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Puzzles

Photo courtesy American Cancer Society
Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of the First Coast will take place on Saturday, Oct. 14, 2023 at EverBank Stadium.

Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of the First Coast unites community

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

For more than 30 years, the American Cancer Society Making Strides Against Breast Cancer has united communities in the nation's largest movement to end breast cancer as we know it, for everyone. This year, Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of the First Coast will take place on Saturday, Oct. 14, 2023 at EverBank Stadium, providing a supportive community for breast cancer survivors and metastatic breast cancer thrivers, caregivers, supporters and families alike.

Since 1993, Making Strides Against Breast Cancer events in communi-

Making Strides cont. on pg. 11

Constitution Week luncheon features keynote speaker Jim Schmitt

By Betty Reed
mail@floridanewsline.com

Jim Schmitt, American History teacher at Mandarin High School, spoke at the Constitution Week luncheon held at the Timuquana Country Club on Sept. 16. The luncheon, an annual event to celebrate our Constitution, was hosted by the Regents Council of Northeast Florida, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution.

Schmitt has a teaching career that spans 31 years. He has received numerous awards as an outstanding teacher locally and statewide. He formed "Teachers Teach Teachers," which allows teachers to share their talents and innovative ideas with other educators.

Schmitt spoke on a "Teacher Lost in Boston." He took a trip to Boston this summer and was invited to speak during the trip. He utilized this occurrence to time-place himself in Boston in the 1770s, at the time of the Boston

Photos courtesy Betty Reed
Jim Schmitt was presented with a certificate and a Tricorn hat by Betty Reed.

Massacre.

History records the street fight of American Patriots throwing stones and snowballs and sticks against British soldiers. Five colonists were killed

as British soldiers fired into the crowd. Consequently, this situation is American blood spilled on American soil. This was the beginning of the severe fighting to

Constitution Week cont. on pg. 11

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide offers free tax preparation services

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

The AARP Foundation Tax-Aide program is preparing for the 2024 tax season and is looking for volunteers to provide vital services to the public. Volunteers come from a variety of industries and range from college students to retirees. All levels and types of experience are welcome. Tax-Aide provides all training and support to ensure success. Volunteers fill a variety of roles, including:

- Counselors work with taxpayers directly by filling out tax returns.
- Client Facilitators welcome taxpayers, help organize their paperwork, and manage the overall flow of service.
- Technology Coordinators manage computer equipment, ensure taxpayer data is secure, and provide technical assistance to volunteers.
- Leadership and administrative vol-

Photo courtesy AARP Foundation Tax-Aide
This year there will be two locations in Mandarin staffed by AARP Foundation Tax-Aide volunteers.

unteers make sure program operations run smoothly, manage volunteers, and maintain quality control.

Tax-Aide provides tax preparation

free of charge. Neither volunteers nor taxpayers need to be members of AARP, and there is no sales pitch for other

AARP Foundation cont. on pg. 9

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In the case of Dr. Jann Turpin, DOM, AP of Riverplace Acupuncture Integrative Health it is a case of true empathy. "I suffered from chemotherapy-induced peripheral neuropathy while battling Stage III breast cancer."

Peripheral neuropathy, which affects over 20 million people in the U.S., is weakness, numbness and pain from nerve damage, usually in the hands and feet. "My feet were burning at night and my fingers were numb and tingling all day. If my feet got cold, the pain was so intense I had to sit down."

Peripheral neuropathy is normally a degenerative condition, but since Dr. Turpin's neuropathy was caused by chemotherapy, it was expected to improve. However, doctors said that improvement could take months or years and the medications prescribed weren't working. She knew she couldn't live like that.

It wasn't until her primary care doctor sent her to an acupuncturist that she found real relief.

"This is why I often refer to my practice as 'The Last Resort With the Best Results.' You've been everywhere else and been given the same disheartening prognosis, prescribed the same medications and told this is just something you're going to have to learn to live with."

Soon after her first experience with the healing arts, she made the life changing decision to abandon her 13 year computer programming career and pursue her education in acupuncture.

Acupuncture quite literally saved my life and I wanted to share that with the world," she proclaims.

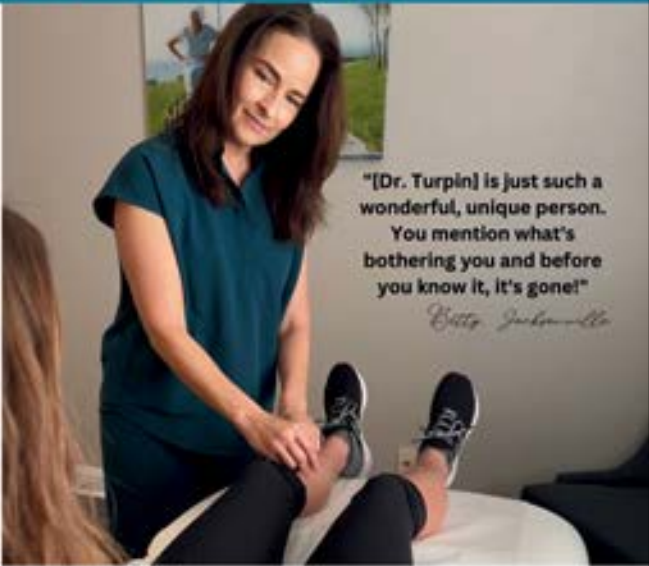
Your Golden Years Should Be Golden
 While in school, she watched as her grandmother began to suffer from peripheral neuropathy. "Your golden years should be golden, not plagued with insufferable pain while doctors and specialists tell you there is nothing they can do." Understanding that Eastern Medicine excels where Western medicine fails, Dr. Turpin set forth to develop treatment protocols for all variations of Peripheral Neuropathy (including diabetic and chemotherapy-induced) and now has a 90% success rate in treating this once difficult to manage condition.

"I was tired of seeing the older generation suffer unnecessarily," shares Dr. Turpin. "Diagnosing them as 'just getting older' and giving them a treatment plan of 'you're just going to have to get used to it' has never sat well with me so I wanted to offer them a real option for treatment and care."

The Magic of Compassionate Care
 And what do those in her care have to say?

"Dr. Turpin looked me in my eyes and wanted to know about me, not just my condition. I feel like a person, not just a patient," shares Jesse. "In fact, I don't think she ever used the word patient." Others proclaim "she saved my life", "her neuropathy treatments gave me my life back," and "it's a miracle she treated my fibromyalgia. I don't know how else to explain it."

Dr. Jann Turpin has a long, personal history in complicated, difficult to understand conditions and understands how tragic it can all be if left untreated. "I have sat where my patients sit. I've experienced their pain and suffering in a very real way. I know the frustration of feeling hopeless on an intimate level.



That's why I practice the brand of medicine I do and why I've made it my life's mission to treat the 'untreatable'. It brings me joy when I get to say 'I can help you'.

Furthermore, Dr. Turpin isn't opposed to more modern medical solutions. "It's in blending the time-tested science of acupuncture with recent innovations in medicine that get me the best results." One of those advancements is ATP Resonance BioTherapy. Originally developed by NASA it aids nerves in regeneration by providing them with the nutrients they need to repair and renew, "very similar to what water does for a plant!"

Dr. Turpin and her staff specialize in treating chronic pain, complicated neurological conditions and autoimmune diseases that leave other professionals scratching their heads. Ready to schedule? Call (904) 720-8887 for a comprehensive consultation today. For more information about Dr. Jann Turpin and what she treats, visit www.RiverplaceAcupuncture.com.

