

Ponte Vedra NewsLine

MARCH 2019 Volume 6 Issue 3

Ponte Vedra, Palm Valley, Nocatee and South Ponte Vedra Beach

A Florida NewsLine Publication



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Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library to reopen in March

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewsline.com

A lot has been accomplished since early November when the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library was closed to make repairs to the fire sprinkler system pipes. Amy Ring, the library's branch manager, said she visited the library in early February for the first time since November. She said the piping work has been completed and all that is left to do are some ceiling repairs, cleaning and general punch list items.



Photo courtesy Amy Ring

The Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library has been operating a limited library service at the Tax Collector's Annex on Palm Valley Road since November.

"We are confident that the library will be open by the beginning of March," Ring said.

She noted that the exact date will probably only be known a day or two in advance and will be communicated via the library's website and on the library's automated phone answering system.

Ring said that library staff will make sure everything in the library is functioning before opening the doors. For instance, all the public computers will require updating since they have been shut down for three months and have not received ongoing updates. The con-

Library cont. on pg. 11

About six years ago, a small group of women primarily from Ponte Vedra and NW St. Johns County began volunteering in classrooms in Title 1 elementary schools, Webster and Crookshank. The women's own children were now of middle school or high school age and the women found that they missed volunteering in elementary school classrooms.

"When you are in these schools, you become aware of the needs almost immediately," said Brette Reiman, one of the founders of Hugs Across the County. "We realized students needed clothes and shoes and eventually realized that even greater needs existed for food and school supplies."

So the women formed Hugs Across the County, which aims to work with school counselors to identify and provide for the basic unmet needs of students all over St. Johns County. Reiman said it is important to note that students are homeless or living below the poverty line even in the northern part of the county. In 2017, the group formed as an official 501 c 3 nonprofit organization with an all volunteer staff and a new board of directors this year that Reiman said truly cares about kids in the community.

Hugs Across the County provides assistance in four basic areas. First are the Clothing Care Packages. Reiman said in 2018, the group provided 300 such packages of clothing to St. Johns County students in 25 schools — all over the county.

Secondly, Hugs Across the County spearheads a couple of food initiatives. Every year, the group sponsors No Hungry Holidays, which provides food over the winter break for students who depend on free school-based breakfast and lunch programs. Reiman said this need continues to grow and last year, more than 1,000 children were referred by school counselors at 36 schools in St. Johns County.

Hugs Across the County assists students living in poverty — all over St. Johns County

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewsline.com

"This includes all of the Ponte Vedra schools and the vast majority of NW St. Johns County schools," Reiman said. "For instance, Bartram Trail High School requested 30 bags of food."

Reiman said she also learned that in some instances, school administrators were using their own funds to feed students who came to school too late for the



Photos courtesy Hugs Across the County
Ponte Vedra High School Juniors Sami Meyers and Alex Schupler put in hundreds of hours towards multiple Hugs Across the County programs.

free breakfast at school, as well as to feed the students again before they boarded the bus for home in the afternoon. Now, Hugs Across the County stocks food pantries containing kid-friendly breakfast and lunch items at six county schools.

In the area of literacy, Hugs Across the County celebrates Dr. Seuss' birthday in early March by providing a brand new Dr. Seuss book to every kindergartener and first grader in the county's six Title 1 elementary schools.

"Books are very important to me," Reiman said. "Research has shown that in low income communities, approximately 60 percent of kids do not have books to call their own at home. We are trying to change that."

A new program launched last summer, "Summer Soar" (because it aims to combat the "summer slide") is a four to five

week program with volunteers who work with Crookshank and Webster schools as well as Kids Safe Zone and the Homeless Coalition to bring books and read to the children once a week. At the end of each week, each participating child takes a book home. Reiman said that two juniors at Ponte Vedra High School, Sami Meyers and Alex Schupler, took this program to heart. They collected books and recruited and scheduled the reading volunteers.

Finally, Hugs Across the County sponsors a girls' empowerment program in conjunction with the school counselor at Murray Middle School. This is a monthly lunch for about 40 girls facing serious life events. Each month the focus is on a different subject matter, such as the importance of surrounding oneself with supportive people, and the girls are also provided with a copy of the book, "Wowsdom." Reiman said they are always looking for guest speakers and lunch sponsors.

Reiman acknowledges with the growth of Hugs Across the County, she now works a full time volunteer job.

"Truly, though, this community is incredible," she said. "We get remarkable support from families, students, churches, Rotary clubs, and neighborhoods. It is very humbling."



Hugs Across the County appreciates its high school volunteers.

Visit www.stjohnshugs.org, call (904) 580-4847 or email info@stjohnshugs.org for more information or to make a donation to Hugs Across the County.

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BFF Best Furry Friend of the month

Meet FOXY!



BREED:
Terrier mix
(she's a rescue so we don't know exactly!)

FAVORITE ACTIVITY:
Hunting squirrels and chipmunks up north and lizards at our home down here in Nocatee

FAVORITE TREAT:
Anything edible

FAVORITE FRIEND:
His human

HOW YOUR BFF GOT THEIR NAME:
She looks like a fox.

This month's sponsor:
Palencia Pet Clinic
159 Palencia Village Dr #101
www.palenciapetclinic.com

Do you have a cute pet? Send us your pet's picture and the answers to the five questions above before the 10th of the month. Your pet could be our BFF of the month and you could win a Gift Certificate!
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MYSTERY PHOTO



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

Last month's Mystery Photo was the Mountainstar Capital Building on Sawgrass Village Circle. Our winner was Kerry Mullen. Congratulations!

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around town

save the date!

April 6 - Cupcake Run 5k and 1 Mile Cake Walk

7:30 a.m. 5k / 8:30 a.m. fun run
St. Johns Town Center
Proceeds benefit Girls on the Run of Northeast Florida
Register: www.gotrnefl.org/cupcake-run

April 7 - 2nd annual Friends With Autism 5K /Walk & Autism Month Kickoff

8 a.m. 5k / 9 a.m. 1-mile
Northbank Riverwalk Riverside Arts Market, Jacksonville
www.bit.ly/runwalkstim

April 17 - Afternoon Insight: Right Whales

3 p.m. - 4 p.m.
GTM Reserve's Environmental Education Center
Free event; RSVP at www.gtmnerr.org

April 20 - St. Augustine Easter Parade

9 a.m.
Starts at the Old Jail
(904) 829-3800 or dchatterton@trolleytours.com

April 21 - 51st annual Mandarin Arts Festival

10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Mandarin Community Club
12447 Mandarin Road
www.mandarinartfestival.org/

