

Mandarin NewsLineSM

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March 2012

44th annual Mandarin Art Festival returns to its homespun roots

By Karl Kennell



There is a special magic that occurs when a group of community volunteers produces an event by themselves. And so it is this year when the 44th Annual Mandarin Art Festival returns to its roots as an all-volunteer event. The special magic returns to the festival on Easter weekend, Saturday April 7 and Easter Sunday, April 8 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. That weekend artists and artisans from around the area and the nation will again be gathering under the majestic oaks at the

Mandarin Community Center to display their works.

This nationally recognized art festival, at 44 years, is the longest running event of its kind in Northeast Florida. It has grown year after year since founder Judge Edward P. Westberry gathered a small group of community volunteers together to host the first Mandarin Art Festival in 1968. A couple of years ago the size and scope of the festival grew so large and popular that the Mandarin Com-

munity Club's board members and volunteers decided to seek collaboration with an outside professional organization. This year the board and volunteers are re-energized and have returned to the festival's roots as an all-volunteer community focused art festival. They have been hard at work since early January meeting, planning and preparing.

The response from the artists has been overwhelmingly positive. Many of the returning artists have grown accustomed to the friendly welcome they receive each and every year by familiar, local faces and the personal treatment they receive only from the Mandarin Art Festival volunteers. Whether it is the coffee and donuts in the morning or the wave goodbye and invitation to return next year on Sunday when the show closes, it is the warmth the volunteers bring to the show that has the artists looking forward to this Easter weekend tradition. In fact, many of the artists have been exhibitors for over 20

Art Festival cont. on pg. 8

Greenland Pines holds successful fun run

By Contributing Writer Melissa Phillips, Greenland Pines PTA

The faculty, students and parents at Greenland Pines Elementary recently celebrated record-breaking fundraising efforts of over \$20,000 through the Boosterthon Fun Run. The fundraiser began two weeks prior to the actual event with a kick-off pep rally to educate the students about the program and have them start collecting pledges from family and friends. As part of the 2011-2012 program, Greenland Pines Elementary and schools nationwide joined the Boosterthon Fun Run in Operation Playground, an initiative that will build playgrounds for underprivileged schools in Guatemala. Leading up to the Boosterthon Fun Run event students were invited to gather pledges for each lap they run.

Along the way, Boosterthon provided fitness rewards



Students warm up prior to the Boosterthon Fun Run.

such as the PlayDisc, a hand-woven Fair Trade disc made by Guatemalans. When a student reached the PlayDisc level, he or she helped fund the Operation Playground giveback program. Students saw first-

Fun Run cont. on pg. 8

Keep them busy with all of the activities listed in the 2012 Mandarin NewsLine Summer Kids' Activity Guide.

St. Johns River trip celebrates "Old Florida"

By Donna Keathley

The St. Johns Riverkeeper organization has put together the best overnight visit we locals could ever make...the Eco Heritage Boat Trip. Instead of our usual daily views of the St. Johns River from the shoreline, this is taking in the ultimate view of Florida's longest river from a boat! The next excursion is scheduled for April 14 and 15.

The two day trip is well planned and executed. The journey starts at the Monroe Harbor Marina in Sanford and ends 93 miles downstream at Crystal Cover Marina in Palatka. All the passengers are bused back to their cars in Sanford at the end of day two.



Former St. Johns Riverkeeper Neil Armingeon on the most recent Eco Heritage Boat Trip. Photo courtesy of St. Johns Riverkeeper.

The overnight stop is in Astor at the family-owned Blair's Jungle Inn. The Blairs pride themselves in providing their visitors with an "Old Florida" experience as the accommodations are advertised as "rustic." Dinner is served at

the Blackwater Inn restaurant just across the river from Blair's.

On day one, you set out traveling on the comfortable S.S. Marine Taxi and head straight to Blue Springs, the largest spring on the St. Johns River and the wintering grounds of the manatee. The tour group is allowed to walk the grounds and view the Thursby House, built in 1872 at Blue Spring Landing. The next port of call is Hontoon Island. The island, which became a state park in 1967, is accessible only by private boats or the park

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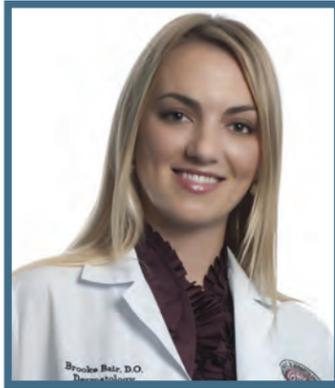
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Physician Spotlight
Brooke Bair, DO

is a board-certified dermatologist who specializes in cosmetic dermatology, laser surgery, and the cancer-fighting Mohs surgery. As a third-generation Floridian, Dr. Bair is no stranger to the effects of the Florida sun on her patients' skin. After graduating from the University of Florida, Dr. Bair went on to medical school at Nova Southeastern University where she graduated at the top of her class before her internship at Johns Hopkins University. She excelled in her residency program at Michigan State University, St. Joseph Mercy Hospital winning multiple awards and grants for research and publications. Dr. Bair is a member of the American Academy of Dermatology, American Society for Mohs Surgery, and the American Society for Laser Medicine and Surgery. Dr. Bair joins Gulf Coast Dermatology's team in Jacksonville, and looks forward to continuing to serve her Jacksonville patients by providing cutting-edge dermatology practices and the best patient care available.

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What's New

Community Happenings

Do you have community or club news you would like included in Mandarin NewsLine? Then contact Martie Thompson at: editor@mandarinnewsline.com or 886-4919.

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The Mandarin Senior Center will hold their annual Spaghetti Dinner on Friday, March 9 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The dinner will include spaghetti with your choice of several different sauces, salad, breadsticks, dessert and beverage. The cost is only \$7 per person and tickets can be purchased in advance at the Senior Center at 3848 Hartley Road or by calling 262-7309. There is a limited amount of people we can serve, so purchase your tickets early!

The Mandarin Museum and Historical Society is partnering with Greenscape of Jacksonville to conduct a general clean-up, removal of invasive species and tree planting at the Walter Jones Historical Park located at 11964 Mandarin Road on Saturday, March 17 from 8:30 a.m. until 12:00 noon. On Saturday, March

31, from 8:30 a.m. until 12:00 noon, volunteers are needed for planting of 20 native and flowering trees, also under the direction of Greenscape, with trees supplied by JEA. If you can lend a few hours to help beautify one of Mandarin's most scenic places, please contact the museum at mandarinmuseum@bellsouth.net or 268-0784.

Join the Jacksonville Humane Society for the fourth annual **Trail of Tails: Fun Walk and Festival** on Saturday, March 3, 2012 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Jacksonville Landing. Registration is \$30 per person, \$25 per person for members of teams of four or more, \$15 for students (ages 13 to 22) and \$10 for children (ages five to 12). All prices increase by \$5 the day of the event. The registration fee includes an event goodie bag. Animals walk with their owners for free. A festival featuring silent auction, food, fun and free kids' crafts follows the event. Registration for the walk and festival vendors is available by calling 725-8766 or visiting www.jaxhumane.org. All proceeds benefit the Jacksonville Humane Society, a no-kill, non-profit adoption and animal education center.

The Mandarin Women's Club program for Thursday, March 22 will be Patchington's Fashion

Show beginning at 10:30 a.m. The program will be held at the Ramada Inn, located at 3130 Hartley Road. Club membership is open to all women. The price of the luncheon is \$15.50 for members and \$16.50 for non-members and reservations are required. Please call Iris at 268-2459 no later than March 17 to reserve your spot!

The Dogwood Circle of the Mandarin Garden Club will be taking a field trip to Walter Jones Park for bird watching with Carole Adams on Tuesday, March 20. Please bring your own brown bag lunch. For additional information, please call Karen at 292-1546.

The next **AARP Driver Safety Program** for drivers 50 and older will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, March 13 and 14, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at Memorial Hospital, located at 3625 University Boulevard South. The fee for AARP members is \$12; non-members' fee is \$14. You must attend both days for certification to qualify for auto insurance discount. To register, please call 391-1320.

Shuffleboard is played on Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. at Mandarin Park (south end of Mandarin Road) next to the tennis courts at the park entrance. Beginners are welcome. Just show up un-

less it rains.

Don't miss the event of the year, **Laugh for Charity**, hosted by the Rotary Club of Mandarin on Thursday, March 22, 2012 at The Comedy Zone in the Ramada Inn Mandarin Conference Center. The evening will begin at 6:00 p.m. with cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and a silent auction, followed by the comedy show and live auction at 7:30 p.m. Tickets cost \$50 and one hundred percent of the ticket proceeds will benefit the Mandarin Williams YMCA and the Clarke School for Hearing and Speech. For additional information or to purchase tickets, please contact JollyZing@aol.com or call 282-1945.

The next meeting for the **South Jacksonville Republican Club** will be Saturday, March 3, 2012 at the Golden Corral, located at 11470 San Jose Boulevard South. The breakfast social will begin at 9:30 a.m. followed by the club meeting at 10:00 a.m. We will be gathering in the enclosed Meeting Room in the restaurant. We will have our 2012 club board election. Our guest speaker will be former State Representative Aaron Bean who will talk about the upcoming campaign season and also talk about the future for Florida. There will also be a question and answer period which will

What's New cont. on pg. 5

Letters to the Editor policy

At RT Publishing we welcome Letters to the Editor. We request they be no more than 250 words. All letters must include writer's name, address, and telephone number. Only the name will be published. E-mail to editor@rtpublishinginc.com. Anonymously sent letters will not be published.

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The Sheriff Reports

By Contributing Writer John H. Rutherford, Duval County Sheriff

Why accreditation matters: Measuring our success

The Jacksonville Sheriff's Office is one of only 41 law enforcement agencies in the country to have achieved Triple Crown status in accreditation. What does that mean for us? Why should it matter to citizens? As we travel down the road to become "the" premiere law enforcement agency in the country, remember the words of Benjamin Franklin, who said: "Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning."

This is how "best practices" are determined; this is how true "effectiveness" is measured; and this is how we know that what we are doing on the street and in the back offices, day in and day out, is having the desired effect. Especially given the

investment in our services that is being made by taxpayers. We can't simply declare "we are the best." We have to measure, evaluate and benchmark our processes and outcomes against others' processes and outcomes. We must also measure ourselves against our own outcomes, year in and year out. We do this with our bi-weekly CRIMES meetings, where all crime activity in the city is discussed and crime fighting strategies are analyzed. We innovate and improve on those activities that are working and we (hopefully) work to eliminate steps and processes that aren't achieving the desired outcome or aren't measurably effective given the time and cost of doing them.

Highly regarded accrediting bodies set standards and

benchmarks by which the JSO can be measured against others. Respected assessors critically measure both our police operation and our corrections operation against these state and nationally accepted matrices and they engage in thorough on-site reviews of our ability to meet these standards. And if these experts from other agencies tell us there is something we should consider doing differently or could do better, we make those improvements and changes.

Continual growth, as Franklin said!

This year, once again, we received very good news. The Triple Crown is awarded by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA); the American Correctional Association (ACA); and the National Coalition for Corrections Healthcare. Meeting their combined hundreds of mandatory standards is step one. We also have the goal of meeting all the applicable non-mandatory standards as well. In 2011 the JSO was the only agency of the 94 receiving CALEA accreditation or re-accreditation to achieve 100 percent in all their 400-plus mandatory and non-mandatory standards. We were recognized with the coveted "Gold Standard" designation.