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Suite 106 PMB 101
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www.FloridaNewsLine.com

Publisher
Mark Pettus
Publisher@FloridaNewsLine.com

Editor
Martie Thompson
Editor@FloridaNewsLine.com

Bookkeeper
Emily Whitehead
Accounting@FloridaNewsLine.com

Social Media
SocialMedia@FloridaNewsLine.com

Advertising Sales
Linda Gay
Linda@FloridaNewsLine.com
(904) 607-5062 cell

Mandarin NewsLine Community Newspaper is a free monthly publication distributed via bulk mail and carrier to all addresses in Zip Codes 32223, 32258 and selected routes in 32257. Submission of articles and photographs are received by mail or email, although email to editor@FloridaNewsLine.com is preferred. The writers' opinions do not necessarily reflect the opinion of Florida NewsLine. Advertising Rates are available by request. Florida NewsLine is not responsible for advertisement content or accuracy of information provided by its advertisers. Nor does Florida NewsLine endorse any of the products or services included in this publication. Florida NewsLine reserves the right to refuse advertisement or copy from any advertiser. All rights are reserved and no portion of this publication may be copied without the express written consent of the publisher. ©2023.



BFF Best Furry Friend of the month

Breed:
American shorthair
Favorite Activity:
Meowing non-stop
Favorite food:
Tuna
Favorite Friends:
The lizards she lures into the lanai
How did your BFF get her name:
Her love of seafood



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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Trick or Treat

Happy Halloween from your friends at Mandarin NewsLine!

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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 Loretto Elementary School.

Answers to our Puzzles
PG 10

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October

Community Calendar

What's Happening in Mandarin

Shuffleboard is played on Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. at Mandarin Park (now known as Hazouri 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 playinghookie2022@gmail.com for more information.

1st: Music Under the Oaks community music jam, hosted by the Mandarin Museum & Historical Society and North Florida Folk Network will resume underneath the beautiful trees in front of Mandarin Museum on Sunday, Oct. 1 from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. Bring a chair or blanket and relax and listen. Mandarin Museum and the 1898 Schoolhouse will be open to visitors. Visit www.mandarinmuseum.org or call (904) 268-0784 for more information.

3rd: Honeybee Quilters Guild will meet on Tuesday, Oct. 3 at 6:30 p.m. at Mandarin Presbyterian Church in the Loft on the County Dock Road side of the church at 2501 Loretto Road. The program includes QuiltFest 2023 follow-up including show and tell of show quilts with judge's comments. Wearing masks is optional. New members/guests welcome. Visit honeybeequilters.org for more information.

6th – 7th: Trash to Treasure Sale will be held at the Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Road, on Oct. 6 – 7 from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. each day. A locally grown plant sale will be offered outside. Cash only and the public is welcome. Visit www.mandaringardenclub.org for more information.

7th: Mandarin Frog paint party at Mandarin Museum will be held on Saturday, Oct. 7 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 per person and advance registration is required; email info@mandarinmuseum.org to sign up.

7th: St. Margaret's Craft Circle Show will be held on Saturday, Oct. 7 from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. at St. Joseph's Catholic Church (main church), located on the corner of Greenland Road and Old St. Augustine Road. Tickets for a large quilted throw or handmade glass window will also be for sale. Visit <https://stjosephsjax.org/st-margarets-circle> for more information.

7th: Meet the Maple Leaf Divers at the Mandarin Museum, 11964 Mandarin Road, from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 7. This is an informal, conversational-style event; drop in anytime within the two hours to chat with Dr. Keith Holland and his team and view the museum's expanded Maple Leaf exhibit. Admission to Meet the Maple Leaf Divers and Mandarin Museum is free. Donations help support the museum's programming and operations. For more information, visit www.mandarinmuseum.org or call (904) 268-0784.

12th: Orchids, presented by Bonnie Myers, will be held on Oct. 12 at 10 a.m. at the Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Road, 2892 Loretto Road. The public is welcome. Visit www.mandaringardenclub.org for more information.

14th: Mandarin Museum's volunteer interest meeting will be held on Saturday, Oct. 14 at 10 a.m. at the museum, 11964 Mandarin Road. The museum offers many regular volunteer opportunities including positions at museum guest services, as a docent, and at special events. Attendees will receive a guided tour of the museum (including behind-the-scenes) and learn more about the volunteer program and its benefits. Email Brittany Cohill at director@mandarinmuseum.org to RSVP or

for more information.

14th: Second Saturday Arts and Farmers Market at First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd. on Oct. 14 from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Visit www.facebook.com/SecondSatMarket/ for more information.

14th: The Southern Genealogist's Exchange Society will meet Saturday, Oct. 14 at 10 a.m. at the Mandarin Branch Library, 3330 Kori Road. Featured speakers Dr. David Sheffler, Dr. Felicia Bevel and Michael Boyles will present "Documenting Red Hill: A Historic African American Cemetery in Waycross, Georgia." Visit www.sgesjax.org or call (904) 778-1000 for more information.

14th: Southside Multiple Sclerosis group meets on the second Saturday of each month (this month on Oct. 14) 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.

16th: The All Star Quilters Guild will meet at 9:30 a.m. for socializing prior to the 10 a.m. meeting on Monday, Oct. 16 at First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd. The Modern Quilt Guild will present a trunk show and more. Sew and Tell is always a feature. Guests are welcome. Visit www.allstarquilters.org for more information.

19th: Color Theory and Container Gardening will be presented on Oct. 19 at 10 a.m. at the Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Road, 2892 Loretto Road. The public is welcome. Visit www.mandaringardenclub.org for more information.

21st: Halloween Happenings at the Mandarin Branch Library on Saturday, Oct. 21 in the Community Room from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. Play spooky Halloween mini-golf through the stacks. Trick or treat at all three desks, decorate a Trick or Treat bag, and enjoy a festive refreshment. Visit www.jaxpubliclibrary.org/events for more information.

21st: Jacksonville Rose Society will host its annual rose show at the Mandarin Garden Club on Saturday, Oct. 21. Exhibits will be accepted from 6 a.m. – 10 a.m. Judging begins at 10:30

a.m. The show is free and open to the public at 1 p.m. There will be a free seminar at 2 p.m. on Roses 101, how to grow beautiful roses, and learn what roses grow well in this area. Rose vendors will be on site to help select what's best for your garden. Visit www.jacksonvillerosesociety.org for more information.

22nd: "What was Martin Luther Thinking?" hosted by Hope Lutheran Church, 8570 Philips Hwy., Suite 104, on Oct. 22 at 9:15 a.m. will address questions that plague many about the "Reformation." Was Luther "canceled" for expressing his beliefs? Was he spreading disinformation? Knowing the possible consequences of his actions, what caused him to risk life and limb to take on a powerful organization? Visit www.Luther.HopeJAX.org for more information.

26th: Mandarin Republican Club will meet on Thursday, Oct. 26 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: Mandarin Women's Club will hold Game Day for members only on Oct. 26 beginning at 9 a.m. at the Ramada Inn Mandarin. Lunch will be served after game play is finished. The cost of the lunch is \$25 and reservations and payment must be received by Oct. 19 by calling Jo-Ellen at (904) 635-8722 or emailing her at joshifty@aol.com. Visit www.mandarinwomensclub.com for more information and membership forms.

27th: The Italian American Club of Jacksonville will hold its popular Spaghetti to Go on Friday, Oct. 27 from 5 p.m. until the spaghetti is gone at the club building, 2838 Westberry Road. Visit www.iacofjacksonville.com or call (904) 586-2700 for more information.

