

Mandarin NewsLine

June 2023 Volume 17 Issue 8

A Florida NewsLine Publication



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BFF Best Furry Friend



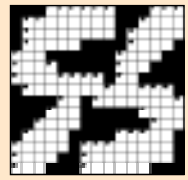
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Q&A with Michael Boylan



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Get To Know ...
Brittany Cohill



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Puzzles



Photo courtesy Steve Gallagher

Homeowner Janet Husney, along with Rotary members Paul Hardaker, Leo Gurman, Robert Meek, Jeff Weeks, Mark O'Connor, Ken McCauley, and project supervisor Louis Dunbar.

Rotary builds 65th wheelchair ramp

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

On April 21, eight members of the Mandarin Rotary Club built a wheelchair ramp at the home of Janet Husney. Club members provided all of the labor, and Hart Felt Ministries provided all of the materials. The ramps are built free of charge to mobility impaired homeowners, and make it much easier for the residents to enter and leave their homes, when they otherwise would be essentially homebound.

The Mandarin Rotary Club is dedicated to serving local citizens

Mandarin Rotary cont. on pg. 2

Relay for Life 2023 surpasses fundraising goal

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewsline.com

"Lights, Camera, Cure" was the local theme at this year's Relay for Life of the First Coast, held on April 22 at Nease High School. According to the American Cancer Society's Senior Development Manager Jaclyn Rodriguez, it was a traditional Relay in a shorter time frame than years past, but all went smoothly.

"The weather was beautiful up until about 6 p.m., right before the luminaria ceremony, when we had a 15 minute downpour," Rodriguez said. "After that, though, we had a beautiful rainbow."

Relay for Life is the American Cancer Society's signature national fundraising event and it has been around locally for many years. According to Rodriguez, pre-Covid there were four Relays in the area, but post-pandemic they have combined them into one big event. This year, there were approximately 50 registered fundraising teams, with about 15 of them showing up with a tent at the event. (Teams can fundraise outside of the event itself.)



Photos courtesy Jaclyn Rodriguez
Luminaria Ceremony after the rain.

"We had about 250 people attend First Coast Relay, but we're working diligently to get attendance up in 2024 by partnering with more of the schools and other community groups," Rodriguez said.

The fundraising total for Relay for Life of the First Coast as of mid-May was \$92,066, well above the goal of \$80,000. The top fundraising team was

the Chemours Company, which was still sending in donations as of press date.

World's Greatest Heating and Air of Nocatee participated in the event by giving away free cotton candy and snow cones to attendees from their purple truck. After the event, Ro-

Relay for Life cont. on pg. 2

Greenland Pines brings home 26th Safety Patrol trophy

By Traci Gunston
mail@floridanewsline.com

Each year, fifth grade safety patrols from all over Duval County gather to compete for the coveted Safety Patrol Play Day trophy. Early on the morning of May 6, at the Police Athletic League on Monument Road, 26 Duval County public and charter schools were represented, with more than 360 participants, including 52 patrol sponsors.

Competitors met up to compete in six relay race competitions and games with hopes of bringing home the trophy and bragging rights for their school. Relays and games included the three-legged race, sack races, stickball relays, spoon relays, tire relays, and the softball relay. As hundreds of families and friends



Photos courtesy Traci Gunston
Greenland Pines safety patrols with their first place trophy.

looked on, the students competed in each round of competition.

At the end of an amazing day of team

patrols came away with this year's trophy and bragging rights. The

Greenland Pines cont. on pg. 9

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Rainbow after the rain at Relay for Life of the First Coast.

Relay for Life cont. from pg. 1

driguez said they followed up with a generous \$1,000 donation.

Relay for Life of the First Coast featured traditional Relay activities like the Luminaria Ceremony to honor those lost to cancer and the Survivors' Lap to celebrate those still fighting. Rodriguez said silly games like Cheeto Head and a frozen shirt race also entertained attendees. The Road to Recovery lap focused on the American Cancer Society's mission and programs; teams made a personalized vehicle to go around the track and earned spirit points as a way to keep the crowd engaged.

Rodriguez said donations raised help fund signature programs like Hope Lodge near Mayo Clinic, where patients receive free lodging during cancer treatment. The American Cancer Society Road To Recovery program

provides free rides to medical appointments and treatment for people with cancer.

"This was a building year for us, post pandemic, as we came back to schools for Relay locations," Rodriguez said. "I can't stress enough how much our partnerships mean to us, especially Nease High School which hosted us."

Rodriguez said organizers are working already to get more schools and more community members involved for next year's Relay, which will again be held at Nease High School (date is to be announced.)

Visit RelayForLife.org/FirstCoastFL and www.facebook.com/groups/first-coastrelay for more information about Relay for Life of the First Coast. Visit cancer.org for more information about the American Cancer Society and the programs it offers.



One team's Road to Recovery lap vehicle.




Survivors' Walk at Relay for Life of the First Coast.

Mandarin Rotary cont. from pg. 1

in need, with the motto, "Service Above Self." The Mandarin Rotary Club meets every Tuesday morning for breakfast at the Ramada Inn on Hartley Road in Mandarin.

For more information about the Mandarin Rotary Club and its opportunities for service and good fellowship, contact Membership Chairman Michael Sullivan at michaels@coj.net.


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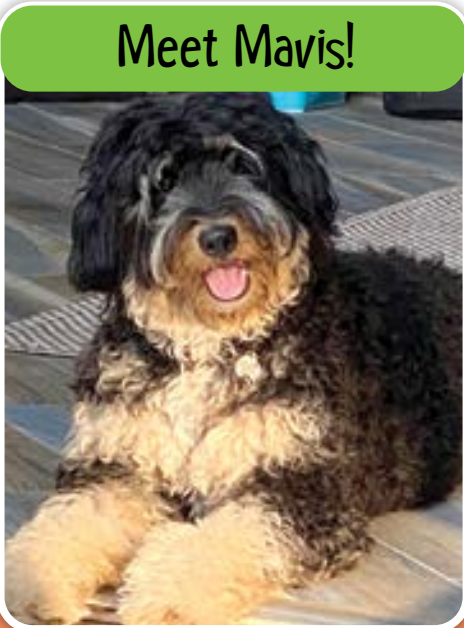
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BFF Best Furry Friend of the month

Breed:
Bernedoodle
Favorite Activity:
Playing with her sister Ellie.
Favorite Food:
Bacon Treats.
Favorite Friend:
Mumma.
How your BFF got its name:
Mavis from Hotel Transylvania.