Along with the assessments by the Florida Corrections Accreditation Commission and the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation, the JSO has demonstrated time and time again, a willingness to be examined, poked, prodded and change in order to improve. CALEA assessors from the Georgia Bureau of Investigations and the Lexington Kentucky Police Department had some very high praise for the JSO, in the exit interview following the August on site visit:

Regarding our Patrol department, specifically traffic enforcement: "There is nothing

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they are not doing well."

They also had very positive comments on the interview with rank and file employees in Records and ID, saying "I wasn't snowed here. Everyone here knows how business is done here."

"The standards have been inculcated into the entire operation," said Major Stack (Lexington, Kentucky) of the agency. They commented on impressive "ride alongs" and random conversations with employees throughout the organization and were impressed with how people loved their jobs, felt appreciated for their contributions and had the resources needed to do their jobs.

During their assessment of our homeland security division's operations, the assessors said our port security (and

courthouse security) showed the excellent relationships JSO personnel have with other agencies, enabling us to succeed. They commented on the JSO property and evidence organization as "one of the largest, most well organized, cleanest and neatest" they had ever seen!

Many of those same accolades were echoed in July, when the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation assessors commented on the outstanding innovations by JSO's crime analysis unit, information technology unit and the public information unit.

Like me, you can rightly be proud of your JSO not only achieving historic crime reductions, but also for the commitment to be "the" premier law enforcement agency in the country.

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Join Hubbard House in taking steps to end domestic violence

By Contributing Writer Katie Swanson, Hubbard House Volunteer

Prudence Williams, an 11-year Mandarin resident and Hubbard House board member, is challenging Mandarin residents to take steps to end domestic violence by participating in Hubbard House's third annual Setting the Pace for Peace Domestic Violence Awareness Walk, to be held on Saturday, March 31, 2012. The event is a 3.5 mile (shorter option is available) fun, family walk in the park, complete with a family fun zone including bouncy houses, music and more. While the walk is fun, the purpose is serious - to increase awareness about domestic violence and to raise funds to continue efforts in ending abuse in our community.

In a short time, the walk has become such an integral part of Hubbard House's awareness and fundraising efforts. Last year's walk raised \$75,000 to help victims of domestic violence and their children. In addition, the amount of participants more than doubled from the first to the second year, from 425 to 1,000, really helping to raise awareness about domestic violence in the community.

"By walking each of us are helping to break the silence

about domestic violence," said Williams. "We are being a voice for all those affected by abuse and sending a message that ending abuse is a priority in our community."

The Setting the Pace for Peace Awareness Walk is free to participate in and is open to the public. The walk will be held at the Ed Austin Regional Park, located at 11751 McCormick Road and begins at 9:00 a.m., with registration starting at 8:00 a.m. Please visit www.hubbardhousewalk.com to register. If you have any questions, please contact Ashley Johnson Scott by phone at 354-0076 ext. 212 or by e-mail at ascott@hubbardhouse.org.

If you or someone you know is in an abusive relation-

ship please call the Hubbard House 24-Hour Domestic Violence Hotline at 354-3114 or (800) 500-1119. Hubbard House can help.

About Hubbard House: Founded as the first domestic violence shelter in Florida in 1976, Hubbard House is a certified, comprehensive domestic violence center providing programs and services to more than 6,000 women, children, and men annually in Duval and Baker counties. While Hubbard House is most known for its emergency shelter, the agency also provides extensive adult and youth outreach services, school-based education, therapeutic childcare, batterers' intervention programs, court advocacy and volunteer and community education opportunities. Visit www.hubbardhouse.org to learn more.

Congratulations

Cathy Lehman of Mandarin High School!

Third runner up
2012 School Related Employee of the Year

Cathy, who has six years of service to DCPS, is a clerk at Mandarin High School.



From the City Council Member's Desk

By Contributing Writer Matt Schellenberg, City Council Member, District 6

I recently wrote a "Letter to the Editor" which was published in the local daily newspaper on February 2. I've had such a good response that I've decided to publish it here as well.

As a side note: I know you all lead very busy lives, but if you are involved a neighborhood group, homeowners association or any small gathering, I would be delighted to come by and introduce myself and discuss issues facing our district. Please contact my office and we will schedule a time.

The Only No Vote:

The ghost of Nancy "we have to pass the bill to find out what's in it" Pelosi visited the City Council last Tuesday night.

After two and half years of negotiating between the city administration and the police union, including six and half months with the current administration, the two parties finally reached an agreement. Last week [late January], the Police Union voted in favor of the agreement which required final approval from the City Council.

At 2 o'clock in the after-

noon, on the day of the city council meeting, the mayor's office sent the city council members a one-page, double-spaced outline with six bullet points that "summarized" the two-inch thick agreement between the administration and the police union. The mayor's office announced at 4 o'clock that they wanted the agreement to be voted on at the 5 o'clock council meeting. This gave the council members less than an hour to absorb the two-inch thick agreement or simply rely on the administration's one-page summary as accurate and sufficient.

Ronald Reagan believed that you should "trust, but verify." Unfortunately, this was not done. The bill was passed without giving our city council auditor and the city council as a whole the opportunity to review and digest the ramifications of the agreement. Sadly, I was the only "no" vote.

In my opinion, the city council members were elected to deliberate and fully understand any agreement, which binds the city in any capacity. In doing so, the citizens gain insight and confidence in our ability to represent their best interest.

Hopefully, the city council members will forever banish the ghost of Nancy Pelosi and never again allow it to interfere with good government.



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What's New cont. from pg. 3

be a very informative to all who attend. If you are a Republican candidate and would like to introduce yourself to our club members, please attend.

The March General Meeting of **The All Star Quilters Guild** will be held on Monday, March 19 at 9:30 a.m. in the First Christian Church, located at 11924 San Jose Boulevard. The program will be a trunk show and lecture by quilter Sandra Lindfors. Visitors are welcome! For more information, please contact Dot Butler at 642-6574 and visit us at www.orgsites.com/fl/allstarquiltguild.

The **Italian American Club** will celebrate St. Patrick's Day with a corned beef and cabbage dinner on Sunday, March 11 at the club. We will also have a Palm Sunday dinner on April 1. As always, we're available for rentals. For further information, check out our website at www.iacofjacksonville.com.

Sugar Arts Guild of North Florida meets monthly at the South Mandarin Library, located at 12125 San Jose Boulevard. We are an organization of sugar artists, cake designers and confectioners from Northeast Florida who enjoy getting together every month to visit, watch a demonstration and sample each other's creations. Our purpose is to promote creativity and experimentation in cake decorating, sugar art, chocolate, pastries, candies and just about anything edible that can be done decoratively. We welcome anyone interested in meeting other sugar enthusiasts and swapping ideas and techniques to visit www.sagnfl.blogspot.com for meeting dates.

The **Bumble Bee Circle of the Mandarin Garden Club** will meet on Thursday, March 1, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. We will learn about hydroponics. Children ages five through 18 are welcome to attend with an adult. Buzz by the club, located at 2892 Loretto Road and join in the fun!

The **Mandarin Chapter of AARP** meets the third Friday of every month at 2:00 p.m. at Augustine Landing, located at 10141 Old St. Augustine Road. We are a non-profit, non-partisan membership organization, affiliated with the national AARP. Our activities and programs are designed to help people age 50 and over improve the quality of their lives. Visitors are welcome! For additional information, please call 733-0516 or email alex9520@comcast.net.

Jacksonville/Mandarin-SE offers support for stay at home and part-time working moms living in zip code 32258. With the club you will have enriching activities for you and your children, during the day when you need the most support. A sample of activities includes park days, beach days, monthly socials, playgroups and field trips to the zoo and museums. For additional information, please email semandarinmoms@yahoo.com. **MOMS Club of Jacksonville/Mandarin-N** is open to moms who live in zip codes 32207, 32217, 32223, 32257. For this club, please contact mandarinmomclub@gmail.com.

The **North Florida Daylily Society** holds its meetings on the second Sunday of each month at 2:15 p.m. at the Orange Park Library, located at 2054 Plainfield Avenue, just off Kingsley Boulevard. Daylily experts provide programs ranging from preparing daylilies for planting to how to prepare daylilies for shows.

The club membership includes daylily enthusiasts from the Beaches to Middleburg. Guests are welcome to attend.

Are you troubled by someone's drinking? **Al-Anon Family Groups** can help. Let us share our experience, strength and hope. Join us every Monday night from 8:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. in the First Christian Church of Jacksonville, located at 11924 San Jose Boulevard or visit us at www.jaxafg.org.

The **NASJAX Skin and Scuba Diving Club** meets at 7:00 p.m. on the first Wednesday of every month at the Golden Corral Buffet and Grill, located at 11470 San Jose Boulevard in Mandarin. The club is open to all divers and those who are interested in diving (military affiliation is not required). For more information, please see the website nasjax-scubadivers.org or contact the club president, Dave Martin at 413-8773.

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Tax Tip of the Month

As the "health care bill" now stands, a 3.8% Medicare Surtax will come into play in 2013, if no change is made. This **MEDICARE SURTAX** is on **UNEARNED INCOME** for taxpayers with **MODIFIED ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME (MAGI)** in excess of \$200,000 for single and \$250,000 for married. The tax is imposed on the smaller of the filer's net **INVESTMENT INCOME** or the excess of **MAGI** over the thresholds. For more information as to how it will affect you, please contact us for an appointment.

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The MOMS Club of Jackson-



School District Journal

By Contributing Writer Tommy Hazouri, School Board Representative, District 7

Earlier this month, 10 states, including Florida, received flexibility from the infamous No Child Left Behind requirements. The state requested the waiver in order to move toward a single statewide accountability system, eliminating duplicative accountability.

There are three key elements to the waiver that will have the greatest impact on our schools.

For the first time, this will make it possible for our high schools to exit intervene status. A combination of a "C" grade as the full school grade, along with a percentage of our students meeting proficiency in reading, will now be included in the formula to exit intervene status. This also means that more schools may enter intervene status because schools that are graded "F" for the first year are automatically entered into that status. This, in combination with the new rigorous cut scores recently adopted, means that more schools, especially more elementary and middle schools, will enter intervene status.

This provides a more realistic timeline and growth targets. Schools will now have annual measurable objectives to meet to become proficient.

In the waiver, a fifth option under "Intervene" will now be available to school districts. This option, called a hybrid option, gives districts more flexibility to

use a combination of effective "Turnaround" strategies to be submitted and approved by the Florida Department of Education and the State Board of Education.

The third element is similar to the work that we are currently doing in our intervene schools with Educational Directions. The flexibility gives the reforms we have put in place time to work.

We are continuing to work with our partners to see how we can best support turnaround efforts. The superintendent met with United States Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and teachers' union presidents to continue the discussion on the strategies to turn around our lowest performing schools.

As I indicated in previous articles, we have continued to see progress in our Priority Schools. More students are taking advantage of our accelerated programs, including Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Early College and Cambridge AICE. The graduation rate and at-risk graduation rate are improving and students are doing better on college readiness tests.