March 1

GTM Research Reserve new volunteer orientation

10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Environmental Education Center, 505 Guana River Road
(904) 823-4500

March 4

Current Events Discussion Group

10 a.m. (repeating event on Mondays)
New location: Amenities Annex, 625 Market St., Palencia
adsilby@yahoo.com

March 4

Caregiver support meeting

12 p.m. - 1 p.m. (repeating event on Mondays)
Ponte Vedra Memory Care Center, 1048 A1A N.
(904) 297-0061

March 5

Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Ponte Vedra Chapter meeting

10:45 a.m. - 1 p.m.
pontevedrachaptersdar@aol.com

March 6

Jacksonville Camera Club

6:45 p.m.
Shepherd of the Woods Church, 6595 Columbia Park Ct.
www.jax.jaxcameraclub.com (repeating event, first and third Wednesdays)

March 7

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 14-7

7:30 p.m.
St. Augustine Yacht Club near the St. Augustine Lighthouse
(904) 460-0243

March 9

10,000 Maniacs concert

8 p.m.
Ponte Vedra Music Hall, 1050 A1A N.

March 11

Beaches Toastmasters Club

7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. (Repeating event on Mondays)
Baptist Hospital Beaches, Wilson Epstein Building
cgsml3@yahoo.com

March 11

Ponte Vedra Beach Municipal Service District Meeting

6 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church, 545 A1A N.
www.pvmsd.org

March 13

Toastmasters Club #5199 Ponte Vedra Beach

7:30 a.m. (repeating event on Wednesdays)
Players Community Senior Center, 175 Landrum Lane
carmenjsardinas@gmail.com

March 13

Ponte Vedra Democratic Club Meeting featuring local historian Scott Grant speaking on "The Summer of 1964"

7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Palm Valley Community Center, 148 Canal Blvd.
Newcomers welcome; [Facebook.com/PonteVedraDemocrats](https://www.facebook.com/PonteVedraDemocrats)

March 13

Newcomers of the Beaches luncheon

11 a.m.
Sawgrass Beach Club, 975 Summer Place
RSVP: www.newcomersofthebeaches.com

March 14

Shorebird Walk at Matanzas Inlet with St. Johns County Audubon Society

9 a.m. - 11 a.m.
Matanzas Inlet West Parking Lot, 8655 A1A S., St Augustine
www.stjohnsaudubon.com

March 16

Nocatee Farmers Market: Sauce Boss

10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Town Center Field, Nocatee

March 18

Summer Beaches' Art Book Club

3 p.m.
Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library
Maurice Shuman, (904) 982-1340 to sign up

March 19

St. Johns CARES meeting

7 p.m.
Bartram Academy, 164 Everest Lane, Ste. 1
www.stjohnscares.org

March 20

Open House - Starling at Nocatee

1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
999 Crosswater Pkwy.
(904) 686-2000

March 20

Agging Parent Support Group

6 p.m.

First Atlantic Bank building, 100 Corridor Road S., Ste. 280
Limited space; RSVP to Karen Feliciano, (904) 907-7880

March 27

OneBlood Drive

3 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Starling at Nocatee, 999 Crosswater Pkwy.
(904) 686-2000

March 27

Purim celebration, "A Night in Paris"

6:30 p.m.
Chabad@the Beaches' Center for Jewish Life, 521 A1A N.
RSVP www.chabadbeaches.com or (904) 543-9301

March 28

Alzheimer's Support Group

6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Starling at Nocatee, 999 Crosswater Pkwy.
(904) 686-2000

March 29

Food Truck Friday

6 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Nocatee's Splash Waterpark

March 29

Casino Night

6 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Starling at Nocatee, 999 Crosswater Pkwy
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take 5

Landscaping lecture scheduled

THE PLAYERS Community Center has partnered with UF/IFAS Extension St. Johns County to present a native landscaping lecture on Friday, March 8 from 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. at the community center, located at 175 Landrum Lane in Ponte Vedra Beach. The free lecture on Florida-Friendly Landscaping



Photo courtesy MetroCreative

will focus on low-maintenance plants and environmentally sustainable practices. Attendees will learn how to select the appropriate Florida-Friendly plants for their landscape. Contact Kelly Ussia at kussia@sjcfl.us or (904) 209-0335 for more information.

Newcomers of the Beaches seeks new members

The Newcomers of the Beaches meets for lunch on the second Wednesday of each month. The next luncheon is

scheduled for March 13 at the Sawgrass Beach Club in Ponte Vedra Beach. This social club consists of a fun and diverse group of women who have recently moved to the beaches area or have gone through a major life event. Visit www.newcomersofthebeaches.com for more information and to make a reservation for lunch.

Friends of Ponte Vedra Library concert to celebrate library reopening

The Friends of the Ponte Vedra Library will present a concert to celebrate the reopening of the library on March 19 beginning at 6:30 p.m. Melissa Barrett, associate concertmaster of the Jacksonville Symphony (violin) has brought together three fellow members of the symphony: Anne Hertler (violin), Susan Pardue (viola), and Betsy Federman (cello) along with soprano Regina Torres to present Rodgers and Hammerstein. Doors open at 6 p.m. Seating is limited; the concert is free to the public.

Purim Carnival scheduled

Beth El The Beaches Synagogue will host a Purim Carnival on March 10 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Purim is a joyous holiday that commemorates the Jewish people's victory over the wicked

Haman and his plot to massacre the Jews, as recorded in the book of Esther. The Beth El carnival will include a hot dog lunch as well as face painting, balloon art, ring toss, a photo booth and stations set up for Purim crafts and the making of hamentashen, a filled-pocket cookie recognizable for its triangular shape. Participants are encouraged to dress in costumes and masks. Visit bethelbeaches.org for more information.

Cummer Beaches to visit St. Augustine

Cummer Beaches, a support group of the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens and Beaches Museum and History Park are sponsoring a bus tour to St. Augustine on Friday, March 29 for members and their guests. The tour will



Photo courtesy MetroCreative

include Flagler College and its beautiful solarium, the Crisp-Ellert Art Museum and the Lightner Museum following lunch in the afternoon.

Call Marianne Stein at (904) 280-2976 or visit www.cummermuseum.org/beaches or www.beachmuseum.org for more information.



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Inquiring Minds want to know!

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewsline.com

Are you puzzled about something going on in Ponte Vedra or wondering about whatever happened on a topic from a previous issue? Email your question to us at editor@floridanewsline.com by the fifth of the month and we will do our best to track down the information for you.



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with Kelly Barrera, St. Johns County School Board Member, District 4

Q: What can you tell us about upcoming improvements to Ray Road?

