

BREAST CANCER
AWARENESS MONTH

CreekLine seeks local stories to honor veterans

Florida NewsLine Staff
editor@floridanewslines.com

The CreekLine 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 St. Johns 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@floridanewslines.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@floridanewslines.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



Photo courtesy Renay Daigle
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.

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Keep fighting.

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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BFF

Breed:
Golden Retriever

Favorite Activity:
Going to the beach

Favorite Food:
Carrots

Favorite Friends:
My mom and my auntie

How did your BFF get their name:
She is sweet and fuzzy

Best Furry Friend of the month

Meet Peaches!

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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Embracing Local Journalism

for a Better Future

National Newspaper Week

October 5-11, 2025

Answers to our Puzzles

PG 8

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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October

October

Community Calendar

What's Happening in St. Johns

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

River of Life UMC Pumpkin Patch (ongoing through Oct.)

River of Life UMC Pumpkin Patch continues through Oct. Hours are Monday through Friday, 2 - 8 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.; and Sunday, 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Morning field trips available Monday through Friday at 9, 10 and 11 a.m. Contact Kayla Hull at children@rolumc.com.

**Oct. 10 - 11
Fall Plant Sale**

St. Johns County Master Gardener Fall Plant Sale will be held Friday and Saturday, Oct. 10 - 11, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the St. Johns County Extension Office, 3125 Agricultural Center Drive, St. Augustine. The sale will feature landscape plants, houseplants and vegetable seedlings. Visit sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/stjohns/ for more information.

**Oct. 11
Bartram Trail Genealogy Club**

The Bartram Trail Genealogy Club meets Saturday, Oct. 11, from 2 - 4 p.m. at the Bartram Trail Branch Library. This month's topic will be "Discussion of Jumping the Pond with your family research." Open to the public of all levels of genealogical experience. Email ginglish@comcast.net for more information.

**Oct. 11
Permaculture Day**

Permaculture Day will be held at 9 a.m. in the garden at Unity Church for Creative Living, 2777 Race Track Road. Join Ed Boardman in the garden as we harvest, plant and share in the bounty. Cost: Donation. For more information call 904-287-1505 or email

UCCLOffice2777@gmail.com.

**Oct. 14
Bartram Trail Newcomers and Women's Club luncheon**

Bartram Trail Newcomers and Women's Club will hold its October luncheon Monday, Oct. 14, at 11 a.m. at St. John's Golf and Country Club in St. Augustine. The theme will be Trick or Treat/Halloween Trivia presented by John Harrell of Fast Jax Trivia. Prizes will be awarded to the trivia winners. Cost is \$32 and includes both entertainment and meal. Attendees are encouraged to wear costumes.

**Oct. 14
Palencia Elementary PTO meeting**

Palencia Elementary School PTO will meet Tuesday, Oct. 14. Visit palenciapiratespto.com for more information.

**Oct. 14
Living Hope Community Church Pumpkin Patch opens**

Living Hope Community Church will open its pumpkin patch during the second week of Oct. at 2585 Pacetti Road. All proceeds above the cost of pumpkins will support local ministries. Visit living-hope-community-church.com for more information.

**Oct. 21
Women of Unity Gathering**

Women of Unity Gathering will be held at 6:30 p.m. at Unity Church for Creative Living, 2777 Race Track Road. A safe place for women to gather, connect, support and explore spiritual principles. All women are welcome. Cost: Donation. For more information call 904-287-1505 or email UCCLOffice2777@gmail.com.

**Oct. 25
Free Family Fall Festival**
River of Life UMC will hold its annual Free Family Fall Festival Saturday, Oct. 25, from noon to 4 p.m. The free event will feature food, drinks, bounce houses, face painting and entertainment. The festival supports children's ministries and collects donations for local food banks and shelters.

**Nov. 2025
Field of Dreams Baseball Registration**
Field of Dreams Baseball registration is now open for the 2026 season. FOD Baseball is a free baseball league for children and young adults with special needs. Games are played at Aberdeen Park, across from Freedom Crossing Academy. Season begins Jan. 30, 2026. To guarantee a uniform for opening day, register by the end of Nov. 2025 at FODBaseball.com.

**Ongoing Activities
Open Game Play**
Open Game Play at Council on Aging (COA) River House, 179 Marine Street in St. Augustine. Bring your deck of cards or board game (there are also games available at River House) and socialize over a friendly game of your choosing on Thursdays from 12:15-3:15 p.m. Call 904-209-3655 (Monday-Thursday) or email tharris@coasjc.org for more information.