As we continue our road to education success, this waiver will allow us to keep moving forward, truly leaving no child behind.

The State Legislature is well

into its 2012 Legislative Session. It also appears that both chambers will make a concerted effort to conclude business on time, March 9, 2012. The House and Senate have both passed their respective budgets. The Senate budget contains \$100 to \$150 million more for public schools than proposals by the House and the governor. The Senate would increase total funding per unweighted FTE by about \$193 or 3.1 percent, nearly level with the funding for the current year. The House and Senate still have to go through the budget conference process to resolve differences. With any luck, the end result will be at least an average of the two spending plans. Keep in mind that while the governor increased the education budget recommendation by \$1 billion, it has also been reduced by nearly \$2.2 billion over the past two years. Additionally, the district continues to face annual fixed cost increases.

Important Dates:

Political Commentary

Environmental extremists are costing all of us too much money

By J. Bruce Richardson

For a perpetually unexplained reason, the further south one drives on San Jose Boulevard deeper into Mandarin, the more gas prices are higher. No explanation why, but, those prices are only going to soon get worse. As gas rockets closer to \$4 per gallon – and those prices are often blamed on escalating tensions in the Middle East – Americans continue to allow these unsustainable prices to continue because of an annoying, vocal minority.

Oil is a four letter word to environmental extremists and their boorish ilk. America has huge reserves of oil, enough to make us free of energy dependence on any of the hostile nations which happily take our billions of dollars in oil revenue, yet refer to us as the "Great Satan." We're good enough to make them wealthy, but we're allegedly bad enough to hate us.

Between oil reserves in the Dakotas and nearby and the oil deposits in Canada which would happily flow our way if the Obama administration would allow the Keystone Pipeline to be built, plus the oil in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, America should have to bow to no one. Instead, because of unbending environmental extremists we're paying exorbitant oil prices and are being deprived of the thousands of jobs to be created by building the Keystone Pipeline.

When are we going to end this boorish tyranny? Why do we allow a rabid vocal minority to hold all of us and our wallets hostage? One reason is election season – the Obama administration is more interested in the votes of the environmental extremists than the vote of union workers who want to build the Keystone Pipeline and the rest of us who are gasping for reasonably priced gas.

There is the silly argument about the allegedly urgent need to replace fossil fuel burners with more expensive alterna-

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March 6: School Board Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Cline Auditorium, 1701 Prudential Drive
March 7: Student Early Release Day

March 19-23: Spring Break (Schools closed)

March 28: Student Early Release Day

FCAT Testing Dates: April 16-27, 2012

Thought for the Month:

A teacher takes a hand, opens a mind, and touches a heart. ~Author Unknown



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them they had their day and that day is over. Now is the time for all of us, for the sake of ourselves and the well-being of our children, to stop pandering to special interests. If this continues, we will be far, far too along the way to becoming another Europe. The food may be good there, but the politics are terrible.

J. Bruce Richardson, a resident of Jacksonville, has created many successful marketing, advertising, public relations, fund-raising and political campaigns. A former newsroom staffer of the late Jacksonville Journal, Mr. Richardson has an educational background in management and finance.



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Commentary

Citizen X

By Contributing Writer James A. Lee, M.Ed., Ed.D. ABD, St. Johns County School District

Hello. I'd like to introduce myself. I am Citizen X. I am "the average citizen." When politicians and pundits quote "public opinion," I am that public. I am the constituency represented by every elected official. Democrats, Republicans, liberals, conservatives and libertarians all claim me as the base of their support. The American free press, whether it was the newspapers of an earlier era or the horde of opinion-makers on the blogosphere, relentlessly pursues the issue of the day and speaks on my behalf because I am its "public who has a right to know." I am the special interest groups advertising "on behalf" of the candidates. I am the voter who chooses to stay home rather than go to the polls. I am also the voter who wades through the speeches, debates, political advertisements, rumors and innuendo and learns to the best of her ability who the candidates really are, what that ballot referendum really means and how those candidates and that referendum will affect her and her children's future and then goes to vote - even though she has too many other things to do.

I am Citizen X. I am that talk show host to whom you listen religiously and that loudmouth on television blabbering about who knows what and the person who chose to run for the school board because no one else would and the young man in town who just started that new shop that you like so well and that corporate executive who came to a comfortable landing thanks to his "golden parachute" and that person in line hoping for a place for the night at the homeless shelter. I am Citizen X and I am old and young, pretty and plain, rich and poor, atheist and believer, gay and straight, pro-life and pro-choice, capitalist and socialist.....

In reality though, I don't exist. Citizen X does not exist. Citizen X is an idea perceived by many, promoted by some and symbolic of nothing. Citizen X does not exist because the "average citizen" does not exist. There are only citizens—pluribus and unum, the many and the one, bound together and free. There are only citizens who have obligations—obligated to self and obligated to country and community. There are only citizens who each have the obligation to protect his or her rights and the rights of others—obligated to self and to others. Citizen X does not exist. There are only citizens obligated to the fulfillment of a social contract - a contract found in the Preamble of the Constitution.

"We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings

of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

When our leaders in office and seeking office and in the media claim to speak for the American people, listen to them carefully. Most of them sincerely want what is best for our land and its people; they just differ on principles, very important but heartfelt principles. And please understand that they really speak for themselves or what they perceive our opinions to be and we have to choose to accept what they say and do or to refuse it. All citizens are responsible for holding them responsible. All citizens are contractually obligated. Stand up. Speak up. Get involved.

Who am I? I am Citizen X. I am you.

Constitution for the United States of America

Continued from the February 2012 issue of Mandarin NewsLine. Please refer to the prior issue for the beginning of the document.

Prior issues of Mandarin NewsLine are available online at www.mandarinnewsline.com.

Article I Section 8 (cont)

To exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States, and to exercise like Authority over all Places purchased by the Consent of the Legislature of the State in which the Same shall be, for the Erection of Forts, Magazines, Arsenals, dock-Yards, and other needful Buildings; - And

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

Section. 9. The Migration or Importation of such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the Year one thousand eight hundred and eight, but a Tax or duty may be imposed on such Importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each Person.

The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public Safety may require it.

No Bill of Attainder or ex post facto Law shall be passed.

No Capitation, or other direct, Tax shall be laid, unless in Proportion to the Census or Enumeration herein before directed to be taken.

No Tax or Duty shall be laid on Articles exported from any State.

No Preference shall be given by any Regulation of Commerce or Revenue to the Ports of one State over those of another; nor shall Vessels bound to, or from, one State, be obliged to enter, clear, or pay Duties in another.

No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.

No Title of Nobility shall be granted by the United States: And no Person holding any Office of Profit or Trust under them, shall, without the Consent of the Congress, accept of any present, Emolument, Office, or Title, of any kind whatever, from any King, Prince, or foreign State.

Section. 10. No State shall enter into any Treaty, Alliance, or Confederation; grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal; coin Money; emit Bills of Credit; make any Thing but gold and silver Coin a Tender in Payment of Debts; pass any Bill of Attainder, ex post facto Law, or Law impairing the Obligation of Contracts, or grant any Title of Nobility.

No State shall, without the Consent of the Congress, lay any Imposts or Duties on Imports or Exports, except what may be absolutely necessary

for executing it's inspection Laws; and the net Produce of all Duties and Imposts, laid by any State on Imports or Exports, shall be for the Use of the Treasury of the United States; and all such Laws shall be subject to the Revision and Controul of the Congress.

No State shall, without the Consent of Congress, lay any Duty of Tonnage, keep Troops, or Ships of War in time of Peace, enter into any Agreement or Compact with another State, or with a foreign Power, or engage in War, unless actually invaded, or in such imminent Danger as will not admit of delay.

As a community service, Mandarin NewsLine community newspaper will be publishing the Constitution for the United States in its entirety over the next several issues. Please check back next month for the continuation.

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Fun Run cont. from pg. 1

hand that their efforts not only benefited Greenland Pines, but also gave children in other parts of the world the opportunity to play. Held Thursday, January 26, 2012, the event closed with all of the students running up to 35 laps in the school parking lot—approximately two miles. Parents and teachers cheered the children as they ran, walked, skipped and even danced to their goal.

Representatives from Boostertion were at the school every day for the two-week event visiting classrooms and motivating children about health and character. The mini lessons

taught about being leaders and good citizens through a clever acronym, E.P.I.C., which stands for Encourage, Play, Invite and Celebrate.

The money collected from the event will go toward school supplies, the accelerated reader program and technology improvements such as SMART Boards for the classrooms. Assistant Principal Dave Burrell of Greenland Pines Elementary was instrumental in promoting the fundraiser both during school and through a promotional video on the school's information page linked to the Boostertion website.

Art Festival cont. from pg. 1

years.

Mandarin Club President and event coordinator Susie Scott explained that this change will bring the festival back to its homespun roots. She says she has been particularly touched by the many warm messages and greetings on phone messages and artist applications.

"This is really a special year. We all feel like we are welcoming friends back and that we were really missed," she shares.

The festival will continue to offer the works of local school children in the Children's Art Show sponsored by Young Rembrandts who will also once again hold free hands-on art clinics throughout the weekend in the club building. The Green Market returns with locally produced goods and merchandise that highlight local business. Festival-goers have the chance to win big with the purchase of raffle tickets at the club table. And, don't forget the festival-style cuisine offered at the food court and the tempting tasty treats at the bake sale fundraiser.

All are welcome! Parking and shuttles are free from Mandarin Presbyterian Church on Mandarin Road and Alberts Field at the corner of Orange Pickers Road and Brady Road. There is a \$1 admission fee at the gate. Sorry, no pets are allowed. Please call 268-1622 for more information or check out the website at www.mandarin-communityclub.org.

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What would boating be without the aggravation?

The concept is simple: Experience all the joy, relaxation and exhilaration of a boating lifestyle while leaving all the hassles behind. That simple goal has fueled the remarkable growth of Freedom Boat Club. Founded in 1989 in Sarasota, Florida, Freedom Boat Club is the country's oldest and largest member-only boat club. Members are treated to a hassle-free boating experience at surprisingly affordable rates.

"It's almost too good to be true," said Lisa Almeida, boat club manager of Freedom Boat Club. "Who wants to spend time doing cleaning or maintenance when you could be out having fun on the water? It's the reason so many people have lost their enthusiasm for boating. We want to bring back the fun and excitement."

Freedom Boat Club (FBC), with 62 locations across the

United States, has most recently expanded their fleet at Julenton Creek Marina and Camanche Cove in St. Augustine. Locally, with 14 boats to choose from, members have unlimited access to boats at both locations and reciprocal use at all the others.

The boats, which range from 16 to 27 feet, are guaranteed to be new or in like-new condition. All boats are equipped with four-stroke engines, depth finders, fish finders, VHF marine radios, compasses, stereos, ladders, anchors and bimini tops.

In addition, members have access to unlimited training. FBC has three United States Coast Guard-certified captains on staff. New member orientation includes two hours of classroom instruction followed by two hours on the water. FBC also offers training for off-shore boats, twin-engine boats, inboard operation and unlimited local orientations.

"The most amazing part of this," said Almeida, "is that being a member of Freedom Boat Club is often cheaper than owning your own boat."

Members are guaranteed use of a clean, new boat every visit. The only obligation is filling the boat with gas. Freedom Boat Club takes care of all maintenance, cleaning, storage and insurance.