A: The St. Johns County School District and the county have been looking at improvements to Ray Road for a period of time and we are collaborating on the project, which involves building an additional turn lane into Nease High School. The plan is to build an additional lane onto the shoulder of the road, but some modifications will have to be made first for drainage. The county will oversee the planning of the road, but the school district would be responsible for the construction cost. I think this will improve safety, especially during peak times and will be a welcome change for students and staff.

Q: What is the timing for this proposed project?

A: The school board approved it at the Feb. 12 meeting and the Board of County Commissioners will take it up at an upcoming meeting. I believe we would like to have the construction take place over the summer.

Q: What is happening locally in District 4?

A: Each of the schools' SAC committees are working on their Needs Assessment surveys. These surveys should go out to parents, students, and staff by the end of February and through March. I encourage everyone to participate by taking the survey, which will include items like school climate and school safety.

Q: What are some of the school board's priorities looking forward to the March legislative session?

A: From the school district's standpoint, we are always looking to see what will impact us. Gov. DeSantis has asked for flexi-

bility in spending the safe schools funding, which we would agree with. Florida school districts are not "one size fits all" and local control is important. We would also like to see flexibility in spending capital outlay funds for building new schools.

Q: Speaking of new schools, do you have an update in the site selection search for a new high school?

A: Internally, district staff is working on this now. We hope to have this topic as a point of discussion in our March workshop, where we will hear of the benefits and challenges of each site. After the site is determined, we have a fairly aggressive construction plan that would take about two years. I know the community as a whole is looking forward to a new high school.

Q: Are there any upcoming events that you would like to share?

A: Palencia Elementary will host the countywide STEM Fair on March 2. The event also includes presentations and information provided by business and community partners, in addition to hands on displays by students and a group competition for elementary students.

Also upcoming is the History Fair on March 7, from 6 p.m. – 7 p.m. at First Coast Technical College. The community is invited. If you are a history buff, this is a great way to see what our students are working on as well as hear from community historical organizations.

Q: How can our readers contact you?

A: They can email me at kelly.barrera@stjohns.k12.fl.us or call me at (904) 547-7510.

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**with St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections
Vicky Oakes**

Q: 2018 was a busy election year. Can you let us know how things went in St. Johns County?

A: Everything went very well in St. Johns County. We participated in the recount for three of the races. This was a historical event; the last statewide recount was in 2000.



The manual recount. cast in the General Election in St. Johns County. For the U.S. Senate race, there were about 750 outstacks. Bill Nelson increased his vote tally by 26 and Rick Scott increased his vote tally by seven. For the Agriculture Commissioner race, there were about 4,000 outstacks. In this race, each of the two candidates increased their vote tally by fewer than 10 votes.

Q: Can you describe how the recount process works?

A: First we did a machine recount. This requires the ballot readers to be reprogrammed to only count the three races in question. We do not recount the other races. During this process, the machines “outstack” or separate any ballots that are under-voted or over-voted. This process is very open and transparent and we had a lot of observers, including attorneys and representatives of the candidates. We confirmed our totals and then certified them to the state. This process took about a day and a half. Then the state ordered a manual recount of two of the races, the U.S. Senate race and the Agriculture Commissioner.



Photos courtesy Vicky Oakes
The machine recount.

Q: What happens in a manual recount?

A: It’s not really like it sounds. When we performed the machine recount, the outstacks (under- and over-votes) were put in a container, sealed, and then locked in our vault. For a manual recount, we take the outstacks for just the two races in question and review each ballot to see if there were obvious and legitimate votes as compared to a statewide standard called the “Voter Intent Rule.” All counties apply the same standard. Everybody can look at each ballot, but only my employees may touch the ballots. Ultimately it is the responsibility of the three-member canvassing board (made up of myself, a county court judge and a member of the board of county commissioners, or in his/her absence, a “qualified elector”) to make the final determination in any dispute after hearing from both sides.

Q: Approximately how many outstacks were there for each of the two races and how many votes did each candidate gain as a result of the manual recount?

A: Approximately 140,000 votes were

Q: When do you count the Vote by Mail ballots? After all the other votes are tallied?

A: This is a myth I’d like to put to rest. The law allows us to open and count mail in ballots 15 days prior to Election Day and we do. In fact, by the time we leave the office on the Monday afternoon prior to the Tuesday election, all Early Voting and Vote by Mail ballots have been counted. We go into Election Day all caught up with everything counted except for votes cast on Election Day or received in the mail on Election Day. We had approximately 30,000 mail in votes this past election.

Q: Do you have anything else to share with our readers?

A: At this time, no elections are scheduled in 2019 in St. Johns County; however, Duval County is having their municipal elections this month, which is why you are seeing commercials. St. Johns County’s next schedule is the 2020 elections: March 17, Presidential Preference Election; Aug. 25, Primary Election; and Nov. 3, General Election.

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

A: Readers can email me at voakes@votesjc.com or call me at (904) 823-2238. Our website, www.votesjc.com also has a wealth of information.



**with State Attorney, 7th Judicial Circuit,
R.J. Larizza**

Q: Could we discuss the juvenile system?

A: I think education in this area is important for families. First, I’d like parents to know that the juvenile system is focused on rehabilitating kids who may have problems with the law. The punitive portion is very small and reserved for the worst offenders.

Q: What options are available for minors who are get in trouble with the law?

A: We have a robust civil citation program in St. Johns County. This program allows an officer to have some discretion when deciding whether to make an arrest (which would stay on the child’s record) or, if certain criteria are met, instead write a civil citation. If the charge is a misdemeanor that is non-violent and non-sexual in nature, and if the family of the child agrees, the officer can write a civil citation. No arrest is ever recorded. The child committing the offense would then have to successfully complete a program, overseen to the St. Johns County Sheriff’s Office, that might include community service, a letter of apology, restitution or maybe a substance abuse evaluation. If the child successfully completes the program, the matter is concluded with no arrest on the child’s record. If the child does not successfully complete the program, then the State Attorney’s office has the option of coming in and filing the original misdemeanor charge. Minors may get a civil citation

more than once, up to the point that it becomes apparent that more strenuous consequences are needed.

Q: What would be the next level?

A: The State Attorney’s office oversees the Diversion Program for offenses above the criteria for a civil citation. Again the child would have to successfully complete a program similar to that of the civil citation. If successfully completed, the difference is that with the Diversion Program, the child would have an arrest on his or her record, but it would show that the charges were dropped.

Q: And if neither of these programs work or are appropriate, what happens?

