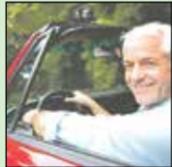


Mandarin NewsLine

APRIL 2018 Volume 12 Issue 6

A Florida NewsLine Publication



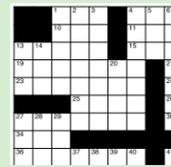
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Connect for a Cure at Relay for Life

By Angela Higginbotham
angela@floridanewline.com



Photos courtesy Kim Aslan
Festivities from previous Relays for Life.

Relay for Life of Mandarin is merging with Relay for Life of North St. Johns County for their 2018 event. The annual fundraiser will be held on Saturday, April 14, 2018 from 12 p.m. until 10 p.m. at Bartram Trail High School. Mandarin residents and all surrounding areas are invited to join in on this much anticipated event. Entrance is free and the family orientated day will include ceremonies to honor and remember the courageous and strong loved ones who have faced cancer. Live entertainment, games and a variety of food will be on hand.

Founded in 1986, Relay For Life is the signature fundraiser for the American Cancer Society. Relay is staffed and coordinated by volunteers in thousands of communities and 27 countries across the world. The mission of Relay for Life is to honor cancer survivors of all ages. These events bring communities together to remember loved ones lost, honor survivors of all cancers and raise donations to help the American Cancer Society make a global impact on cancer. Through donations, Relay for Life events have helped thousands with life saving cancer research studies, crucial patient care programs and education and prevention initiatives.

Connect for a Cure cont. on pg. 13

Mandarin Senior Center a "home away from home" for area seniors

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewline.com

Tucked away on Hartley Road is a gem for our community's seniors: the Mandarin Senior Center. What began with just a few golden agers meeting in the Moose Lodge in 1987 has now grown into a vibrant recreation center that serves approximately 500 members. The programs and members have long since outgrown the current building, which opened in 1990, and expansion plans have been in place for some time. According to Advisory Board Chair Chris Buckley, these will finally be coming to fruition ... and not a moment too soon.

"We have \$1.5 million approved from the city this year for our expansion," Buckley said. "The actual size of the expansion is to be determined, but we envision a large central room with breakout rooms that will be attached to the current center. The plan is to hopefully start construction this fall."

Architectural plans exist from a few years ago when an expansion was anticipated. Unfortunately, the funding fell through and the amount approved now is not as much. But with the center serving an estimated 75 - 100 people per day and more for special occasions, the additional space is needed now more than ever.

"For big events, like our Independence Day and Christmas dinners, we have to operate on a first come, first served basis," Buckley said.

Board member Frances Bosman said, "At this point, if we add a program, we pretty much have to drop one due to space issues."

The Mandarin Senior Center is open to anyone over the age of 60. To become a member, a senior must fill out an application and then visit three times to get a membership card. With a membership card, a senior may participate in any of the programs at the center, as well as receive transportation to the center from the Mandarin/Southside area. A free lunch is served each weekday and a hot breakfast is served on Tuesday and Thursday mornings.



Seniors fill up the existing space in the Mandarin Senior Center on a busy Bingo day.



The Mandarin Senior Center on Hartley Road.

The membership card is scanned for each activity, and this is how the center receives funding from various public agencies.

Available programs include the ever-popular Bingo as well as yoga, dancing, exercise classes, shuffleboard, many varieties of card games and off site field trips to zoos, museums and sporting events, some of which require an additional fee. Also, the center is open two evenings a week, offering square dancing on Monday and ballroom dancing on Thursday. The center has a ceramics room, a library, computers, and a billiard room.



The open area to the right of the large trees is where the much-needed expansion of the senior center will be built.



Photos by Martie Thompson
Michael Beck, Chris Buckley, Odile Gracy, Frances Bosman and Luci McCracken look at the initial plans for the expansion of the Mandarin Senior Center in the center's library.

In addition to the Advisory Board, which is made up of community members, the senior center has an active Site Council made up of seniors. According to Site Council member Michael Beck, this is the body that is responsible for planning the day to day activities and programs.

Site Council Chair Luci McCracken, like many members, gives back to the center that she considers her home away from home. She and several other members help maintain the gardening and the landscaping around the center. Another member enjoys maintaining the center's library.

Although the City of Jacksonville owns the building and pays for utilities and limited staff, the center relies heavily on volunteers to keep things going. Additionally, both the Advisory Board and the Site Council conduct fundraisers to help fund programs and supplies. An annual Spaghetti Dinner and Health Fair are two examples of events that are designed to invite the community into the center as well as raise funds. According to Buckley, a Cinco de Mayo taco night is in the works for this May.

Over the years, the senior center has undergone some minor expansions and improvements. According to Bosman, they have received good support from the Jacksonville City Council and Mandarin councilmembers in particular.

"The main thing is that the Mandarin Senior Center provides socialization for seniors rather than them sitting at home, sometimes alone. Our programs get them up and moving," Buckley said.

Member Odile Gracy concurred and said, "The senior center often fills a big void in people's lives."

The Mandarin Senior Center is located at 3848 Hartley Road. Call (904) 262-7309 for more information.