"Members get to spend 100 percent of their time on the water," Almeida said. "Isn't that the whole idea? It is no wonder we often get people who have decided to sell their boats or trade them in to us so they can join us."

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Cancer patients find strength in yoga classes

By Donna Keathley



Christina Phipps was a Navy wife, a food columnist, a guest on cooking shows for a local television station, a leader in the “turtle patrol” and a patron of the Beaches Historical Museum. But how Phipps is most remembered is as an extraordinary yoga instructor. Her classes were an opportunity to share in her love of yoga.

In late 2005 Phipps was diagnosed with breast cancer. At that time she was a professional personal chef and she was operating a successful business named Comforts by Christina. For fun and fitness, she had been conducting yoga classes and other physical fitness programs.

When she began chemotherapy, Phipps found that she was better able to deal with the treatments than any of her fellow patients. She attributed this to yoga and she felt that she could make the treatments easier and rehabilitation more successful for others by providing cancer patients with personalized yoga. Already a certified

yoga instructor, she began setting up these specialized classes and continued to teach them herself until her death in the summer of 2010.

The Christina Phipps Foundation (CPF) was formed to continue her dream of providing yoga therapy classes to cancer patients with a particular focus on breast cancer. The mission of the foundations is to provide specialized training for experienced yoga instructors to prepare them to guide cancer patients and survivors through yoga. This “CPF” designated training is conducted by physicians and other healthcare specialists along with yoga professionals.

The CPF Yoga therapy classes are available at hospitals, medical clinics and healthcare facilities in the greater Jacksonville area and also in Tallahassee. Classes for cancer patients and survivors are also available to the general community at selected locations as approved by the foundation; these classes are instructed by CPF-designated affiliates. These classes are free and open to all cancer patients with their doctor’s approval.

Beth Daugherty, executive director of the Christina Phipps Foundation and a Mandarin resident, continues to grow the organization. Finding more class locations and continued training and education of their instruction is the key to this mission.

“It’s a passion,” says Daugherty. “This is such a neat story with such a positive outcome!”

Phipps would be proud to know that scores of people are receiving this rare comfort inside a yoga classroom. .

Daugherty’s own private studio, Lifespan Yoga, was one of the first individual classroom settings offering these specialized yoga classes to cancer patients and survivors, which are free of charge.

For more information about the location of classes being conducted by CPF-designated yoga instructors or for those interested in receiving the advanced training to qualify for the CPF designation, please visit christinaphippsfoundation.com.

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Every year during Super Bowl week, the “Mandarin Ladies,” who volunteered for Super Bowl XXXIX, meet at the Mandarin Ale House to have lunch and reminisce. This year was our seventh reunion to dress in volunteer uniforms and celebrate volunteering for the game played in Jacksonville on February 6, 2005. Terry Meier (blue shirt) was our captain. She scheduled all the events we were assigned as volunteers. We had fun getting to the events via city bus, trolley or car. Overall it was a great experience. It is fun to continue our annual reunion during Super Bowl week!

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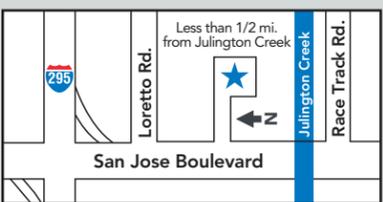




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Youth Arts Update

Make plans to attend the Douglas Anderson Writers' Festival

By Danielle Wirsansky

A biennial event, the Douglas Anderson School of the Arts Writers' Festival, is coming up quickly on the calendar. An opportunity to explore and discover more about words, the event will take place over three

days starting March 1 and will feature events and workshops with more than 14 acclaimed writers. In the past, the festival hosted such writers as three-time Nobel Prize nominee, Joyce Carol Oates and former United States Poet Laureate Billy Collins.

Following this tradition, this year's festival will feature literary legend, Margaret Atwood. A Canadian poet, novelist, literary critic, essayist and environmental activist, she is best known for such works as *The Handmaid's Tale*, *Cat's Eye*, *Alias Grace*, *The Blind Assassin*, *Oryx and Crak* and *Surfacing*.

In addition, there will be writers of all genres, such as Peter Meinke, the Poet Laureate of St. Petersburg, Florida; Kiala Givehand, a poet, educator and book artist originally from Florida; Stan Lynch, a founding member and 20 year veteran of Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers; and Martha Cooley, the author of *The Archivist*, a national bestseller.

The festival features such events as an original play reading and talk back with playwright, John Ray; a spoken word presentation and assembly for students from Raines, Ribault, Andrew Jackson and Douglas Anderson high schools; a manuscript review with Pauletta Hansel; readings and break-out sessions with 16 writers including an on-stage interview and question and answer period with Margaret



Two students, Kelly Milliron and Morgan Walker, tear pages out of books to prepare for a performing art installation that will take place at the Writers Festival.

Atwood; as well as "An Evening with Margaret Atwood," which includes a reading and talk followed by a book signing and reception.

"Everyone should come to the festival. Even if you don't consider yourself a 'skilled writer' because the workshops are just going to be plain fun," says Jenn Carter, one of the students helping to organize the festival. "Even if you don't often write this is a chance to completely immerse yourself in an art form, with professional writers....and opportunities like this are rare in Jacksonville."

The festival grows each year and is now moving its location from the Main Library downtown to the University of North Florida's campus (though certain events will still be held on Douglas Anderson's campus). For more information, such as times, locations, workshop schedules and ticket prices, check out www.douglasandersonwritersfest.com.

"The festival evolves and gets bigger every year. This year the location is expanding and our headliner, Margaret Atwood, is one of the best writers of our generation," continues Jenn Carter. "If Douglas Anderson keeps bringing writers like Atwood and Oates, I'll be returning after I graduate."

Encore!

A new adventure with Ayn Rand

By Betty Swenson Bergmark, Professor Emeritus, Jacksonville University

Once again Theatre Jacksonville is offering a multifaceted season, with something to satisfy or stimulate the interest of almost everyone. One often wonders how these choices are made and how much time must be given by the committee members who read and evaluate the numerous possibilities? In the final analysis many things must be taken into consideration and one cannot please everyone!

Having already presented

two dynamically different productions this season, "Welfare-well" and "I Love you, You're Perfect, Now Change," I was particularly intrigued when I saw that the next production to be offered is a play by Ayn Rand. Having read and been emotionally and intellectually stimulated by her renowned books, "The Fountainhead" and "Atlas Shrugged," I was not aware that she had written any plays. After doing some research on the subject, I am even more intrigued and am looking forward to the upcoming production of "The Night of January 16th," which will be presented on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from March 2 to March 17.

Originally written in 1933 and entitled "Penthouse Legend," it was inspired by the death of the "Match King"-Ivar Kreuger. It takes place entirely in a court

room and is centered on a murder trial. It was submitted by Rand's agent to several theatrical producers in New York but was repeatedly rejected. She finally accepted an offer in 1934 from the Hollywood Playhouse in Los Angeles, where it was presented as "Women On Trial." It received some positive reviews and in 1935 it was picked up by Al Woods and was produced on Broadway. The title was changed once again, this time to the now familiar "Night of January 16th." Numerous changes had been made, even adding a character and altering dialogue. This resulted in numerous clashes with Rand, but it finally ran on Broadway for six months.

One of the unique features of the play is the selection of members of the audience to take on the role of Jury Member, which results in different possible endings depending on Guilty or Not Guilty verdicts. Originally, the element of selecting a jury from the audience created some concerns, but as the play became famous the criticism disappeared.

Rand never overcame her resistance to the many changes that were made and in fact disowned a 1941 movie which was produced by Paramount Pictures. She claimed it had only a single line from her original dialogue.

In any event, I find the entire presentation intriguing and am looking forward to it.

Two other productions remain in the current Mainstage Season. "Twentieth Century" is a play by Ben Hecht and Charles McArthur and will be presented April 20 through May 5. "Hot Mikado," a 1940-style update of a Gilbert and Sullivan favorite, will be featured June 8 through 23.

For days and times of performances, you can call 396-4425 or visit the website www.theatrejax.com.

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That's the slogan of the Mandarin Museum and Historical Society, a non-profit education and research institution operated for the benefit of the community to preserve and display historical exhibits and objects related to Mandarin's rich history. It also informs and educates adults and children through tours, special events, programs, publications and museum archives.

The organization accomplishes these objectives through having the museum buildings open for visitors on weekends and by engaging area students on school and scout tours. It also hosts quarterly Third Thursday lectures (a partnership with the Mandarin Community Club) and special events like the annual Winter Celebration in Mandarin, the Miss Aggie Day and Award and a summer environmental camp for youth.

The society operates two museums in Mandarin. The Mandarin Museum is located in the beautiful 11-acre Walter Jones Historical Park, on the corner of Mandarin and County Dock Roads. The park also includes the historic home of Major William Webb and associated buildings. The Mandarin Store and Post Office, which recently celebrated its centennial anniversary, is located at the corner of Mandarin and Brady Roads next to the Mandarin Community Club.

The society is supported financially primarily through contributions from the public, as well as a grant from the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville. It also enjoys a close partnership with the City of Jacksonville Parks and Recreation Department.

Community members are invited and encouraged to become part of this all-volunteer organization. In fact, many volunteers are needed to help the Society maintain its outreach and programs to the community. Opportunities to get involved are varied and are flexible to accommodate schedules of volunteers. Ways to help include:

1. Supporting the mission of the Mandarin Museum and Historical Society by becoming a member. There are several membership levels available and members receive regular information about programs and events, as well as discounts in the museum gift shop.
2. Becoming a museum volunteer. Opportunities for volunteers include greeting and educating visitors to the two museums about the exhibits and history of the area; leading scheduled tours from area public, home and parochial schools; helping at special events and providing office and administrative support for the society.

Please contact the Mandarin Museum and Historical Society for more information and to become involved. The website is www.mandarinmuseum.net. The museum may be contacted at mandarinmuseum@bellsouth.net or at 268-0974.



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School to add fifth grade

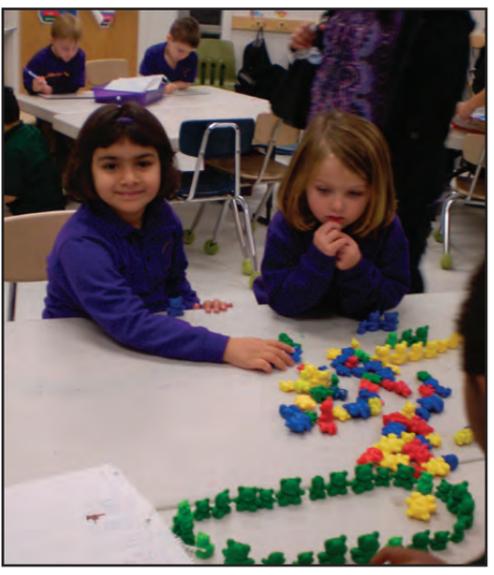
By Contributing Writer Jackie Hudson, Shepherd of the Woods Lutheran School

What's new at Shepherd of the Woods Lutheran School for the coming year? We are excited to share with our Mandarin neighbors that we are expanding again and will add fifth grade in the 2012-2013 school year. As we continue to develop our curriculum to support 21st century learning, we are adding more technology in the classroom at all grade levels. And we will continue to offer differentiated instruction so that each student learns at an appropriate pace.