A: If the Diversion Program is not appropriate, one sentencing option if a child is charged with a crime would be probation. If that is rejected by the court or if the child is high risk, he or she could be committed to a juvenile detention facility. There is one in the Hastings area and one in St. Augustine. It takes a lot for a child to be committed, such as an armed robbery, sexual assault or a serious juvenile record with many second chances given but not taken advantage of. Finally, sometimes a crime is severe enough for what we call a direct file. This is where a minor is charged as an adult. This is worst case and fortunately happens a lot less now than it did several years ago.



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Ponte Vedra Field Office: (904) 209-2215

Property Appraiser: Eddie Creamer, sjcpa@sjcpa.us; (904) 827-5500

Supervisor of Elections: Vicky Oakes, voakes@votesjc.com, (904) 823-2238

Tax Collector: Dennis Hollingworth, taxcollector@sjctax.us, (904) 209-2250

Clerk of Court: Hunter S. Conrad, (904) 819-3600

St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners

District 1: Jimmy Johns, bcc1johns@sjcf.us, (904) 209-0301
District 2: Jeb Smith, bcc2jsmith@sjcf.us, (904) 209-0302
District 3: Paul Waldron, bcc3pwaldron@sjcf.us, (904) 209-0303
District 4: Jeremiah Blocker,

bcc4jblocker@sjcf.us, (904) 209-0304
District 5: Henry Dean, bcc5hdean@sjcf.us, (904) 209-0305

St. Johns County School Board

(www.stjohns.k12.fl.us)
District 4: Kelly Barrera, kelly.barrera@stjohns.k12.fl.us, (904) 547-7510

State of Florida Elected Officials

Governor Ron DeSantis, (850) 488-7146

State House District 17: Representative Cyndi Stevenson, Cyndi.Stevenson@myfloridahouse.gov, (904) 823-2300

State Senate District 7: Senator Travis Hutson, (386) 446-7610

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Senator Marco Rubio, (202) 224-3041
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ST. JOHNS Business Monthly

MarketInsight



The Customer's Man

By Scott Grant
ScottGrant@StJohnsBusinessMonthly.com

I have long been fascinated by the 1942 Nazi Submarine attack off Jacksonville Beach. The attack occurred at 9:30 on a Friday night, just four miles off the coast. Thousands stood on the shore and watched in horror as the German submarine shelled the stricken oil-tanker, "SS Gulfamerica." One of the people on the boardwalk that night was Phil May, who passed away recently.

I went to interview Phil at his home two years ago and heard his stories. He was a World War II veteran. He served in the 1st Division (the Big Red One) and was severely injured at the Battle of the Bulge. He spent years recovering from the injuries he suffered in Europe. Eventually, he recovered to a normal life. He graduated from Princeton University and became a local stockbroker

Phil May was 17 and on the boardwalk the night of the attack. He and some friends were riding the merry-go-round as the German torpedo slammed into the stern of "Gulfamerica," causing a massive explosion. They rode round and round and again and again they were treated to the sight of the ocean on fire. One of those friends was the daughter of J. Turner Butler, a long-time state senator from Duval. They named a pretty big road after him, J. Turner Butler Boulevard. Cecil Butler had a curfew and no teenage boy wants to upset the daughter of a state senator, so they all piled into an old Ford sedan and headed back to Jacksonville. They assumed, as did almost everyone on the beach that night, that the explosion off the coast was some sort of accident.

A short while later as they cruised north along the beach, the Germans began to shell the burning tanker and they stopped to watch. It was quite a show: the commander took his submarine around the sinking oil tanker and placed it between the shore and the burning wreck so that everyone on the beach could see the outline of his sub and the flash of his guns. Cecil Butler, who was described in her yearbook as "the heartthrob of femininity," got home late. I have no idea what her father had to say, but she certainly had one of the best excuses ever.

Years later, Phil May, Jr. was president of the Meninak Club when the commander of that submarine came to Jacksonville. Phil arranged to have him speak to the club. Not everyone was happy, and Phil got some angry calls from people who thought it inappropriate to host the former "Nazi."

One of the things that popped out about Phil May was his profession: stockbroker. Back when Phil first went to work, it was common to refer to stockbrokers as "customer's men." The idea being that the broker was there to help the customer. Somewhere along the line, that concept was lost. Investments were increasingly sold to people by someone trying, sometimes desperately, to earn a commission. Your financial future is too important to be someone else's commission.

Scott A. Grant is President of Standfast Asset Management in Ponte Vedra Beach. He welcomes your comments or questions at scottg@standfastic.com.

Women may need to make extra financial moves

By Karsten Jacobson
mail@floridanewslines.com

International Women's Day will be observed on March 8. Around the world, special events will celebrate the cultural, social, political and economic achievements of women. However, this last area — economic progress — is one that still causes concern, and rightfully so, because women still face gender-related challenges. How can you deal with them?

To begin with, you need to recognize the nature of these challenges. While many factors are actually responsible for women facing more economic pressure than men, two stand out in particular:

- **Gender wage gap:** It's still around, despite some progress toward equality. The U.S. Census Bureau has found that full-time, year-round working women earn about 80 percent of what their male counterparts earn. Other studies show a slightly smaller gap.
- **Caregiving responsibilities:** Women typically take more time away from the workforce than men, both to raise children and then, later in life, to take care of aging parents. These absences can result in lost wages, lower Social Security benefits and fewer contributions to 401(k) and similar retirement plans. So, given these realities, what can you do to improve your own financial outlook? Here are a few suggestions:
 - **Increase your contributions to your retirement plan:** Every time your salary goes up, increase the amount you contribute to your 401(k) or similar retirement plan. At a minimum, put in enough to earn your employer's match, if one is offered. These plans offer potential tax-deferred earnings, and since your contributions are typically made with pre-tax dollars, the more you put in, the lower your taxable income.
 - **Invest for growth:** Some studies show

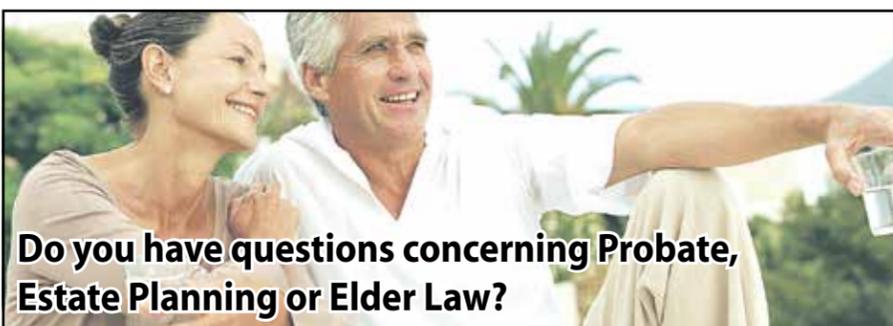
that men may invest more aggressively than women — though not necessarily more successfully. However, while you do need to invest wisely, you can't ignore the need for growth. Consequently, you should consider including a reasonable percentage of growth-oriented investments in your retirement and other investment accounts, with the precise amount depending on your individual goals, risk tolerance, and time horizon.