28th: Grandparenting Summit 2023, presented by Legacy Coalition, will be simulcast at Mandarin Presbyterian Church, 2501 Loretto Road, on Saturday, Oct. 28 from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. This will be a full day of inspiration, ideas, and tools for anyone who loves children and desires to leave a meaningful legacy for this generation and beyond. Register at mandarinpres.com/legacy or legacycoalition.com/summit. Lunch is provided by Chick-fil-A and purchased separately, or bring your own. Drinks and snacks are provided.

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Q&A

with Duval County School Board Member
Lori Hershey, District 7

Q: Do you have an update to share on the search for a new superintendent?

A: The superintendent’s role has been posted and resumes are already coming in. The window to accept applications will close on Oct. 13 and on Oct. 18, we will identify the semi-finalists. Then, finalists will be selected on Nov. 8 and arrangements made for them to come to Jacksonville for final interviews on Nov. 16 and 17. Finally, on Nov. 21, we will select a superintendent at a special board meeting. To remain up to date on the search, visit our website, <https://dcps.duvalschools.org/search>.

Q: Do you have any insight to share about the heavy traffic on Loretto Road during school hours?

A: Traffic on Loretto is hectic during the school year, but currently the situation is being exacerbated by the detour to Loretto Road due to road construction on Julington Creek Road. The road construction is scheduled for completion in late September (so, hopefully by the time you read this). Please be aware that the school is doing their best to move traffic. Heavy traffic on Loretto continues to be 7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m., during student drop off and pick up.

Q: Can you explain how hurricane

days for schools are determined in Duval County?

A: The process all revolves around schools as hurricane shelters and if we have to open them. If we do, it takes one day to prepare the facility, the day(s) that the facility is open serving as a shelter, and one more day to clean up and close the shelter. The mayor is the person who requests the use of schools as shelters, which Mayor Deegan did with the recent Hurricane Idalia.

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

A: Florida State Rep. Jessica Baker visited Atlantic Coast High School on Sept. 12 and spoke with students, toured the school, and learned about the array of Career and Technical Education opportunities at Atlantic Coast. I am trying to coordinate a date for her to visit Mandarin High School.

Congratulations to the Mandarin Mustangs! On Friday, Sept. 15, Mandarin High beat Atlantic Coast 30 – 0 and won the Principal’s Cup.

Q: How can our readers contact you?

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

Q&A

with Jacksonville City Council Member
Michael Boylan, District 6

Q: Do you have any information about what is going on with the old SunTrust/Truist bank property on San Jose Boulevard?

A: Yes. This property will be rebuilt as a tire store. The property is already zoned for this purpose. I think it’s important to note that the city doesn’t dictate what kind of private development is built in a particular place. Our responsibility is only to make sure that it is zoned properly for the purpose, that road capacity exists, and that the construction is completed properly and safely. The type of business that opens in any location meeting these qualifications is all market-driven.

Q: How about the old Shell gas station on the corner of Loretto Road and San Jose?

A: The last conversation I had with the owner of the property, First Coast Energy, I learned that they were making no efforts to market this property at this time.

Q: Can you comment on general citizen concerns regarding tree cutting in Mandarin?

A: I hear laments about this frequently, but few people seem to notice the number of trees we have planted. Many trees have been added to the medians on San Jose Boulevard plus Mandarin Road and the property behind the old JTA commuter lot. We try to more than replen-

ish trees taken down for development in our area so we can keep Mandarin beautiful.

Q: Do you have updates on a couple of ongoing projects: Cissell property on Loretto Road and the County Dock project?

A: For the Cissell property, there haven’t been any really meaningful changes except the prospect of a church as an added option for development. I presume there must be an active interest for this.

Regarding the County Dock property, the last conversation I had I was told that the neighborhood committee will review the community survey results at a meeting in late September. One question that came up was that a one acre parcel of the property was listed for sale on Zillow, and it looked like the seller wanted to divide the property into a six-acre parcel and a one-acre parcel. The representative for the applicant said they were just testing the market, but the application was still moving forward.

Q: As of the date of this interview [Sept. 19], what is the latest with the construction on the bridge on Julington Creek Road?

A: I received a report on Sept. 18 that said the construction was 75 percent complete; the contracted completion

Q&A with Michael Boylan cont. on pg. 9



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Guest Column

Now or Never

By Allison DeFoor, president, North Florida Land Trust

Northeast Florida is at a crossroads of history for land conservation, and it is literally Now or Never. The people of Florida and their leaders have stepped up to the plate. Now it is time for you, the landowners, to respond. If we do it right, landowners can make money and our grandchildren will get to see what real Florida looks like. If we do it wrong, shame on us as we watch our end of Florida become like Orlando, cheapening property and lifestyle values. We can truly have it all if we choose, so let's choose!

Throughout the years, both Republican and Democratic governors have been behind initiatives to preserve Florida's natural lands — from Save Our Everglades in the 1980s, Preservation 2000 in 1990, Florida Forever in 1999 and beyond. Florida's voters have also done their part. No statewide initiative on the environment in our state has received less than 70 percent of the vote. This year the total commitment of state funding was more than \$900 million. House of Representatives Speaker Paul Renner courageously added a similar amount targeting wildlife corridors, including \$400 million for our own O2O, Ocala-to-Osceola corridor. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Local efforts mirrored statewide initiatives. Referenda were passed in 27 counties, starting in Volusia. Conservation initiatives were also passed in 55 municipalities. Locally, Duval made a big land acquisition effort under Mayor John Delaney. Federal partners have also come into play. These efforts expand buffer lands around military bases such as Camp Blanding, vital to national security and to our economy. Initiatives

aimed at salt marshes and resiliency are aborning.

In addition to fee simple acquisition of lands, efforts increasingly involve conservation easements which allow the landowner to retain ownership and traditional uses such as timber or farming while pocketing the value of development rights. You can "cash out," in farming terms, your development rights, while staying in traditional uses, and enjoying those income streams into the future. Innovative developers, such as at Babcock Ranch and Framton, have discovered blending conservation into development plans for open space and recreation can actually increase the value of the lands developed.

We the People have stepped up to the plate. Landowners, it is now batter-up! Without willing sellers, these massive efforts to create willing buyers will come to nothing.

This old Florida Cracker, whose family has been in Florida now for nine generations, speaks to the heart of you who own the land. You own it because you love it, and often have for generations. You, like me, have seen it slipping away. Like me, you want our grandchildren to know the real Florida, while also making provisions for them economically. There are ways and means now to do this, and they will not be available forever. North Florida Land Trust stands ready to help. The money is here. It is truly Now or Never.

Please act!

Rev. Cn. Allison DeFoor is the president of the North Florida Land Trust. He served as Everglades Czar for Florida. His family has been in Florida since it belonged to Spain.

Church's Baby Pantry is open to serve those in need

Through the support of congregation and community members, as well as the business community, Mandarin Lutheran Church's Baby Pantry is well stocked. This ministry of the church strives to assist Jacksonville-area parents by providing baby care items such as diapers, wipes, bathing items, rash cream, and gently used clothing at no cost. One congregant,

Jack Cosentino, regularly donates stuffed animals for the siblings of the babies who receive formula and diapers from the pantry. "All of these groups have been an enormous help to our cause and we would like to thank them for all they do to help this ministry every month," said Carol Gomez of the Mandarin Lutheran Church Baby Pantry.