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April
Enhanced Section

SUMMER CAMP GUIDE

FISHING
CAMP
SWIMMING
CANDLING

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MYSTERY PHOTO



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

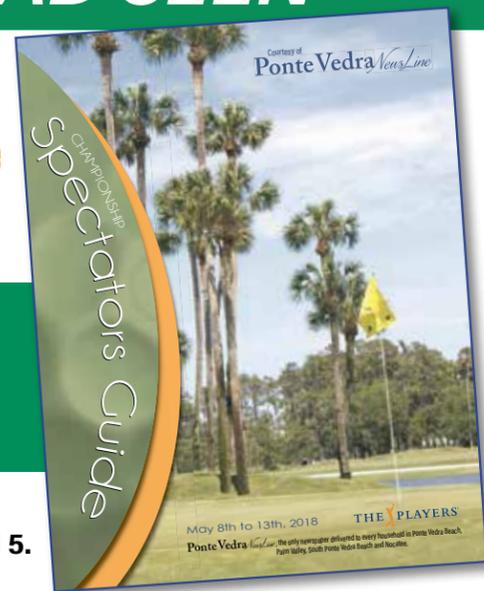
Last month's Mystery Photo was Harbor Chase Independent and Assisted Living on San Jose Boulevard. Our winner was Mercedes Bilotti.

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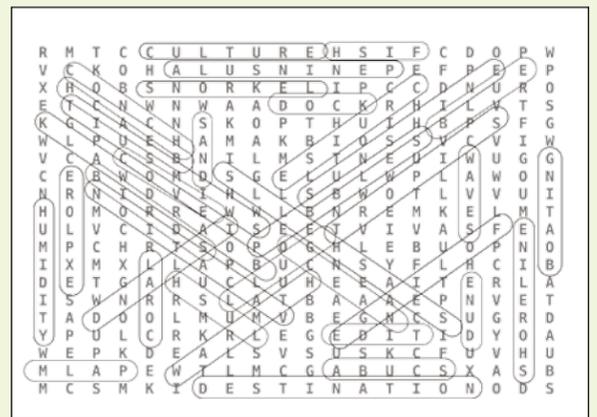
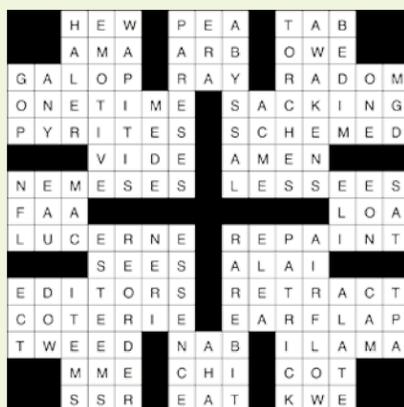
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answers to puzzles on page 16



ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
CRYPTO FUN
Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Answers to our Puzzles

take 5

Mandarin Women's Club hosts popular Game Day

On April 26, the Mandarin Women's Club will hold its annual Game Day at the Ramada Inn in Mandarin. Ladies will choose to play either Bunco or Mexican Train and will enjoy lunch and meet new friends. Doors open at 9 a.m. The cost is \$17 and includes lunch. Reservations must be made by April 12 by contacting Geri at gerimarch23@gmail.com or (904) 993-7649. Visit www.mandarinwomensclub.com for more information on events, photos, and membership forms.

Mandarin Rotary's Laughs for Charity to benefit Mandarin Museum

The Rotary Club of Mandarin will host its annual fundraiser, Laughs for Charity, on April 19 at the Comedy

Zone, 3130 Hartley Road. This year's event will benefit Mandarin Museum & Historical Society. Funds from this year's event will be used by the society for future expansion, which will include housing artifacts recently recovered from the Civil War Union transport ship Maple Leaf that was sunk by Confederate forces in the St. Johns River near Mandarin. The evening will start at 6 p.m. with a reception and silent auction. The comedy show will begin at 7:30 p.m. featuring headliner Frank Del Pizzo. Tickets are \$65 each and corporate sponsorships are available. Contact Jim Register at (904) 268-5522 or jim@jimregister.com for tickets and more information.

Maple Leaf divers at Mandarin Museum

The Maple Leaf divers will appear at Mandarin Museum in Walter Jones

Historical Park, 11964 Mandarin Road from 12 p.m. – 4 p.m. on April 21. Attendees may meet and talk with Dr. Keith Holland and the men

who found the Maple Leaf shipwreck and recovered the Civil War artifacts from this National Historic Landmark site in the St. Johns River at Mandarin Point. For more information visit www.mandarinmuseum.net or call (904) 268-0784.

Smart Driver course offered at library

AARP will hold its Smart Driver course for drivers 50 and older from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesday, April 24 and Wednesday, April 25 at South Mandarin Branch Library, 12125 San Jose Blvd. You must attend both days to qualify for auto insurance discount. Bring your driver's license and AARP membership card (if applicable) and arrive 15 minutes early on the first day to register. To enroll, call (904) 414-0007.

Paper shredding fundraiser scheduled for Setzer Youth Education

Setzer Youth Education of the Jacksonville Jewish Center will hold a paper shredding fundraiser on April 25. Iron Mountain will be at the Jacksonville Jewish Center, 3662 Crown Point Road

from 5 p.m. – 7 p.m. to provide safe and secure paper shredding services to the Mandarin community. The cost will be \$5 per standard file box. All proceeds go directly to the Youth Merit Scholarship Program, which provides financial assistance to Jewish youth participating in global educational and leadership opportunities. Call the Jacksonville Jewish Center at (904) 292-1000 for more information.