- **Look for income even while serving as caregiver:** Of course, you may never become the primary caregiver for your elderly parents — but even if you do, it doesn't necessarily follow that you must forego all earned income. If it's possible, you could seek to go part-time at your current job, or request some type of telecommuting arrangement. And as long as you have some earned income, from somewhere, you can still contribute to an IRA.

- **Manage retirement plan withdrawals carefully:** Once you're retired, possibly to become a full-time caregiver, you can take penalty-free — though still taxable — withdrawals from your 401(k) as early as age 55, provided you meet certain conditions. Once you're 59 1/2, you can take penalty-free withdrawals from a traditional IRA, though the money will be taxable. While you can withdraw contributions you made to a Roth IRA at any time, tax- and penalty-free, you'll have to wait until 59 1/2 to take out your earnings free of taxes and penalties. And you'll need to find a sustainable withdrawal rate so you can reduce the risk of depleting these accounts too early.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by local Edward Jones Financial Advisor, Karsten Jacobson. Email Karsten.Jacobson@edwardjones.com for more information.

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Get to Know . . .

Shirli Billings

By Ken Gillespie
mail@floridanewslines.com



Photo courtesy Shirli Billings
Shirli Billings and son Joshua

Shirli Billings' career spans more than 40 years, with achievement starting early in life. She was chosen as "Girl Mayor" of Cincinnati in 1954. After college she spent several years teaching in the classroom. Moving into administration, she took an assignment as junior high principal in Lansing, Mich. It was there she first met young student Erwin Johnson, later known as Magic Johnson. A signed basketball is one of her treasures. While in Lansing, she worked toward and earned a PhD Degree from Ohio State University. Billings would eventually progress through several superintendent positions in public systems across several states. As an African American woman holding leadership roles in mainly white school systems during the '70s and '80s, she was a trailblazer during times of societal change.

Following years in public education she transitioned to the corporate world, first with Honeywell then later running her own training and development consultancy. During that time she also served on the board of directors of a major utility company in New Jersey, initially the lone woman and person of color. During her 30 year tenure, she recruited other highly capable women and minorities to the board.

Q: Any career roads not taken?

A: I was offered a job in the Boston school system as an area superintendent. This rising young woman from the midwest was romanced by city leaders to come and help shape their strategy for desegregation. I was assured that after spending a few years

in this high profile role I could write my own ticket. A tenured position at Harvard was mentioned. But my mom weighed in on my decision. At that time there had been several murders of professional black women in the Boston area at the hands of a serial killer. Mom got emotional and pleaded that I shouldn't put myself in harms way. I declined the job.

Q: You've had some interesting side roads out of public education.

A: While in the Education Leadership and Policy PhD program, I also decided to pursue a number of business courses. During my service as superintendent of schools in a suburb of Minneapolis, Honeywell recruited me into for-profit corporate life. Given my background in education, they were interested in my taking over their in-house leadership school. But the hiring officer suggested I might initially best serve the company in a profit center that was facing operational challenges. This led to a role running an \$800 million division in the armaments business, "bombs and bullets." Eventually I did turn to human resource development, taking on a global role as vice president for HRD.

Q: You place high value on family.

A: Mom died at the age of 97. She raised six kids with me being the second oldest. My siblings often saw me as their "bossy big sis." Mom raised all of us quite well. One brother became a pro football player. My sister was a noted New York fashion designer. Another brother became a criminologist with undercover assignments in white collar crime. I myself came late to family and motherhood due to my career being all-consuming for so many years. At

the age of 57 I was fortunate to adopt a baby boy as a single parent. My Joshua is now 21 and the focus of much of my life.

Q: What brought you to Florida?

A: Ohio's weather was a factor. Snow and cold didn't agree with my arthritic joints. When Joshua was looking for college we both rated warm weather high as a criteria. I bought my present house in Nocatee while he was still in high school, but rented it out for a year. After he signed on to Florida Southern University we moved here. It was difficult leaving family and friends in the midwest and I still miss them, but for now I'm comfortable with new friends I've made here.

Q: What lies ahead?

A: Our family seems to have good longevity genes and I'm hopeful for a solid number of years ahead. My son is encouraging me to follow some long held dreams. One is to capture my life and career experience in writing and become a motivational speaker. I've had a few privileges in my life along with some tough learning experiences I would like to share. I believe I can help younger women with advice and perspective.

Library cont. from pg. 1

tractors were responsible for covering and protecting the library's books and Ring said that when she visited she didn't see any damage to any of the library's assets.

During the repair period, library staff have been operating out of a space in the Tax Collector's Annex on Palm Valley Road. Ring said that she was pleased that a number of patrons have followed them to the annex.

"We have been very comfortable with the space we were allowed to use here at the Annex," Ring said. "We have been operating limited library service just a few miles away from the branch, which made it a convenient option for our patrons. Patrons have been able to request items and browse a small collection of items as well as get questions answered by qualified staff."

To welcome back patrons, friends and volunteers back to the branch, the Friends of the Ponte Vedra Library will present a concert to celebrate the reopening of the library on March 19 beginning at 6:30 p.m. Melissa Barrett, associate concertmaster of the Jacksonville Symphony (violin) has brought together three fellow members of the symphony: Anne Hertler (violin), Susan Pardue (viola), and Betsy Federman (cello) along with soprano Regina Torres to present Rodgers and Hammerstein. Doors open at 6 p.m. Seating is limited; the concert is free to the public.

"Our patrons are our priority," Ring said. "We are all so excited to move back into the library."