Congregation member Harold Kendall, who has a walking group that donates funds for diapers, with two moms who give back to the pantry by volunteering their time and donating items.



Kindercare Learning Center of Fruit Cove regularly donates furniture, baby items and diapers to the Baby Pantry.

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 372 supports troops



Photo courtesy Caitlin Bailey

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

Recognizing the importance of standing by those who protect our nation, the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 372 embarked on a mission to support troops overseas through a dedicated donation drive.

The American Legion Auxiliary Unit 372, a community organization known for its commitment to veterans, active-duty military personnel, and their families, has taken the initiative to uplift the spirits of those serving far from home. Through the dedication of its members and

support from the local community, the auxiliary unit has accumulated a donation valued at \$800. The items collected through this initiative will directly translate into practical support for overseas troops.

The impact of this effort is not only seen in the intention behind it, but also in the tangible results achieved. Currently, in Mandarin, the American Legion Post 372 is working on building a permanent home that will allow for these acts of giving and service to thrive and bring aid to more veterans and their families in need.



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Briefs

Mandarin Women's Club hosts Game Day

On Oct. 26, the Mandarin Women's Club will hold its popular Game Day at the Ramada Inn in Mandarin. Game Day is one of the most anticipated events of the year, and members will choose to play either Bunco or Mexican Train. The Game Day event is for members only and affords members an opportunity to make new friends and maybe take home one of the many cash prizes. Lunch will be served after game play is finished.

Doors open at 9 a.m. and reservations for the luncheon are required. The luncheon cost is \$25 and must be received by Thursday, Oct. 19. To make reservations and obtain payment instructions, call Jo-Ellen at (904) 635-8722 or email her at joshifty@aol.com. Visit www.mandarinwomensclub.com for more information and to download a membership form.

19th annual Halloween Doors & More supports Community PedsCare

On Saturday, Oct. 14, The Foundation of Community Hospice & Palliative Care will transform the Jacksonville Fairgrounds Exhibition Hall into a magical, candy land-themed day of family-friendly fun and entertainment for the 19th annual Halloween Doors & More. Northeast Florida's premier Halloween event since 2005, Halloween Doors & More, will begin at 2 p.m. for fun attractions with candy, toys, food, interactive experiences, and live characters. Visit with the Jacksonville Jaguars Cheerleaders, trick or treat at the 14-foot-high Fantasy Doors, stroll the Magical Meet

and Greet Streets to see favorite costumed characters, show off dance moves in the Fiesta Family Disco, visit the Booutiful Salon for a spooktacular makeover, and stop by the Grown-Up Grotto and Food Court to enjoy gourmet foods and drinks. Fantasy Smiles are required, and costumes are encouraged.

Proceeds from Halloween Doors & More benefit Community PedsCare®, the pediatric program of Community Hospice & Palliative Care, supporting children living with serious and life-limiting illnesses and their families. Most Community PedsCare® services are provided without charge, regardless of insurance coverage. All vital care and support are provided at no cost to the family, which is made possible through generous community supporters, efforts of The Foundation of Community Hospice & Palliative Care, and Medicare.

To purchase Halloween Doors & More admissions, call (904) 886-3883 or visit HDM.CommunityHospice.com.

Housing market in flux; inventory increases

While outside temperatures may continue to soar as fall approaches, the opposite is true of Northeast Florida's housing market. A cooling period has begun with the inventory of single-family homes increasing in August, while pending sales and prices are down. Home affordability in the region crept up slightly during the last month of summer, but housing continues to be expensive compared to last year and previous years.

"The real estate market is fluctuating. Interest rates, inflation, and changing labor markets are factors," said Diana Galavis, 2023 president of the Northeast Florida Association of REALTORS®. "Home affordability took a slight upward tick, but overall housing is significantly more expensive than this time last year."

Pending sales were down, which is heavily due to interest rates. Buyers now have an opportunity to preview more active inventory, and there is an increase of new listings to 3,022, a rise of 12 percent in August. Meanwhile, active inventory jumped 10.9 percent to 5,012 homes in the region.

In August, Northeast Florida's Home Affordability Index for single-family homes over the region's six counties registered at 66, a slight 1.5 percent hike upward from July, when the index came in at 65, its lowest point ever; however, August's score still indicated a 14.3 percent drop from the same time in 2022.

The Housing Affordability Index measures housing affordability for the region. A higher number means greater affordability. This index measures affordability factors for all homebuyers making a 20 percent down payment. An index of 100 is defined as the point where a median-income family has the exact amount of income needed to purchase a median-priced existing home. An index value over 100 means that the family has more than enough income, while a value below 100 means that a family doesn't

have enough income to qualify for a mortgage loan.

While affordability is still lower than it was last year, the index in August was still higher than it was in July, which is a good sign for buyers. The region's months' worth of supply rose 10 percent to 2.7 months. The median sales price for single-family homes fell 3 percent to \$383,000 and was down 1.8 percent from August the year before.

In Duval County, the August 2023 median price of single-family housing was \$335,150, a 1.6 percent hike from July 2023 when it registered \$330,000. The median days on the market in June decreased to 29. Month-to-month, closed sales rose 6.6 percent to 941, pending sales dropped 6 percent to 926, and new listings increased 9.7 percent to 1,509. Active inventory for the county rose 10 percent to 2,214 homes, a 2.4-month supply. In July, the home affordability index fell 3.8 percent, registering at 75.

In St. Johns County, August 2023 median prices decreased 6.8 percent to \$550,000 for single-family homes. The median days on the market continued to hover at 36. Month-to-month, closed sales fell 17.5 percent to 428, pending sales tumbled down 21.6 percent to 428, and new listings rose 7.5 percent to 760. Active inventory rose to 1,568 homes, an increase of 8.7 percent from July 2023, and 3.7-month supply. The affordability index increased slightly, 4.5 percent to 46, yet still indicated St. Johns County is an expensive place to live.



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SoleMates share common desire to be champions for girls

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

Girls on the Run SoleMates are leveraging their love of movement to train with a purpose to raise critical scholarship funds for girls in their community. Studies show that a girl's self-confidence begins to drop by age nine, but SoleMates know that it doesn't have to be that way.

In addition to cultivating meaningful and healthy relationships, participating in Girls on the Run transforms girls' lives by helping them increase their self-confidence and teaching them critical skills to manage emotions, resolve conflict, help others, and make intentional decisions. In fact, U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy highlighted Girls on the Run as an example of a program for girls to learn life skills through engaging activities and lessons.

SoleMates help to advance this powerful mission while training for a physical activity. In March 2023, Girls on the Run SoleMates raised \$45,938, which translates to 306 Girls on the Run scholarships.

Whether they are counting miles on the trail, laps in a pool, reps in the weight room, or downward dogs in the studio, SoleMates can train for any athletic activity of their choice. SoleMates that choose to train for the 2024 Gate River



Photo courtesy Girls on the Run
SoleMates help fund scholarships for Girls on the Run while they train for a physical activity.

Run in Jacksonville or the 2024 Shark Bite Half Marathon in New Smyrna Beach will have access to the exclusive SoleMates VIP Experience. The SoleMates VIP Experience is a private party for SoleMates and a guest before and after the race in the air-conditioned WJCT building and includes food, beverages, parking, indoor restrooms, gear storage, and plenty of post-race pampering.

Visit www.gotrnefl.org/solemates to register or learn more about becoming a SoleMate.

Life

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Get to Know ...

