, they can right themselves and find hope and come out on the other side. That we can be a part of that is hugely rewarding.

Q: What do you like to do in your spare time?

A: My son is a baseball player, so we spend lots of evenings watching him play. I also love to go boating in the St. Johns River.

[Editor's Note: Visit www.jfcsjax.org for resources, referrals, and more information.]

Mandarin Museum cont. from pg. 1

and programs, including an expansion of the Mandarin Museum building owned by the City of Jacksonville.

Since 2011, Arpen has led the Mandarin Museum & Historical Society as its volunteer executive director. Under her leadership, the organization has meaningfully preserved and shared Mandarin's history, culture, and natural resources. Major accomplishments include saving, restoring, and moving the St. Joseph's Mission Schoolhouse for African American Children to Walter Jones Historical Park, launching a successful capital campaign to fund the expansion and renovation of Mandarin Museum's exhibit galleries and archives, and overseeing the initial phases of the project. In addition, Arpen managed the museum's operations, facilities, archives, tours, outreach, and marketing.

The board of directors, along with newly-hired Executive Director Brittany Cohill and Volunteer Coordinator Paula Suhey, presented Arpen with a custom printed and framed Olis Garber original photograph of Mandarin's oak canopy over Brady Road — her favorite in Garber's Mandarin series. Messages of gratitude were inscribed on the back from museum friends and family. Another uniquely Mandarin gift to Arpen was a surprise performance from Music Under the Oaks musician Eric Arndt.

Arpen will remain a volunteer with the Mandarin Museum, but in her words, "Now I get to just focus on the fun stuff!"



Donald Bowden receiving his official resolution from the City of Jacksonville.

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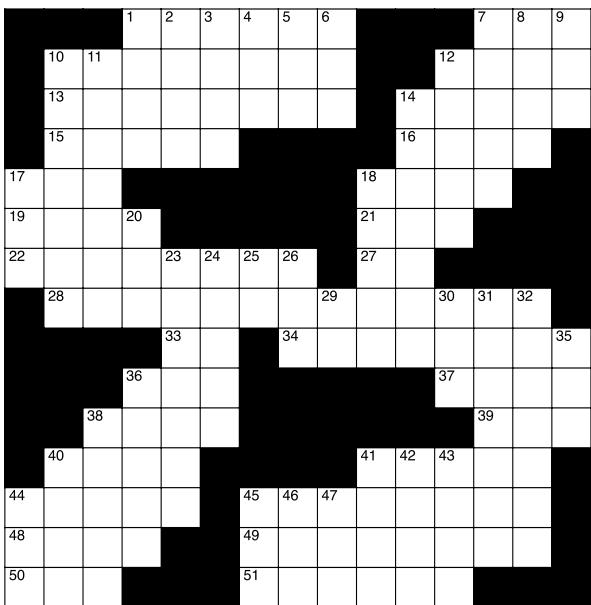
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Answers on page 3
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CLUES ACROSS

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Wear away by friction | 33. Blood type |
| 7. Insecticide | 34. Scottish city |
| 10. Elicited a secret vote | 36. Google certification (abbr.) |
| 12. Beef | 37. Serbian monetary unit |
| 13. Disagreement | 38. Make a sudden surprise attack on |
| 14. __ Crawford, supermodel | 39. Wood or metal bolt |
| 15. Jeweled headdress | 40. Relaxing attire |
| 16.. Digits | 41. Famed neurologist |
| 17. Trillion hertz | 44. Dullish brown fabrics |
| 18. Snap up | 45. Member of ancient Jewish sect |
| 19. Classical portico | 48. Griffith, Rooney |
| 21. Residue after burning | 49. Lawmakers |
| 22. Large integers | 50. Government lawyers |
| 27. Free agent | 51. The arch of the foot |
| 28. Where ballplayers work | |

CLUES DOWN

1. Nonflowering aquatic plant
2. Britpop rockers
3. National capital
4. Consumed
5. The habitat of wild animals
6. Sun up in New York
7. Cygnus star
8. Male parents
9. Talk to you (abbr.)
10. A place to clean oneself
11. Southwestern US state
12. South Korean idol singer
14. Pirate
17. Pituitary hormone (abbr.)
18. Mistake
20. Promotions
23. Prepares
24. Partner to flowed
25. State lawyer
26. Patti Hearst's captors
29. Pound
30. Electronic data processing
31. Sports player
32. Treats with contempt
35. Apprehend
36. Excessively talkative
38. Highways
40. Ribosomal ribonucleic acid
41. College organization for males
42. Any customary observance or practice
43. Employee stock ownership plan
44. Male parent
45. The 23rd letter of the Greek alphabet
46. Female bird
47. Autonomic nervous system