Trout Creek Senior Center activities
Trout Creek Senior Center offers activities for seniors on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings at 6795 Collier Road in Orange-dale. Cards, crafts and games start each day at 9 a.m. with trivia, nutrition/exercise, Bunco and Bingo among the additional activities

before lunch at 11:30 a.m. each day. Contact Program Coordinator Jessica Curry at 904-209-3658 or jcurry@stjohnscoa.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 play-inghookie2022@gmail.com for more information.

Jokers Wild card group
Jokers Wild, a local card group, plays the game of "Hand, Knee, and Foot" on Wednesdays. If you are interested in joining, call 904-230-6962 and leave a message.

A Course in Miracles Study Group
A Course in Miracles Study Group meets on Sundays from 9 - 10 a.m. at Unity Church for Creative Living, 2777 Race Track Road. This is a unique spiritual self-study program designed to awaken us to the truth of our oneness with God. Cost: Donation. For more information call 904-287-1505 or email UCCLOffice2777@gmail.com.

Widow to Widow support group
Widow to Widow, support group for widows by widows is held at Council on Aging (COA) River House, 179 Marine Street in St. Augustine on Wednesdays from 11:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Call 904-209-3655 (Monday-Thursday) or email tharris@coasjc.org for more information.

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Q&A

Q&A with St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections Vicky Oakes

In mid-September, 93,000 signature letters were sent to registered St. Johns County voters who had not updated their signature within the past five years. The letters were also sent as a reminder to voters who have renewed or replaced their Florida driver's licenses within the past year that their identification number may have changed.

As expected, after receiving these letters, our office was flooded with calls and our social media filled with questions from residents. I have gathered the most common questions I was asked in hopes

of answering some of your questions as well.

Q: Is this letter a scam?

No, this letter is from the St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections office. I wanted to remind voters who have not updated their signature within the past five years that they should keep their signatures up to date. These voters were sent a letter, a Florida voter registration form, and a postage-paid return envelope.

Q: I didn't get a letter, but my spouse

did. Where is mine?

If you did not get a letter, that means you HAVE updated your signature within the past five years, and no action is necessary.

Q: If I do not return the registration form, will I be kicked off the voter rolls?

No! Your voter record will not be changed if you do not send back the provided registration form. This is just a reminder to voters that their signature should be kept up to date, and an opportunity to do so.

Q: I vote in every election and sign the signature pad. Why isn't my signature updated?

When voting in person, your signature from the signature pad does not replace your main signature on file, which is taken from your voter registration application or DMV -- depending on where/how you registered or updated your information.

When signing the signature pad, many voters do not sign exactly how they normally would. The signature pad signatures from early voting and Election Day are uploaded and stored in our system and can be utilized if needed. It is best to update your signature every few years using a Florida voter registration application.

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Q&A

Q&A with St. Johns County Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller Brandon J. Patty

Q. This year marks 204 years since the St. Johns County clerk's office was established. Can you tell us about the origins of the office?

A. Our history goes back to 1821, just months after Florida became a U.S. territory. Gov. Andrew Jackson established the first clerk's office in St. Augustine, operating from the historic Governor's House. That same year, Florida's first property deed was recorded by our office on Sept. 13, 1821.

Q. How did record-keeping evolve over the years?

A. Records were originally copied by hand, but technology slowly transformed the process. The first typed deed appeared in 1901, and by 1926, clerks were using photographic copy technology. Later came microfilm, microfiche and eventually computer systems, which make searching records much faster today. Each change was made with the goal of making records more accurate, secure and accessible to the public.

Q. Why are records so important?

A. They are integral to our way of

life. Think about it: Without accurate court and official records, how would one prove they own their house? Or how would a dispute be resolved in the courts? A great historic example of records being used in everyday life is the branding books we maintain. These books contain a rancher's unique brand, which was used to prove ownership of their livestock. We take this responsibility and the public's trust very seriously by ensuring records are accurate, stored securely and accessible to the public.

Q. Where can residents learn more about these records and the history of your office?

A. I invite everyone to watch a special video celebrating the 204-year history of the clerk's office, which shows how far we've come. You can view it at stjohnsclerk.com/history.

For questions about records or services we provide, our Customer Care Call Center is available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at (904) 819-3600 and by email at clerk@stjohnsclerk.com. I can also be reached directly on my cellphone at (904) 599-8688 or by email at BPatty@stjohnsclerk.com.

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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.

CANCER SS MONTH



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.



ST. JOHNS Business Monthly

Business Briefs

William Bartram Scenic Highway celebrates 20th anniversary

The St. Johns County Commission recognized the 20th anniversary of the William Bartram Scenic & Historic Highway with a proclamation on June 17.

Commissioner Christian Whitehurst presented the proclamation to Scenic Highway Chairman Joe McAnarney, encouraging residents to "come to the westernmost part of the county, take that lovely drive south or north on State Road 13, and glimpse old Florida."