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewsline.com

Grace McCormick

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewsline.com

Grace McCormick is a life-long resident of Mandarin who has a strong affinity for Jacksonville and its people. She is Miss Jacksonville 2023 and she says representing the community that raised her is a dream come true. Grace is a member of the Class of 2020 of Bishop Kenny High School and is now in her senior year at the University of Central Florida, where she plans to earn a degree in Human Communications with a minor in marketing and a certificate in leadership. She remains very close with her family of three younger brothers and parents and says she comes home to Jacksonville most weekends to attend her brothers' sporting events and events supporting the city's special needs community, with which she volunteers extensively.

Q: How did you choose UCF as your school?

A: Because of the support I received from family and friends, I was fortunate to be accepted to all the colleges I applied to. UCF offered everything I wanted. UCF is a very unique school as it is one of fewer than 30 colleges in the state that offers a program for the special needs community. I have built up a passion for this community in Jacksonville and I wanted to continue my work at the collegiate level.

Q: What can you tell us about your work with the college's Inclusive



Photo courtesy Grace McCormick
Grace McCormick

Education Services?

A: This is a two-year program that allows those with special needs or intellectual difficulties to come to college and receive an education. These students can study one of three areas: Hospitality, Education, and Social Services, all with the end goal of employment. The program, for which I am a Resource Facilitator, provides emotional, social, and academic support. For some, it is their first time living independently. They live in a dorm with added support. In my role, I meet with my students throughout the week to act as a kind of peer mentor and tutor.

Q: What was your path to becoming Miss Jacksonville?

A: If you had told me I'd be involved in scholarship competitions when I was growing up, I'd have said you were crazy. I was shy, couldn't use my voice, and was trying to overcome my own learning disability. My first com-

petition was for Miss Bishop Kenny in my junior year. I didn't place, but wanted to continue to bring a light to my community, so that summer I entered Miss Freedom USA, a national pageant held in Jacksonville, and I won. Next, I decided to enter the Miss Jacksonville competition, a preliminary for the Miss Florida (Miss America) competition. I was first runner up in January 2022. I entered the Miss Winter Park competition shortly thereafter and won, so I went on to Miss Florida in the summer of 2022. I was in awe of the caliber of the women involved. Then this January, I entered Miss Jacksonville again and won this time. It was a true team effort, but the biggest thing I did differently was communicate that Jacksonville was the community that raised me and verbalize how much I've grown. This past summer at Miss Florida, I was honored to be presented with the Presidential Service Scholarship.

Q: What are your future plans?

A: First, I'm focused on finishing my reign as Miss Jacksonville and serving the best I can. This was always the goal for me. Once I graduate next spring, my plan is to look into the news anchor field. Working with the special needs community will always be a part of my life. As a news anchor, I hope I can shed light on all communities including the special needs one.

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

A: In my spare time, I enjoy musical theater, my Christian ministry both in Jacksonville and at UCF, and hanging out with my pets when I'm in Jacksonville... we even have a pet duck!

AARP Foundation cont. from pg. 1

services.

During the 2023 tax season, in Jacksonville, AARP Foundation Tax-Aide volunteers completed 3,187 returns with refunds of more than \$3 million. This would not be possible without our volunteers, who make an indelible mark on the taxpayers we work with and the communities where they live.

Two sites will be open this year in Mandarin: South Mandarin Branch Library (12125 San Jose Blvd.) and Mandarin Branch Library (3330 Kori Road). There are nine additional sites across Jacksonville from the Beaches to Regency Square to Edgewood.

Visit <https://aarpfoundation.org/taxaidevolunteer> to complete an Interest Form, or call 1 (888) 227-7669 or email dianevtax12@gmail.com to learn more about volunteer opportunities.

Visit <https://taxaide.aarpfoundation.org> to learn more about having AARP Foundation Tax-Aide complete your taxes.

Q&A with Michael Boylan cont. from pg. 5

date is Sept. 26.

There is a new director of Public Works, Nina Sickler, and I had the opportunity recently to sit down with her and communicate the frustration we all feel with projects like this that seem to lack urgency in getting them completed. I also brought to her attention road resurfacing that is needed on Beauclerc Road and in the Mandarin Lakes neighborhood. I asked her for a listing of street resurfacing and sidewalks underway in District 6 so I can respond to constituents. It's important to keep in mind that the transitions in administration in the city government are also affecting ongoing projects.

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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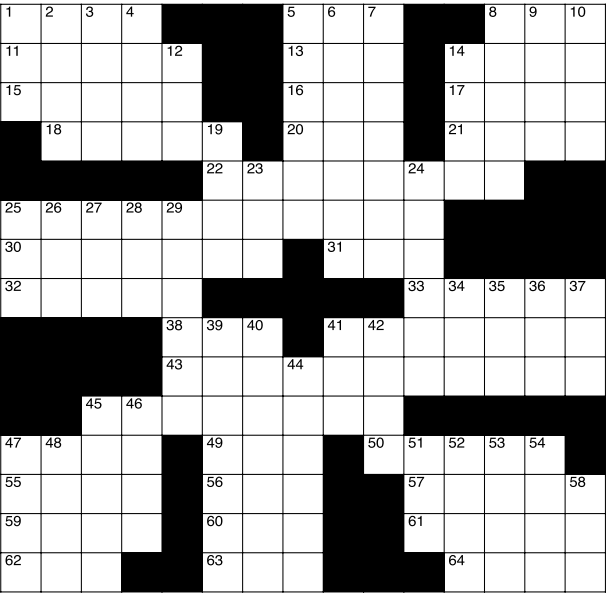
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Puzzles

Answers on page 3
Provided by MetroCreative



CLUES ACROSS

1. Information

5. Seaport (abbr.)

8. Agricultural disease (abbr.)

11. Riding horses

13. Boxing's GOAT

14. Hurt or discomfort

15. A small sharp knife to trim vegetables

16. A beaver builds one

17. Horizontal passage into a mine

18. Self-immolation by fire rituals

20. Chain bar with lots of games (abbr.)

21. Goo Goo Dolls' hit

22. Agreeable

25. In an early way

30. In a way, struck

31. It's there in the morning

32. County in the S. Pacific
33. Central Florida city

38. Numbers cruncher

41. Mexican beers

43. Lawyers say you can indict one

45. Capital of South Australia

47. Wings

49. Drug used to treat HIV/AIDS

50. Fencing sword

55. Capital of Qatar

56. Portable bed

57. Afflicted

59. Lying down

60. Midway between northeast and east

61. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation

62. Inflamed

63. Soviet Socialist Republic

64. Impudence

CLUES DOWN

1. A way to fish

2. Greek mythological figure

3. Scarlett's home

4. Assist

5. More doleful

6. Premeditated

7. Dish featuring minced food

8. San Diego ballplayer

9. Eight

10. Unwelcome picnic guests

12. Human gene

14. Bucket

19. Make full

23. Dirt

24. Person cited as ideal example

25. A part of (abbr.)

26. The 17th letter of the Greek alphabet

27. Very long period of time

28. Gas usage measurement
29. North American native people

34. It says "moo"

35. Folk singer Di Franco

36. Resinlike substance of certain insects

37. Residue

39. Grand homes

40. Popinjays

41. Man who behaves dishonorably

42. Figures

44. One who watches over children

45. Expressed pleasure

46. No longer living

47. Hebrew calendar month

48. Part of the ear

51. Swiss river

52. Prejudice

53. Italian Island

54. Resist authority (slang)

58. Criticize

ANIMAL WELFARE WORD SEARCH

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

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

WORDS

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ANIMAL
BEHAVIOR
COMMUNITY
COMPASSION
CRATE
DECLAW
DISEASED
ETHICS
FOSTER
GENETIC
GROOM
HOARDING
HUMANE
OUTCOME
PROTECT
RESPONSIBLE
RIGHTS
SHELTER
TESTING
TRAINING
VACCINATION
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WELFARE



Solve the code to discover words related to animal safety.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 21 = A)

A. 21 23 2 11 21 9

Clue: Pet or wild

B. 3 21 16 7 18 24

Clue: Caution

C. 19 25 11 21 23 7

Clue: Tender and compassionate

D. 16 14 3 18 7 15

Clue: Care for temporarily

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Constitution Week cont. from pg. 1

follow in 1775.