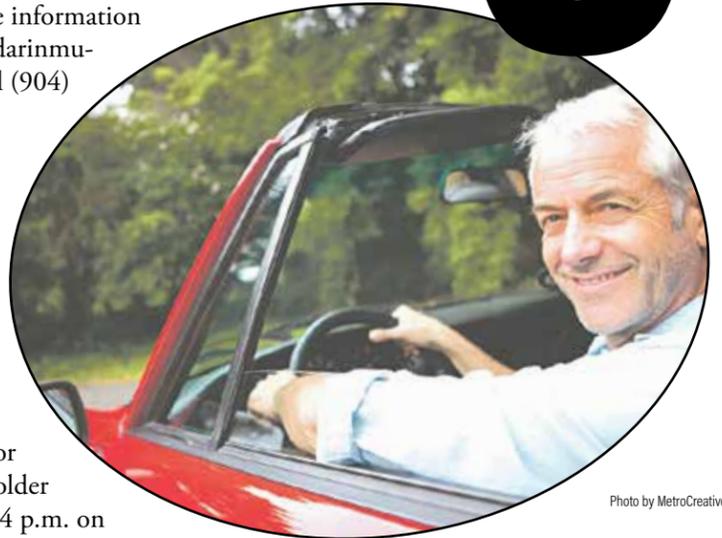
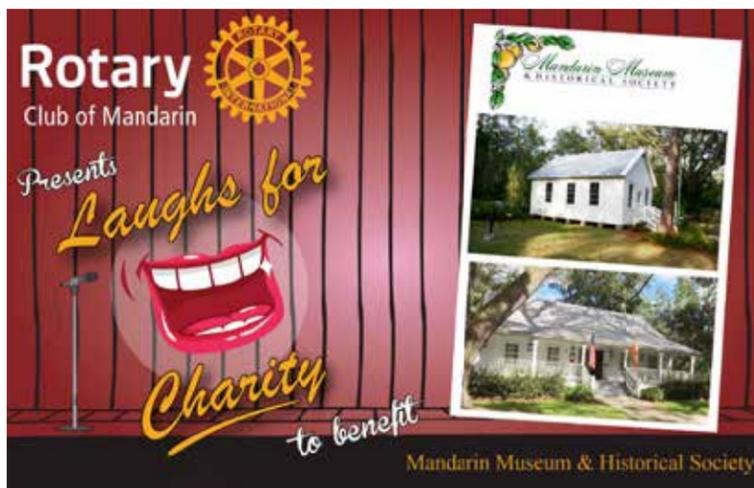


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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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29	30					

around town

save the date!

May 5 Crown Point Elementary School school carnival

11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Community welcome!

May 8 - 13 THE PLAYERS Championship TPC Sawgrass

www.theplayers.com

May 12 HAWKE's Dine on the Wild Side

5 p.m. – 9 p.m.
St. Augustine Alligator Farm
Tickets available April 15; www.hawkewildlife.org

May 12 Waves of Gray - 5K Brain Cancer Awareness Walk

8 a.m.
https://nbtsevents.brainumor.org/event/2018-waves-of-gray-5k/e146712

May 24 - 27 Jacksonville Jazz Festival

http://jacksonvillejazzfest.com

April 3

Honeybee Quilt Guild

6:30 p.m.
Mandarin Presbyterian Church, 11844 Mandarin Road
www.honeybeequilters.org (Repeats first Tuesday of each month)

April 5 - May 24

Youth Alpha Class for middle to high school students

Thursdays, 6 p.m. – 7 p.m.
Grace Chapel Christian Fellowship, 2960 Plummer Cove Road
Free; register at (904) 288-8808 or info@gracechapeljax.com

April 7

Mandarin Toastmasters meeting

10:15 a.m. – 12 p.m.
South Mandarin Library, 12125 San Jose Blvd.
Mandarintostmasters.org

Parish Bingo

6:45 p.m.
St. Joseph's Cody Center
Open to community; (904) 742-8777

Mandarin Republican Club breakfast meeting featuring Senator Aaron Bean

10 a.m.
Golden Corral, 11470 San Jose Blvd.
rmclean1@bellsouth.net

Mandarin Museum and St. Joseph's Mission Schoolhouse for African-American Children open

9 a.m. – 4 p.m. (repeating event on Saturdays)
Walter Jones Historical Park, 11964 Mandarin Road
www.mandarinmuseum.net

Toast of Jax Toastmasters meeting

7:30 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.
Baha'i Community Center of Jacksonville, 5034 Greenland Road
www.toastofjax.com (Repeating event on

Saturdays)

1911 Historic Mandarin Store and Post Office open

12 p.m. – 4 p.m.
12471 Mandarin Road
www.mandarinmuseum.net or (904) 268-0784

April 10

Shuffleboard

1:30 p.m. (repeating event on Tuesdays)
Mandarin Park, next to tennis courts at park entrance
Just show up unless it rains

April 12

American Legion Post 372 general assembly

6 p.m. meet and greet / 7 p.m. meeting
Mandarin/St. Johns Elks Lodge, 4280 Oldfield Crossing Drive
(904) 297-8344 or www.mandarinpost372.org

Mandarin Council networking luncheon

11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Bonefish Grill, 10950 San Jose Blvd.
www.mandarinCouncil.org

