



Mandarin NewsLine seeks local stories to honor veterans

Florida NewsLine Staff
editor@floridanewsline.com

Mandarin NewsLine is honoring Veterans Day (Nov. 11), and we want to highlight the service, sacrifice and stories of our military veterans right here in our community.

We're looking for:

- Local veteran trailblazers — business owners, community leaders, or anyone making a difference after their service.
- Multigenerational military families keeping traditions of service alive.
- Stories from veterans who made Duval County home after their service.
- Veterans involved in local organizations, volunteer work, or mentoring.
- Young veterans and their families sharing what service means to them.

Know a veteran we should spotlight? Want to share your own story?

Email us at editor@floridanewsline.com by Monday, Oct. 27 for a chance to be featured.

Rare but Real

Local man's breast cancer journey inspires mission to educate others

By Tracy McCormick-Dishman
editor@floridanewsline.com

When Bill Carter felt a lump on his chest on New Year's Day 2024, he almost brushed it off. But being married to Susan, an oncology nurse for more than 30 years, changed everything.

"If I wasn't married to Susan, I would have blew that off and just went on about my business," said Carter. "Being married to her for 50 years and hearing all her stories about patients, I knew I needed to show her this lump."

Susan Carter immediately recognized the danger. The lump felt "spiculated" — spiky rather than smooth — a characteristic often associated with malignancy.



Photo courtesy Susan and Bill Carter
Susan and Bill Carter.

"When I felt Bill's lump, it was like my heart skipped a beat," Susan said. "The word spiculated came to mind

and I thought, we need to move on this."

Rare but Real cont. on pg. 2

A fighter's guide to cancer: 23 years later



John and Renay Daigle pose for a photo in 2002 with their daughter Hannah, shortly after her breast cancer diagnosis while six months pregnant.

By Renay Daigle

"It's positive," the doctor said.

How could something so life-changingly negative be labeled "positive?" I had breast cancer. And I was six months pregnant.

I was 32 years old, didn't smoke, exercised regularly, ate right and had no family history of the disease. I was stunned. I was beyond overwhelmed. But I was not going down without a fight. I was determined to get my baby here safely and raise her.

But it was indeed a fight. The next two years included four chemo treatments, six surgeries, 30 radiation treatments and countless tests. I also had a three-year-old daughter and infant to care for as well as a new consulting business.

That was 23 years ago. This spring, I proudly watched the daughter I was pregnant with graduate from the University of Florida. That new business evolved into an advertising and public relations agency, and we just celebrated its 25th anniversary.

A fighter's guide cont. on pg. 2

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Rare but Real cont. from pg. 1

Within five weeks, Carter had undergone mammography, biopsy and a mastectomy. The experience opened his eyes to challenges women face during breast cancer screening.

"When they put me in that vice-type thing and cranked it down, it was hurting like hell," Carter recalled of his mammogram. "I have so much more appreciation for women that go through that now than I did before, because I know the pain now."

Carter's surgeon told him he was treating an unusual case. Men represent only 2% of all breast cancer patients, and the surgeon had never treated a 75-year-old male patient with the disease.

"He'd been doing this surgery for over 20 years and said he had never had a male patient," Carter said. "He said of the ones he knows of, male breast cancer patients are between 30 and 40 years old."

According to the American Cancer Society, 2,800 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer in 2025, and 510 men will die from the disease. One in 726 men carry a lifetime risk of developing breast cancer.

Carter's cancer was caught between stage one and two. His recovery was remarkably smooth — he took no pain medication after surgery and felt minimal discomfort.

"Two days after I had the surgery, I told the doctor, 'Did this really just happen to me?' I couldn't feel any pain," he said.

The experience sparked what Carter believes is a divine calling to educate other men about breast cancer risks. Three weeks after surgery, he dreamed of speaking to groups of men about his experience.

"It's like Jesus is guiding me to do this," Carter said. "I really believe I'm on a mission. If I could just get across to one person and it saved his life, I would be doing what I'm supposed to do."

"Men need to check themselves like women do and take it seriously if they find a lump," Carter emphasized. "I promise you 95% of all men would not take it seriously. They would find a lump and think it's not a big deal, but it's serious."

With encouragement from his son, Carter wrote a book about his life experiences, including his cancer journey. The book, "100% Bill, Stories by

Aron William (Bill) Carter," written with a ghostwriter and available on Amazon, chronicles Carter's path from a troubled youth in Jacksonville's housing projects to police officer and cancer survivor.

"I just told a story," Carter said modestly about his book. "I tried to be as honest as I could. I didn't try to hide anything or glorify anything. I just told it how it was."

Susan Carter, drawing on her decades of oncology nursing experience, emphasized the broader message of their journey: "It is a wicked disease, all cancer is, but if people are aware and informed, it can save lives."

Carter will speak about "Triumphant testimony of overcoming male breast cancer" on Saturday, Oct. 25, at noon via Zoom (Meeting ID: 882 5732 2929, Pass-code: 339243). The event, themed "The impact of men's health on the family and community," is hosted by P.M.D.C. Word of God. Those



Photo courtesy Susan and Bill Carter
Bill Carter wears a "Breast Cancer Survivor" t-shirt as part of his mission to educate men about breast cancer risks.

interested in learning more about his story or arranging speaking engagements can contact him at abcpaving@gmail.com.