Schmitt recounted the walk on the streets and standing in the very place of the occurrence. He went on to say to appreciate history, it must come "alive" to us and to his students. He received a standing ovation from the well-attended lunch. He was presented with a certificate and a Tricorn hat to wear in class during Constitution Week.

The Sons of the American Revolution, Jacksonville Chapter, led by Paul Tucker, SAR President and Commander of the Color Guard presented the flag of the United States of America. A Mayoral Proclamation from Mayor Donna Deegan was read by Lynne Cason, Florida State Society DAR Historian, to highlight, celebrate, and honor our United States Constitution week. Bells were rung in St Augustine, Orange Park and Downtown Jacksonville. The Bicentennial Bell of Jacksonville rang at the Jacksonville Public Library on Sept. 17 at 4 p.m.



The Sons of the American Revolution, Jacksonville Chapter, led by Paul Tucker, SAR President and Commander of the Color Guard presented the flag of the United States of America.

The Regents Council of Northeast Florida, DAR, consists of eight chapters of the DAR and boasts more than 1100 members. The purpose of the society is promoting Patriotism, Education and Historic Preservation. DAR is a women's volunteer service organization who come from a variety of backgrounds and interests, but all share a common bond of having an ancestor who helped contribute to securing the independence of the United States of America. Any woman

18 years or older, regardless of race, religion, or ethnic background, who can prove lineal descent from a patriot of the American Revolution is eligible to join. Visit www.dar.org for more information.

Betty Reed is Regents Council of NE Florida President.

Making Strides cont. from pg. 1

ties across the country have raised approximately \$1 billion to support breast cancer research, patient programs, and direct services.

"Making Strides has grown into the nation's largest and most impactful breast cancer movement over the past three decades," said Jaclyn Rodriguez of the American Cancer Society. "Through Making Strides, we are funding critical research and life-saving programs that will ensure a brighter future for everyone who is impacted by breast cancer."

On Oct. 14, gates will open at 8 a.m. and the walk begins at 9 a.m. Registered survivors and thrivers will receive an event t-shirt and recognition at the event, which will feature entertainment and community partner booths.

Making Strides Against Cancer was founded in 1984 by Margery Gould Rath, a breast cancer survivor in Massachusetts, as a "move-along-a-thon" to raise funds for the American Cancer Society. The event officially became known as the American Cancer Society Making Strides Against Breast Cancer in 1993 and has since inspired millions of people to participate in events in communities across the country. Rath remained a passionate volunteer until her passing in 2001. Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of the First Coast raised more than \$350,000 for the American Cancer Society's mission in 2022 and aims to raise \$320,000 this year.

Visit MakingStridesWalk.org For more information, to register to walk, or to make a donation.



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Crown Point kindergarteners' "First Day Jitters"



Photos courtesy Mary Eyler

On the first day of school, Andrea Gore's kindergartners at Crown Point Elementary School arrived at her classroom with all sorts of feelings. There were those who were excited, those who were scared, and those who were nervous and anxious about leaving their parents. Gore decided to read the book "First Day Jitters" by Julie Danneberg to her kindergartners. Then, they talked about how everyone gets the first day jitters, even teachers. Afterward, the class drank their "jitter juice" to help dispel all their first day jitters.



Six Bolles seniors named 2024 National Merit Semifinalists

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

Officials with the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC®) announced the names of more than 16,000 semifinalists in the 69th annual National Merit Scholarship Program, a list that includes six senior students from The Bolles School. This year's National Merit semifinalists from the Bolles Class of 2024 are Isabel Bassin, Daniel Ji, Alex Meyers-Labenz, William Schilling, Aryan Shah and Ashkon Shirazi.

The students will continue in competition for some 7,140 National Merit Scholarships worth nearly \$28 million that will be offered next spring. More than 1.3 million juniors from about 21,000 high schools around the country entered the 2024 scholarship program by taking the 2022 Preliminary SAT/

National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, also known as the PSAT/NMSQT®. That test served as an initial screen of program entrants. The semifinalists represent less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors.

To become a finalist, semifinalists must submit a detailed scholarship application, in which they provide information about their academic record, participation in school and community activities, demonstrated leadership abilities, employment and honors and awards received. A semifinalist must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, write an essay and earn SAT® or ACT® scores that confirm the student's earlier performance on the qualifying test. More than 90 percent of semifinalists are expected to attain finalist standing.

Halloween boasts a rich history

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

Costume-clad kids, bags of candy and jack-o'-lanterns are some indelible images associated with Halloween. Those images may forever be linked to this beloved, fun-filled holiday, which boasts a rich history that varies depending on where in the world you might be.

Celebrations around the world may not mirror those in the United States, where trick-or-treating youngsters travel from house to house in search of candy. But true Halloween enthusiasts may be interested to learn the history of the holiday and how it has changed over the centuries.

El Dia de los Muertos: In parts of Mexico and Latin America, El Dia de los Muertos (The Day of the Dead) is celebrated each year in early November. The day is designed to honor the

Halloween history cont. on pg. 13

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Fall and spooky events coming soon to the library

By Jeremy Yates
mail@floridanewsline.com

Spooky season is upon us, and you know what that means: Your favorite fall activities are back. So, scare up some friends and join us at Halloween Happenings on Saturday, Oct. 21 at 2 p.m. at Mandarin Branch Library. Decorate trick-or-treat bags or play a round of “spooky” mini-golf through the shelves. And don’t miss the costume parade at 3:30 p.m.

You can also enter the Haunted House (if you dare!). Please note: This activity will feature flashing lights and spooky scares (suggested for children aged five and up). Tour as a family (if you need someone’s hand to hold).

Treat yourself to a calming craft and learn a new skill. Teens and adults are invited to Craft & Chat every Tuesday from 5 p.m. – 6 p.m. at Mandarin Library. On Oct. 10, join us for a hand-sewing clinic where you’ll learn how to make repairs or alterations to simple or store-bought Halloween costumes.

Writers: Join us for a free Writer’s Lab workshop all about crafting interesting characters with children’s author Karen Chow at the South Mandarin Library on Saturday, Oct. 28, at 10:30 a.m.

Looking for more fun, hands-on activities? Children (aged five through eight) can join us on Wednesdays at 3:30 p.m. at Mandarin Library for Junior Scien-

tists or Tuesdays at 4 p.m. for Junior Artists at South Mandarin Library.

The next Homeschool Lab starts Friday, Oct. 6, at 11 a.m. at South Mandarin Library. Using Jacksonville “street art” as inspiration, young artists (aged 10 – 14) will work collaboratively to design a new mural over the nine-week series.