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

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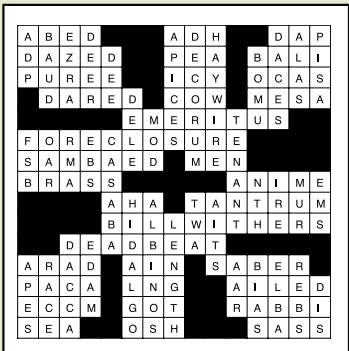
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MYSTERY PHOTO

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

Last month's Mystery Photo was the Lofton Cemetery off Westberry Road.

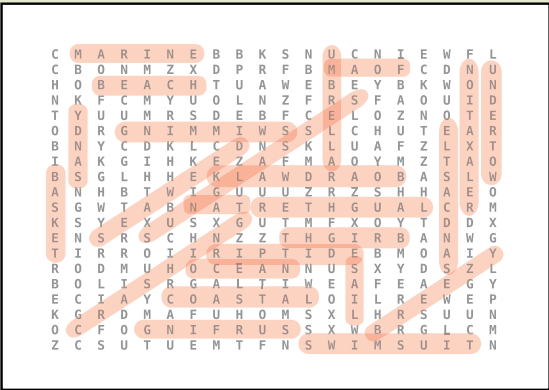


Answers to our Puzzles
PG 10

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A. sunshine B. shore C. boating D. waves



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June

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.toastmasterclubs.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 playinghookie2022@gmail.com for more information.

3rd: 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 June 3 and June 17 in Walter Jones Historical Park, 11964 Mandarin Road. Visit

www.mandarinmuseum.net or call (904) 268-0784 for more information.

3rd: Paint party at Mandarin Museum will be held on June 3 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.

4th: 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, June 4 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.

5th: 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.

5th: Southside Newcomers Club will host its monthly Monday Breakfast on the first Monday of each month (this month, June 5) at 10 a.m. at iHop, 3250 Hodges Blvd. Ladies who are new to the area, have had a lifestyle change or wish to enlarge their group of friends are invited to attend. Contact sncmembership84@gmail.com or call (904) 683-4170 for more information.

6th: Honeybee Quilters Guild will meet on Tuesday, June 6 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 Jennifer Routh, who will present "Binding — It's not as hard as you think." Wearing masks is optional. New members/guests welcome. Visit honeybeequilters.org for more information.

10th: Second Saturday Arts and Farmers Market at First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd. on June 10 from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Visit www.facebook.com/SecondSatMarket/ for more information.

10th: The Southern Genealogist's Exchange Society will take a tour on June 10 beginning at 10 a.m. at Colonial Dames, 4114 Herschel Street, Suite 109, followed by a second stop at 11:30 a.m. for a tour of Merrill House, 317 A. Philip Randolph Blvd. This historical tour will include the satellite archive of Colonial Dames of Florida at the first stop and a tour of a fully furnished house reflecting the life of a successful businessman of 1903 at the second stop. The tour is free for SGES members; call (864) 237-1433 to RSVP. Visit www.sgesjax.org for more information.

10th: Southside Multiple Sclerosis group meets on the second Saturday of each month (this month on June 10) 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 Armstrong, (904) 396-1082 for more information.

13th: "History Chat: A Visual History of Mandarin," will be held at the South Mandarin Branch Library, 12125 San Jose Blvd., on Tuesday, June 13 beginning at 6:30 p.m. Susan Ford, author of "Mandarin"

and Sandy Arpen of the Mandarin Museum & Historical Society will lead the presentation and Q&A session. Visit www.jaxpubliclibrary.org/events for more information.

19th: The All Star Quilters Guild will meet at 9:30 a.m. for socializing prior to the 10 a.m. meeting on Monday, June 19 at the First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd. The program is to be announced. Sew and Tell is always a feature. Guests are welcome. Visit www.allstarquilters.org for more information.

21st: AARP Smart DriverTEK workshop, designed to help people older than 50 learn about the safety technology they are likely to find in their new cars, will be held on June 21 from 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. at River Garden, 11401 Old St. Augustine Road. Current and emerging technologies are being installed in most new vehicle models, and the goal of the Smart DriverTEK class is to extend the number of years drivers are able to safely stay on the road. The workshop is free and no advance registration is required. Call Kari Bell at (904) 288-7855 for more information.

22nd: Mandarin Republican Club will meet on Thursday, June 22 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.

30th: The Italian American Club of Jacksonville will hold its popular Spaghetti to Go on Friday, June 30 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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with Jacksonville City Council Member Michael Boylan, District 6

Q: Can you give an update on the Town Hall meeting held on May 15 regarding the County Dock Road rezoning application?

A: This meeting was well attended. Subsequent to the meeting, the applicant has agreed to modify the application to a Planned Unit Development (PUD), which will allow us to codify the conditions agreed upon by the community and the applicant. I am presently putting together a group of community members to meet with the applicant for this purpose. The property was originally scheduled for 70-foot fronts on the lots and the applicant has agreed to 90-foot fronts, which reduces the number of units from 24 to 21. (Keep in mind that without any changes to zoning, 10 units could already be built on this property.)

Also at the meeting, concerns were expressed regarding retaining and maintaining institutional trees as well as ensuring that water from the property’s retention ponds drains appropriately to the river. With these changes, this application will not be appearing before the Planning Commission as originally scheduled, but at a later date.

Q: Can you address the Julington Creek Road closure?

A: I’ve had ongoing discussions with Robin Smith, the city’s chief of engineering and construction about this and am aware that the road closure is very inconvenient for community members. We considered deferring it until the summer to avoid school traffic, but then it would likely run into the beginning of next school year. The traffic department is monitoring the intersections of Loretto and Aladdin roads as well as Hood Landing and Old St. Augustine in case adjustments are needed at the traffic signals.

Q: What is the latest on the Livingston Road project?

A: The applicant filed a revised written description and site map on

May 8. Of note is that the garages for the townhomes will be located on the back of the units and won’t be seen from the road. The revised Livingston Road application (80 townhomes) was approved by the Planning Commission and now will be on the agenda of the City Council’s Land Use and Zoning Committee on Tuesday, June 6 at 5 p.m. in the Council chambers and to the full City Council at its meeting on June 13.

Q: Can you share how the process for rezoning works?