As we continue to grow we will be greatly enhancing learning activities with technology and project-based learning. This approach emphasizes inquiry and critical thinking skills. Students become more resourceful and creative as they work together to build new skills

and solve real-world problems. An important aspect of our project-based learning is outreach to the community. Students discover that what they learn in school helps them, but it can also be used to help others around them. It's a great way to link academics with citizenship and strengthen the students' understanding of community.

Call soon for a tour to see how our students are learning more than just academics, they are discovering their talents and gifts and how those gifts can be shared with



others. Look for their ad in this issue of *Mandarin NewsLine*.



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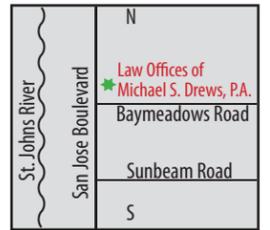
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Antiquing in Lake City and High Springs

By Contributing Writer Sharon Weed

On Friday, January 13, 19 ladies from the Mandarin Women's Club travel group met at 8:30 a.m. for the long ride over to Lake City where they spent a couple of hours poking around in the nooks and crannies of the humongous Webb's Antique Mall. Needless to say, several treasures were found!

From there, it was a short drive to the Great Outdoors Restaurant in High Springs. And, no, we didn't eat outdoors, though if it had been a warmer day, their outside dining room would have been great!

After a lovely lunch, we scattered all over the quaint downtown area of High

Springs and poked around in numerous antique shops and others that looked intriguing! It was a tired but happy bunch of "antiquers" making the trek back to Mandarin in the late afternoon!

For more information about the Mandarin Women's Club, please call Kay at 521-2524.



Pat Ulp with a treasure she found!

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Youth Scene
Happy Birthday to inspirational people born in March

By Contributing Writer Megan Crawford

What makes March such an important month besides the fact that the first day of spring is March 20? Many famous people, who have made big improvements, changes and breakthrough discoveries in the world around them, were born during this special month. This includes artist Vincent Van Gogh, avant-garde pop singer Lady Gaga, disappearing magician Harry Houdini and many more. Perhaps these influential birthday boys and girls can inspire us to make an impact in

our community! After all, with so many role models blowing out their candles this month, there are a million different ways to celebrate.

What's black and white and lives in a hat? If you still haven't figured out the answer, then you need to head to the children's library ASAP. Anyone familiar with the late Dr. Seuss, born March 2, 1904, remembers his delightful children's books, including *The Cat in the Hat*, *Horton Hears a Who*, *Go Dog Go*, *Hop on Pop*, *Green*

Eggs and Ham and many more. Without a doubt, Dr. Seuss's stories remind teens and adults everywhere of their childhood. Why not bring back even more memories by volunteering to work with children? For example, Wolfson Children's Hospital is a great place to help out if your goal is to assist kids with certain medical needs. If you're not interested in volunteering at a hospital, sometimes the Jacksonville public library offers opportunities for students to do story time or even crafts.

Regardless of whether or not being around small children is your thing, Dr. Seuss's birthday can teach anyone that finding their inner child is as easy as "One fish, two fish, red fish, blue fish."

Want to get better grades or take a stand for something you believe in? Perhaps Albert Einstein and Sandra Day O'Connor can help. Albert Einstein, well known for both his theory of relativity and crazy hairstyle, was born on March 14, 1879 and Sandra Day O'Connor, the first woman to be a member of the Supreme Court, was born on March 26, 1930. Although making achievements like Einstein and O'Connor's sounds (and probably is) overwhelming, we can still allow their accomplishments to inspire us as we move forward with our own lives, even if it is one baby step at a time. For example, it's never too late to get better grades; if Einstein hadn't studied his school work, he probably wouldn't have become a scientific genius. How can we make O'Connor proud? Glad you asked; there are several different causes worth fighting for such as women's rights, disability rights, animal rights, racial discrimination, etc. All you have to do is pick one that speaks the most to you.

Albert Einstein once said "Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance you must keep moving." Volunteering, taking a stand and/or making some sort of improvement is the most valuable thing in the world and anybody can do it; you just have to keep moving.

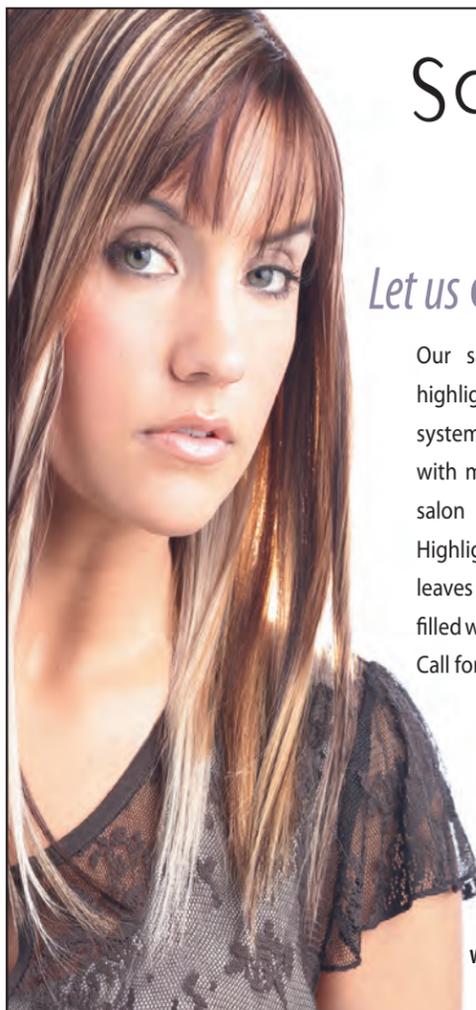
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Exploring St. Simons Island

By Contributing Travel Writer Debi Lander, www.bylandersea.com

Four Georgia barrier islands, known as the Golden Isles, lie an hour north of Jacksonville International Airport. Their name comes from the 19th-century wealthy aristocrats who built vacation homes on Jekyll and Sea Island, as well as the colorful reflection of the sun on lowland Spartina or marsh grass. If you're lucky to catch the view at sunrise and sunset, the amber glow sparkles like a chest of jewels.

St. Simons, largest of the group and most affordable, carries the name given by Spanish explorers in honor of a 16th-century saint—and this island is a saintly jewel with a chest full of treasures. From the moment you cross the soaring Sidney Lanier Bridge, rising to a height of 480 feet, you'll be enveloped by reedy marshes, swirling waterways and white sand beaches. Let the sea breezes relax your

soul; take off your shoes and get sand under your toes.

The 1872 working lighthouse is a St. Simons landmark; climb 129 steps leading to the top for panoramic views. Other than the lighthouse, there are no high rises; by law buildings must remain under 45 feet in height. The atmosphere feels beachy with a quaint, small town touch, while the focus centers on the water.

The grand dame of the island is the King and Prince Beach and Golf Resort, one of the Historic Hotels of America. Built in 1935 as a private dance club, lodging was added in 1941 and then opened to the public as a hotel. Shortly thereafter came World War II and the United States Navy took over the structure, transforming it into a radar station.

The oceanfront property returned to use in 1947 and

Local preschool has fun on PJ Day

It was a bright and sunny morning, but the kids and staff of First Christian Preschool looked like they were ready for bed! Friday the 13th was the date for their annual PJ Day. Miss Carolyn, director of the preschool, decided to shake it up a little and planned breakfast for lunch as a special treat. Lunch consisted of French toast sticks, sausage links, tater rounds, bananas and apple juice. It was a very popular menu for "Fun Feast" which replaced the normal brown bags and lunch boxes brought from home.

It is always cute to see the kids in their favorite jammies. Some brought blankies; others brought teddy bears or their special cuddle buddies. The teachers wore an assortment of jogging suits, pajamas, robes and slippers. Miss Charlene, a teacher in the three year old class, had penguins on her feet.

Each of the four classes in attendance did special activities to conclude their two-week unit on winter. The VPK students did experiments with melting ice using different dye colors, measuring different melting rates,



Students and teachers had a fun day in their PJs!

predicting outcomes and graphing the results. The three year old class invited all the teddies to circle time, along with their owners, as they read favorite bedtime stories.

One student remarked "This was the best day ever!" because

she didn't have to get dressed. Even the teachers agreed that it was a very relaxing day.

"We especially like to combine learning experiences with fun activities as children learn best through play at the preschool age," said Miss Carolyn.



Happy St. Patrick's Day

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the King and Prince continues to welcome guests as a multi-generational getaway. Families come back year after year to enjoy the beach, pools, tennis courts and spa. The resort's award winning golf course lies at the northern-most end of the isle.

A visit to the Maritime Center, housed in a historic Coast Guard station, adds to understanding of island ecosystems and the constant shift of sands. To learn more about the shrimping industry, hop aboard the Lady Jane with Captain Larry Credle. The crew takes you trawling and provides a taste of the freshest shrimp ever. Biking is one of the best ways to see the area and visitors find many paved trails.

Of course, vacations must include dining out and St. Simons offers plenty of choices. The Sandcastle Cafe is the hands-down best spot for breakfast and a real bargain. Barbeque is the finger-licking specialty of Southern Soul BBQ. Seafood restaurants abound, but Saltwater Cowboy does it up right with nightly music. The King and Prince is renowned for their Sunday brunch buffet. For sweets, try homemade concoctions like seashell chocolate and Georgia pecan pralines from St. Simons Sweets.

Vacation time needs to be treated like gold and St. Simons and the Golden Isles can make your next getaway shine.

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Seniors enjoy grand opening of new clubroom

Vaulted beamed ceilings towering over large picture windows bathed Coves members in late afternoon sunlight on Sunday, January 22. Members were celebrating the grand opening of the new clubroom at The Coves independent retirement community on the River Garden senior campus in Mandarin.



family, it is the perfect place to enjoy one's time. It is also large enough to host large activities and members can also enjoy the built-in bar.

Members now have a 1000 square foot elegant clubroom to enjoy anytime of the day or night. It houses a library, computers and is equipped with hi tech equipment to show movies and watch television. With cozy corners to curl up in, read a book or just visit with friends or

Don Romo, president of The Coves board said, "The board was happy that they were able to complete the clubroom for the members. We know that you and many others will enjoy this room for many years to come."

Look for their ad in this issue of *Mandarin NewsLine!*

St. Joseph Catholic School hosts Academic Fair

By Contributing Writer Elizabeth Webb



St. Joseph's Academic Fair is a process whereby students explore chosen topics in science, history or fine arts. Through this process, the students research a topic, write a report, decorate a backboard and give a presentation in front of the class and later the judges.

"Academic Fair, while not always popular with the students during the process," Principal Rhonda Rose said, "is a wonderful teaching tool that allows our students to become independent experts on a topic of their choosing. When it is done, the students are always relieved and usually very pleased with the quality work they were able to produce. The Academic Fair prepares students for high school research projects and competitions and it is probably then that they realize the true value of all their efforts in

our fair."

Twenty-four judges from the community volunteered their time for this year's Academic Fair held January 19 in the school gymnasium. Junior high students proudly displayed their backboards for inspection by parents and teachers at the Home and School Association meeting that evening.