A fighter's guide cont. from pg. 1

Yet I didn't write this to report a happy ending. This is a love note to the people just beginning their fights against this cruel disease.

I hope it helps simply to know I was in your shoes, and I'm still here more than two decades later.

You can do this. Fight. While there are no assurances you'll win, make it your job to get up each day and try. I hope these few things I learned help in some small way:

Screw the statistics and survival rates — it never hurts to hope.

Be as positive as possible — even if it doesn't change the outcome, you're more pleasant to be around.

That said, it's okay for you to feel sorry for yourself sometimes — just make it a short wade instead of a wallow.

Let people help you and tell them what you really need. It's not only for you; they need to feel less helpless.

Break things down into smaller sections. Don't look at the many things you have to endure until you're reviewing all you've accomplished.

Take every opportunity to be with people you love and to do things that make you happy.

Whatever it takes, find your way forward.



Renay Daigle poses with her family in a recent photo, more than two decades after her breast cancer diagnosis.

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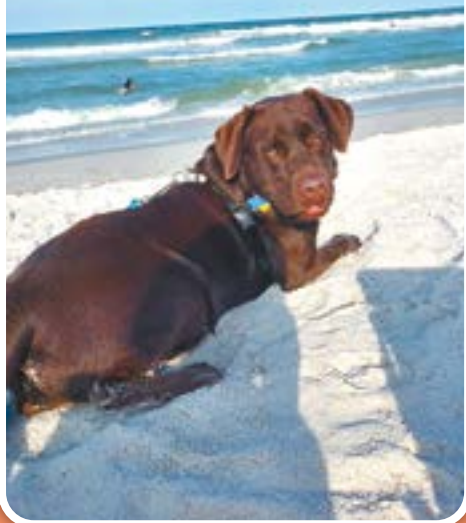
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BFF Best Furry Friend of the month

Meet Kylo!



Breed:

Chocolate Lab

Favorite Activity:

Running, chasing squirrels and belly rubs

Favorite Food:

Anything

Favorite Friends:

Everyone he meets

How did your BFF get their name:

Big family decision

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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A message of gratitude from the editor

As we conclude our special October edition dedicated to Breast Cancer Awareness Month, I extend my heartfelt thanks to every reader who shared their story with us.

Eight years ago, I lost my mother to breast cancer. Through that devastating experience, I learned about this relentless disease firsthand. It ignited a passion in me for spreading awareness and information that can save lives – because knowledge truly is power in the fight against cancer.

The response to our invitation was overwhelming. We received submissions from survivors, family members and caregivers. From Bill and Ron's mission to educate men about breast cancer risks to the women who shared their paths through diagnosis and recovery, these stories illuminate the strength that emerges from the most challenging circumstances.

Your courage in sharing deeply personal journeys has created something meaningful. Each story reminded us why this work matters – not just in October, but every day. Whether you shared triumph or loss, your narrative contributed to a community of support that extends far beyond these pages.

Thank you for trusting us with your most personal experiences. Your willingness to share creates awareness that can save lives.

With deep appreciation for your courage,

Tracy Dishman, editor





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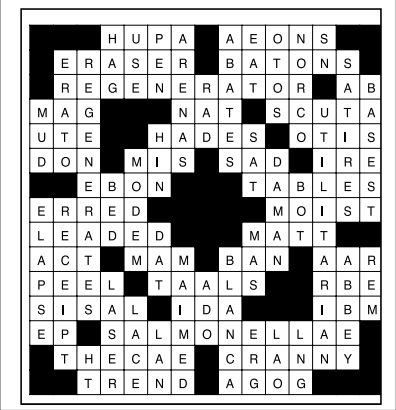
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Answers to our Puzzles

PG 8



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October

Community Calendar

What's Happening in Mandarin

To submit items for the Community Calendar, email editor@floridanewsline.com.

Oct. 9
American Legion Mandarin "Fallen Heroes" Post 372 meeting
American Legion Mandarin "Fallen Heroes" Post 372 meets on the second Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at Williams Family YMCA upstairs on the second floor, 10415 San Jose Blvd., Jacksonville. Visit alpost372fl.org for more information.

Oct. 10
Philip R. Cousin AME Church 139th Anniversary
Philip R. Cousin AME Church invites you to join us as we celebrate our Church's 139th Anniversary, Friday, Oct. 10, at 6 p.m. and Sunday, Oct. 12, at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. Come and help us make this a joyous occasion of praise, worship and fellowship. Call (904) 262-3083 or email prcame@bellsouth.net for more information.

Oct. 11
Southside/Mandarin MS Support Group meeting
The Southside/Mandarin MS Support Group will hold its monthly meeting Saturday, Oct. 11, from 2-4 p.m. at JCA, 8505 San Jose Blvd. This month's speaker Russ Davis, head of the Jacksonville Transit Authority Advisory Committee, will be talking about UZURV which is a company specializing in assisted mobility for anyone who would like additional help with their transportation. Refreshments will be provided.

Oct. 15
City Council, District 6 Town Hall
Wednesday, Oct. 15, from 6-8 p.m. at the Mandarin Senior Center, 3848 Hartley Road. Updates on: 1) Hartley Road Widening, 2) Mandarin Road Sidewalk project, and 3) improvements to the various parks in the District.