Magnolia Circle of the Mandarin Garden Club

10 a.m.
Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Road
(904) 260-2764; mandaringardenclub.org
Book Club/Friends of the South Mandarin Library meeting
1 p.m. / 2 p.m.
South Mandarin Branch Library, 12125 San Jose Blvd.
(904) 288-6385

April 14

St. Johns Chapter of the Catholic Writers Guild

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
St. Paul's Catholic Church school auditorium,

2609 Park St.

www.dosafl.com/outreach/catholic-writers-guild/ or writerrod@comcast.net

April 16

All Star Quilt Guild

9:45 a.m.
First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd.
www.orgsites.com/fl/allstartquiltguild or (904) 502-5254

April 17

Dogwood Circle of the Mandarin Garden Club

10 a.m.
Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Road
(904) 260-2764; mandaringardenclub.org

April 18

River City Women's Club luncheon featuring installation of new officers

10:30 a.m.
Ramada Inn Mandarin, 3130 Hartley Road
RSVP to Florence, (904) 262-8719

April 19

Laughs for Charity presented by Rotary Club of Mandarin

6 p.m. cocktails and hors d'oeuvres / 7:30 p.m. show
The Comedy Zone inside Ramada Inn Mandarin
(904) 268-5522 or jim@jimregister.com to register

Cherokee Rose Circle of the Mandarin Garden Club

10 a.m.
Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Road
(904) 260-2764; mandaringardenclub.org

April 20

Line Dancing

10 a.m. (repeating event on Fridays)
First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd.
bootsbarb194@comcast.net

April 21

Cruise In sponsored by Sunshine State Chevelles

4 p.m. – 8 p.m.
PDQ parking lot, 194 State Road 13
Repeating event on third Saturday of each month
Duck Race – Making a Splash for Autism
9:30 a.m. gate opens/race at 10:30 a.m.
Adventure Landing, 1944 Beach Blvd.
https://jaxduckrace.org

April 26

Mandarin Women's Club luncheon meeting: Game Day

10:30 am
Ramada Inn Mandarin, 3130 Hartley Road
RSVP by April 12; gerimarch23@gmail.com or (904) 993-7649

Live Oak Circle of the Mandarin Garden Club

7 p.m.
Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Road
(904) 260-2764; mandaringardenclub.org
Mandarin Council monthly breakfast
8 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.
Bonefish Grill, 10950 San Jose Blvd.
www.mandarinCouncil.org

April 28

Plant Sale

8 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Road
www.mandaringardenclub.org

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with Duval School Board Member,
District 7, Lori Hershey

Q: What is the latest information on the superintendent search?

A: We have finished with all 10 of the community meeting that were held to help develop the ideal candidate profile. The search firm will be advertising for the position and we will have a superintendent in place by July.

Q: Did you learn anything interesting during these community meetings?

A: We met with a large variety of community groups and the same values came up every time. Trustworthiness was at the top of everyone's list. Additionally, the ability to build relationships, the ability to bring the community together and being student centered were mentioned by all groups, as well as an emphasis on the importance of experience.

Q: Will there be any other opportunity for the public to be involved in the search?

A: When we have narrowed the search to the top three or four candidates, there will be an opportunity for the public to observe the interview process. Additionally, a focus group has been formed that consists of three members from each district for a total of 21 members. One member from each district must be a Duval County Public Schools employee. This group will get to interview the top three for four candidates and give a recommendation to the school board.

Q: Do you have any thoughts on the recently passed state budget as it relates to education?

A: The governor has 15 days to sign the budget and as of today (March 15) we are in the middle of this period. If the bill becomes law, 47 cents per student is the amount increase for Duval County, which equates to about \$60,000 total. We do not feel this is sufficient.

Q: What insight can you give on the school safety bill as it pertains to Duval County?

A: There are some concerning things about HB 7026. Some parts of the bill are only funded for one year, so sustainability will be difficult. Also, regarding the funding to harden our schools, the approximately \$196 million is a one-time funding that is set up as a grant — and all 67 counties in the state will have to apply for it. There is recurring funding for school resource officers, but it's not as great of an amount as that set aside to arm teachers. If a school district decides to arm district employees (including teachers), they will be trained by the Sheriff's Office — but in the event of an incident, the school is liable, not the Sheriff's Office. And the individual gets a one-time stipend of \$500 for participating. At our March meeting, the school board passed a resolution 6 – 1 that we would secure our schools with school resource officers rather than district employees.

Q: What can you share as to the safety precautions already in place in Duval County Public Schools?

A: We have a safety plan in place and we do regular Code Red drills at all of our schools. Recently, our school board chair and Superintendent Willis met with Sheriff Williams to review our plans and he said they were good plans. We have school resource officers in each middle and high school and mental health counselors in all middle schools. We are also evaluating all schools in the district for safety and some schools will receive additional fencing and security cameras where warranted. We take the security of our students and every threat we learn of very seriously.

Q: How can our readers contact you?

A: They can email me at HersheyL@duvalschools.org or call me at (904) 316-3609.



with Jacksonville City Council Member
Matt Schellenberg (District 6)

Q: Can you give us an update on County Dock?