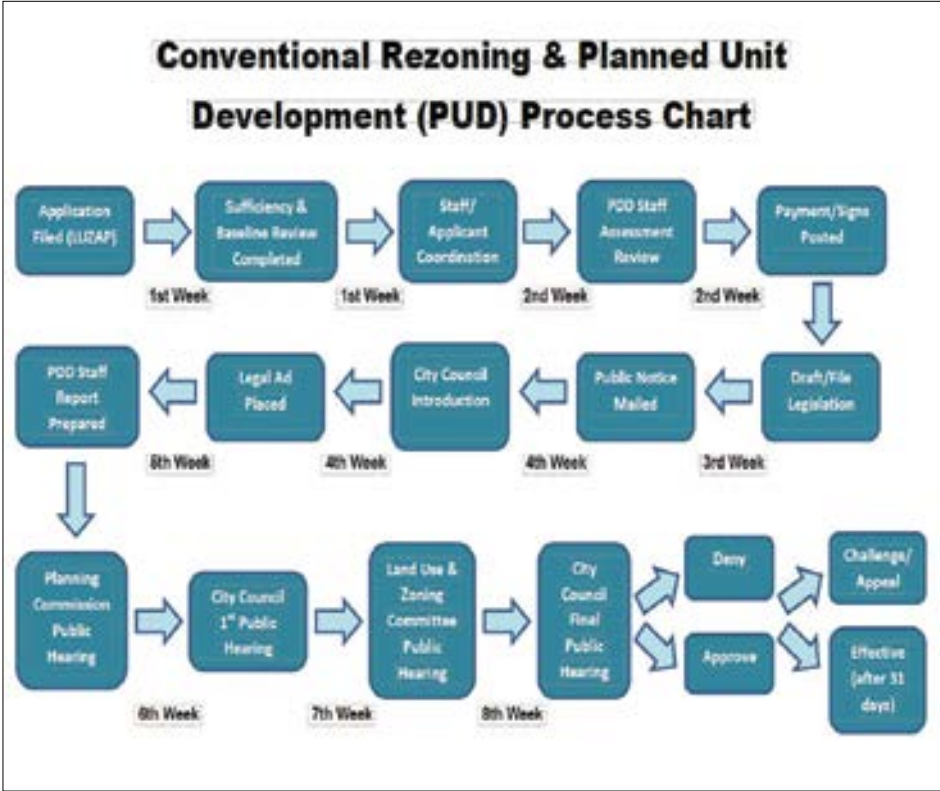
A: There are multiple layers to this process with a lot of vetting before it gets to the Council for a vote. As to the citizen interaction, while there are opportunities beforehand for citizens to speak to the LUZ Committee and the full Council, the initial focus should be when the matter is taken up by the Planning Commission, the LUZ the following week and the full Council the week thereafter. (The first, third and fourth boxes on the bottom of the flow chart.) We encourage the applicants to host a community meeting early in the process in order to gauge the neighbors level of support (or opposition) and learn of their specific concerns. Our office will make certain that our constituents know the best time to speak their opinion before the respective bodies as the application moves forward.

Q: Do you have anything else to share with Mandarin residents?

A: I am pleased that I will be introducing a resolution at the City Council meeting on June 27 recognizing the 100th anniversary of the Mandarin Community Club. Congratulations to all the hardworking volunteers and club members.

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

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



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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!"

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. This shortage 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 the nerves begin to deteriorate they will continue to do so until they are completely expired, leaving those suffering with severe balance issues. "In this case, the absence of pain is not necessarily a good thing," shares Dr. Turpin. "This usually means that your nerves are hanging by a 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."

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.

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Q&A

with Duval County School Board Member Lori Hershey, District 7

Q: Can you share comments on the impending retirement of Superintendent Dr. Diana Greene at the end of this school year?

A: Dr. Greene is retiring as Duval County Public Schools’ superintendent effective June 5. Under her leadership, the district began a massive plan to improve school infrastructure and student safety. She led on the expansion of Career and Technical Education (CTE), which District 7 has benefited from. Duval County is better for her leadership and she will leave a lasting legacy.

The Duval County School Board will meet in June to determine a timeline for hiring a new superintendent.

Q: Do you have any legislative updates?

A: As the legislative session wrapped up in Tallahassee, Duval County benefited from funds for the school district to pilot Career and Technical Education (CTE) for elementary school students

for the state of Florida. This pilot program was led by Rep. Wyman Duggan, who visited Loretto Elementary last summer. Loretto is the only CTE elementary school in Florida and this allocation to expand to a pilot program is a result of that visit.

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

A: Even as the school year winds down and summer is upon us, I’d like to remind parents to remind their students that any threats, whether spoken or posted, are taken seriously. Students will be held accountable for them.

I’d also like to say a big congratulations to the Class of 2023. We are very proud of all of our graduates. I’d like to wish everyone a fun and safe summer.

Q: How can our readers contact you?

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

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Library announces book sales and live events

By Jeremy Yates
mail@floridanewsline.com

Readers of all ages can find great books and great deals at the Friends of the South Mandarin Branch Library Book Sale on 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. Patrons may fill a plastic bag for \$5 or paper bag for \$10. Or shop the Friends of Mandarin Library Book Sale on Friday and Saturday June 2 – 3 (10 a.m. – 4 p.m. both days) at 3330 Kori Road. Fill a paper grocery bag for \$10, \$5 or less for individual items.

Both sales are cash only and bags are provided. Proceeds benefit their respective libraries.

Then, join us for a Drop-In Summer Kick-Off Party on Wednesday, June 7 from 1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. at Mandarin Library or Friday, June 9 from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. at South Mandarin Library. Kids and teens can pick up their free summer prize book (while supplies last). Visit www.jaxpubliclibrary.org/summer for more information.

Looking for ways to keep your kids entertained during summer break? We’ve got musicians, magicians and more, performing live from the Library. Programs are sponsored by

the Friends:

South Mandarin Library on Wednesdays at 11 a.m.

- June 14: Just Add Rhythm: Adventures in Drumming
- June 21: A Magical Puppet Show with your Fairy Godmother
- June 28: STEM author Jennifer Swanson presents: Footprints Across the Planet

Or join us for “Jazz It Up!” at the Mandarin Library on Friday, June 23 at 1 p.m. Registration is strongly encouraged for all “Live from the Library” programs as space is limited. Please arrive early to check in.

Looking for book recommendations? Teen Book Chat (ages 12 – 17) meets Thursday, June 7 at 4 p.m. at Mandarin Library to discuss “Claiming My Place” by Planaria Price and Helen Reichmann West. As the Page Turns Book Club (adults) meets Thursday, June 8 at 1 p.m. at Mandarin Library to discuss “Wish You Were Here” by Jodi Picoult. Top Shelf Book Club (adults) meets Saturday, June 17 at 10:30 a.m. at South Mandarin Library to discuss “The Three-Body Problem” by Cixin Liu.

Visit www.jaxpubliclibrary.org/ events for more information.

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Briefs

Mandarin Women's Club offers summer activities

The Mandarin Women's Club's popular Game Day had a large turnout at the April luncheon as members spent the morning playing Bunco or Mexican Train. After the prize money was distributed, club members held the election of their 2023 – 2024 officers who will serve under the guidance of Kathy Sisbarro, president.