Although impressed by many projects, the judges awarded the following students with honors during this year's Academic Fair:

Eighth grade:

- Science—first place—Diane Gabriel; second place—Joseph Pohlgeers; third place—Christian Carlyle
- History – first place –Matthew Sawyer; second place – Joshua Weber; third place – Casey Jakubowski
- Fine Arts – first place –

Madison Stalls; second place – Kenzie Geers; third place – Tressa Bleu

Seventh grade:

- Science – first place –Daniel Cononie; second place – Nick Sasser; third place – Sarah Lendvay
- History – first place – Andrew Schmoyer; second place – Sam Hanania; third place – Stephen Thompson and Julie Butler
- Fine Arts – first place – Alexa Lavallee; second place – Alexa Kelly; third place – Patrick Martens and Reilly Spadafora

Sixth grade:

- History – first place – T.J. Tillo; second place – Margaret Gupton; third place – Melanie Kienlen
- Fine Arts – first place – Lyndsey Price; 2nd second place – Samuel Geers; third place – Kaitlyn Devine

Winners of the School Science Fair go on to compete in the Diocesan Science Fair held at Bishop Snyder High School and the Northeast Florida Regional Science Fair. Congratulations and good luck to all the competitors!

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MHS Happenings

Here comes Spring Break!

By Rondene Grinam, MHS Student

With Spring Break just around the corner, students are winding down and preparing for a week of relaxation. Spring Break lasts from Monday, March 19 to Friday, March 23. Many Mustangs, like senior Adam Lebano, will be spending all week soaking up the sun at Jacksonville Beach, while others will be spending their vacation abroad. Jim Hicken and Kevin Sacerdote, AICE history teachers, will be taking a group of 13 students and some of their parents on a trip to Italy! The group will depart on March 16 and return from Rome on March 24.

The National Honor Society will be selling shamrocks beginning on March 1 for a dollar each. The proceeds from these shamrocks will go towards the Muscular Dystrophy Association and the school who sells the most will receive a pizza party at the end of the drive.

Seniors, scholarship deadlines are swiftly approaching. Stay on top of scholarship information by corresponding with your guidance counselor

or following the Scholarships page on PlanetHS.com. Be sure to complete for FAFSA application through www.fafsa.ed.gov and if you are eligible for Bright Futures, complete that application as soon as possible through www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org. Also, as those college acceptance letters continue to roll in, save copies for your counselor and earn your very own graduation caps on the College Acceptance bulletin board!

Yearbooks are still on sale, now for \$100. Order at yearbookordercenter.com and when prompted, enter the school code: 2340. Get yours now!

The French Club will be competing at the district's World Language Festival on March 3 at Orange Park High School. They will be reciting French poems and competing in a French Brain Brawl competition.

The Drama Department will be performing I Hate Hamlet on March 29 through March 31. Doors open at 6:30 and admission is \$7. Mark your calendars. You will not want to miss it!

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Mandarin Art Festival raffle returns

By Contributing Writer Lynn Cuda, Mandarin Community Club

The Mandarin Community Club will once again hold a raffle to benefit the Billard Park and general grounds improvement during the Mandarin Art Festival, to be held on Easter weekend, April 7 and 8. Donated items this year include an autographed football from the Jacksonville Jaguars, dining gift certificates to local restaurants including the Panera Bread Company, Outback Steakhouse, the Olde Florida Cafe and the Beach Diner, a spa package and a wildlife print on canvas from Olis Garber Photography. Stop by the club table for your chance to win!

Mandarin Community Club merchandise will also be available for purchase during the festival. The club anticipates offering the third in a series of festival T-shirts designed by local artist Julie Fetzer. Her past two designs have been sellouts! Other items for sale will include note cards, the popular Mandarin auto tag, puzzles and books of local interest such as a limited edition printing of Palmetto Leaves by Harriett Beecher Stowe.

For more information, please call 268-1622 or visit www.mandarincommunityclub.org.



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Senior Center Update

Mandarin seniors look forward to annual spaghetti dinner

By Contributing Writer Rita Dower

The Mandarin Senior Citizen Center will be hosting their annual Spaghetti Dinner on Friday, March 9 from 5:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. The dinner will include spaghetti with your choice of several different sauces, salad, breadsticks, dessert and beverage. The cost is only \$7 per person or \$5 per person for children. Tickets can be purchased in advance at the Senior Center, located at 3848 Hartley Road or by calling 262-7309.

There is a limited amount of people we can serve, so please purchase your tickets early!

In April, the Senior Center will hold a Health Fair which is very informative and open to all.

The Center is for seniors 60 and up and is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. with bus transportation available if you live within the Mandarin area. Some of the activities offered at the center are ceramics, line



Betty Presson and Betty Rannow have fun at the Mandarin Senior Citizen Center

dancing, computer class, bingo, as well as trivia, billiards, bridge and so much more. A lunch is served everyday.

Please stop by and visit the Center or call 262-7309 and we will gladly provide more information and a big welcome!

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MHS Sports Roundup

By Natalie Cleghorn, MHS Student

The Mustang softball team has a promising season this year, even after the loss of six seniors—each of whom signed to continue their softball careers in college. The pitching duo Riley Carter (Appalachian State) and Alli Johnson (St. Petersburg College) is gone, but the Mustangs are not left empty handed. Juniors Kayla Donker and Dajia Jones are hard workers and have stepped up to lead the team. And the Mustangs are also returning five seniors to the varsity team. Led by Morgan Taylor and Sarah Kane, the seniors prove their leadership on and off the field. They are extremely talented as proven by Taylor and Kane, both of whom have already signed their national letters of intent to play softball in college. Taylor, center fielder for the Mustangs, will play at Georgia Tech and Kane, shortstop, will play for Holy Cross. All five of the seniors are well rounded and participate in the Leadership class at Mandarin High as well as extra-curricular activities such as Student Council and Sixth Man Club.

The newest addition to the team, Coach Kelly Townsend, will step in to aid Head Coach Natalia Gonzalez. Townsend brings experience from her college softball career where she played at Florida State Univer-

sity as a first baseman.

Coach Townsend is enthusiastic about her new position and says, "I am extremely excited for the season to start!"

To prepare for their tough season, the Mustangs practice hard every day working on fundamentals as well as scrimmaging to be the best they can be. All of the girls give practice their all to maximize their time and efficiency. The team works off of tees, hits forward toss, scrimmages and works on in-field and outfield drills to hone their softball skills.

As said by Coach Gonzalez, "I put together a competitive schedule and everyone is out to beat us. We need to out-hustle, out-work and out-play the opponent to win."

After a tough loss to Orange Park on February 6, the Mustangs hope to make a rebound and come out strong for their season.

The Mustangs want to delve deeper into the playoffs and return to the elite eight where they were defeated by Winter Springs last year 3-0. The girls have potential with the experience of five seniors and several other returning varsity players to make it to the final four.

The Mustangs play March 7 at home against Creekside at 7:00 p.m. and on March 15 at home against district opponent Sandalwood High School at 6:30 p.m.

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Mustangs advance to state finals with double overtime home win

By Natalie Cleghorn, MHS Student

The Mandarin High varsity boys' soccer team pulled out a huge victory in the state semifinal soccer game at home. Throughout the day at Mandarin High School, students were excited and eager to see the boys' soccer team face off against Palm Harbor University for the state semifinal game. With a record of 17-1-4 for Palm Harbor and senior Charlie Hales, the Mustangs (23-3-3) had a tough game ahead of them. But Mandarin pulled out a huge win over the Hurricanes and advanced to the state championship.

A pep rally was held at the end of the school day to build up excitement and support for the team. Athletic Director Tammie Talley introduced Assistant Coach Donald Gordon who spoke about his team.

"We trust in each other," Gordon said.

The boys spend much of their time off the soccer field together participating in activities such as supporting other school sports teams, eating meals before games and just spending time together. This trust has enabled the team to travel deep into the playoffs. Making it to the state semifinals was a big achievement in itself, but being able to host the game at Mandarin's home field was a huge opportunity.

This was the first time that the game would not be played on a neutral field due to the budget cuts implemented this year. The Mustangs used this facet of the playoffs to their full advantage, filling the stands with orange and green. Students came prepared with umbrellas and even ponchos to watch the game through the drizzle like the true fans they were and settled in for an electrifying contest. The game started off with a shot by Cody

Wegener with five minutes left in the half just as the rain started to drizzle, making the playing field wet and slippery.

The Mustangs kept pressure on Palm Harbor throughout the half, but Robert Sennabaum scored for the Hurricanes in the 62nd minute to tie up the game. From there the Mustangs fought hard but were unable to score again before overtime kicked in. The Mustangs' defense was solid throughout the night, led by seniors John Mella and Thomas Wood. In double overtime, Mandarin took a shot toward the goal which was deflected but junior forward Eric Han shot the ball back into the goal to win the game with just 1.3 seconds left on the clock.

Han was elated after his winning goal and said, "I



couldn't have scored that game winning goal with 1.3 seconds left of overtime if it wasn't my amazing teammates that fought for 99 minutes!"

There again, trust and teamwork enabled the Mustangs to continue their run to the state championship.

Editor's Note: The Mustangs advanced to the state championship in Tampa on Saturday, February 18 and faced Cypress Bay, a nationally ranked team. The Mustangs finished the season as state runners-up, losing in the final game to Cypress Bay by a score of 4 - 1.

Martin J. Gottlieb Day School students pose with their daddy at the school's annual Father/Daughter Dance held this past month.



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Children's Art Show popular part of Art Festival

By Contributing Writer Lynn Cuda, Mandarin Community Club

One of the most popular components of the annual Mandarin Art Festival is the Children's Art Show. Held inside the Mandarin Community Club building both days of the festival, artwork from as many as 20 public and private elementary and middle schools from both Duval and St. Johns Counties will be on display. Ribbons will be awarded to individual students and over all school submissions.

Chris Buckley is the 2012 chairwoman and local artist Reta Russel-Houghton will serve as the judge this year. Cathy David of Young Rembrandts will offer interactive art demonstrations both days of the show. This activity is

offered free of charge and will also take place inside the club building. It is a great opportunity for young and old alike to sit down to do an activity together.

The Mandarin Art Festival is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, April 7 and 8 on the grounds of the Mandarin Community Club, located at 12447 Mandarin Road. Hours are from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. both days. Ample free parking will be available at the Mandarin Presbyterian Church on Mandarin Road with shuttle service to the Festival.

For more information, please visit www.mandarincommunityclub.org.



Faith News

Mandarin Lutheran Church, located at 11900 San Jose Boulevard, will have a **Spring Garage Sale** on Saturday, March 10 from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon. This is a fundraiser for our youth. Be sure to stop by and shop for great bargains!

Lifetree Café is a place where people gather for conversations about life and faith in a casual coffeehouse-type setting. Upcoming topics are: March 7, "Is America a Christian Nation?"; March 14, "Unlock the Mystery of Music"; and March 21, "Peace when Life is Difficult." Find out more about each topic, times and location from the www.MandarinNewsLine.com online community calendar or call George Treiber at 731-0731. Admission is free and refreshments are available. Check us out at www.LifetreeCafe.com

Upward Soccer Evaluations will be held at Mandarin United Methodist Church on March 5, 6 and 8 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. for ages three through sixth grade. Practices will begin on

March 19 and the first game is Saturday, March 31. For more information, please call the church at 268-5549.