Experience astronaut training, shuttle launches, moonwalks and more in the new Mission to Mars Lab (for ages nine to 12) Wednesdays at 4 p.m. at the South Mandarin Library or Thursdays at 3:30 p.m. at the Mandarin Library. This nine-week series explores the fascinating engineering, science, and history behind space exploration. For more Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (paired with an awesome book), check out STEAM & Stories at Mandarin Library Mondays at 3:30 p.m. (for children aged five through 12).

For our Pre-K kids and families, we have Little Readers (for birth through age five) 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 Library continues in the park outside South Mandarin Library Thursdays at 10 a.m. Sensory Friendly Storytime continues Wednesdays at 11 a.m. at Mandarin Library.

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

Bolles students unite for #MauiStrong fundraiser

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

Bolles students on all four campuses raised funds for those affected by the devastating Maui wildfires the week of Sept. 4. Participating students collectively raised \$4,150 to support Maui Nui Strong, a Hawaii-based initiative that is providing direct relief to individuals, families and businesses impacted by the natural disaster.

Students, faculty and staff members who participated at the upper school

were allowed to wear jeans and a Hawaiian shirt on Sept. 8 for a special #MauiStrong dress-down day. The Middle School Bartram Campus organized its fundraiser similarly, with participating Bulldogs allowed to wear jeans and either Hawaiian shirts or Bolles t-shirts that day. Lower school students who contributed received floral leis to wear.

Bolles senior Katherine Asbury ’24 of the Upper School Student Council was essential in collaborating with Campus Heads to organize this effort.



Photo courtesy The Bolles School
Bolles students collectively raised \$3,888.26 to support Maui Nui Strong.

Halloween history cont. from pg. 12
dead, who Day of the Dead celebrants believe return to their earthly homes each Halloween. Families may burn candles and incense in an effort to help their deceased relatives and ancestors find their way home.

Guy Fawkes Day: For many years, England had reason to celebrate around Oct. 31, but those celebrations did not mirror the Halloween festivities familiar to those across the pond. While recent years have witnessed more and more Brits adopting the Americanized celebration of Halloween, for many the true holiday this time of year will always be Guy Fawkes Day. Celebrated on Nov. 5, Guy Fawkes Day is a commemoration of the foiled Gunpowder Plot. Smithsonian notes that this was a failed attempt by disgruntled Catholics to blow up the British Parliament building while King James I was inside. Fireworks, pa-

rades and bonfires marked Guy Fawkes Day celebrations, which in recent years have gradually begun to transform into something that more closely resembles American Halloween.

Samhain: History.com notes that Halloween can trace its origins to Ireland. But those origins did not involve giggling youngsters carrying plastic pumpkins around in search of candy. Halloween’s origins can be traced to the Celtic festival of Samhain. Samhain was considered the Celtic New Year and was sacred to the ancient Irish. The festival was celebrated as the days became shorter, and offerings were left for the dead, who celebrants believed could cross over into the land of the living at this time; however, they also believed demonic spirits could follow such a path during Samhain, giving the festival the taste of the macabre that many still enjoy imparting on their Halloween celebrations today.

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Gardening

Fall gardening, and hornets?

By Master Gardener Volunteer Lesley Arrandale
mail@floridanewsline.com

We live in an area which has been affected by invasive species, both flora and fauna. Most of us know about the pythons in the Everglades and kudzu in Georgia, which have had profound impacts on native wildlife. Unfortunately there is a new menace we may encounter soon, and that is an Asian insect, the yellow-legged hornet. Recently two have been identified in Savannah and it would be naïve to think they are the only invaders.

The problem is that these hornets are a threat to honeybees, which they will devour. They were discovered by an amateur beekeeper near their hives. The hornets prey on bees as they come and go, and can seriously impact the hives once they are targeted. For help in identification, see https://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/MISC/BEES/Vespa_velutina.html.

If you think you have seen one, please talk to a Duval County Master Gardener Volunteer, at (904) 255-7450. They will advise you how to report the insect to FDACS, if they confirm it could be a yellow-legged hornet. Take a picture if you can. Our agricultural industry doesn't need any more invasive species to deal with, and this is potentially very serious.

And finally — gardening. Fall is a time when some of us like to spruce up our flower beds with mums and other seasonal color. Check out <https://tinyurl.com/ybv7f8dk> for inspiration. If you intend to plant a display bed, give plants a good start by first working some compost into the area before planting. Add some slow-release fertilizer, water the plants well, and spread mulch. If there isn't enough rain, make sure to water them. Since mums — Chrysanthemums — are perennials, they could come back the following year if they are happy in their location. Dead head fall flowers especially annuals to keep the blooms coming.

For vegetable gardeners, don't stop scouting for insects. Either source transplants or, if there's time, sow seeds for new plants to replace early crops once they are harvested (see the Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/VH021>). Instead of ornamental cab-bages, why not grow attractive kales and Chinese greens in the landscape? If you do so and suffer insect or disease problems in your flowers, only use chemical products that can also be applied safely around edible plants. There are plenty of organic or OMRI listed products that would be suitable. Just be sure to read and follow product labels, which are the law.

Autumn is a good time to plant shrubs and trees. For maximum benefit to wildlife, which has co-evolved with native plants, consider if you have space for an oak tree. Oaks support a wide range of environmentally valuable insects and other invertebrates. If small shrubs and trees are more in scale with your landscape, a redbud tree (*Cercis canadensis*) is just one possibility. It blooms in late winter to early spring, providing honeybees and more an early food supply. The flowers cover the bare branches making a lovely show before the heart-shaped light green leaves appear. Another pretty choice would be a native flatwoods plum, *Prunus umbellata* (<https://www.fnps.org/plant/prunus-umbellata>). It also blooms in early spring.

Whichever plants you are drawn to, I hope they give you joy.

Garden Club's annual Trash to Treasure sale is this month

By Joann Butler
mail@floridanewsline.com

Calling all treasure hunters! If you enjoy garage, yard and estate sales, you will love the Mandarin Garden Club's annual Trash to Treasure Sale on Oct. 6 – 7, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day at 2892 Loretto Road. The Mandarin Garden Club will be loaded with items that have been generously donated by the members, including household items, electronics, small accent furniture, glassware, kitchen items, pictures, books, lamps, toys, crafts, baskets, small tools and appliances and gardening tools. Additionally, there will be a "Treasure" section that will feature fine china, crystal, signed pottery, one of a kind pieces and fine art. The Masons will cook their famous BBQ on both days and club members will be selling some homemade baked goods. There will also be a Pop-up Plant Sale for garden lovers.

The Mandarin Garden Club Circles started their monthly meetings in September. Check the community calendar each month in Mandarin

NewsLine for details on those meetings. There are three daytime and one evening Circle. The Mandarin Garden Club is the perfect place to make friends, get involved with the community and learn about gardening and environmental issues. There also is a game day once a month for members only, which is a great time to meet more people in the club. The Crafty Ladies group works on various crafts each week from September to May. There are still a few spots available at the club's annual Craft Fair to be held on Nov. 18 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The fee for an outside 10 foot by 10 foot space is \$40; if interested, return your application promptly as spaces fill up fast. Contact Wanda Bosworth at (904) 654-6945 or email mgccraftyladies@gmail.com or Joyce Datz at (904) 287-3602 or e-mail jdatz@bellsouth.net for more information.

Finally, the Mandarin Garden Club is available for rent for parties, weddings, reunions, and all kinds of special occasions. Visit www.mandaringardenclub.org for more information, including pictures of the club.