Oct. 16
Mandarin Garden Club general meeting
All Mandarin Garden Club members gather at 10 a.m. for their general meeting. Guest speaker Master Gardener Jamie Lankenau will present a program about Jacksonville Zoo and Botanical Gardens.

Oct. 17
St. Joseph's Charitable Arts Ministry Wine and Cheese Opening
St. Joseph's Charitable Arts Ministry invites you to their Second Annual Falling in Love with Art Exhibit Wine and Cheese Opening Friday, Oct. 17, from 5-8 p.m. in the Cody Center. The art exhibit runs Oct. 18-Nov. 7.

Oct. 18
30th Annual Festa Italiana
Italian American Club of Jacksonville presents its 30th Annual Festa Italiana Saturday, Oct. 18, from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. at 2838 Westberry Road, Jacksonville. Free admission with authentic Italian food, live entertainment, and activities. Call (904) 586-2700 for more information.

Oct. 20
All Star Quilters Guild meeting
The All Star Quilters Guild will meet at 9:30 a.m. for socializing prior to the 10 a.m. meeting at First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd. "Show and Tell" is always a feature. Guests are welcome. Visit allstarquilters.org for more information.

Oct. 23
Mandarin Garden Club Live Oak Circle meeting
"Migrant Birds and how to attract them with your garden" - the Mandarin Garden Club Live Oak circle will have their monthly meeting and Brian Bidwell will give an educational presentation on how to attract migrant birds with your garden. The public is

invited to this free event. Visit mandaringardenclub.org for more information.

Oct. 23-25
Friends of Mandarin South Fall Sale
Friends of Mandarin South will hold its Fall Sale Thursday through Saturday, Oct. 23-25, featuring brown bags for \$10 and plastic bags for \$5. The group supports teen coding programs and critter visits at the library. Chair Yoga on Wednesdays is popular with seniors and will resume in the fall. The group meets on the fourth Thursday of the month at 1 p.m. in the library lobby meeting room. Donations of used books are welcome.

Oct. 25
16th Annual Craft Fair
The 16th Annual Craft Fair from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at Mandarin Garden Club. Shop for crafts made by club members and local vendors, including homemade chocolates, ornaments, embroidery, jewelry, soaps, wreaths, handmade towels, greeting cards, original artwork, African violets, plants, and more. The Garden Club will have a café and food vendor. Vendor spaces still available - outside 10x10 space is \$40. Contact Joyce Datz at (954) 980-0713 or jdatz@bellsouth.net. The public is invited to this free event. Visit mandaringardenclub.org for more information.

Oct. 25
Trunk-or-Treat
Free family event! Come in costume for Trunk-or-Treat at Mandarin Lutheran Church from 5-7 p.m. Food, fun, and bounce houses! Mandarin Lutheran Church, 11900 San Jose Blvd., Jacksonville. Call (904) 268-4591 for more information.

Oct. 28
Acoustic Jam Session
Acoustic Jam Session is held at 7 p.m. in the Kids' Building of Trinity Mandarin, 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. Contact Burt Coulliette at (904) 302-0423.

Ongoing Activities
Shuffleboard
Shuffleboard is played on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. at Tommy Hazouri Park (formerly 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
Toast of Jax Toastmasters meets every Saturday, except on holiday weekends, at 8:30 a.m. at Baha'i Community Center, 5034 Greenland Road. Guests are welcome. The meetings can also be attended online at toastofjax.toastmastersclubs.org.

MPC MomCo
MPC MomCo meets every other Tuesday from 9:45-11:45 a.m. on the Mandarin Presbyterian Church campus. MPC MomCo is a vibrant fellowship of moms who support each other in motherhood and grow together in faith. Register at mandarinpres.com/momco; space is limited. Email momco@mandarinpres.com for more information.

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



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

Q: How long did the recent city council budget meeting last, and what major financial decisions were made?

A: The annual budget meeting set a record, lasting 13.5 hours from 3 p.m. to 4:30 a.m. The council made two major financial decisions: they reduced the property millage rate by 0.125 mills (from 11.3169 to 11.1919) by a 10-9 vote, and they appropriated \$729,557 to support six free and charitable clinics operating under Jax Care Connect to reduce emergency room usage for primary care services.

Q: What controversy nearly derailed the budget approval process?

A: Councilman Diamond proposed a controversial policy amendment that would restrict city funds for DEI programs, services to unauthorized residents, and abortions. While initially approved 10-9, two supporting members had to recuse themselves from the final budget vote, which would have caused the budget to fail 9-8. The crisis was resolved when Councilman Lahnen changed his vote, allowing the policy amendment to be voted down and the budget to pass 15-2.

Q: What major infrastructure improvements are planned or underway in the Mandarin area?

A: Several projects are underway: JTA's Mandarin Pedestrian Safety Road Improvements includes Phase 2 sidewalk construction along Mandarin Road from Red Cypress Drive to the intersection of Mandarin and Loretto roads. The new sidewalk will feature a

grass buffer separating pedestrians from the road's edge. JTA has significantly upgraded its project webpage with enhanced information including an expanded Frequently Asked Questions section for residents. Additionally, San Jose Boulevard repaving from north of Sunbeam Road to south of Interstate 295 is completed with traffic signal improvements at Hartley intersection, and Hartley Road is planned for widening from two lanes to three lanes with bicycle lanes, sidewalks, and improved drainage.