The club will take a break from monthly luncheons, but that doesn't mean the fun winds down. Some of the activities available to active members during the summer months are Bridge, Bunco, Hand and Foot, Mah

Jongg, Mexican Train, and Pennies Canasta.

Visit www.mandarinwomensclub.com for information regarding summer activities and to complete a membership form.

Church to host financial classes, open to community

Christian Family Chapel will host Financial Peace University (FPU), a personal finance management course, over a nine-week period beginning Aug. 30 at 6:30 p.m. The course teaches participants how to live by a budget that gets them out of debt, helps them build wealth, and prepare

for their financial future.

The class will meet every Wednesday at 6 p.m. starting Aug. 30. The cost of the course is \$45. Christian Family Chapel is located at 10365 Old Saint Augustine Road. Visit CFCJax.com/events or email blakem@cfcjax.com to sign up.

Church announces Vacation Bible School

Mandarin Lutheran Church will host Vacation Bible School with the theme "Ready! Set! Move!" at the church, located at 11900 San Jose Blvd., from July 17 – 20. The camp will run from 5 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Call (904) 268-6591 for more information and to sign up.

Higher mortgage rates impact summer selling season

Mortgage increases appear to be having a big impact as the Northeast Florida housing market heads into the busy summer selling season. Closed sales, pending sales, and new listings dropped in April, indicating that many homeowners who hold mortgages with low interest rates have decided to stay put, wait, and see what the future holds as far as mortgage rates go. Meanwhile buyers have been dismayed to discover that, although they may have a better selection of single-family homes on the market due to increased inventory, prices were also slightly higher in April.

"Just like the seasons, the market has changed," said 2023 Northeast Florida Association of Realtors President Diana Galavis. "The fluctuating interest rate has put some buyers and sellers on pause; however, there are still buyers who are choosing homeownership. This is reflected in a low month's supply of inventory, which has contributed to moving the median sales price up."

For Northeast Florida's six counties,

the median price of single-family residences inched up 2.8 percent to \$370,000 with the price per square foot rising by \$4 to \$202 from March to April. Meanwhile, closed sales plummeted 19.2 percent to 1,757; pending sales fell 3.6 percent to 2,097, and new listings decreased 1 percent to 2,950. Active inventory rose 5.5 percent to 4,667 and the median days on the market quickened by 10 percent to 36 days.

In April, single-family homes became slightly less affordable with the Home Affordability Index dropping from 76 the month before to 74. The Housing Affordability Index measures housing affordability for the region, as it measures whether a typical family earns enough to qualify for a mortgage on a typical home, based on current interest rates, median income, and median home prices. A higher number means greater affordability. An index value of 100 means that the average family has exactly enough income to qualify for a mortgage.

"Factors such as inflation, rising interest rates, and the cost of goods and services play a role in home affordability," Galavis said.

In Duval County, the April 2023 median price of single-family housing was \$325,000, a slight 3.2 percent increase from March 2023 when it registered \$320,000. The median days on the market in March was 32, a 15.8 percent drop over March. Month-to-month, closed sales tumbled 22.1 percent to 890, pending sales fell 7.3 percent to 1,029, and new listings decreased 2.8 percent to 1,432. Active inventory for the county rose to a 2.3-month supply — 2,087 homes, which is an increase of 4.5 percent from March and a 93.2 percent hike from the year before. In April, the home affordability index showed housing was becoming slightly less affordable by registering at 84, a 2.3 percent drop from the month before.



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Mandarin Community Club seeks members



The Mandarin Community Club turns 100 this July. Probably best known for the Mandarin Art Festival held every Easter weekend, this non-profit organization organizes and sponsors various other events during the year such as the annual tree giveaway, US flag retirement ceremony, and the holiday tree lighting ceremony in December. It also strives to promote historic preservation and the natural beauty of Mandarin. Various levels of memberships are offered starting with family or individual for \$35 a year. Visit www.mandarincommunityclub.org for more information. The Mandarin Community Club building is located at 12447 Mandarin Road in the historic corridor of old Mandarin.

travel • pantry raiders • gardening
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Life

Get to Know ...

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewsline.com

Brittany Cohill

Brittany Cohill said her life hasn't always followed a straight line — and her personal mantra of "Say 'yes' to all good things" is likely part of the reason. She said that it's rarely steered her wrong. Born in Savannah, she moved with her family to Lake Asbury near Orange Park at the age of four and considers herself a Floridian. She attended Clay County schools and graduated from Clay High School before going on to the University of North Florida. After an extended graduation timeline (again, not a straight line) due to marriage and family, she secured an internship and then a job with Beaches Museum in Jacksonville Beach. She also began teaching classes at Jacksonville University while raising her family. When her mother-in-law was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 2020, Brittany stepped back from her duties at Beaches Museum to care for her, but knew she wanted to eventually get back to the museum field. The right opportunity came along a couple of years later and now she is the new director of the Mandarin Museum, located minutes from her home in Mandarin. She and husband David, a police officer in Jacksonville Beach, have three children: Caleb, who is a student at the University of South Florida; Kate, who graduates this year and will attend Loyola University in Maryland next fall; and Brendan, a rising fifth grader at The Bolles School. They are parishioners at San Jose Catholic Church.

Q: How did you meet your husband?

Get to Know ...

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



Photo courtesy Brittany Cohill
Brittany Cohill with her husband David.

A: We met our senior year of high school in Spanish class; we started dating and we never looked back. We both went to UNF and were married while we were students. Our oldest son, Caleb, was born while we were students and I became a stay at home mom before finally going back to school to finish my degree once our second child, Kate, started kindergarten.

Q: How did you become interested in working at a museum? Is it something you wanted to do as a child?

A: As a child, I wanted to be a cashier at Publix or perhaps a pop singer. I had really had no idea what career I wanted even when I started college. My first major was psychology and then when I came back to finish my degree I added history — so when I finally received my degree it was a BA in psychology and history. I still wasn't sure what I wanted to do, so I applied for the master's program in history. I was able to take classes at night and stay home with my children during the

day. I interned at the Beaches Museum while still in the master's program and loved the work and the people. I was eventually promoted to operations manager and then associate director.

Q: How did you become the director of Mandarin Museum?

A: I knew I wanted to get back to the museum field after my mother-in-law passed away. I learned that the Mandarin Museum was searching for a director, so I signed up to be a volunteer first. I trained as a docent and helped with grant writing. I loved it and very quickly told [then-volunteer director] Sandy Arpen that I was the person they were searching for. I lived close by in Mandarin, had the skills, and felt very prepared to step in and continue the good work already started. She and the board agreed and I became the director in March.

Q: What is your favorite part of your job?

A: I love working with the museum volunteers. Museums have a way of attracting the nicest and most interesting people. Seeing their dedication to the museum, its history, and their community is a great experience. I like that we can bridge the gap between scholarly research and public history. And there's never a dull moment!