A: The dock is in the design process now and will be going out for permitting in about 30 days. Ultimately this will lead to an RFP (request for proposal) and then construction. Unfortunately, the dock probably won't be completed until the early part of next year. The good news is that the kayak launch at County Dock will be open by the end of March.

Also, speaking of docks, the Mandarin Park dock, Hood Landing dock and Palmetto Leaves kayak launch are all being repaired and should all be completed in the next 60 – 90 days. We are getting ready for summer.

Q: What is the latest on the Losco Park playground?

A: The playground equipment is on order and we anticipate it will arrive soon and then will be constructed. The old equipment will be moved to a Mandarin neighborhood for reuse by their homeowners association.

Q: Are the sidewalks along Mandarin Road on schedule for completion?

A: They are. They are on track to be completed by the end of April. We are also working on the design of a side-

walk along Orange Picker Road from Mandarin Road to Brady Road, as well as from Orange Picker Road north about a half a mile on Mandarin Road.

Q: What is happening with the JTA property on Marbon Road?

A: The potential purchaser has another 30 days in the due diligence period before closing can occur. I think closing will probably be at the end of April. The PUD that is in place will not change.

Q: Do you have any other Mandarin updates?

A: The long-awaited expansion of the Mandarin Senior Center is currently in the design phase. This will be a \$1.5 million project. I'm looking for input from community members. I would like to include some type of outside physical activity to the plans, like possibly a trail? If anyone has suggestions, I'd like to hear from them.

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

A: Community members can email me at MattS@coj.net or call (904) 630-1388.

FYI Contact Numbers

Duval County Local Government (coj.net)

Sheriff's Office: Sheriff Mike Williams, (904) 630-2120
Patrol Zone 3: Assistant Chief J.G. Short, (904) 828-5463
Property Appraiser: Jerry Holland, jholland@coj.net; (904) 630-2011
Supervisor of Elections: Mike Hogan, mhogan@coj.net, (904) 630-1414
Tax Collector: Michael Corrigan, taxcollector@coj.net, (904) 630-1916
Clerk of Court: Ronnie Fussell, (904) 255-2000

Jacksonville City Council

District 6: Matt Schellenberg, matts@coj.net, (904) 630-1388
At Large, District 3: Tommy Hazouri, thazouri@coj.net, (904) 630-1396
Duval County School Board (www.duvalschools.org)
District 7: Lori Hershey, hershey@duvalschools.org, (904) 390-2375

State of Florida Elected Officials

State House District 16: Representative Jason Fischer, (850) 717-5016
State Senate District 4: Senator Aaron Bean, (904) 757-5039

Federal Elected Officials

U.S. Congress District 4: Representative John Rutherford, (202) 225-2501
U.S. Senate:
Senator Bill Nelson, (202) 224-5274
Senator Marco Rubio, (202) 224-3041



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Inquiring Minds want to know!

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewslines.com

We are starting a new feature in Mandarin NewsLine. If you are puzzled about something going on in Mandarin or wondering about whatever happened on a topic from a previous issue, email your question to us at editor@floridanewslines.com by the fifth of the month and we will do our best to track down the information for you.

While we will do our best to answer all the questions we receive, we may not be able to answer all questions received each month. Also, due to publication scheduling, the time it takes to research answers may vary.

So, let us hear from you. What questions would you like answered to satisfy your curiosity?

Email your question to us at editor@floridanewslines.com



with Jacksonville City Council Member
Tommy Hazouri (At Large District 3)

Q: The potential sale of JEA is still a big topic of conversation. Do you have any updates?

A: I think this question to sell has created angst among employees and citizens. The City Council has the final authority on whether JEA is sold and so far we haven't really been told anything outside of the original JEA presentation. We have a select committee that is under the auspices of the council president that is looking at whether to sell or not to sell. This committee will be in existence until June 30. So we have a short window to study this. Council members can ask questions, but we don't have the expertise to make a decision at this point.

Q: How do you expect to get more information?

A: There are so many issues to look at, including the valuation of the properties, the water and sewer component, the fact the Clay and St. Johns counties have the right of first refusal for portions of JEA in the event of a sale. We need to study all these items and despite \$100,000 that will come from the DuPont Foundation for this purpose, I think it will cost in excess of \$1 million to thoroughly study. We don't have this money.

Q: So what do you think are the next steps?

A: This is a topic of conversation that is not going away, but I don't think any decision will be made anytime soon. This is probably the biggest decision to be made by the City Council in many years. JEA could probably be sold for a premium in today's market, but is there

a deal out there that we can't refuse? One that would be in the best interests of the citizens of Jacksonville and the taxpayers? We want to protect our employees, our income (\$116 million in lieu of taxes that we currently receive from JEA) and most importantly the service we receive from JEA.

Q: Can you give us an update on the JTA property at Marbon Road?

A: JTA has entered into a purchase and sale agreement with First Coast Energy/Daily's. The due diligence period goes through mid-April and closing is anticipated to occur in mid-May. The developer will comply with the PUD as approved.

Q: Are there any statistics coming in on the effectiveness of the six-month pilot opioid program that the city is participating in?

A: We have had tremendous response to this program. Overdoses and deaths from overdoses are trending downward and we are moving away from residential treatment to outpatient and peer specialties. As of March 15, the program was expanded to the Southside location of St. Vincents, in addition to the Riverside location. At the end of May, the pilot program will conclude, but we intend for it to continue with existing funding. Soon, new funding sources, both public and private, will be needed.