BURGER JOINT SLANG WORD SEARCH

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

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

WORDS

ALL-THE-WAY
BLOWOUT
BLUE
BUTTER BURGER
COMBO
DOUBLE MEAT
EAST COAST
FACIAL
HAMMERED
LTO
MID-RARE
MINIBURGER
NO FUN
ON WHEELS
PATTY
PLAIN JANE
RABBIT FOOD
RATIO
SALLY
SEAR
SLIDER
SLUG
SMASH BURGER
SPECIAL SAUCE



Solve the code to discover words related to hamburgers.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 9 = N)

- A. 24 19 6 6 14 9 17 21**
Clue: Lettuce and tomato are two
- B. 17 18 14 5 5**
Clue: Cooking device
- C. 15 13 24**
Clue: Oily or greasy matter
- D. 3 16 9 21**
Clue: Burger breads

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Jimmy's Fishing Report

By Jimmy Tomazinis
mail@floridanewsline.com

I hope everyone is doing well and staying cool as the warmer part of the year begins to ramp up. With the hot temperatures and Memorial Day later this month, May can mean the beginning of the busy boating season in Northeast Florida. Considering this I wanted to take a few words and remind everyone of the wonderful water resources we have available to us here and that it's everyone's responsibility to keep them safe and enjoyable places for everyone.

While no and minimum wake zones can seem like inconveniences, they were placed there for the safety of people and wildlife and are not optional. We have plenty of space in our area of the river, so be courteous to others and don't crowd them while they enjoy their own little slice of paradise. If you must pass someone at a close distance, please be mindful of your wake and know that you are liable for it. Kayaks, paddle boards, canoes, and other small watercraft are much more sensitive to boat wakes than larger boats, so think of how they will be impacted after you pass them.

If you are new to boating or have never taken one before I would highly recom-

mend taking a boater safety course. An FWC-approved course can be found online at www.boatus.org/florida. Another valuable resource for in-person courses and vessel safety inspections would be our local Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla. You can reach out to them via email at division07014@gmail.com for a schedule of courses and any other information.

One last thought is to be aware of your trash while on the water and if you see some in the water, please remove it so we can continue to leave the river better than when we found it.

Now let's talk fishing. The larger redfish have shown up and many over slot fish are being caught on crab around dock lines and shell bars. Sheepshead are around if you want to move a little closer to the docks and present them with a smaller piece of crab or a clam. The stripers are still hanging on the bridges, biting on frozen shrimp and I'm sure they are partaking in the live shrimp that we no doubt have around already. We just can't throw the nets for them yet. That all starts next month. Until then stay safe, think of others, and tight lines.

Briefs cont. from pg. 8

about some of the city's most interesting buildings. The program will feature many newly discovered architectural gems, culturally significant buildings, and Mid-Century Modern landmarks not included in Wood's original 1989 edition of the book. The Bicentennial Edition, signed by the author, will be available for purchase.

Regarded as one of the foremost chroniclers of Jacksonville's history and architecture, Dr. Wayne Wood has been called "the undisputed godfather of preservation in Jacksonville." An author, historian, artist, and retired optometrist, Wayne is the founder of Riverside Avondale Preservation, the Riverside Arts Market, and Friends of Hemming Park.

For more information, call (904) 268-0784.

Mandarin Women's Club welcomes local news anchor

On May 25, local news anchor Tenikka Hughes will be the guest speaker at the Mandarin Women's Club luncheon at the Ramada Inn in Mandarin. The Kentucky Derby "Run for the Roses" will also be

celebrated, so attendees are invited to wear their most outlandish Derby hat.

Doors open at 10:30 a.m. and reservations for the luncheon are required.

The luncheon cost is \$25 and must be received by Thursday, May 18. To make reservations and obtain payment instructions, call Susie at (904) 885-8952 or email her at spm104@aol.com.