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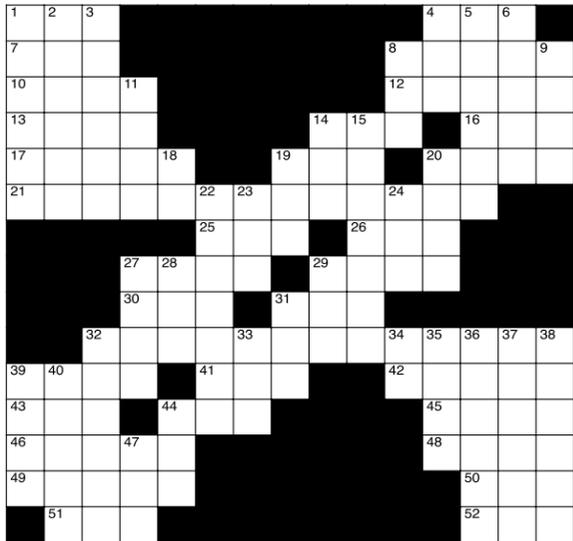
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T P C S A W G R A S S

Puzzles

Answers to puzzles on page 8
Provided by MetroCreative



- 1. Employ
- 4. Not a starter
- 7. Matchstick game
- 8. One who receives a gift
- 10. One shows highlights
- 12. Open sore
- 13. Within
- 14. ___ Caesar, comedian
- 16. Investment account
- 17. A negatively charged ion
- 19. Immoral act
- 20. Cheek
- 21. Lacking in vigor or vitality
- 25. Partner to flow
- 26. Ink
- 27. "Mad Men" actor
- 29. A taunt
- 30. Single
- 31. A very large body of water
- 32. A configuration of stars as seen from the earth

- 39. Herringlike fish
- 41. No (Scottish)
- 42. White-breasted N. American auk
- 43. American time
- 44. Adult female
- 45. Singer Horne
- 46. Pronouncements
- 48. From a distance
- 49. Indian term of respect
- 50. One from Utah
- 51. Never sleeps
- 52. Type of bulb

- 8. Misfire
- 9. Amounts of time
- 11. The act of perceiving something visually
- 14. Female sibling
- 15. First
- 18. Sodium
- 19. Brother or sister
- 20. Satisfy
- 22. The lands of an estate
- 23. Antibalistic missile
- 24. Taxi
- 27. Covers the engine
- 28. Commentator Coulter
- 29. Mousse
- 31. Witness
- 32. Unlikely to be forgotten
- 33. Bar bill
- 34. Morning
- 35. City south of Moscow
- 36. Highly incensed
- 37. Intricately decorated

- 38. Drew closer to
- 39. Beers
- 40. Central China city
- 44. Touch lightly
- 47. Habitual twitching

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Hard to believe
- 2. Used as a pigment in painting
- 3. Induces vomiting
- 4. Fifth note of a major scale
- 5. Written in a majuscule script
- 6. Brews



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Solve the code to discover words related to basketball.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 17 = e)

A. 14 19 20 23 23 24 17

Clue: Bounce ball

B. 8 6 6 5

Clue: Net

C. 18 21 16 19 14

Clue: Block or protect

D. 5 6 20 1 15 11

Clue: Score

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

WORDS

- A CAPPELLA
- ACCENT
- ALTO
- AUDIATE
- BALANCE
- BARITONE
- BASS
- BEAT
- CADENZA
- CHEST
- CHOIR
- CHORUS
- CLEF
- COUNT
- ENSEMBLE
- FALSETTO
- FLAT
- HEAD
- KEY
- MAJOR
- MEASURE
- MINOR
- MODIFICATION
- MOVEMENT
- MUSIC
- OCTAVE
- PITCH
- REGISTER
- SHARP
- SIGHT
- SOPRANO
- TEMPO
- TENOR
- TOPE
- VOCAL
- VOWELS

Society of St. Andrew seeks volunteers passionate about stopping hunger

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewline.com

Gleaning is the act of collecting leftover crops from farmers' fields after they have been commercially harvested. The Society of St. Andrew is a national non-profit founded in 1979 that takes this biblical principle to heart and mobilizes volunteers to dig up or pick the good vegetables or fruit remaining after harvest and then share it with nearby feeding agencies.



Photos courtesy Larry Rood
Students from Ridgeview High School Spanish Honor Society after a successful citrus gleaning in Mandarin.

For the past four years, Larry Rood has been the Society of St. Andrew coordinator for the northeast Florida region, which goes from the Florida state line south to Crescent City and from Gainesville east to the beach. While southern St. Johns County is home to the majority of farms in his region, he said there are two small farms in the Jacksonville area, including one run by the Clara White mission in Ponte Vedra Beach, where volunteers are needed to plant, weed and harvest. Even individuals with citrus trees may contact Rood to schedule a gleaning.

"We always need volunteers," Rood said.

In addition to citrus gleaning, which requires volunteers to pick fruit from trees, bag it and then take it to a distribution center, volunteers are also called upon to harvest cabbage, cauliflower and broccoli. Rood said these crops are more labor intensive and require volunteers to bend while cutting the produce, and then throw the produce into a wagon. He estimates that most gleanings take between 90 minutes and three hours and the peak time is

December through the end of May.

"In addition to small individual farms, we also partner with the UF test field," Rood said. "We have a large cabbage gleaning scheduled there soon. All of the food gleaned is fit to eat and we take it to either the Mandarin Food Bank, Mandarin Presbyterian Church, St. Francis House in St. Augustine or Dining with Dignity in St. Augustine, among others."

Rood said the work is very fulfilling, but can be physically demanding and he is appreciative of all the volunteers. Some are individuals who feel called to help out, while others are church and high school groups in search of a noble group activity and community service hours.

"Here are some staggering numbers that often, people don't know: As a country, there are 55 million people who do not get three meals daily and a lot of these are children. There are 144 billion pounds of



Photo courtesy Dick Basye

New Scouts BSA all girl troop now in Ponte Vedra Beach

Scouts BSA, Troop 291, an all girl troop, has now formed and is hosted by Ponte Vedra United Methodist Church. The girls will do the same program that the boys have done for over a century, which emphasizes leadership, citizenship, and personal fitness. They will have the opportunity to earn all the ranks including that of Eagle Scout. The new troop meets every Thursday from 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. The girls designed their neckerchiefs at their organizing meeting. Visit www.Troop291PVB.org for more information or contact Elaine Mitchell at elainemitchell426@gmail.com or (904) 982-4937.

food a year that gets thrown away. We try to get as much of the food that is going to waste to the people who need it. That's why the Society of St. Andrew and the volunteers exist," Rood said.

Rood said that volunteers can sign up in a couple of different ways for gleanings at times convenient for them: visit the Society of St. Andrew website, www.endhunger.org, and sign up online, or call Larry Rood directly at (904) 738-1190. Volunteers must sign a liability waiver and gleaning locations are not publicized so that random people don't show up at a farmer's field outside of scheduled gleaning times.

"I have a passion for this," Rood said, "and I am always looking for others who do, too."



Photo courtesy Nocatee

Pirates invade Nocatee Farmers Market

The Fernandina Pirates invaded the Nocatee Farmers Market on Saturday, Jan. 19. They brought along their life-sized pirate ship, "Amelia's Revenge," and taught three interactive pirate schools for the kids. Attendees also enjoyed shopping with more than 70 local vendors, crafts, face painting, and bounce houses.