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

A: I love live music and going to concerts and music festivals. We enjoy kayaking, often to a restaurant. A new hobby is floral arranging and home decorating. I have always volunteered at my kids' school. And I like genealogy ... even in my spare time, for the fun of it!

Greenland Pines cont. from pg. 1

team of 23 safety patrols who participated that day, with the guidance of their two dedicated sponsors, Corey Wesner, and Maria LeStrange, persevered to bring home the first-place trophy to Greenland Pines for the 26th time.

LeStrange said, "I am proud of this special group of patrols, and how hard they worked today! I would also like to thank our school administration, faculty, staff, and community for their continued support! We did it!"

The Safety Patrol Play Day is an annual event sponsored by the Police Athletic League, AAA, Southwest Grill, and Veterans of Foreign Wars, who also provided food and drinks for all patrols and sponsors. Members of the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office Community Engagement Unit, Zone 5 Officers, retired JSO, JSO civilians, the FTO office and Police Explorers volunteered their time to make the event a huge success.

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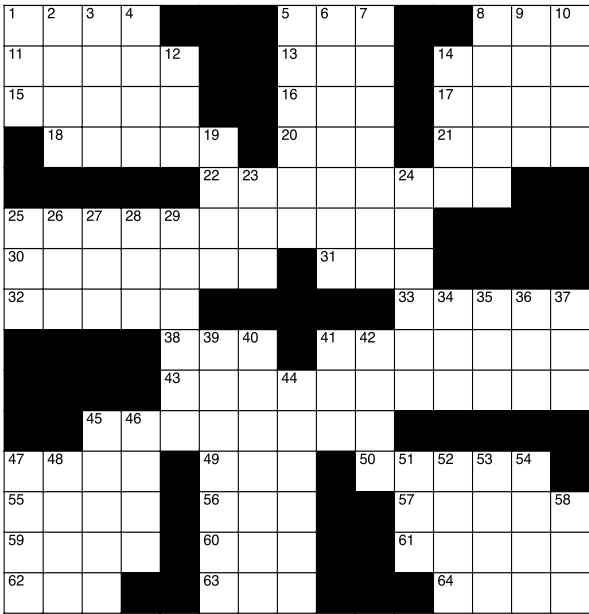
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Puzzles

Answers on page 3
Provided by MetroCreative



CLUES ACROSS

1. In a place to sleep
5. Chemical compound (abbr.)
8. A way to fish
11. Classic Linklater film “ ___ and Confused”
13. Legume
14. Indonesian island
15. Smooth, creamy substance
16. Arctic
17. Wood sorrels
18. Defied
20. Cattle
21. Tableland
22. Honorably retired and retaining one's title
25. Repossession
30. Danced
31. Adult males
32. A type of section
33. Type of Japanese animation
38. Satisfaction
41. Fit
43. “Ain't No Sunshine” singer
45. Failure
47. Israeli city
49. French river
50. Cavalry-sword
55. Nocturnal S. American rodent
56. Liquefied natural gas
57. Afflicted
59. Electronic counter-countermeasures
60. Popular HBO fantasy series (abbr.)
61. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
62. Large body of water
63. ___kosh, near Lake Winnebago
64. Impudence

CLUES DOWN

1. Payroll firm
2. Unit of transmission
3. Rockers Better Than ___
4. Bambi is one
5. Highest parts of something
6. Correct behavior
7. Batty
8. Cyprinid fishes
9. Expression of sorrow or pity
10. Site of the famous Leaning Tower
12. American rocker Snider
14. W. African language
19. Symbol to mark for removal
23. ___ Squad
24. Resident
25. Federal savings bank
26. Paddle
27. Returned material authorization (abbr.)
28. One point south of due east
29. Winter melon
34. Last or greatest in an indefinitely large series
35. Anger
36. Central European river
37. First responders
39. Spanish noble
40. Persons with absence of skin pigment
41. Defunct airline
42. Small island (British)
44. The extent of something from beginning to end
45. Capital of Bangladesh
46. Dutch cheese
47. Imitates
48. A contest of speed
51. Swiss river
52. Prejudice
53. Actor Idris
54. UNLV's are Runnin'
58. Criticize

SUN & SAND WORD SEARCH

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

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

WORDS

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BEACH
BOARDWALK
BREEZY
BRIGHT
COASTAL
CRASHING
FOAM
LAUGHTER
MARINE
OCEAN
RELAXATION
RIPTIDE
SAIL
SANDCASTLE
SANDY
SEAWEED
SUNGLASSES
SURFING
SWIMMING
SWIMSUIT
TAN
UMBRELLA
UNDERTOW

CRYPTO FUN

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to the beach.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 2 = S)

A. 2 10 4 2 25 24 4 14
Clue: Warm light

B. 2 25 5 23 14
Clue: Coastline

C. 11 5 18 13 24 4 12
Clue: Water hobby

D. 22 18 26 14 2
Clue: Ocean swells

100 Years Ago This Month: Historical events from June 1923

By NewsLines Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

The month of June has been home to many historical events over the years. Here's a look at some that helped to shape the world in June 1923.

- The Polo Grounds in New York City hosts a boxing match between Frenchman Eugène Criqui and Johnny Kilbane on June 2. Among those in attendance to see Criqui knock out Kilbane in the sixth round was New York Yankees slugger Babe Ruth, who arrived after a game at Yankee Stadium earlier in the day.
- On June 4, 16 men begin what becomes a 2,000-mile voyage in a single lifeboat after they are forced to abandon the British cargo ship Trevesa as it begins to founder in the Indian Ocean.
- The Soviet Army defeats what is left of the White Army near Okhotsk on June 6, ending what proves to be the last major battle of the Russian Civil War.
- On June 8, a bill is passed in the British House of Commons granting women the right to divorce their husbands on the grounds of infidelity without having to prove cruelty or desertion.
- On June 12, magician Horace Goldin is granted a patent for the popular illusion of sawing a woman in half.
- Lou Gehrig makes his debut for the New York Yankees on June 15. Gehrig replaces first baseman Wally Pipp in the ninth inning.
- Scores of people cross the border from Northern Ireland into the neighboring Irish Free State on June 17 as a ban on Sunday alcohol sales goes into effect in the former locale.

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Countdown to 100 Years: A glance at the 2000s

By Emily Lisska
mail@floridanewsline.com

One month remains in the countdown to the Mandarin Community Club 100th birthday. The club's centennial celebration began with a 99th anniversary kick-off on July 2, 2022, recognizing the 1923 date a group of area citizens transitioned from their former World War I role as a Liberty League to a civic organization enhancing Mandarin community life.