Original scenic highway founders Al and Phyllis Abbatiello were recognized at the ceremony, along with Nancy

Grogan, daughter of co-founder Mary Cornwell.

The Scenic Highway will resume monthly meetings at Westminster Woods on Sept. 18 at 6:30 p.m. Virtual attendance is available through Zoom by contacting McAnarney at jmcanarney@yahoo.com.

Upcoming discussions will focus on enhanced landscaping along State Road 13 and new activities and events. Residents can submit ideas at monthly meetings or through the organization's Facebook page, where membership information is also available.



Photo courtesy Bartram Scenic Highway
St. Johns County Commissioner Christian Whitehurst, center, presents a proclamation recognizing the 20th anniversary of the William Bartram Scenic & Historic Highway to organization Chairman Joe McAnarney, second from left, during a June 17 ceremony. Also recognized were original founders Al and Phyllis Abbatiello and Nancy Grogan, daughter of co-founder Mary Cornwell.

Florida portability property tax benefit explained

By St. Johns County Property Appraiser Eddie Creamer
Portability, also known as Save Our Homes, is a benefit provided to homesteaded property owners in Florida that enables them to transfer their accumulated tax savings from one homesteaded property to another within the state. The portability benefit could be significant for those who have been in their home for several years.

Portability allows the homesteaded property owner to transfer the accumulated difference between the previous property's just value and assessed value to another homesteaded property. Just value is a property's probable sale price in a competitive market as of Jan. 1 of this year. Assessed value is the just value limited by the Save Our Homes statutory caps, which is up to 3% for homesteaded properties. If the just value

increases more than 3% annually, then the portability benefit begins to increase each year, creating a tax savings for the homeowner.

The maximum portability amount that can be transferred is \$500,000. If the property owner purchased a home with an equal or higher just value from their previous home, then they can transfer all of their portability benefit, up to

\$500,000. If the property owner purchased a home with a lower just value than their previous home, then they can transfer a proportionate amount, up to \$500,000. For example, if the new home is valued at 50% less than the previous home, then 50% of the portability benefit is transferable.

Florida cont. on pg. 10

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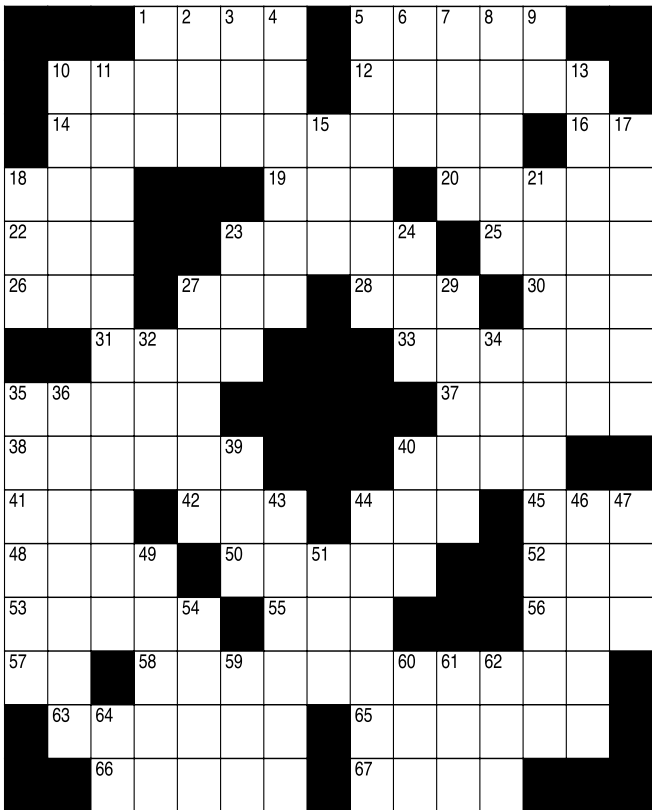


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1. Native American people of CA
5. Long periods of time (Brit.)
10. Classroom tool
12. Rods
14. One who renews
16. They start the alphabet
18. Periodical (slang)
19. Smooth singer Cole
20. Dorsal sclerites in insects
22. One from Utah
23. The world 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

Local scout Earns Eagle award

By Roslie Herren

Troop 280 is proud to recognize and congratulate Scout Nathan Lough for attaining Scouts BSA's highest rank, the Eagle Scout Award.

Nathan was recognized during Troop 280's Court of Honor ceremony held Sept. 22, 2025.

In preparing to be an Eagle Scout, Nathan learned survival skills, served in troop leadership positions such as quartermaster, patrol leader and assistant senior patrol leader, earned 13 Eagle required and nine elective merit badges and camped a total of 37 nights. Na-

than spent at least 16 hours on service projects on top of the many hours spent on his Eagle Scout service project.