Hughes is a North Carolina native and has been in the news business for 15 years. She currently anchors the weekday newscasts for Action News Jax. She has a passion for storytelling and community engagement. She can often be found spending time in local classrooms promoting youth literacy and education or connecting with viewers at community events across the Jacksonville area. Attendees will learn about the day-to-day activities of a news anchor from this Emmy-nominated journalist and Florida Associated Press Broadcasters Award recipient.

Visit www.mandarinwomensclub.com for more information on events, photos, and membership forms.

Did you know?
Archived issues of Mandarin NewsLine may be found online!
Visit www.floridanewsline.com



Summer Camp and Activities Guide!



Cultural Arts Night held at Crown Point

By Mary Eyler
mail@floridanewslines.com

On March 9, the Crown Point Elementary School arts department held a cultural arts night that included a huge display of artwork from students, including performances from Crown Point’s drum ensemble led by Khemya MitRahina, the Cathedral Arts dance group, and the Springfield Middle School cheer team. The artwork from Deborah Bickle and Adam Hill’s

classes were inspired by traditional cultural styles from all around the world. There were several stations where the students created their own beautiful art pieces, such as Ukrainian eggs, Chinese fans, Guatemalan Quetzal, African necklaces and more. Food trucks were on site for families to purchase dinner to eat in the courtyard area. It was a great night for our students and their families to enjoy learning and celebrating different cultures.



First grader Kenley Crew checks out her class artwork with her parents. Photos courtesy Mary Eyler

Act II Players announces 2023 summer camp

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

Act II Players community theatre will stage Disney’s Moana, Jr. musical at the culmination of its 2023 summer camp. Participants aged six through 17 will join camp directors Tori Tompkins and Courteney Phillips for four weeks at the Mandarin Community Club.

The camp will cover all things theatre, including:

- Acting skills (improvisation, line memorization, projection, tone, characterization, stage movement)
- Singing
- Dancing
- Samoan history and culture

“This is a wonderful, fun show,” said

Tompkins. “The kids will have a great time learning about all the elements of theatre and seeing the show come together. Everyone is welcome to participate.”

The camp runs from June 26 through July 21, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. each day and the cost is \$225 per person. There is a discount for multiple family members.

Campers do not need to have experience. At the conclusion of camp, there will be six performances of Disney’s Moana, Jr. at the Mandarin Community Club. All camp attendees will have a role in the show. Tickets will be on sale to the general public beginning in May.

Visit <https://actiplayers.org/2023-summer-camp-1> to register.

Driver’s Ed classes offered

Duval County Public Schools will offer Driver’s Education classes this summer as part of its Community Education. All classes are six days and class times are different at the schools that are offering the classes.

The cost of the class is \$180 for the six day session.

Registration is online at <https://duvalschools.reg.eleyo.com>

The following schools are offering Summer Driver’s Education:

Andrew Jackson, Atlantic Coast, Ed White, First Coast, Fletcher, Mandarin, Wolfson, and Sandalwood.

Call Darrin Williams or Diane Allen at (904) 858-6080 with any questions.

- Session 1: June 12, 13, 14, 15, 20, 21
- Session 2 : June 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, July 3
- Session 3 : July 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17
- Session 4 : July 19, 20, 24, 25, 26, 27



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Summer Camp and Activities Guide!



Factors to consider before choosing a summer camp

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

Adults often look back fondly on their childhood experiences at summer camp. Camps can provide the opportunity to form lifelong friendships and discover rewarding hobbies that can enrich campers' lives for decades to come.

Choosing a summer camp is no small task, as the options at families' disposal range from overnight camps to weekday afternoon camps to camps that specialize in certain programs, such as music or dance. Cost also is likely to factor into families' decisions, as the American Camp Association notes that cost can vary greatly depending on which camp families choose. For example, the ACA notes that the average daily fee at a resident camp is \$85, while the same fee at a day camp is \$43.

When looking for a summer camp for kids, families should make the decision together. Kids should be involved in the selection process, as they're more likely to have an enjoyable camp experience if they had a say in where they will be spending their summers. The following are some factors families should consider

as they look for summer camps, courtesy of the ACA.

Kids' interests: The ACA urges parents to consider the child's interests and personality before choosing a summer camp. Parents might want their children to attend the same summer camp they visited as youngsters, but each child is different. Just because mom and dad liked a particular camp does not mean their children will. The ACA notes that summer camps should align with children's interests and maturity level.