The Mandarin Community Club will be recognized and honored for its 100 years of service by Councilman Michael Boylan at the June 27 Jacksonville City Council meeting.

In the 2000s, the Mandarin Community Club turned 80 years old and its historic building, the old Mandarin School, reached 130 years. Ruth Daniel led the decade, serving as president in 2000 and 2001. She was followed by Bill Bosworth, who focused on community forums and membership.

Bruce Scott held the presidency in 2003 when fundraisers helped secure much needed funds to maintain the historic properties. The club also continued its long practice of collecting food for individuals in need. The club began the process of securing local designation for its two historic structures, the Mandarin Community Club (1872 Mandarin School) and the 1911 Mandarin Post Office and General Store. Dan Copeland

followed as 2004 president.

Ruth Daniel served again in 2005, with the club organizing a special community-wide meeting for hurricane preparedness. When Wanda Bosworth served as president in 2006, the club was involved in an effort to stop development of an 11-story condominium tower at Jurlington Creek. The club's success with the hurricane forum and its involvement to stop the high rise construction were important factors when the club received the 2006 Mayor's Neighborhood Award for Outstanding Civic Organization.

Susie Scott, who actively fought the towering Jurlington Creek project, served as president in 2007 – 2009. She retired the club's 1997 mortgage on adjoining club land and coordinated the construction of a passive park, the Billard Commemorative Park on Brady Road just south of Mandarin Road. For these efforts, among others, including the Mandarin Art Festival's 40 year run in 2008, the club was presented the Jax Pride's Award of Excellence. Pat Corrado, elected club president in 2010, was well known for his longtime work perpetuating the club's annual Art Festival.

Susie Scott stepped up again to serve as president in 2011 and 2012. In 2012 – 2014, Emily Lisska held the presidency. In celebration of the club's 90th anniversary in 2013, the club board voted to purchase the Sisters of St. Joseph's



Photo courtesy Doris Hastings
The Mandarin Community Club held a Vintage Tea Party in January.

Schoolhouse, then in the backyard of a private residence. The old school was immediately deeded to the city by the club, "as a gift to the community" and moved to the Walter Jones Park in early 2015.

Susie Scott has continued to serve as president since 2015, with a brief interruption in 2018, when Emily Lisska stepped in as Scott stepped away for medical reasons. By this time, the club's Mandarin Art Festival reached the half century mark.

Under Scott's lengthy leadership, the club has established an annual tree give-away

to underscore its commitment to Mandarin's tree coverage; added a popular holiday tree lighting on its historic properties; took ownership of a tree-filled acre plus adjoining the historic club property, generously gifted by Marilyn Carpenter; continued its active restoration efforts for its historic properties; partnered with OneBlood for quarterly blood drives; and published works on Mandarin's history. The club continues to raise funds to maintain its extraordinary historic properties for the benefit of the Mandarin community and is preparing to envision its next 100 years.

Blacks in Technology Jacksonville: Building Bridges, Tearing Down Stereotypes

By NewsLine Staff
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The first BIT (Blacks In Technology) Jacksonville Networking event was held Friday, April 28. Those attending included educators, entrepreneurs, business owners, artists, creators, innovators, and others interested in entering into diverse fields of technology or bonding with those already active and engaged in a technology career.

The first meetup of the year for BIT Jacksonville included the discussion of providing technology training, workshops, seminars, and conferences to excite Blacks in fields of technology that were not previously considered. In attendance was William Jackson, a former educator with Duval County Public Schools, and STEAM+M educator, now a Certified Virtual Reality (VR) educator, with his wife and STEAM+M consultant Aida Jackson. They travel across the nation and internationally teaching about the Metaverse, and its influences in education and business.

According to Jackson, Blacks are the least likely to start, manage and own a

technology business across the United States. He said this does not have to be the norm; it can change with the availability of technology areas that can be created, managed, designed by Blacks to have a technology business. For this reason, mentoring is important and networking builds cooperation and collaboration.

"Not every Black child wants to play sports," Jackson said. "When I was teaching in the computer lab, many wanted to be artists, coders, programmers, web developers, and involved in building on Minecraft and Roblox which are pre-metaverse sites."

The BIT Jacksonville Chapter president, Alana Whitaker, encouraged those in attendance to network and connect with other local techies and invite them to the June networking event to be held on Friday, June 30, from 5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. at Burrito Gallery in Riverside.

Visit <https://linkedin.com/showcase/bitjacksonville> for more information.



Photo courtesy William Jackson.
Attendees at the first BIT (Blacks In Technology) Jacksonville Networking event.

RCSA Mandarin Seaperch teams claim World Championship titles



Photos courtesy River City Science Academy Mandarin

By NewsLine Staff
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River City Science Academy Mandarin Seaperch Submarine Engineering teams have emerged as the World Champions in the International Seaperch Challenge held at the University of Maryland. Competing against 147 teams from five countries, the teams showcased their exceptional skills and dedication, earning them an impressive total of five awards in various categories.

Team Aquarius, representing River City Science Academy Mandarin, not only secured the Overall International Championship in the High School division but also clinched first place in the obstacle course and the missions course.

Additionally, Team The Octonauts, also from River City Science Academy Mandarin, showcased their remarkable abilities and secured second place in the missions course and third place in the obstacle course.

The International Seaperch Challenge is a highly esteemed event that brings together talented young engineers and scientists to design and build remotely operated underwater vehicles organized by Robonation. US Navy Office Naval Research, NOAA Ocean Research are main sponsors for the competition. This competition not only tests their technical skills but also challenges their problem-solving abilities and teamwork.

"We are incredibly proud of our River City Science Academy Mandarin Seaperch teams for their outstanding performance and their accomplishments at the International Seaperch Challenge," said Principal Alaaddin Akgul of River City Science Academy Mandarin. "Their success is a reflection of their commitment, teamwork, and the exceptional support they have received from their mentors and the entire school community."

Visit www.rcsamandin.com for more information.





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"Purple Up!" Day held at Crown Point

By Mary Eyler
mail@floridanewslines.com

On Monday, April 17, Crown Point students and their families "purpled up" to show support and gratitude for military children attending the school. The teachers, faculty, and students wore purple to honor and represent all the branches of the military.

Purple ribbon stickers were provided

for all students to wear. The special event included the raising of the flag by Crown Point safety patrol and reciting of the pledge. A trumpet performance of "The Star-Spangled Banner" was played by Jose Gomez from the University of North Florida. The ceremony ended with a small reception in the school cafeteria to honor each military student and their families attending the school.