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

A: They can email me at THazouri@coj.net or call (904) 630-1396.



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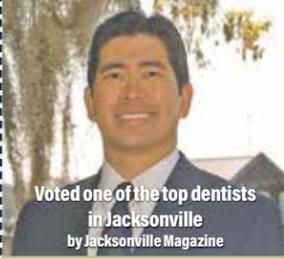
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Mandarin Target store set for redesign

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

Target has increased its investment to reimagine more than 1,000 stores by the end of 2020, in what the company says will enhance the guest experience with the next generation of store design. In addition to the 110 stores remodeled in 2017, Target plans to fully renovate more than 300 stores annually over the next few years. Those plans include the Jacksonville store on San Jose Boulevard, according to company spokesperson Liz Hancock.

Hancock said that since renovation at the Mandarin store has not started, the company doesn't have any additional details as to when everything will be started or completed.

Target's chairman and CEO Brian Cornell introduced Target's newest store redesign plans from the stage at Shoptalk, the retail and ecommerce event held in Las Vegas, as part of the company's commitment to invest billions of dollars over the next three years to reimagine hundreds of existing stores.

"With our next generation of store design, we're investing to take the Target shopping experience to the next level by offering more elevated product presentations and a number of time-saving features," said Cornell.

To create an experience that's uniquely Target, the modernized design features will include glazed, large glass windows at the front of store, stenciled concrete floors and unique lighting throughout. Additionally, the new design offers two entrances, each with a specific guest need in mind. Guests can enter through one entrance to find displays



Artist's rendering courtesy Target
Curved center aisle in the reimagined Target.

of exclusive brands and seasonal moments, and the other for easy pick-up of online orders and groceries. Outside this entrance, guests will find dedicated parking spaces where team members will bring out online orders.

Additional features include:

Elevated, cross-merchandise product presentations will amplify Target's exclusive style assortment across apparel and accessories, home, jewelry and beauty, encouraging guests to browse.

For time-starved guests, the second entrance will offer easy access to grocery, a Wine and Beer shop, self-checkout lanes and a dedicated Order Pickup counter within steps from each other.

New for Target, curved, more circular center aisles will feature merchandise displays to engage guests with products in unexpected places.

Store team members will be equipped with new technology — available in all stores this fall — to search inventory, take payment from a mobile point-of-sale system and arrange delivery, all from the sales floor.

Briefs

Hospital to add more patient rooms

Memorial Hospital is growing and will soon be able to accommodate more patients. In April, the hospital will begin a \$13 million expansion project of new patient rooms on the fifth floor of its West Tower.

The 27,688 square foot unit will house 36 additional patient beds for medical/surgical patients, bringing Memorial Hospital's total number of licensed beds to 454. The five floor-West Tower was built in 2009. Since then, the hospital has utilized four of the five floors for patients. The fifth floor was built as shell space, designed and designated for future expansion.

In addition to the expansion, new jobs will be created to care for the additional number of patients.

Construction will begin in April with the new rooms scheduled to open by the end of the year. This project coincides with the hospital's current emergency room expansion project.

Visit <http://memorialhospitaljax.com/construction> for more information.

River City Women to install new officers

The River City Women's Club meets the third Wednesday of each month for lunch, camaraderie and a fundraising program for charity at the Ramada Inn located at 3130 Hartley Road in Mandarin. Social time begins at 10:30 a.m., followed by a business meeting at 11 a.m. and then luncheon and program. The group will meet Wednesday, April 18 for installation of new officers, announcement of new committee chairs, and distribution of checks to the selected charities. Guests are welcome and luncheon reservations are required; call Florence at (904) 262-8719.

Craft fair seeks crafters

Mandarin United Methodist Women's 29th annual Fall Craft Festival will be held on Saturday, Oct. 6, 2018 at the church, located at 11270 San Jose Blvd. More than 100 crafters participate. Those who make handmade items and are interested in participating should contact Darlene at dhc1015@bellsouth.net for more information.



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♦ *Dr. Joanna McGetrick is opening a practice closer to her home in St. Augustine. Her last day seeing patients at Dermatology Specialists of Florida / Aqua Medical Spa in Jacksonville was March 22, 2018.*

♦ *We encourage patients to contact their insurance providers or The Duval County Medical Society to find another dermatologists in the area.*

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Miss Aggie Award honors first male ever

By Sandy Arpen
mail@floridanewslines.com

Since the Miss Aggie Award was created by the Mandarin Museum & Historical Society in 2003 and bestowed upon Mandarin legend Kate Monson, the recipient has always been a woman. Miss Agnes Jones was Mandarin's postmistress and owner of the Mandarin Store and Post Office from 1928 to 1964, when Mandarin was still a village. Miss Aggie, as she was affectionately called, was known for her deep sense of community and her charitable heart.

The annual award was established to honor a female who, like Miss Aggie, had contributed to the Mandarin community in the areas of business, civic, educational or charitable accomplishment. It provided an opportunity to recognize a resident for their service to the community, their caring attitude or individual accomplishments.

This year it was decided to make the award more inclusive and open to honoring anyone, male or female, now and in the future. This change is appropriate, since Miss Aggie was a pioneer in a man's world. So, the 2018 Miss Aggie Award, announced on March 3 at Miss Aggie Day, went to the first male recipient: Donald Bowden, Mandarin's Frog Man!