Locale: Locale may only be a consideration for families considering overnight camps. Kids will likely be familiar with the locations of local day camps, but overnight camps might be set in mountain ranges, near the ocean or environments less familiar to youngsters. Kids who love the ocean might benefit from oceanfront camps that focus on marine biology, boating or other activities involving the water. In the same vein, youngsters who like camping and hiking might be more likely to embrace camps located in mountainous regions.

Session length: Camps may last as little

as one week or up to a couple of months. Session length should be considered by families looking at both local day camps and overnight resident camps. Parents who want their children to enjoy a largely schedule-free summer might not want to commit their children to lengthy camp sessions, even if those sessions are close to home. If parents think their children can benefit from the same structure they're accustomed to during the school year, then an overnight camp

that stretches for several weeks might be what they're looking for.



Photo courtesy MetroCreative
Summer camps give kids a chance to make memories that will last a lifetime.

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Guest Column

Acupuncture as integrated health

By Dr. Jann Turpin

As an acupuncture physician, I have heard countless infuriating stories from patients who have struggled to navigate the healthcare system in Florida. Many patients are now waiting four to eight months for non-emergency health issues. When they do eventually get seen, they are not getting the attention and care they deserve. In fact, many patients get worse because physicians often don't have time to review possible medication interactions, to dive deeply into complex cases or to really even listen. Patients are waiting for months only to eventually hear that there is no solution to their health problems or they are just getting old, leaving them feeling hopeless and abandoned by the healthcare system.

Does a patient's condition worsen and become more difficult to treat during this wait? Many times, unfortunately, the answer is yes. This is where integrative health care practices like acupuncture come in. Acupuncture is a time-tested form of medicine that has been used for thousands of years to treat a wide range of health issues. In fact, research has shown that acupuncture can be effective in treating conditions such as chronic pain, headaches, anxiety, and depression, among others.

Acupuncture is a safe and non-invasive treatment option that has minimal side effects. Additionally, acupuncture can be used in conjunction with traditional

medicine to provide a more comprehensive approach to healthcare.

One patient I treated, Susan, was suffering from chronic back pain for almost half of her 67 years. As it worsened, she saw multiple doctors and eventually had surgery in the hope of finding relief; however, when the surgery went badly, she found herself unable to get in with the surgeon for follow-up care. Despite her continued pain and discomfort, she was left to deal with the aftermath on her own. While she waited for an appointment, her pain increased and she started to lose feeling in her feet. She started having more falls and her husband became her full time caretaker by the time they came to my clinic.

At my clinic, Susan was able to find relief from her symptoms and improve her overall quality of life. By targeting the root cause of her pain and providing ongoing care, her pain was reduced by 75 percent and she and her husband were planning a trip to Alaska by the end of her treatment plan.

As the healthcare system in Florida continues to struggle, it is crucial that patients are aware of alternative options such as acupuncture that can provide them with the care and attention they need to lead healthy and fulfilling lives.

Dr. Jann Turpin is the founder of Riverplace Acupuncture. Visit www.riverplaceacupuncture.com for more information.



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Nutrition Check

Eliminating diet culture

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

Have you ever heard of diet culture? The term diet culture is a social exception that tells us how we are expected to eat, look, and that only when our bodies look a certain way, we are accepted. It is a system of beliefs and rules that promote weight-loss at any cost to achieve the “desired” appearance, which can impact all genders and all aged individuals from adolescents to older adults. During this month, May 6 is recognized as “National No Diet Day.”

Examples of diet culture are:

- Categorizing calories and labeling foods as “good or bad”
- Commenting on/criticizing another persons’ weight (children and adults)
- Diets that cut out food groups (e.g., fruits, whole grains)
- Influencers who glorify “health” by adopting unhealthy eating behaviors

Diet culture can be very dangerous, not only emotionally, but also physically. It often fuels guilt and shame around eating, encourages body discrimination, and can lead to disordered eating habits and in some cases, eating disorders such as bulimia, binge eating, anorexia, or many others.

In order to avoid diet culture, we can:

- Removing labels such as “good or bad” when it comes to foods.


All foods can be good and enjoyed in moderation; let’s focus on food positivity over food negativity.

- Focusing on your overall diet and acknowledging foods that make you feel good, recognizing that all foods provide value and benefit to our bodies, some more than others.
- Try to avoid being exposed to diet culture (this is really hard!), such as unfollowing those on social media who promote strict diets/restrictions/eliminations or ending a conversation with someone who may be talking about it
- Be mindful of how you speak about foods and others in terms of their looks; be kind and seek to be a supportive friend or family member to those who feel diet pressures.
- Think more about intuitive eating. Visit www.intuitiveeating.org/10-principles-of-intuitive-eating/ to learn more.