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Sharks swimmers and divers excel at state championships

By Tanis Milicevic
mail@floridanewsline.com

The Ponte Vedra High School swim and dive season has come to close with an outstanding showing at the 2A Florida State Championships. Coming off the District win for the boys' and girls' teams as well as the boys' regionals win, which was a first in Ponte Vedra High School history, the team was well prepared to finish off the season on a high in Stuart, Fla.

The team sent five male swimmers and five female swimmers in addition to the school's female diver to represent Ponte Vedra High School. Seven school swim records were broken.

Following are the results of the state finals 2018:

- Andrew Relihan (senior): Fourth place 200 Freestyle, new school record 1:42.79 and fifth place 100 Freestyle, 47.27
- Max Milicevic (senior): Second place 100 Freestyle, new school record 46.66 and 10th place 50 Free, new school record 21.75
- Nicolas Cox (senior): Eighth place 200 IM, new school record 1:57.55 and fourth place 100 Back, new school record 52.35

- Igor Kazhuro (senior): 12th place, 100 Fly
 - Boys' 200 Free Relay: Third place, new school record 1:26.68 (Cleburne Wilson, Igor Kazhuro, Andrew Relihan, Max Milicevic)
 - Boys' 400 Free Relay: New school record 3:10.61 (Igor Kazhuro, Nicholas Cox, Max Milicevic, Andrew Relihan)
- The girls' team sent the following swimmers to State Finals:
- Lilly Lewis: 100 Free, 200 Free Relay, 400 Free Relay
 - Holly Cox: 200 Free, 500 Free, 200 Free Relay and 400 Free Relay



Photos courtesy Tanis Milicevic
Swimmers and diver representing Ponte Vedra High School at the 2A Florida State Championships.

- Riley Hagy: 500 Free, 200 Free Relay & 400 Free Relay
- Kaitlyn Copland: 200 Free Relay
- Hannah Outcalt: 400 Free Relay
- Diver Kate Zehil finished in fourth place.

2018 - 2019 St. Johns County School Calendar

MARCH 2019				
M	T	W	T	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

- Teacher Optional Planning
- Teacher Planning (non-student day)
- Teacher Inservice (non-student day)
- Classes Resume
- Student/Teacher Holiday
- End of Quarter
- Underline = testing dates

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Briefs

Adventures in the Arts to feature disability and inclusion

The Adventures in the Arts program series will continue on Thursday, March 21 at 2 p.m. in the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library. The program is sponsored by Friends of the Library, Ponte Vedra Beach and Cummer Beaches, a support group of the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens.

Guest speaker and museum educator Danielle Garcia will present “Creating Access: Disability, Inclusion and the Arts.” The museum aims to offer a welcoming environment, where each visitor has the opportunity to feel inspired and connected with compelling artwork and intellectual experiences.

Garcia received her degree in art history from the University of Florida with experience in museum education, curatorial work and studio arts. She collaborates with museum educators and other departments to ensure that museum experiences are welcoming, inclusive and accessible to, among others, children, Women of Vision and the Florida School of the Deaf and Blind.

The program is free and open to the public. Call Marianne Stein at (904) 280-

2976 for more information.

Butterfly lecture offered

Attendees can discover how to cater to the life cycle needs of butterflies on Wednesday, March 13 from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. at the GTM Research Reserve, 505 Guana River Road.

Florida is home to a spectacular array of butterflies and Renee Stambaugh, Florida Master Naturalist and Butterfly Habitat Designer will explain how to offer not only nectar plants for the adult butterflies, but also delicious foliage for the babies. By planting host plants, gardeners are providing food for caterpillars and can enjoy watching them grow and transform into adult butterflies. This program is free and open to the public.

Visit www.nativeplantconsulting.com or call (904) 671-2880 for more information.

Rotary Club scholarship application now available

The Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach Sunset is currently accepting applications for the prestigious “Service Above Self” Scholarship.

Students currently enrolled as juniors or seniors as Ponte Vedra or Allen D. Nease

high schools are encouraged to apply for the “Service Above Self” Scholarship.

Offered annually by the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach Sunset, these \$1,000 scholarships are awarded to the top applicant from each school based on his/her application, which includes an essay about community service. Children of Rotarians are not eligible to apply.

Details and the scholarship application are available at <https://goo.gl/forms/HAuBTJPijjLaCcWv1>. The deadline for receipt of all application requirements is March 14, 2019. The two scholarship winners will be notified by mid-April. Later, they will receive their scholarships at dinner hosted by the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach Sunset.

Contact Paula Roderick at paroderick1@comcast.net or (904) 280-8933 for more information.

Oldest performing arts organization in St. Augustine turns 70

A milestone has arrived in the performing arts in St. Augustine, with the St. Augustine Community Chorus celebrating its 70th year/season and hosting a gala benefit and two concerts to honor it in March.

“We are delighted to be at this great age as an organization and continuing to provide relevant, joyful musical entertainment for this city that so embraces music in all forms,” said Lynn Abjornson, president of the St. Augustine Community Chorus. “We love that there are so many talented musicians turning 70 this year including Bruce Springsteen, Bonnie Raitt, Billy Joel, and Lionel Richie — great music is enduring, and singing is a lifelong pleasure,” she added.

The public can attend one of three events to be part of the festivities: a gala dinner, dancing and silent auction event on March 8 at Riverview Club in St. Augustine Shores; or two concerts on March 16 or March 17 at Lewis Auditorium, all with the St. Augustine Orchestra for this unique shared program.

“I Hear America Singing” is the name of the concerts which will be jointly conducted by Maestros Mike Sanflippo and Scott Gregg. The program includes music by iconic American composers such as Bernstein, Copland, Gershwin, and



Photo courtesy St. Augustine Community Chorus
The St. Augustine Community Chorus is celebrating 70 years.

Berlin, as well as folk tunes and recently composed pieces. “This program was conceived as a celebration of Americana,” said Mike Sanflippo, who has been conducting the Chorus since 2015. “I Hear America Singing is also a great theme for our concert, as choral singing continues to be the most popular form of participation in the performing arts in the US, with approximately 12,000 professional and community choruses in the country.”

Visit <https://saosaccevents.ticketleap.com/> to buy tickets for the gala and concerts. Visit www.staugustinecommunitychorus.org for more information.