By leaning into his love of music, Nathan completed his Trail to Eagle with a service project that would benefit seniors in the community. He organized a group of his fellow musicians to perform a series of jazz concerts for the residents of Westminster Woods. The concerts were a great success and very much appreciated by the residents.

Nathan has lived the Scout Oath, Motto and Law. He has been a great mentor to younger scouts in the troop.



Nathan Lough, left, was recognized by Troop 280 for attaining the Eagle Scout Award at a recent honor ceremony.

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Florida cont. from pg. 10

Portability must be transferred within three tax years once a homestead has been relinquished. It is important to note that when a homestead is relinquished in December, that is considered one tax year. Also, portability can be used an unlimited number of times.

For St. Johns County properties, the

portability total can be found by looking at the property's Truth in Millage notice on our website at sjcpa.gov or by calling our office. For properties located outside the county, contact that county's property appraiser's office for details.

I'm available to answer questions at Ed-die@sjcpa.gov or 904-827-5500. Also, additional information about portability is available at sjcpa.gov/portability.

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Newcomers of North St. Johns plans October luncheon

Newcomers of North St. Johns will hold its October luncheon Tuesday, Oct. 21, at Jacksonville Golf and Country Club, 3985 Hunt Club Road, Jacksonville.

The event will feature lunch and a line dancing demonstration with group participation led by Jerry and Phyllis Casper. Doors open at 11 a.m.

Cost is \$35 for members and \$40 for guests. Reservations must be received by Oct. 12.

Menu options include Chicken Toscana, grilled salmon or a vegetarian entrée, all served with mixed green salad and Key

Lime Pie for dessert.

In honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, attendees are encouraged to wear pink and western attire.

The event will include raffles and a 50/50 drawing.

For more information, visit newcomersofnorthstjohns.org.

NNSJ offers activities for St. Johns County residents including lunch groups, walking club, wine socials, golf, Mah Jongg, day trips and cultural events.



Photo courtesy of Newcomers of North St. Johns
Newcomers door prize winners from September 2025 luncheon.

Troop 474 continues legacy of excellence after 23 years

By Christine Miller

For more than two decades, Boy Scout Troop 474 has stood as a pillar of excellence within the North Florida Council, earning recognition as one of the region's most established and successful units. Known for its exceptional track record of producing Eagle Scouts, the troop continues to develop young men into capable leaders and engaged citizens.

Founded in 2001, Troop 474 has built a strong reputation across the region. Its sustained success reflects a deep commitment to the Scout Oath and Law and serves as a model for other units across the North Florida Council.

One of the most striking accomplishments of Troop 474 is its remarkable output of Eagle Scouts. Achieving this rank requires at least 21 merit badges, demonstrated leadership and the completion of a substantial community service project. The troop's Eagle Scout production rate consistently surpasses both regional and national averages, testament to its high standards and strong support system.

While camping and outdoor adventures remain core to the program, Troop 474 offers much more than weekend getaways. Scouts are immersed in experiences that build practical life skills, leadership capabilities and civic responsibility—all preparing them for lifelong success.

From wilderness survival and navigation to environmental stewardship and hiking, scouts gain hands-on experience that fosters confidence, resilience and respect for nature. These lessons stay with them long after their final campout.

The troop's impact extends deeply into the community. Over 23 years, Troop 474 has contributed thousands of hours of community service—from neighborhood cleanups to supporting local nonprofits. Eagle Scout projects alone have left lasting improvements across the region, demonstrating the power of youth-led service and reinforcing the importance of giving back.

At the heart of the troop's success is its dedicated adult leadership team. These trained volunteers bring professional expertise and life experience, offering mentorship that reaches far beyond the

Scouting handbook. Their commitment ensures that every scout has a safe, enriching and empowering experience.

After 23 years, Troop 474 continues to prove that quality programming, strong leadership and clear purpose can make a profound difference in the lives of young people—and in the communities they serve.

As Troop 474 looks to the future, its mission remains clear: to develop young men of character, equipped to make ethical decisions and contribute



Photo courtesy Christine Miller
Eagle Scouts from Boy Scout Troop 474 pose for a photo. Front row, from left, Scoutmaster Dawson Kilhoffer, Harrison Warren, Ethan Miller and former Scoutmaster Michael Mazur. Back row, from left, Oliver Kilhoffer, Nathan Williams and Cole Kouremetis.

meaningfully to society. Alumni often credit their time in the troop as a defining chapter in their lives—shaping their success in college, careers and family.



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Travel

Walking the Freedom Trail in Boston

By Debi Lander
mail@floridanewslines.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.



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 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 Newslines, 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@floridanewslines.com

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 grave-stones 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](https://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.



Granary Burying Ground is where a weathered grave-stone marks the resting place of Paul Revere.

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