Q: What was approved in the Claire Lane rezoning application?

A: The Planning Commission and City Council approved applications for a small-scale amendment to Community/General Commercial and rezoning to Planned Unit Development at Claire Lane, west of San Jose Boulevard. This will permit single-story office and garage condominiums. The approval includes a condition requiring the developer to hire a traffic engineer to conduct a traffic study approved by the chief of traffic engineering.

Q5: What community events and meetings are coming up for residents?

A: Several events are scheduled: a town hall and community meeting on Oct. 15 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Mandarin Senior Center covering Hartley Road widening and park improvements, and the Mandarin Community Club's citrus fundraiser running through Nov. 14.

Contact Council Member Boylan at MBoylan@coj.net or (904) 255-5206.

Local quilters showcase work at QuiltfestJax 2025



Photos courtesy Sondie Frus
Kestrel Michaud won Best of Show for "The Arrival," a whimsical art quilt.



The Viewer's Choice Award went to Tony Alicea for his first quilt, "Duval in Dots."

QuiltfestJax 2025, "Color Our World," was held in September with local quilters participating in the display and judging of quilts.

Kestrel Michaud won Best of Show for "The Arrival," a whimsical art quilt. The Viewer's Choice Award went to Tony Alicea for his first quilt, "Duval in Dots."



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From patient to volunteer: Finding purpose after cancer



By Cathy Barnwell

I was diagnosed with bilateral breast cancer Nov. 4, 2015. I had just retired from working for JEA for more than 30 years and was getting

into retirement — traveling, volunteering at a food bank, my church and with preschoolers for Reading Pals.

After initially hearing the diagnosis, I felt like I was the only person in the world who had cancer. It was a very frightening time. After a couple of

weeks of a pity party, I realized that my job during this journey was to bring my body to appointments and to do what the doctors and medical staff told me to do. I understood that the only thing I could control during treatment was my attitude.

I had an unfounded fear that I would not be able to volunteer while undergoing treatment. I was the Session Clerk at my church and my pastor assured me if I felt like I could handle the job to keep on doing it. I didn't do as much physical work at the food bank as I had done in the past, but was

able to help. I found keeping as busy as I could kept my mind off of me.

I got through the "long" chemo March 10, 2016, and had my surgery April 12, 2016. I got finished with Herceptin Dec. 22, 2016. While I was going through chemo, I came to the realization that I needed to give back to people who are dealing with breast cancer. M.D. Anderson was open and I now volunteer a day a week in their infusion department.

While there, I visit with patients who want or need to talk, bring them

things to drink if they want and offer lunch and snacks. I just listen when people want to talk. I have been blessed by some of the questions asked of me and the relief on some of their faces when they realize how far I'm out from my chemo and surgery. I love it when some of my favorites light up when they see me. It is gratifying to get a smile or laugh from people going through treatment.

I'm grateful to be here and able to contribute to bringing a little light into my corner of the world.

Handwritten hope in dark moments



By Anonymous

At her second appointment after her initial breast cancer diagnosis, a local woman received a care package from her oncology team containing personal care items, emergency guidelines, medical resources and frequently asked questions to help navigate the disease and upcoming treatment.

"You can likely imagine how devastating facing this type of news is and the contents of the package highlighted the sobering reality of the horror yet to come," she wrote in an email to the editor.

Yet also tucked inside was a handwritten note by a mother who had also been diagnosed with breast cancer. The note contained words of encouragement for strength, hope and peace, along with small colored drawings likely crafted by a child.

"I must share that I burst into tears as all of this was beyond overwhelming," the woman recalled. "But as I slowly caught my breath, the words hit home and my appreciation for this small act of kindness was

intense."

The experience introduced her to Girls Love Mail, an organization that connects women fighting cancer with handwritten letters of support from strangers worldwide. The nonprofit provides guidelines for letter writing that ensure consistency and encouragement.

"Yes, kind words even from a stranger can be impactful during sad times in life," she noted. She plans to write her own letters to newly diagnosed patients through Girls Love Mail.

Anyone can participate in writing notes of support and encouragement regardless of their health status or personal connection to a breast cancer patient.

"Thank you for including a breast cancer segment for breast cancer awareness in October," the woman wrote to the editor. "I know the topic has become commonplace and maybe tiresome for many people, but for the newly diagnosed, it is a whole other story."

For more information about Girls Love Mail, visit girlslovemail.com.

A blue dot in a sea of pink



By Ron Rapaport

I'm Ron Rapaport, a Ponte Vedra Beach resident who was diagnosed in 2019 with male breast cancer and diagnosed again in 2022 with it.

For many that do not know it, men have breasts too and can get breast cancer, although it is only 1% of all breast cancer cases. Approximately 2,800 men in the U.S. are diagnosed annually, and about 510 men die from the disease.

The problem for men with breast cancer is that in many cases it is diagnosed late, ending in a diagnosis in the latter stages of the disease, making the survival rate in stage 4 at 25% for 5 years as opposed to 93% in stages 0, 1, 2 and 73% in stage 3.