If you are ever questioning food choices or interested in changing your diet, consult a registered dietitian and they will be able to work through this with you. You can find a nutrition expert by visiting www.eatright.org/find-a-nutrition-expert

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

Unexpected beauty from a “weed” and a bean plant

By Master Gardener Volunteer Lesley Arrandale
mail@floridanewsline.com

It’s the second week in April and we’ve had a good amount of rain. No torrential downpours, just the steady soaking type and some refreshing brief showers. While venturing into the backyard one day, I glanced along the back of my house, where I’ve laid some long branches to edge an informal bed. Sitting on one of them was a lovely red and black butterfly. I’ve seen the species before, but not often; it was a red admiral.

So why did it appear in my yard? Like most butterflies, it needs specific plants on which to lay eggs, so I did some research (<https://tinyurl.com/yxr5u3tu>). Red admirals can be found in many areas of the world, and they are one of the butterflies I saw as a child in the UK. There they lay their eggs on stinging nettles (*Urtica* sp.), and on this continent there are similar plants for them to utilize. In my yard, though, Florida pellitory (*Parietaria floridana*) is its host plant — a weedy thing that I’d been pulling out without a second thought, and certainly without bothering to learn what it was first. Well, I’ve decided to keep some of it and hope for more red admirals. I’ll be more cautious in future about what I edit from my yard, and this article could help: <https://tinyurl.com/mr2mmd3j>. The website is full of information for wildflower enthusiasts and is worth investigation.

As more insects emerge for the summer, I know there’s more to discover. Before our Shumard oak leafed out I noticed it had two egg-shaped “things” dangling from its outer twigs. I’ve recently learnt that they were cocoons of the polyphemus moth, one of our largest and most beautiful silk moths (<https://tinyurl.com/mazr9zv2>). It might sound strange, but I am hoping our tree will host a small army of polyphemus caterpillars — it won’t suffer — as they could be food for hungry baby birds.

I recently planted out some hyacinth beans (*Lablab purpureus*) at the base of a bamboo “teepee” frame. As well as being decorative plants, the leaves can be eaten

like spinach. The beans are edible, with a good amount of protein, but must be boiled before eating as they contain a toxin. Another experiment. For more information, check out <https://tinyurl.com/4hr7wyc7>.

A reminder — the Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide (<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/vh021>) is a great source of information on choosing and growing our more usual summer crops.

If you are having a difficult tomato season, information here could help identify possible diseases: <https://tinyurl.com/45ypukb3>. Although a popular crop, tomatoes are not always easy to grow, and I’ve had little joy recently. Next year I’ll try one or two varieties bred by the University of Florida. There are three available from Proven Winners, in their “Tempting Tomatoes” series. They get great reviews based on flavor and disease resistance.

Some of the plants flowering in my garden include wild petunias (*Ruellia carolinensis*), Simpson’s stoppers (*Myrcianthes fragrans*), lance leaf coreopsis (*Coreopsis lanceolata*), blanket flower (*Gaillardia* sp.), sunflowers (*Helianthus* sp.), wild red salvia (*Salvia coccinea*), starry rosinweed (*Silphium asteriscus*), and — a mixed blessing — beggar’s ticks (*Bidens alba*), one of the very best native plants for a huge variety of pollinators. It’s vital to keep it in check. If you remove its seed heads before the seeds mature, then it’s a great plant. But if those seeds spread, it will live up to the definition of a weed — there will be plants aplenty in the wrong places.

The native passion vine or maypop (*Pasiflora incarnata*) has begun to flower, and the gulf fritillary butterflies that have been flitting around for weeks, have clearly been laying eggs. Their caterpillars are making a meal of the tender new leaves and are growing daily. This native vine can spread too, but it’s simple to pull up when spotted in the wrong place.

The Pantry Raiders

Mediterranean flavors shine through in salad

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

People often turn to lighter fare when the weather warms because a dense, hot meal can contribute to feeling sluggish or overheated when the mercury has risen. In addition to sandwiches and platters of finger foods, salads can be refreshing on warm days. They also tend to be less calorie-dense and healthier than other offerings.