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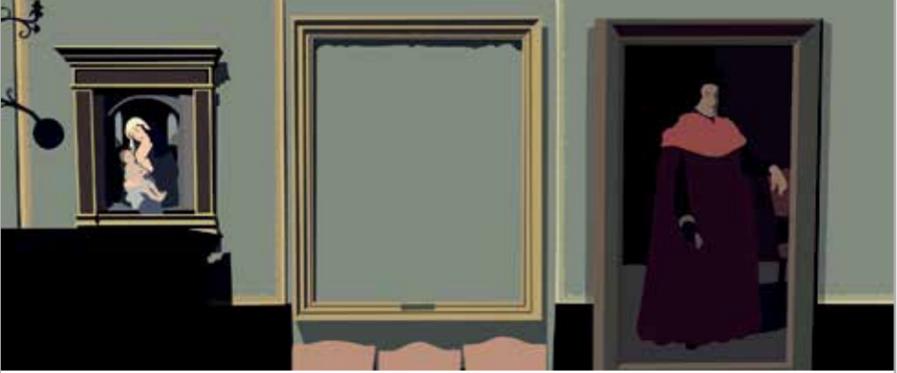
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Kota Ezawa's *The Crime of Art* series explores themes of ownership and access through the lens of high-profile art heists. This multimedia exhibition includes new and recent works inspired by infamous thefts, including a collection of 13 masterworks stolen from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and the disappearance (and subsequent recovery) of Edvard Munch's *The Scream*.

For more information, visit cummuseum.org



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Travel

Explore Lake Geneva, Wisconsin

By Debi Lander
mail@floridanewslines.com

Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, sounded like one of those classic resort towns that a travel writer, like me, ought to know. So, I hopped a flight and began to explore. I came home with plenty of reasons to encourage others to visit, and I'm seriously considering a personal return next summer. It's my kind of place.

Lake Geneva's grand waterfront awed me and felt so relaxing, yet the place initially was called "Maunk-suck" (Big Foot) for a Potawatomi chief, and then later named Geneva after the quiet town of Geneva, New York. The destination was eventually identified as Lake Geneva to avoid confusion with the nearby Geneva, Illinois.

Attracted by the fresh air, clear lake and scenic vistas, the community prospered and grew. Chicago's wealthy businessmen started going there to hunt and fish. The Midwest's great moguls, like Wrigley, Kellogg, Maytag and beer baron Conrad Seipp, liked it so much, they built opulent summer homes. A rail line opened in 1871 bringing more people to the area and it gained the nickname "The Newport of the West."

Then, in October 1871, Chicago suffered its Great Fire, an event that oddly benefited Lake Geneva. Numerous families escaped the burning city on the train and stayed through the winter waiting for city homes to be rebuilt. While life in the big city slowly resumed, the Chicagoans cherished memories of summering in Lake Geneva and kept returning. Even today, about 80 percent of the summer residents have roots in Chicago.

You'll find Lake Geneva's old-fashioned main street about 80 minutes from Chicago, and 45 minutes from Milwaukee.

Boutique shops, non-chain restaurants, coffee shops and bars do a brisk business. Fall foliage, Oktoberfest, a winter ice sculpture extravaganza, and of course, ice fishing keep the pace going year-round.

No trip to the region is complete without a guided cruise showcasing the spectacular lakefront mansions. The script from the cruise line sounds like it was lifted from the show "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous." You need only look at the yachts and boat-houses to see the owners' rank among the country's highest tax brackets.



Photos courtesy Debi Lander
Black Point Estate

Touring inside the Black Point Estate, a fabulous high Victorian style mansion built in 1887-8 for beer baron Conrad Seipp brings a taste of the bygone lifestyle. The property stayed in the family until 2005, much unchanged, until it was gifted to the state. (Group tours via ferry boat or motor coach only.)

If returning, I'd choose to stay in either the Baker House or Maxwell Mansion, two historic downtown properties. They are ideal for couples or a girls' getaway. The boutique hotels with gardens feel magical, flaunting their Gilded Age glamour. The homes include fire-lit parlors, period dining spaces and enticing bars. The Maxwell House even sports a basement Speakeasy Lounge. Should you stay elsewhere, make reservations for champagne brunch, high tea or dinner at one of these inns.

If you are headed toward Wisconsin, don't miss dipping your toes in glorious Lake Geneva. For more information: visitlakegeneva.com

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

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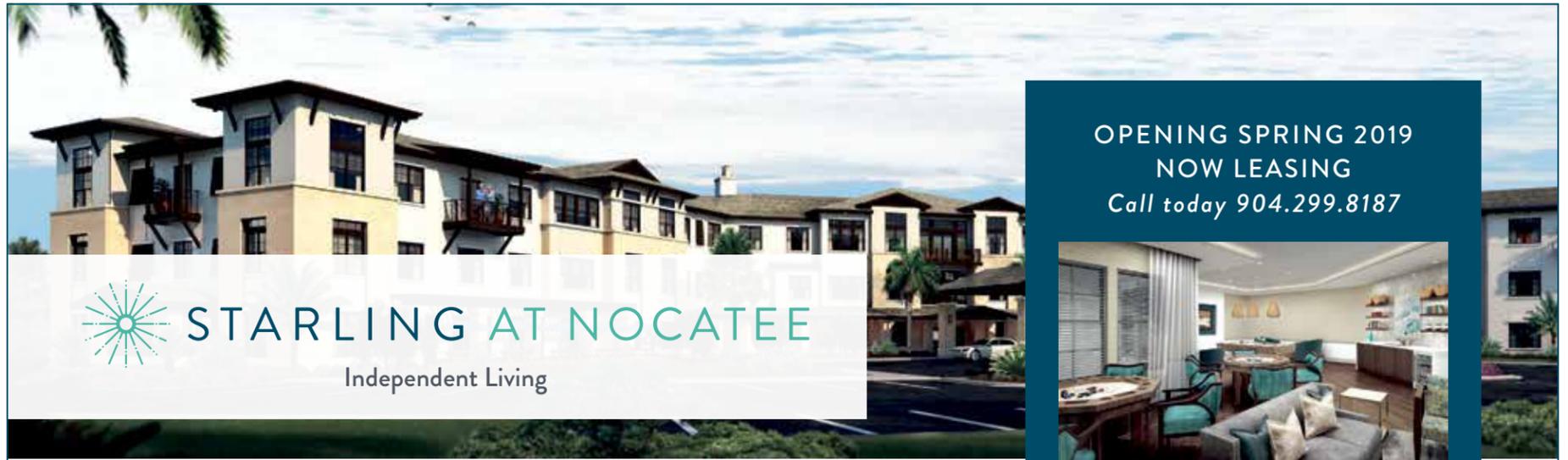
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