Photos courtesy Mary Eyler



Local student to travel to Washington, D.C. for journalism conference

Elizabeth Pall, a student at Christ Church Academy, has been selected to represent Jacksonville as a National Youth Correspondent to the 2023 Washington Journalism and Media Conference at George Mason University. Pall joins a select group of students from all over the country for an intensive study of journalism and media. She was chosen based on academic accomplishments and a demonstrated interest and excellence in journalism and media studies. National Youth Correspondents participate in hands-on, experiential learning through

decision-making simulations that challenge them to solve problems and explore the creative, practical, and ethical tensions inherent in journalism and media. The experiential portion of the program is complemented by speakers who are well-known leaders in the media community. Presenters include prominent journalists, CEOs of major media outlets, researchers, and recent college graduates successfully entering the field. The week-long program is held at George Mason University's state-of-the-art campus, July 9 – July 14, 2023.



Photo courtesy Michele Pall

Mandarin Oaks ESE students participate in track meet



Photo courtesy Carol Butler

Mandarin Oaks Elementary students had a blast participating in the Andrew Turner Memorial Track Meet on May 18. Students in the Exceptional Student Education (ESE) program have been participating in this annual event for 23 years. Students ran, walked, and wheeled down the track while students in kindergarten through fifth grade cheered them on. Smiles were everywhere!



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The Pantry Raiders

This refreshing salad makes a meal

By NewsLine Staff
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Salads are best during the midsummer when they can be comprised of fresh and ripe ingredients plucked right from the garden. This recipe for “Authentic Greek Salad” from “Clueless in the Kitchen: Cooking for Beginners” (Firefly Books) by Evelyn Raab is ideal.

Authentic Greek Salad

Serves 4 to 6

4 medium tomatoes, cut into ½ -inch chunks

1 seedless English cucumber, cut into ½ -inch chunks

1 small red onion, diced

⅓ cup Zorba the Greek Dressing (see below)

4 oz. feta cheese, crumbled (about 1 cup)

½ cup black olives (kalamata or other brine-cured ones are best)

Salt and black pepper, to taste

In a large bowl, toss together the tomatoes, cucumber and onion. Add the dressing and toss to mix. Sprinkle in the feta cheese and olives, and toss gently. Taste the salad, adjust the seasoning with additional salt and pepper if you

think it needs it and serve immediately.

Zorba the Greek Dressing

½ cup olive oil

3 tbsp. lemon juice

1 tsp. crumbled dried oregano

½ tsp. Salt

¼ tsp. black pepper

In a small bowl, whisk together all the ingredients until combined. You can keep any leftover dressing in the fridge for about a week.



Photo courtesy MetroCreative
Authentic Greek Salad.

Fishing

Jimmy's Fishing Report

By Jimmy Tomazinis
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Happy shrimp season! While it will be a few months before we get any larger ones for ourselves, we get to enjoy some of the best fishing the river has to offer while we wait. I've started to take June 1 off every year just so my wife and I can go out and fish on the first day of the season together. It makes the start of the season a little more special that way.

You can fish the shrimp just about any way and anywhere you please, but we fish docks 80 percent of the time with the shrimp on jig heads. Match the jig heads to the size of the shrimp as well as current and depth. We're throwing 1/4 to 1/8 oz. most of the time. If you can get them in chartreuse, you might be onto something.

I'll probably throw mine on just an unweighted circle or live bait hook to encourage any up-feeders to come take a look because as I write this, I'm still in search of my river tarpon. There were already reports of some smaller ones at the end of April. They're around, but I have not found any in my searches ... yet. I did find a very nice snook on one of the hunts though. I can't be too mad about that one. That could've been a goal itself, but honestly, I'd say a tarpon would be more achievable. That statement could also come back to bite me, but I'm still optimistic. How are you coming along on your fishing goals for this year?

The stripers should be ready and waiting for a live shrimp around the bridges and even some docks. I've caught more on artificial than I ever have this year, so I anticipate the bite to be even better when they're offered the real thing



Photo courtesy James Paris

Bonnie with her youngest son Christian caught her very first fish by Six Mile Landing at Guana on Mother's Day. She hooked him and reeled him in as Christian netted and pulled him into the boat. They released the baby red back to his mom, so he could grow up to be a big fish.

finally.

Redfish have also been fairly consistent on live bait and artificials. The river has remained saltier than normal, so their seatrout cousins have been around too. Mostly on the small size, but I suspect some bigger fish could move in when we have more forage for them and if conditions allow. Unfortunately, I haven't seen too much eel grass yet this year and the increased salinity could be attributing to that as well.

Dust off the nets, ready the wells, the river crickets are here. Time to go fishing.

Jacksonville DAR Chapter honors local conservationist with national medal

By NewsLine Staff
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The Jacksonville Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) honored Kaye Lee with a NSDAR Conservation Medal at their most recent chapter meeting this week. Lee is a volunteer for conservation issues in Duval, Clay and Nassau counties in Florida. She has more than 10 years' experience monitoring eagles and rescuing all types of birds of prey. She works with many organizations including the Audubon Society and has developed a very robust volunteer rescue operation for injured birds of prey. Lee gives of her time for eagles and other birds of prey but is also an advocate and educator to the public.

Lee was invited by the Jacksonville Chapter DAR to present a program about the EagleWatch program explaining how the monitoring, rescue and rehabilitation of birds of prey operates in northeast Florida. The Jacksonville Chapter DAR was so impressed with her volunteer history they contacted some of Lee's coworkers for letters of recommendation and applied for a conservation medal to award to her. The Florida State Society DAR approved the application and then forwarded it

to Washington DC where the national conservation committee chair approved the award.

The Jacksonville Chapter awarded Lee this special honor at the end of her presentation as a surprise. Lee was also surprised by two of her coworkers who drove to Jacksonville from Orlando for the occasion. Local chapters in DAR are encouraged to recognize and award outstanding volunteer service in the community.

"We want to highlight all the positive things people are doing for each other every day in the community. As a volunteer women's organization we promote historic preservation, patriotism and education. Kaye Lee was well deserving of this honor and we are thrilled to support her!" said chapter Vice Regent Connie Taylor.

In April the chapter awarded an Excellence in Historic Preservation medal to local photographer and author Mary Atwood who also had come to speak to the chapter about the historic homes along Florida's First Coast.

Visit JacksonvilleDAR.org for more information.

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Spotting the Scam: How to Prevent and Report Elder Abuse

As part of the local observance of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, ElderSource is offering a FREE workshop about how seniors, caregivers and others can detect and avoid common scams and fraud schemes that target older adults.

Join us for this in person event:
Wednesday, June 21, 2023
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM
Mandarin Senior Center - 3848 Hartley Road

Free Event!

Learn more about romance scams, government imposters, church and sweepstake rip-offs.