This recipe for “Mediterranean Salad,” courtesy of The American Heart Association, is full of vegetables and beans and fits with a heart-friendly diet. It’s filling and delicious any time of the day or year.

Mediterranean Salad

Serves 4

1 medium head lettuce (green leaf, red leaf or romaine), cut into thin strips

1 medium cucumber, chopped

½ cup tomatoes, chopped

1 15.5-oz. can no-salt-added chickpeas, rinsed and drained

½ medium red onion, finely sliced

½ cup crumbled fat-free or low-fat feta cheese, or ½ cup shredded Parmesan cheese

2 tbsp. red wine vinegar or 2 tbsp. cider vinegar

½ tsp. garlic powder

½ tsp. Pepper

In a large bowl, gently toss the lettuce, cucumber, tomatoes, chickpeas, onion, and feta. In a small bowl, whisk together the oil, vinegar, garlic powder, and pepper. Pour the dressing over the salad, tossing to combine.



Photo courtesy MetroCreative
Mediterranean Salad

Mandarin Women’s Club hosts fashion show



Photo courtesy Gail Packard

The recent Mandarin Women's Club annual Fashion Show featured member models Toni Hadlick, Kathy Broderick, Sandi Hurst, Julia Shartzter, Marion Linda, Donna Fisher, Susan Pearson, Estelle Davis, Jo-Ellen Baxley and Patty Blalock. Visit www.mandarinwomensclub.com for more information on events, photos, and membership forms.

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Travel

A family trip to an Arizona Dude Ranch

By Debi Lander
mail@floridanewslines.com

While spring break brings thousands of visitors to Florida beaches each year, thousands of Floridians pack up and travel west. They often leave the state to go skiing or explore the desert surroundings.

I recently flew to Tucson, Arizona, where I met my son, his wife, and their four children. We were all headed to the White Stallion Dude Ranch, a three-generation family-owned and operated guest ranch. The facility follows a legacy of the founders: to preserve the Western way of life and provide guests with an authentic Western experience. I can tell you they succeed.

Less than an hour after we arrived, all seven of us were in the saddles and taking a trail ride across the prickly pear and giant saguaro cactus landscape. The view became a pinch-me moment. I was riding horses with my family in Arizona! The

Sonoran Desert and Rincon Mountains ahead of us made an extraordinary backdrop, so much so that the location has appeared in many Hollywood movies.

While at White Stallion, we did much more than ride horses; we shot arrows at targets on the archery range and went rock climbing. The two older girls rode E-bikes (electric) while others hit the heated pool. I shot a 22-caliber rifle and pistol (at targets) for the first time. And one morning, I rode up and down Suicide Pass as my horse carefully placed his hooves on the rocky terrain. It was a bit scary but rewarding, too.

We were busy and having fun from sunup to sun down, and the kids never missed television (they are not in the guest rooms). Instead, they met others and played chess, air hockey, and basketball; we sat around a campfire, listened to a country western singer, and tried



Photos courtesy Debi Lander
Trail ride.

line dancing another night.

The strange thing was while we were active, we were relaxed. No need to cook or clean up, no need to carry a wallet, adults can help themselves to cocktails at the honor system bar, and everyone lays back and basks in the starry night sky. I now understand how a family dude ranch vacation may be one of the best getaways ever. It certainly ranks high in my memories (and I have experienced many exotic trips).

What made our days notable were the welcoming and helpful staff at the White Stallion. The wranglers know how to pick an appropriate horse for every rider. They match your weight and equestrian experience (or lack thereof) with the correct steed. I rode Custer, a Norwegian Fjord horse that was slow but steady. My granddaughter Kate qualified for and took her horse, Comanche, on a fast trail ride.

The grounds are immaculate since gar-

deners tend to the plants every morning. The dining room features indoor and outdoor tables, buffet meals, or custom orders for breakfast. Steaks were pre-ordered at lunch and grilled rare, medium, or well done at dinner. The cooks made and presented my son with a surprise birthday cake.

On our last morning, we took a breakfast trail ride, dismounting our horses at a picturesque area with red and white plaid tablecloths draped over picnic tables. The staff, including the ranch owners, cooked blueberry pancakes, eggs, bacon, and sausage on the outdoor grills and served coffee in blue tin cups. I didn't become a cowboy in such a short time, but I sure felt the allure of the Western ways.

For more information: White Stallion Dude Ranch: whitestallion.com.

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



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