The Working Caregiver will be held on Monday, March 12 from 11:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. at Jewish Family and Community Services, located at 6261 Dupont Station Court East. This program is free and open to the community. This is a monthly drop-in support group for those who are currently caring for a loved one while also working. Join us on the second Monday of each month as we share strategies and techniques to help meet the challenges of competing demands. Bring your own bag lunch; beverages will be provided. To reserve your spot, please call 394-5737.

Mandarin United Methodist Church, located at 11270 San Jose Boulevard, will present their **Easter Musical** on Saturday, March 31, at 7:00 p.m. and Sunday, April 1 at 8:15 and 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary.



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New option for children's health care

Families in Mandarin now have a more convenient way to get the quality health care offered by Nemours without traveling to the Nemours Children's Clinic in Downtown Jacksonville. Nemours just opened the Nemours Children's Clinic, Jacksonville South at 14785 Old Saint Augustine Road.

"We know that parents are juggling the busy schedules of the entire family and a trip across town can be tough," said Dr. Jay Cummings, vice president of physician practice for Nemours in Florida. "With this new location, families can get appointments with the very same physicians who provide excellent care for your child at our downtown clinic."

The Jacksonville South location will include specialists in orthopedics, medical imaging, pulmonology, allergy, ENT, audiology, communication disorders, endocrinology, hematology, neurology, psychiatry, psychology and GI. Patient appointments are

available from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, by calling 697-3600.

The new Nemours location is in the same building as Wolfson Children's Rehabilitation, which offers physical and occupational therapy to children. Wolfson and Nemours have long partnered on pediatric care.

"Many of our patients who need therapy are able to book all their appointments with Nemours and Wolfson on the same day in the same place," said Lindsay Unger, administrative manager for the Nemours Children's Clinic Jacksonville South. "We are so pleased that our new location has helped simplify life for our busy families."

Nemours is an internationally recognized children's health system. Established as The Nemours Foundation through the legacy and philanthropy of Alfred I. duPont, Nemours offers pediatric clinical care, research, education, advocacy and prevention programs to all families in the communities it serves.

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St. Joseph's soccer team wins first championship

By Contributing Writer Paul Rowland, SJCS Coach



The St. Joseph's soccer team had a perfect ending to a great season. The Stars "believed" and it happened.

Their season began December 1 with a loss to St. Paul's at the Beaches 1-0 on a penalty kick (PK), the only loss of the season for the Stars. Two months later the Stars closed their season with a championship tournament victory over the same St. Paul's team in overtime penalty kicks. After the Stars' four PKs by MaryBeth Rowland, Andrew Rauco, Matthew Jackson, Kaitlynn Himmelreich, tournament MVP and Stars goalie, Casey Jakubowski, blocked a St. Paul's shot to ensure the Stars first DOSA Championship Tournament title in school history.

This may not seem that amazing, but this was the second time in three days the Stars were forced into penalty kicks against their opponents. Earlier in the week the Stars had a very similar outcome against Palmer Academy—overtime into PKs. This was after serving Palmer its only loss in the regular season just one week earlier. Not that amazing, unless you consider that St. Joseph was at the bottom of the league just a season ago with no wins at all.

The Diocese of St. Augustine (DOSA) league is a co-ed soccer league, made up of fifth to eighth grade boys and girls. The year before was a disappointing but rebuilding year, having had only one tie and no wins and a last-place finish. With this year's new coach, new approach and new philosophy ("Do you believe?"), the Stars set out on a mission to turn around the program and win. Hard work and tough conditioning brought about an unusual roster of talent and raw ability.

The team was led up top by Christian Carlyle at forward/striker and the team's leading scorer, with great support from Maura Webb, Jake Jones and Andrew Rauco. A set of incredibly nimble mid-fielders with great speed and quick foot skills included Conor Stephens (fifth grade), Matthew Jackson (sixth grade), and Kaitlynn Himmelreich (eighth grade). Rounding out the team was a sound and determined group anchored

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Traditional Latin Mass

Sunday

11:15 a.m. - Historic Church

Weekday Mass Schedule

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8:00 a.m. Historic Church

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Ironically both games went into overtime tied, forcing the games into penalty kicks to determine the winners. Amazing as it may seem, St. Joseph's came away with two astonishing, nail biting PK victories in the same week to be crowned DOSA Division 2 Tournament Champions with a division best record of 8 wins, one loss and two ties.

From last place to first place—what a season!
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Lady Stars volleyball co-champions

By Contributing Writer Andrea Bottin, Volleyball Head Coach



The Lady Stars Volleyball Team had another outstanding season full of digs and spikes! The girls tied San Jose Catholic School as league co-champions, finishing off the season with a 13-1 record.

The end-of-season tournament was exciting for players, coaches and fans! The final championship game put the two rival teams in a tough battle. The ladies of St. Joseph came out strong, winning the

first match 25-18. The Trojans won the second game 22-25, so it all came down to the final match.

Each player gave it her all with points going back and forth from team to team throughout the match. The Stars fell short with a final score of 14-16. Even though the Lady Stars came in as runner-up in the tournament, the season was a great success and accomplishment.

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Local Sports Scene

Sharks ready to defend Arena Football League title

By Chad Cushnir

The 2012 version of the Jacksonville Sharks will look somewhat different from last year's team which won the ArenaBowl. The biggest change is quarterback where the Arena Football League's all-time leading passer Aaron Garcia now plays in San Antonio. Omar Jacobs, the Sharks' backup quarterback last season, will compete with former Florida Gators star Chris Leak for the starting job.

Wide receiver Jeron Harvey, defensive back LaRoche Jackson and kicker Marco Cappozoli are among the key players who are returning from last year's team. Head coach Les Moss is also returning. As the Sharks prepare for their third season of play, Moss is the only head coach that the franchise has had. Jomo Wilson and Jeff

Hughley, two playmakers from last season, have signed with other teams. The same can be said for safety Micheaux Robinson.

On Saturday, March 3, the Sharks will host the New Orleans VooDoo for a preseason scrimmage. Kickoff is scheduled for 12:30 p.m. on Sea Best Field at Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Arena. For this game only, admission is free for everyone. Fans are encouraged to bring non-perishable food items to donate to Second Harvest North Florida.

The Sharks' first home game during the regular season will be on Saturday, March 24 at 7:00 p.m. against the Georgia Force.

In other local sports news, the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament begins on March 13 with the First Four matchups

in Dayton, Ohio. Florida and Florida State will both be looking for good showings during March Madness. Last year, the Seminoles lost in overtime to Virginia Commonwealth in the Sweet 16 while the Gators advanced to the Elite Eight. They were eliminated from the Big Dance after an overtime loss to Butler.

In college baseball, Florida State will face Florida at the Baseball Grounds of Jacksonville on Tuesday, March 27 at 7:00 p.m.

Finally, the 35th annual Gate River Run is scheduled for Saturday, March 10. This 15K race starts and finishes at Ever-Bank Field.



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United States Coast Guard Auxiliary Update Reflections

By Contributing Writer Ralph Little, Flotilla 14-8

My apology if the following upsets someone. These raw 2011 boating fatality reports and the editorial for each speak clearer than any prose I might concoct.

Hillsborough County, November 15: High risk vessel, lone male, no life preserver. Witnesses observed the victim fishing in Lake Wimauma in a small aluminum Jon boat. Witnesses later observed the victim's vessel partially submerged. Search operations recovered the victim.

Manatee County, November 23: Perhaps too much speed or failure to read the chart. Victim struck by propeller after being ejected from his vessel after it struck a sand bar.

Lake County, November 27: Excessive speed for the limited view and space. Two Personal Watercraft operated on Lake Joanna. One PWC entered a small cove while the other was exiting. The operators saw each other and attempted evasive maneuvers. Both turned in the same direction and they collided. All four subjects were ejected. A sole victim resurfaced and suffered an apparent head injury. All wore life preservers.

Collier County, November 28: High risk vessel and no life preserver. The victim was paddling a kayak in a pond behind his home. At some point, the victim fell out of the vessel and drowned.

Broward County, November 28: Probably a failure to ob-

serve the route. A 25-foot vessel with two males was traveling southbound in the Intracoastal Waterway when it struck a seawall. The sole victim was trapped in the bow of the hull.

Brevard County, November 28: Possible natural cause and failure of a lone operator to have a motor cut off lanyard. A vessel was found running in a tight starboard circle with no one on board. There were no signs of injury on the victim and all required safety equipment was on board.

Union County, December 10: Probable failure to wear life preservers. A man and his elderly mother went to Lake Palestine at 8:00 a.m. for a Saturday of fishing. The two were reported overdue at 11:35 p.m. The vessel was found at 1:00 a.m. Sunday. Fishing lines were still in the water. At 7:30 a.m. the female's body was found but the male had not been located.

Collier County, December 15: Failure to observe the route, probably excessive speed. While cruising up on a plane in a canal, the victim struck his head against a bridge which crossed the canal.

Nine accidental deaths while pleasure boating in 31 days. Boating fatalities are rarely inevitable. The flotilla's safety course is doing well but we have the time for more boaters to test our instructors. Call Bob Strong at 721-1346 for specifics.

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St. Johns River trip cont. from pg. 1 ferry. Lunch is served on the grounds of the park and tours are given of the museum. During this segment of the trip Bill Belleville, an award-winning environmental writer, filmmaker and Sanford resident speaks to the boaters from an environmentalist point of view of the St. Johns River.
 From Hontoon Island to the evening stop in Astor, William "Bill" Dreggors, Jr.,

entertains the boaters. Dreggors is a fourth-generation Floridian and lifelong resident of DeLand; he entertains everyone with his colorful folk stories and historical points of the St. Johns River and he is a real hit!
 On day two the tour goes through Lake George, the second largest freshwater lake in Florida and the longest along the trace of the St. Johns (14

miles long by six miles wide). Further downstream you pass the beautiful three-story Victorian Gothic house called The Palmettos at Fort Gates.
 Following lunch is a visit to Mount Royal, the site of an ancient Indian temple mound which was constructed between 1200 and 1500 A.D. There storytellers Wayne and Jane Sims board the boat for an afternoon of entertainment. The

last stop before ending the tour is the town of Welaka, where a visit to its maritime museum to view handcrafted wooden boats of the late 19th and early 20th century period.
 For more information about future trips, please visit the St. Johns Riverkeeper website at www.stjohnsriverkeeper.org or call Shannon Blankinship, outreach director, at 256-7613.

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Seventh annual Blooms, Galore and More festival is coming soon

The Garden Club of Jacksonville's seventh annual Blooms, Galore and More plant sale and artisan festival will take place on Saturday, March 31, 2012, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. located on the beautiful St. Johns River at 1005 Riverside Avenue in Jacksonville. The event is free and open to the public. Guests will have the opportunity to purchase plants grown by Garden Club members at exceptional prices. Also at

the festival will be professional plant nurseries and artisans selling unique hand-crafted items.

In addition to purchasing plants for your garden, The Garden Club of Jacksonville will be featuring world famous floral designer Jan Sillik, who will demonstrate how to create gorgeous floral arrangements with grocery store flowers. She is always fun and informative so you don't want to miss this presentation. In the afternoon a forum of Florida Master Gardeners

will be available to answer your gardening questions.