Many men simply do not know the disease exists, and many men view the disease as a "women's disease," and thus a stigma exists surround-

ing the diagnosis. Also, very few physicians bother to take the time to check men's breast health when examining them.

My passion now is to alert the world that male breast cancer exists through my advocacy work as the Global Lead Advocate for male-breastcancerhappens.org, a nonprofit advocacy group bringing awareness to the disease and offering life saving resources on their website such as self-breast exam cards on how to do monthly breast exam checks. I lead a monthly men's support group with the disease for them to share their knowledge and experience with each other.

I also host my worldwide podcast "It's a Wrap With Rap" showcasing people overcoming life's adversities and have been interviewed on many podcasts advocating for male breast cancer awareness.

For more information, please go to malebreastcancerhappens.org.



Following granny's legacy through cancer



By "CC" Cox

My husband and I survived my breast cancer surgery in October 2020 together. A successful lumpectomy showed clear parameters — no apparent additional carcinoma. We continued through the next three years grateful for each day, with annual 3-D mammograms showing all clear readings.

Life felt like living in a special cocoon since five years of clear tests is the standard for being considered cancer free. Then things changed in January 2024.

My story is enhanced by my grand-

mother, Helen, known as Granny. More than 40 years ago, she discovered a lump but delayed her mammogram until after Thanksgiving, Christmas and the new year. She didn't want to inconvenience anyone.

That delay cost her dearly. Her cancer was so advanced that instead of a single breast removal, she needed a radical double mastectomy. After six months of chemotherapy and radiation, doctors told her she had six months to live.

But Granny was independent and never good at taking orders. She taught me the most valuable lesson: we all face finite time on earth, so never take the gift of a day for granted. She

lived graciously with gusto for life.

Granny took a 2,000-mile driving trip to study watercolor painting in Vermont, packed her colorful scarves, and painted 72 watercolor paintings. She exceeded the doctor's six-month prediction by three years.

Since we had been cancer clear for several years, I almost postponed my January 2024 mammogram to summer. Then I heard Granny whisper, "Do it earlier rather than later." Results arrived in 24 hours — the cancer had returned.

My husband and I elected to be proactive with a double mastectomy. Following my oncologist's advice to

"live your life," we celebrated with a five-week Amtrak rail trip at ages 70 and 79.

Thank you Granny for nudging me — do your test now, don't delay. Stay positive, stay informed and always say thank you.

Editor's note: CC Cox's story is filled with so many inspiring details about both her grandmother's courageous battle and her own journey with breast cancer that I couldn't bear to cut them all for this print edition. I have published her complete, heartfelt story about the lessons she learned from her beloved Granny at www.FloridaNewsLine.com.

Testimony of God's goodness



By Michele McKee

Originally written June 2022

Today marks three months since I had surgery to remove breast cancer. On March 8, 2022, I had a routine mammogram — though it had been three years since my previous one. I was behind on routine health screenings since COVID.

A few days later I received a call that my mammogram was abnormal and I needed a biopsy. While traveling home from visiting family, I received the results. When I heard "invasive lobular carcinoma," I was surprised and sad. I had no reason to think I had cancer.

The following days were a flurry of activity with surgeon and oncology appointments. At the first visit, the surgeon ordered imaging and blood work urgently, saying surgery needed to be done within two weeks. My husband, Dave, and I left that appointment sobered and dumbfounded.

The first few days I experienced sorrow, fear and worry about how this would affect my family. Yet I was also grateful the cancer was seen on the mammogram, since this type often can't be felt and isn't always visible. Two spots were seen on ultrasound, with possible others on MRI. After surgery, my oncologist found three

lesions in my left breast and tissue changes in my right breast that could have been precancerous.

On the second surgeon visit, there was less urgency. Since two of our kids were graduating high school in May, I asked if surgery could wait until after graduation. All doctors agreed to this delay. I began hormone blocker medication to slow cancer growth.

I decided on bilateral mastectomy with reconstruction, scheduled for June 6, 2022, requiring four to six weeks recovery.

During recovery, there was little I could do for myself. I wasn't expecting the pain and inability to get up from sitting or lying down. I used a walker the first week home. My husband and daughters helped whenever needed.

The recovery became a time of slowing down and spiritual refreshing through reading, including John Piper's "Providence," relating God's care to my cancer journey.

Editor's note: Michele McKee's story beautifully captures both the medical realities of her breast cancer journey and the community support that carried her through treatment. I have published her complete story, including details about her church family's incredible care, at www.FloridaNewsLine.com.

Dreams deferred but not forgotten



By Jane Fero

Nancy Turner, a retired middle school teacher, was diagnosed with a particularly malignant form of breast cancer. She underwent lumpectomy, mammography and chemotherapy, plus physical therapy. Her dream was to travel the world and to visit and photograph all 50 states. The demanding cancer treatments put a two-year hold on any travel plans, but courageously she returned to community activities and travel as treatment allowed.

She has visited Northern Europe, Britain, Hawaii and other countries even though lymphedema swelling requires an elastic sleeve and glove, even in the Florida heat. At night

she uses an inflatable pressurized full arm sleeve.

Nancy helps with her granddaughter who attends Hallows Cove school and lives with her father. She sews for her and watches her when Dad is working. She sews gift bags for the Jacksonville group "Dress a Girl Around the World."