Three years ago the mysterious Frog Man came to the Mandarin Museum & Historical Society and offered to help raise funds for the schoolhouse renovation by selling a few frogs. Everybody had already become used to seeing these concrete frogs on the back roads of Mandarin on tree stumps and bridge posts, but nobody knew who was mak-



Photo courtesy Mandarin Museum & Historical Society
Miss Aggie Award recipient for 2018, Donald Bowden, Mandarin's Frog Man.

ing them. These few frogs sold so fast that he then asked if we'd like to keep selling them in the museum gift shop... and, as they say, "the rest is history!"

In the last three years Bowden has worked 50 – 60 hours per week to make, paint and sell more than 3,000 concrete frogs, turtles and squirrels — all made from four molds. He has done this totally as a gift to Mandarin Museum and the community and has taken absolutely no money, even for supplies, but has raised more than \$55,000 for the museum's Expansion Fund and in support of programs and events.

In addition to his charitable gift, Bowden has managed to bring the community together in a very unexpected way. The frogs caught on and people started talking about them and wanting one and visitors from out of state took them back to their homes. (We know of at least 30 states that now have Mandarin frogs). He decided to start holding painting parties on the lawn in front of the museum, where people from 18 months to age 90 have sat under the live oaks trees painting

Miss Aggie Award cont. on pg. 9

Toastmasters advance to area competition

By Stephanie Gerbec
mail@floridanewslines.com

Mandarin Toastmasters hosted its club level International Speech and Table Topics Contest on Feb. 17 and one of the club's members progressed to Area Contest, held March 3. From there, contestants have the ability to make it to the International level, and the winner will have the opportunity to speak at the Toastmasters International Convention.

At the club level, Mandarin Toastmasters was proud to announce the winners of the International Speech Contest. First place was Ed Zoller, second place was Marla Lazaro-Beyer and third place was Jennifer Suharmadji.

The Table Topics contest was also a success, with first place going to Lazaro-Beyer, second to Hiramant Shet and third to Stephanie Gerbec.

Zoller and Lazaro-Beyer were the contestants who went forth to represent Mandarin Toastmasters in the Area 61 and 62 contests. The club contest was



Photo courtesy Stephanie Gerbec
Contest chair, Laura Lopez, third place speaker Jennifer Suharmadji, first place winner Ed Zoller, second place winner Marla Lazaro-Beyer, and Division F Director for District 84, Maribel Hernandez.

chaired by Laura Lopez and Toastmaster for the event was Division F Director Maribel Hernandez. Between their infectious spirit and enthusiasm for Toastmasters, together they led the club through a successful and boisterous meeting. Laughs are never in short supply for this tight knit club.

With the end of the Toastmasters year in sight, July is sure to bring big changes along with a switch up in leadership. Those interested in a supportive and positive learning environment are welcome to stop in. Mandarin Toastmasters meets the first and third Saturday of each month at the South Mandarin Branch Library, on San Jose Boulevard near Orange Picker Road.

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Mandarin Garden Club happenings

By Betty Waldrep
mail@floridanewsline.com

Every April, the Mandarin Garden Club holds a special event for the community; the annual Plant Sale will take place on Saturday, April 28 from 8 a.m. — 2 p.m. at the club located at 2892 Loretto Road. Most plants are grown by garden club members and will be rooted and labeled. The club does not sell invasive plants.

Gardening equipment and furniture will be for sale, too. There will be gardening books, magazines, baskets and garden art for sale by the club. Outside on the grounds there will be local vendors selling gardening related items.

The Masons will be at the club selling a barbeque lunch. The barbeque can also be purchased by the pound; be sure to come before noon because the barbeque goes fast. Homemade baked goods will be for sale in the Garden Café and the club will have free coffee and water in the café.



Photos courtesy Betty Waldrep
The Mandarin Garden Club's annual Plant Sale will be held on Saturday, April 28.

April is one of the months the gardens are beautiful at the club. The master gardeners and members have been working in the gardens to prepare them for the April Plant Sale, so it's a good time to tour the gardens and enjoy the wildlife.

Recently, the club held a personal safety and information seminar for its members. Officer Dukes from the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office spoke about different ways each person could be responsible for his or her own safety. Some of the tips she gave were for ladies to use crossover bags when shopping; to light up your property and always be aware of your surroundings. She also advised using good locks and said cameras really do help.

Miss Aggie Award cont. from pg. 8

their very own unique frogs. He literally created an event that has given people a "sense of place" and belonging in this now sprawling suburb of Mandarin.

"It's my way of giving back to the community that my family helped settle in the late 1700s and to the place I have lived and worked in all of my life," Bowden said.

It is safe to say that Donald Bowden also has a deep sense of community and a very charitable heart and is very deserving to receive this 2018 Miss Aggie Award recognition.

Sandy Arpen is president of the board of directors of the Mandarin Museum & Historical Society.

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SUMMER CAMP GUIDE





5 reasons why summer camp is a good choice for kids

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

Summer vacation offers students a respite from lessons and the routine of school. Children might once have eagerly awaited those final days of classes so they could lounge poolside, skip rocks across ponds and spend the long days of the season playing with friends. But many of today's youngsters spend much of their summer vacations indoors playing with their digital devices.