The Garden Club of Jacksonville, Inc. is a 501(C)(3) not for profit civic organization whose goals are to educate, beautify and conserve. The club supports city projects such as the Horticultural Exhibit at the Jacksonville Zoo, the Jacksonville Arboretum/Gardens, Tree Hill and the St Johns River-keeper. Membership is open to all. Call 355-4224 or visit www.gardenclubofjacksonville.org.

Upgrading your home into home sweet home

(ARA) - Home sweet home. With more homeowners deciding to stay put in their homes, rather than attempting to sell in the current market, that old adage is more meaningful than ever.

Staying put doesn't mean homeowners are settling. Many are upgrading or redecorating their abodes, turning their old home into the stylish, yet comfortable, home sweet home they've dreamed of for many years.

Upgrading and redecorating a house can be done in small steps or in one overhaul, depending on your available time and finances and the upgrades

you want to do. For example, redesigning your kitchen with new appliances, cabinetry, flooring and wall color will require a lot more time, money and decision making on your part than redecorating a bedroom with new linens, wall color and rearranged furniture.

No matter if you want to have everything done in one large overhaul or intend to spread your upgrades out over several years, you need to develop a working plan—one that can be constantly tweaked and updated as the project progresses. Here are some tips to get your working plan started:

- Plan on a budget. You can develop a total budget for all the work you want to do or an annual budget, which will help you divide up all the projects so you are able to afford them over a period of time. When planning your budget, it's a good idea to overestimate the cost of a project, just in case something unexpected pops up requiring additional cash.

Many a home remodeler can tell you about the simple home improvement project that turned into something much bigger than originally anticipated.

- Set a timeline. This is to determine your availability to work on the project. If you find that you only have a day or two available, you probably will want to plan for a much smaller project. Or you may want to hire out any work you won't be able to finish yourself.
- Make a list of equipment you need. If you're going to be purchasing larger supplies like wood boards and drywall, you probably need to update your truck with the Adarac truck bed rack system from Access, a division of Agri-Cover, Inc. Your truck will be able to transport up to 500 pounds of home improvement supplies on the rack, which sits neatly behind the cab and secures your load with eyelets. And don't forget about finding a secure place in your home or garage to store supplies while the project is ongoing. If you live in a home where storage is limited, consider keeping your tools in your truck bed, covered and secured with an Access tonneau cover. The cover's locks keep your tools safe and dry until you need them, and when you're ready to get started on the project, the tonneau truck bed cover can easily be removed, granting you access to everything.
- Ask questions. As you get started in the planning of your project, talk to friends and family who have done something similar, as well as the experts at home improvement stores. The more information you have, the more prepared you will be to address issues as they arise.

Staying in your current house and revamping it into that dream house you always wanted can really pay off. You may find yourself inviting family and friends to come and vacation at your house, so you can stay home and enjoy it.



Tips to breeze through spring cleaning

(NewsUSA) - Spring heralds a season of fresh starts and growth—and what better way to start anew than with a little spring cleaning?

Taking the time to get organized can make all the difference and it can make the most cluttered closets and dirtiest corners a breeze to clean. With the right tools in hand, organizing any messy space becomes a manageable task. You can save time and money by getting cleaning supplies, like dusters, sponges and automated air fresheners ahead of time.

Still don't know where to start? Try these spring-cleaning tips:

- Cover the basics. Take inventory of your cleaning supplies. Some must-haves are mops, brooms, sponges, paper towels, trash bags, disinfectant wipes and bathroom-specific supplies. Make a list of what you need so you can get it all in one shopping trip. Many basic and specialty cleaning products are now available online. For the ultimate in convenience, shop online at www.dollargeneral.com.
- Tackle the clutter in steps. Spring cleaning can be

daunting, so take small steps and approach spaces one at a time. Strive to find everything a permanent home. Create "donate" and "trash" piles for items you no longer use or need.

- Use organizing tools. Over-the-door mesh shoe racks are great for storing all kinds of winter accessories such as hats, gloves, scarves and coats. Get some sturdy hooks for purses, backpacks and other accessories, and relish the feeling of a clean closet.
- Revitalize your laundry room. Put a stop to the mountain of dirty clothes that grows every week by getting each family member a laundry basket. If clothing doesn't make it into their bin, it's not getting washed. Keep your laundry room stocked with detergent, bleach and stain remover.
- Store items in plastic storage containers. Some winter items will be used until the early days of summer, others won't make an appearance until next year. A variety of belongings can be stored in plastic containers to keep them organized and out of the way.

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Accessories: The final touches in your home

By Contributing Writer Wendy Chandler, Owner/Designer, Chandler Designs, LLC and The Model Home Store

One of the most common frustrations I hear with my clients is "I don't know how to put accessories together." Yes, it can be challenging at times, but here are a few simple ideas that might help you put the final touches in your home.

An accessory gives your room character and tells a story about you or where you've been. Of course your paint colors, artwork and furniture give the space definition, but it is the accessories that make it feel like a home.

Let's say we are working on the space above the kitchen cabinets. First, if you have those large planters of silk ivy that you bought and put up there 10 years ago, sorry but it's time to move those on to another life.

That went out with overalls! The look now is to have cleaner groupings at various focal spots that balance the kitchen out. Measure the space from the top of the cabinets to the ceiling; if you have at least 12 inches then accessorizing above the cabinets will work. If you have fewer than 12 inches, then do nothing. The items would get lost in a space that small.

For best results, use a grouping of three or five items, depending on the size of the items. Use items with different textures for visual interest. First, I like to start with a basket that is my "tall" item. Then I bring in an item that is my "medium" item—let's say a great piece of pottery that has your kitchen colors in it, perhaps you bought it while traveling. Finally, I bring in a "small" piece to balance out the other two items. I like to use things like small potted herb plants. I use Styrofoam or books to elevate any item so when you're standing on the floor you can see all the items (but not the Styrofoam!). If you have an electrical outlet above your cabinets, then get a fluorescent light strip and tuck that in front of your grouping. This will not only add light to your kitchen but highlight your beautiful accessories!

For the fireplace

mantle, make sure each side is even in height and balance. So if you put a 24-inch topiary on one side then make sure the item (s) on the other side is at least 22 to 24 inches. This could be a set of three candlesticks with the tallest candle reaching 24 inches.

As a guide, use pictures of rooms you've seen in magazines, take pictures at stores or model homes for inspiration.

The rules are basically balance and size. I can walk into a room and immediately know when accessories or furnishings are off, simply by the overall balance of the room. So, stand back and look around you; make sure it feels right. The accessories you choose can be anything you love—that is the best part about

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Local pool service earns coveted service award

Adkins Pool Service has been awarded the prestigious 2011 Angie's List Super Service Award, an honor bestowed annually on approximately five percent of all the businesses rated on the nation's leading provider of consumer reviews on local service and health providers. This award reflects the business's consistently high level of customer service.

"Our goal has always been to make your pool as inviting as my own. Our motto is: 'Preserving Paradise, One Pool at a Time,'" explains John Adkins of Adkins Pool Service.

"Only a fraction of the businesses rated on Angie's List can claim the sterling service record of being a Super Service award winner because we set a high bar," said Angie's List founder Angie

Hicks. "The fact that Adkins Pool Service can claim Super Service Award status speaks volumes about its dedication to consumers."

Angie's List Super Service Award winners have met strict eligibility requirements including earning a minimum number of reports, an exem-

plary rating from their clients and abiding by Angie's List operational guidelines.

Ratings are updated daily on Angie's List, but members can find the 2011 Super Service Award logo next to business names in search results on www.AngiesList.com.

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Orchids: nature's masterpiece

By Contributing Writer Keith Hall

You be the judge! Which orchid is the best Nature's Masterpiece among the thousands that will be displayed at the Jacksonville Orchid Society's show on March 17 and 18, 2012? Admission is free and the hours are from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Garden Club of Jacksonville will be the setting for this

magnificent exhibition. Located at 1005 Riverside Avenue, the club is easily accessible from Interstate Highways 95 and 10. Directions are available at www.jaxorchidsociety.org.

Imagine flowers that are called "lady slippers, dancing ladies, spider orchids, moth orchids and even corsage orchids." Some orchids have fragrances that smell like cinnamon, wintergreen, cloves or jasmine. One even emits a smell of rotting meat to attract a pollinator.

Beautiful displays will showcase different varieties of orchids in all colors of the rainbow. Ranging in size from 100 square feet to a card table top the exhibits will be created by

10 commercial orchid growers, four orchid societies and several individual hobby growers.

If you want a Masterpiece to take home, the commercial growers will have irresistible blooming plants in all sizes and colors to fit your budget. Orchid growing supplies will be on hand as well as a repotting service for your overgrown plants. Society members can answer your questions about growing orchids and controlling pests and diseases. A flowering orchid door prize will be given one lucky attendee. Ten other plants will be raffled.

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View of five exhibits of commercial growers from 2011 show in main exhibit hall

Congratulations to Alexa Velez

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Gardening

The best way

By Contributing Writer Master Gardener Camille Hunter with Duval County Extension, University of Florida/IFAS



ally want them in your yard? And after you kill the weeds, you then need to apply another product to prevent the seeds, which are not dead, from germinating.

When you pull weeds out of the ground (easy to do in our sandy soils), you remove the weed, the seeds and the roots in one simple motion. If the weeds have not set seeds, put them in your compost. Discard weeds with seeds in the trash. Remember, every weed you pull potentially eliminates a hundred or more future weeds. There is also the extra benefit that you are exercising and doing it outdoors.

However, there is one exception. If you are overrun with torpedo grass, the best way to get rid of it is to sell your home and move. Really. If anyone knows how to get rid of this demon weed, I would like to know what it is.

If you are planting a tree, plant high. A tree planted too low in the ground will languish and never fully recover. The root flare, where the roots begin branching out from the trunk, should be visible. The best way to help a tree to establish its root system and start growing is to keep it watered for the first

few months.

Water is essential to all plants. New transplants especially need regular watering. The best water is rain water, so set up a rain barrel or two and you will see the difference in your plants when you substitute rain water for tap water.

The best way to prune is only when necessary. The plant always prefers that you not prune at all, so have a good reason and learn how to do it correctly. It's always okay to remove weak and broken branches but it is never a good

idea to mutilate a tree by cutting off the top. Jacksonville, we need to stop whacking our beautiful crape myrtles into hat racks. Leave them alone and you won't believe how gorgeous they can be.

Lastly, this might surprise you. Research has shown that the best transplants at the garden center are not the bigger ones, already in bloom or with fruit hanging on them. These more mature plants have a tougher time acclimating to change. Odds are the smaller transplants will ultimately out perform them.

So now that you know some of the best ways to garden, why are you sitting around reading this column? Get out there and get busy!

“I'm Bored!”

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It's always nice to have the best, no matter what it is. This is true of cars, neighborhoods and friends. It is also true of gardens. If you want the best garden, having high quality tools, seeds and plants will surely help. But what really makes a garden shine is knowing the best way to do garden things. Much of gardening is intuitive, but I have found that learning and understanding the best gardening techniques can take your garden to another level.

The best way to get rid of weeds, for example, is to hand pull them. Chemical weed killers are, well, chemicals. Do you re-

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