This ElderSource event is free. No registration is required

A statewide virtual event is also planned for Thursday, June 15 at 10 AM

Virtual Event: Elder Abuse: It's More Than Scams

Date: Thur., June 15, 2023

Time: 10 AM - 11:30 AM

On Zoom: Participants must register for online attendance at <https://bit.ly/441N6qn>

Gardening

Dry season woes and summer planning

By Master Gardener Volunteer Lesley Arrandale
mail@floridanewsline.com



Photos courtesy Lesley Arrandale
Gaillardia, or Indian blanket.

By Master Gardener Volunteer Lesley Arrandale
mail@floridanewsline.com

As someone who tries to avoid watering her yard, I’ve been a bit anxious lately. Although the NOAA long range forecast predicted higher than usual rainfall in May, our position in relation to the St. Johns River seems to deflect rain clouds away from us. And it’s been hotter than average, which at least makes the NOAA forecast right in that regard.

Perhaps I need to plan a water-saving irrigation system. Since I don’t water very often, it would be more of an emergency measure, so I’ll weigh up the cost first; however, these systems are comparatively inexpensive, and the average gardener can devise them to suit their landscape fairly easily. For guidance, check out <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/AE524>.

Despite the lack of rain, the front garden beds are still looking reasonably attractive – at least to my eyes. Indian blanket (Gaillardia sp.) plants are holding up well, and the cheerful red and yellow daisy-like flowers sing in the sun. There is fruit on the native Darrow’s blueberries (Vaccinium darrowii). The berries are turning dusty pink, which blends beautifully with the subtle blue green of the foliage. New shoots are delightfully pink tinged. The fruit is better suited to the birds as it’s not as luscious as our cultivated varieties, which is fine by me. I hope the birds enjoy them.

This year the dwarf Simpson’s stoppers (Myrcianthes fragrans) were full of flowers and their perfume filled the

air. They were insect magnets. Now the flowers have faded, and many tiny fruits are beginning to develop. With adequate moisture, they will be bright red, half-inch round berries, usually with two seeds inside. I can’t wait to see the display. And doubtless the birds will appreciate them too.

Last year two dark pink wandflower plants attracted a host of pink aphids. I had hoped it wouldn’t happen again, but sadly the flower stems are full of them. This is a dilemma: to spray or not to spray. Last year the plants never really recovered from the onslaught, as I left the aphids for the predator insects to eat. This year I’ve half-heartedly tried to squish them, while hoping to avoid the lady beetle larvae which eat them voraciously. But although the larvae have made a meal of some of the aphids, they really haven’t eaten enough. I may just move the plants from the front yard to somewhere out of the way and let nature get on with its, in this case, rather uneven balancing act. Considering those pink gaura are cultivars of the native Gaura lindheimeri, I do wonder if that makes them more susceptible to insects and less resilient.

I’ve been concentrating on growing flowering plants from seed, and it takes time away from the vegetables. Instead of food crops, I’ll sow a cover crop, which will benefit the soil in those beds. It should flourish during the summer, and in time I’ll turn it into the soil as green “manure.” Check out this article to discover the benefits: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/vh037>.



Darrow's blueberry.

Mandarin Garden Club is beneficiary of Eagle Project



Photo courtesy Juliet Johnson

Alex Brodie of Scout Troop 321 funded his Eagle Scout project — to renovate Mandarin Garden Club's sign and raised bed — with a car wash during the club's annual plant sale in April. Troop mates assisted and the Masons next door lent parking and hose access. Brodie raised more than enough money for his project. Groundskeeper Janine Smith is pictured with Brodie and the participating scouts.

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Travel

Launch a visit to Huntsville

By Debi Lander
mail@floridanewsline.com

Huntsville, Alabama, utilizes the tagline, “Huntsville has Space,” a play on words since Huntsville is home to the US Rocket and Space Center. The facility catches your attention along Interstate-65 with its soaring rocket garden. The garden’s model Saturn V rises 363 feet, beckoning travelers to stop. And many do, making the space museum the most visited attraction in the state.

Anyone who recalls manned space flights will enjoy a trip back in time when exploring the museum’s memorabilia and interactive displays. Visitors can squeeze themselves into a Mercury capsule as I did. The little Mercury pod housed the first round of our heroic astronauts flung into space. Bring kids too young to remember the space race; they will get excited about future space probes.

One of only three remaining Saturn V moon rockets, the missiles that launched the lunar landings, hangs overhead, grabbing everyone’s attention. The enormity of the National Historic Landmark makes it the Smithsonian’s largest artifact. It’s hard to imagine the “right” few who agreed to climb aboard and flew in outer space.

If you or your children want to experience an out-of-this-world adventure, sign up for Space Camp on the Huntsville campus. Waiting lists fill quickly, so inquire early. Space Camp guarantees a blast of fun, education, and life-long memories.

Huntsville isn’t all space-related; the city packs surprises. When I arrived, what immediately struck me was the cleanliness of the downtown. I saw no trash on the streets or greenways, just folks on a Sunday afternoon stroll along the water trail. Some crossed the photo-worthy red Japanese bridge, and others pushed strollers or lingered near the spraying fountains.

The water comes from where the city was founded — at the Big Spring. And that spring produces seven to 20 million gallons of fresh water daily. A canal connects the waterway to the Tennessee River, 10 miles away.

In the Twickenham Historic District, visit the Weeden House. I had no idea I would discover an extraordinary artist’s work in her former home. Maria Howard Weeden was legally blind, yet painted watercolor portraits mainly of freedmen and women. Her works include such incredibly intricate detail you’ll think they are photographs. After the Civil War, Weeden began to sell her paintings but signed them as Howard Weeden. (At the time, women artists were rare.) She captured her subjects so well that the costumers of “Gone with the Wind” used her artworks as the basis for creating the actor’s wardrobes. Take the house tour, but go to see her fantastic works.

Head up to the Burritt Mansion on Round Top Road for sweeping city views, especially for sunset. Adults also



Photos courtesy Debi Lander
The author in a Mercury capsule.

enjoy a tour of the unusual X-shaped mansion house, and children love the 1800s farm buildings with animals and interpreters in period clothing.

Music lovers will find Huntsville’s new state-of-the-art Orion Amphitheater an excellent venue for big-name concerts. The facility holds 8,000, all with unobstructed views of the stage. Many vendors sell food and drink before, during, and after the shows.

USA Today readers named the 118-acre Huntsville Botanical Gardens the fourth best in North America. The peaceful venue incorporates multiple indoor spaces, including a butterfly house and

various outdoor buildings. The family-friendly landscaped paths even include a children’s garden.

The Lowe Mill, an old cotton warehouse, unleashes creative spirits. Today it houses 158 artists’ studios and workshops. Visitors can watch them in action and purchase original artwork such as pottery, paintings, cigar box guitars, and other musical instruments.

If your vacation plans have space, head to Rocket City for a surprising getaway.

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



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