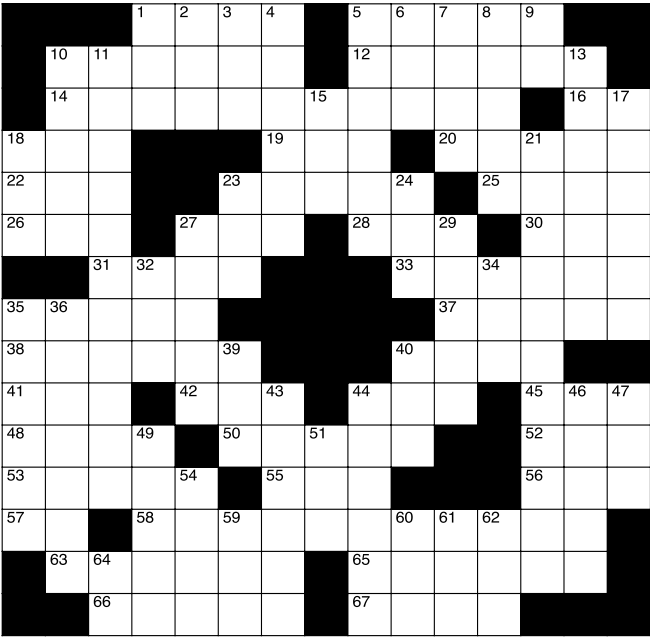
She is a willing driver for disabled community friends for shopping and medical appointments.

Nancy intends to visit Colorado this fall. She has only two states left to visit. Nancy is a wonderful friend and a brave example to others battling breast cancer. She has a collection of mounted photographs to complete. She also intends to take more cruises.



Puzzles

Answers on page 3
Provided by MetroCreative

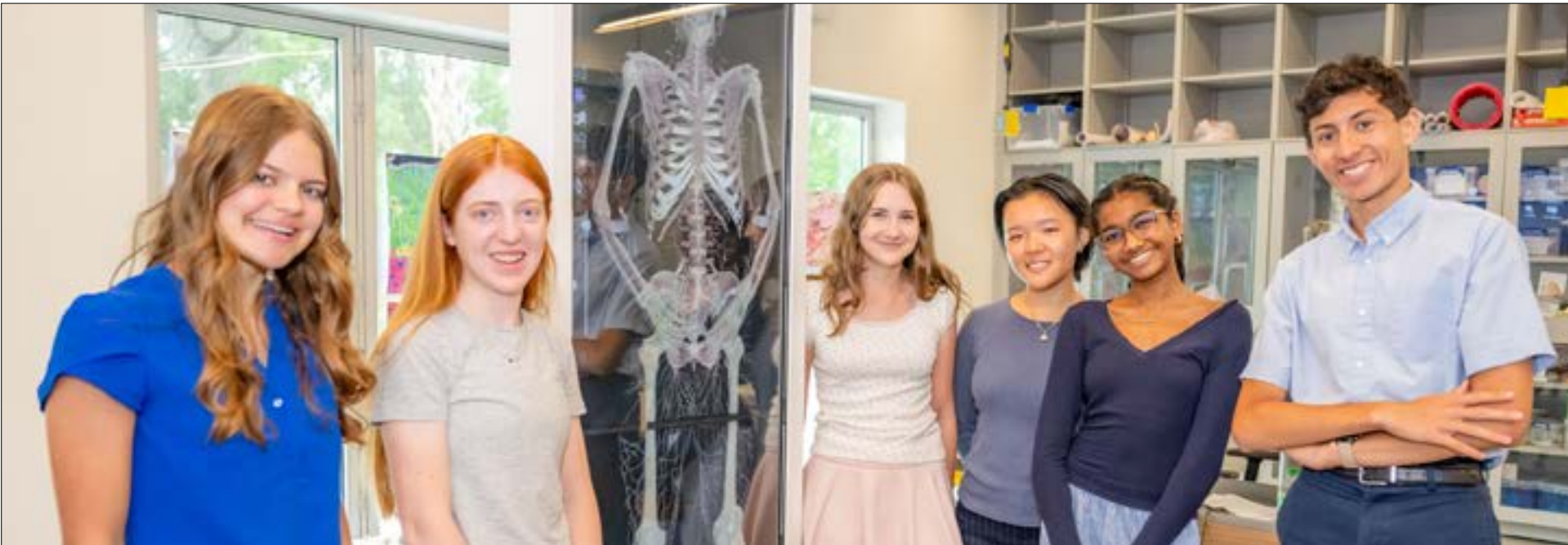


CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Native American people of CA
- 5. Long periods of time (Brit.)
- 10. Classroom tool
- 12. Rods
- 14. One who renews
- 16. They start the alphabet
- 18. Periodical (slang)
- 19. Smooth singer Cole
- 20. Dorsal sclerites in insects
- 22. One from Utah
- 23. The world of the dead
- 25. Singer Redding
- 26. Mafia head
- 27. Wrongly
- 28. Unhappy
- 30. Anger
- 31. Dark olive black
- 33. Places to sit and eat
- 35. Made a mistake
- 37. Damp
- 38. Banned fuel type
- 40. Actor Damon
- 41. What thespians do
- 42. A polite address for a woman
- 44. Disallow
- 45. Swiss river
- 48. A banana has one
- 50. Afrikaans
- 52. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
- 53. Agave
- 55. Journalist Tarbell
- 56. One-time tech leader
- 57. Incidentally (abbr.)
- 58. Intestinal bacterium
- 63. Loose sheats around the spinal co
- 65. Accompanies nook
- 66. Vogue
- 67. Highly excited