Mandarin Rotary Club installs new president

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

The Rotary Club of Mandarin recently installed Wesley Caldwell as its

president for the club's 2023 – 2024 year. He succeeds outgoing president Marc Hassan.

Caldwell is a long-time resident of Jacksonville, and has been employed for 38 years as an insurance advisor. Currently, he works with WRC & Associates, advising local citizens of their options as they become eligible for Medicare. He has served as past president of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and past president of the Delray Beach Sunrise Rotary Club.

The Rotary Club of Mandarin is dedicated to the service of others, with the motto of "Service Above Self." The

club meets every Tuesday morning at the Ramada Inn on Hartley Road in Mandarin.

For more information about the club, visit www.mandarinrotary.org or email membership director Michael Sullivan at michaels@coj.net.



Photo courtesy Steve Gallagher
Wes Caldwell (on left) signing the Rotary charter as a new president, with outgoing president Marc Hassan.



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Fishing

Jimmy's Fishing Report

By Jimmy Tomazinis
mail@floridanewslines.com

Ah, October ... one of my favorite months to fish. We finally get some cooler weather and all the fish are filling up on the end of the warm season's bounty. It also seems that more than half the summertime crowds vacate our waterways for different activities. Need I say more?

Shrimping should still be at its peak this month with the number-to-size ratio being the best before catering towards size as their numbers dwindle into December. I have had some great days in November and December, but that's never a sure thing so make sure you stock up while you can.

At the same time all the fish that have been eating shrimp all summer will be stocking up on the last of the shrimp too, especially the stripers. They've

grown a lot from the beginning of summer and with the water temperatures cooling they will be different animals. Look for them around their usual haunts such as bridges and deeper docks.

Further down river, past downtown, the bull redfish congregate on the deep-dredged channel edges to spawn this time of year. While it's a much more consistent fishery there, we do have some bull reds push into our part of the river occasionally, so if you're feeling lucky it might be worth looking around a bit and soaking some crab or mullet on a few of our drop offs and ledges.

Mullet should still be moving through in the river and along the beaches. They give us such great opportunities to target some larger fish like tarpon and

jacks really close to shore. If nothing else, it's still a spectacle when the stars align and you happen to be in the right place at the right time.

Transitioning to the surf, I can't forget the pompano and whiting fishing that is really good this month. As I've stressed before, when surf fishing you can't be too tied to a certain spot, but rather

certain conditions. Try to find the clean water first then find your troughs and runouts. It will be much more worth your time. Sand fleas, clam, and fresh shrimp got you covered for the whiting and pompano. Throw a mullet out there too if you're looking for something bigger and remember, it doesn't have to be far. Good luck, stay safe, and tight lines.

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The Pantry Raiders

A delicious seafood meal is a catch away

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

One of the benefits of a day out fishing is being able to pull in your catch and then enjoy it almost immediately for lunch or dinner. Fish and other creatures of the sea can be delicious on their own or enjoyed as part of larger meals.

Lump crab cakes are a delicacy often enjoyed at seafood and steak restaurants across the country, but they easily can be made at home with a few ingredients. Enjoy this recipe for "Grilled Gulf Lump Crab Cake," courtesy of Alabama Gulf Seafood and Chefs Greg and Lindsey Kilgore of Black Rock Bistro.

Grilled Gulf Lump Crab Cake

Makes one large crab cake or two smaller ones

1 pound Gulf lump crabmeat, picked

1/3 cup red bell pepper, diced small

Juice and zest of one lemon

1 scallion, thinly sliced

Aioli or mayo, just enough to combine

1 pinch Old Bay seasoning

Couple dashes of hot sauce (Louisiana or Cholula)

Salt and pepper to taste

1. Place all ingredients in metal ring, or loosely form into a patty. Place in hot cast iron.

2. Flip once until browned on both sides. Serve immediately. Garnish with grilled lemon and either tartar or remoulade.

Tip: For a fall or winter meal, serve crab cake on a bed of mashed potatoes and parsnip or carrot puree.



Photo courtesy MetroCreative
Grilled Gulf Lump Crab Cake

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Travel

Exploring the Salt of the Earth

By Debi Lander
mail@floridanewslines.com

You may not consider a salt mine an exciting site, but I'll swear otherwise. Here are four extraordinary salt mines open to visitors.

Wieliczka Salt Mine near Krakow, Poland, earned one of the 12 spots on the very first UNESCO World Heritage list. Its operations date back to the 13th century, making it one of the most historic and famous salt mines. The mine reaches so deep the Eiffel Tower could easily fit. The complex sprawls over nine levels, but tourists descend only three levels.

Tours begin with a walk down 380 stairs to the first level, about 210 feet underground. They cover nearly two miles on winding passageways and 800 stairs, but an elevator lifts you back to the surface.

Everything, including the tunnel walls, floors, sculptures, and crystal decorations, is salt, except for the wooden supports. You see dull gray chambers where

salt sculptures tell stories: some historical, religious, or quirky, like gnomes. One room contains figures depicting the legend of St. Kinga.

Centuries ago, working underground wasn't always safe, so the miners created chapels for prayer. The stunning Chapel of St. Kinga includes chandeliers that look like glass, but are giant rock salt crystals that have been dissolved and reconstructed. Three men worked more than 30 years to create this immense sanctuary, removing approximately 20,000 tons of salt.

The salt mine is free from bacteria, viruses, and pollutants and provides health benefits. Many visit the private spa and wellness facilities for therapeutic purposes.

Hallstatt, Austria Salt Mine: Many years ago, I visited the cliffside village of Hallstatt, in the heart of the Alps. Visitors ride a steep funicular to the mine entrance perched high on a mountain overlooking the tiny lakeside hamlet. Before entering, guests don denim jumpsuits and sit down to ride the miner's slide to lower depths — a big surprise, but great fun.

Salt mining in Hallstatt dates back more than 7,000 years, making it one of the oldest salt mining sites in the world. Guided tours include the underground salt lake. Tourists straddle a



Photos courtesy Debi Lander
Wieliczka Salt Mine.

bench attached to a small train to return to the surface. The Hallstatt salt mines offer visitors a glimpse into the area's history, natural scenic beauty, and one of the most breathtaking Austrian villages.

While in Bogota, Columbia, I visited the Salt Cathedral of Zipaquirá, one of Colombia's most famous and unique attractions. This remarkable cathedral lies within a former salt mine. The miners built the first chapel in the 1930s and dedicated it to the patron saint of miners. Over time, workers expanded the chambers, creating a serene place of worship, like a traditional Roman Catholic church with a dome, nave, and stations of the cross.

Visitors gradually descend a dark, downward-sloping walkway before the sanctuary opens and leads to chambers displaying artistic sculptures and colorful illumination. The cathedral, a fusion of art, religion, and geology, serves as a religious site and tourist attraction. Thousands of pilgrims and visitors come to reflect and pray, especially during the Holy Week before Easter.

The only salt mine in the U.S. open to the public is Strataca, located in Hutchinson, Kansas. The sprawling salt mine rests within one of the world's largest rock salt deposits. A long, 90-second elevator ride transports you down 650 feet to the former work area. Don't worry about getting claustrophobic; visitors enter a wide-open space after the elevator ride.

Self-guided displays and video stations explain the mining techniques since the 1923 opening. Two trains give rides through the mine's older, more confined areas. The driver narrates, speaking about the challenges of working underground. The dry air creates an excellent underground storage facility. The movie industry sends many films, props, and costumes for safeguarding, seen on tour. Although Strataca doesn't quite measure up to the more artistic mines, it's still fascinating.

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



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