CLUES DOWN

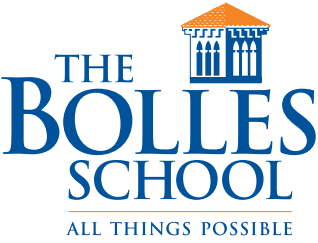
- 1. Witch
- 2. Utilize
- 3. Writing utensil
- 4. Where rockers work
- 5. Becomes less intense
- 6. Consume
- 7. Type of catfish
- 8. "Horsetown, U.S.A."
- 9. Atomic #50
- 10. The Muse of lyric poetry
- 11. Brings back to life
- 13. Humorous critiques
- 15. Cool!
- 17. Worst
- 18. Wet dirt
- 21. Useful
- 23. Hebrew unit of liquid capacity
- 24. High schoolers' test
- 27. Internet device
- 29. City in India
- 32. A place to rest
- 34. Chat responder
- 35. A way to move on
- 36. What consumers are given
- 39. Digital audiotape
- 40. More (Spanish)
- 43. Disfigured
- 44. White (Spanish)
- 46. Church building
- 47. Georgia rockers
- 49. Surgeon's tool
- 51. "Much __ about nothing"
- 54. Make by braiding
- 59. Local area network
- 60. Unit of work
- 61. Indigenous person of Thailand
- 62. Liquefied natural gas
- 64. Distance to top



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AARP Foundation Tax-Aide seeks volunteers

By Matildah Furusa

The AARP Foundation Tax-Aide program is preparing for the 2026 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 who work with taxpayers directly by filling out tax returns;

client facilitators who welcome taxpayers, help organize their paperwork, and manage the overall flow of service; technology coordinators who manage computer equipment, ensure taxpayer data is secure, and provide technical assistance to volunteers; and leadership and administrative volunteers who 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 services.

During the 2025 tax season in Jacksonville, AARP Foundation Tax-Aide volunteers completed 3,782 returns with refunds of more than \$3 million. This would not be possible without volunteers, who make an indelible mark on the taxpayers they work with and the communities where they live.

Three sites will be open this year in Mandarin: South Mandarin Branch Library (12125 San Jose Blvd.), Mandarin

Branch Library (3330 Kori Road), and San Jose Baptist Church (6140 San Jose Blvd.). There are nine additional sites across Jacksonville from the beaches to Regency Square to Edgewood.

To volunteer, visit <https://aarpfoundation.org/taxaidevolunteer> to complete an interest form, call (888) 227-7669 or email dianevtax12@gmail.com.

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



Walking the Freedom Trail in Boston

By Debi Lander
mail@floridanewsline.com

Boston brims with history, but nowhere is it easier to step back in time than along the famous Freedom Trail. This 2.5-mile path winds through the city, connecting 16 sites that played pivotal roles in the American Revolution. Red bricks embedded in the sidewalk guide you like a breadcrumb trail through more than 250 years of history.

The trail begins at Boston Common, where British troops once camped. From this point, the journey unfolds like a live-action textbook. Across the street, the Massachusetts State House's golden dome gleams in the sun. A quick detour inside reveals beautiful architecture and historical artifacts.

The brick line leads into Granary Burying Ground, where weathered gravestones mark the resting places of Paul Revere, John Hancock, Samuel Adams and victims of the Boston Massacre. It's a sobering stop that makes the Revolution's leaders feel real.

The Old South Meeting House was once the fiery gathering place where colonists debated British taxes. Nearby stands the Old State House, site of the Boston Massacre itself. No walk is complete without stepping into Faneuil Hall, dubbed the "Cradle of Liberty," where voices once demanded independence. Downstairs, the marketplace still bustles with food stalls.

Crossing into Boston's North End, the Italian neighborhood delights with bakeries nestled among historic sites. Paul Revere's modest wooden house reveals artifacts from his family life. Just beyond rises the Old North Church, famous for the lantern signal that launched Revere's midnight ride. This site holds special meaning, as my website [Bylandersea](http://Bylandersea.com) refers to that historic phrase "one if by land, two if by sea."

The trail crosses the Charles River into Charlestown. I stopped at the USS Constitution, "Old Ironsides," the oldest commissioned warship afloat. Then I climbed to Bunker Hill Monument, a towering granite obelisk commemorating the Revolution's first major battle.



Debi Lander

Walking the entire trail takes two to four hours, depending on your pace and museum visits. The walk itself is free. Some sites charge modest admission fees. Guided tours with costumed interpreters are available, though many visitors enjoy self-guided exploration.

By the end, my legs were tired but my spirit soared. Boston's Freedom Trail is a journey into America's founding heart. Each stop deepens understanding of ordinary people's courage and sacrifices for liberty. It was the perfect start to my [#BylanderseaAmerica250](https://www.instagram.com/BylanderseaAmerica250) blog series at Bylandersea.com.

Debi Lander is an award-winning travel writer and photographer who blends her passion for history, culture, food, and personal discovery into captivating stories. Through her website Bylandersea.com and her long-running travel column for Florida Newsline, she explores destinations from small U.S. towns to iconic global landmarks. She hopes her storytelling and practical insights inspire readers to experience the world with curiosity, appreciation, and a sense of adventure. Debi can be reached by email to mail@floridanewsline.com



Granary Burying Ground is where a weathered gravestone marks the resting place of Paul Revere.



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Local art group celebrates Mandarin history

By Peggy Harell Jennings

It's not unusual to see the First Coast Plein Air Painters out and about at Walter Jones Park and at historic homes in the area. Loaded with easels, chairs, paints, brushes, sunscreen and talent, the group visits sites all over the First Coast to capture the beauty and history of each area, and a favorite is historic Mandarin.

The group's recent paint out produced fresh views of the barn, the 1875 Webb-Jones Farmhouse, the school, the Harriet Beecher Stowe sculpture by renowned artist Brenda Council, the Mandarin Post Office and, a favorite of the artists, the 1880 Brown House on Mandarin Road. Owners Ashly

and Stephen Unkelbach welcomed the group on several occasions to capture the beautiful historic home with their artistic skills.

The result? A fabulous exhibit, "Vestiges of Historic Mandarin," at the Mandarin Museum, which runs through Oct. 27. Brittany Cohill, director of the museum, was on hand as Stephen Dunn, president of FCPAP, handed out the first-place award to Chriss Flagg for his painting of the Brown Residence, second place to Carron Wedlund, third to Emma Simms, and honorable mention to Gary Garrett and Sheryl Roach. The artwork captures the present-day beauty of the natural surroundings and buildings and echoes "vestiges" of the past.



First-place winner Chris Flagg displays his painting with homeowners Ashly and Stephen Unkelbach and museum director Brittany Cohill, right.

Mandarin Middle launches mentor program to foster positive culture

By Jennifer Litchfield

Mandarin Middle School kicked off an Ignite Nation Mentor Camp in September to promote a positive school culture. Ignite Nation is a nationally recognized program for creating culture change in schools.

The program is led by advisers Mrs. Litchfield and Ms. Kulwicki with 15 executive mentors and 35 mentors who work with sixth-grade students. Students are participating enthusiastically and spreading positivity throughout the school.



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Fall fundraiser promises a scary good time

By Brett Nolan

Get ready for a frightfully fun evening as the Mandarin Community Club resurrects its beloved Halloween Bingo Fundraiser on Friday, Oct. 24, delivering a spooktacular night that'll send shivers down your spine. This annual event, hosted at the Mandarin Community Club, promises a ghoulishly good time, with doors creaking open at 6:15 p.m. and the first bingo game kicking off at 7 p.m. Step inside the historic 1872 Mandarin Schoolhouse, adorned with vintage Halloween decorations, and let the nostalgic charm transport you to a bygone era of spooky celebrations. All proceeds benefit the Mandarin Community Club, one of Duval County's oldest



A volunteer poses with Halloween decorations at the Mandarin Community Club's bingo fundraiser setup.

civic organizations, established in 1923.

Local merchants have donated an impressive array of prizes to make this night unforgettable. This year's bounty includes restaurant gift certificates, entertainment packages, and local business offerings. Highlights include a "Date Night in Downtown" package with two tickets to the Florida Theatre and a \$100 gift card to a downtown restaurant. Plus, don't miss the chilling "Emergency Halloween Kit" giveaway, featuring a 7-foot poseable skeleton, two jack-o'-lanterns, a pumpkin carving kit, a 4-pound bag of candy, a handmade Halloween wreath by a local Mandarin artist, and much more -- all in time to get your house ready for All Hallows' Eve with your family. Tickets for the giveaway are available for purchase at the event.

With at least ten thrilling rounds of bingo and an optional grand prize "cover all" game, the evening is brimming with excitement. The grand prize of the cover all game is sure to lift spirits: four tickets to any Jacksonville Jaguars home game, perfect for football fans aiming to score a touchdown. Costumes aren't required, but those bold enough to sport their most imaginative attire could win a prize for the best-dressed participant.

Reservations are essential for this haunted extravaganza. Secure your spot by calling the Mandarin Community Club at (904) 268-1622 or visit www.MandarinCommunityClub.org to

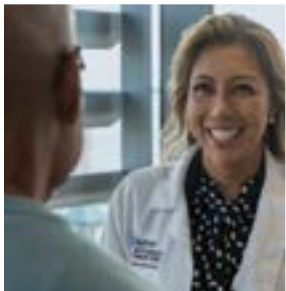


The 1872 Mandarin Schoolhouse on Mandarin Road is illuminated for the Halloween Bingo fundraiser.

complete the bingo reservation form. Payment is cash only at the door on the night of the event, with pricing for ten games starting at just \$25 and additional optional combo kits for purchase to boost your luck.

Food including pizza, hot dogs, desserts, chips and sodas will be available for purchase. Every cent raised supports the 102-year-old nonprofit, the Mandarin Community Club, making this a monstrously good cause. Note that this event is for adults only; no one under 18 is permitted, and outside food or drinks are not allowed.

For more details, visit www.MandarinCommunityClub.org or the club's Facebook page.



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