Perhaps that's why one of the last vestiges of the classic summer vacation escape — summer camp — remains such a viable option for parents who want their children to get outdoors once the school year ends.

Although kids needn't be in camp all summer long, a week or two can benefit campers of all ages. The following are five reasons why summer camp might be the right fit this year.

1. Explore talents. Summer camps help young people explore their unique interests and talents. Under an organized, yet often easygoing, camp schedule, kids can dabble in sports, arts and crafts, leadership, community support, and so many other activities that may not be fully available to them elsewhere.

2. Physical activity. Lots of camps build their itineraries around physical activities that takes place outdoors. Campers may spend their time swimming, running, hiking, playing sports, climbing, and so much more. This can be a welcome change for kids accustomed to living sedentary lifestyles. Regular physical activity has many health benefits and can set a foundation for healthy habits as an adult.

3. Gain confidence. Day and sleep-away camps offer campers the opportunity to get comfortable in their own

skin. Camps can foster activities in self-esteem by removing the academic measures of success and fill in with noncompetitive opportunities to succeed. Campers learn independence, decision-making skills and the ability to thrive outside of the shadow

of their parents, siblings or other students.

4. Try new things. Camp gives children the chance to try new things, whether that's learning to cook, exploring new environments or embracing a new sport or leisure activity. Opening oneself up to new opportunities can build character and prove enlightening for children.

5. Make new friends. Camp is a great place to meet new people and make lifelong friends. Campers flood in from areas near and far. This provides kids with a chance to expand their social circles beyond their immediate neighborhoods and schools.



Photo by MetroCreative

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SUMMER CAMP GUIDE





How to keep kids engaged over school breaks

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewline.com

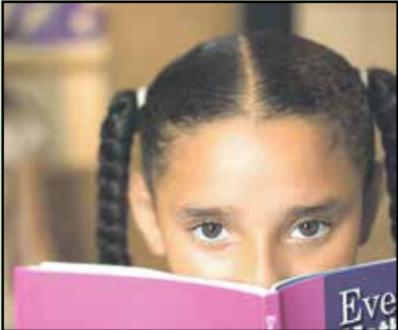


Photo courtesy MetroCreative

Reading is a great way for students to keep their brains sharp during prolonged school breaks.

Children in North America will spend, on average, more than 900 hours attending school in a given year. The average school year in the United States lasts 1,016 hours, the equivalent of 42 continuous days. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, many developed countries begin their academic years in September and end them in June.

As much time as kids spend in school, there will be times when they are left to their own devices, and during these times it's easy for them to forget classroom lessons. Sometimes called "summer learning loss" or "summer slide," this forgetfulness sees many students fail to retain all of their lessons over

prolonged breaks from school. Studies indicate that students score lower on standardized tests at the end of the summer compared to their performance on the same tests at the beginning of summer. Anywhere from between one to three month's worth of educational achievement can dissipate during prolonged breaks from the classroom. To help ensure that those hard-earned lessons are not so easily forgotten, parents can help children remain intellectually engaged in various ways over school breaks.

- Stick to a schedule. Try to maintain a schedule similar to school, with children waking at the same time each day and going to bed at similar hours. This will make it much easier to get back into a routine when a new school year begins.

- Encourage reading. Set aside time for reading each day. All it generally takes is 15 to 30 minutes of reading per day for kids to remember their vocabulary lessons and maintain their fluency and comprehension skills. Children may enjoy picking their own books rather than having a required reading list.

- Keep a math book handy. On long car trips or rainy days, children can do a few math problems to keep their skills sharp. This will help keep learning loss to a minimum. Math workbooks may

be available at bookstores, or parents can look online or ask a teacher for a summer to-do packet.

- Plan educational trips. Vacations and day trips can be fun, entertaining and educational all at the same time. Science centers, museums and living history locations can bring to life information learned in the classroom, even on family vacations.

- Learn at camp. Many children attend camp for a portion of their school

breaks. Look for camps that do not simply babysit children, but engage them through enrichment activities.

- Take a class. Children and families can learn together by exploring new skills. Enroll in something educational and enjoyable, such as a music or dance class, a STEM seminar or something else that engages the mind and body. This gives everyone a chance to learn something new and have a great time together as a family.

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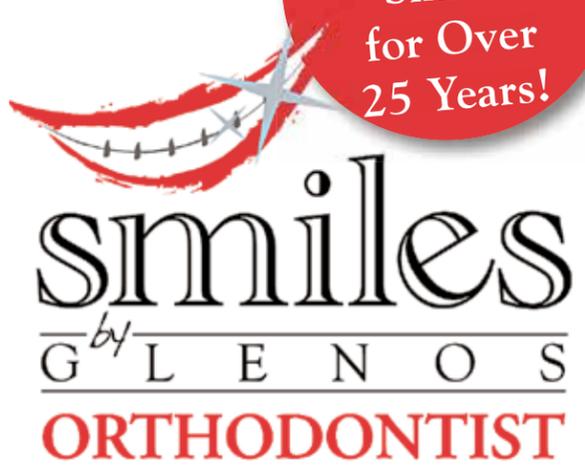
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Bartram Springs Elementary Run Club provides healthy start to school day

By Rachael Sircar
mail@floridanewline.com

Fun, healthy, and exciting. Those are only three of many words that describe the Bartram Springs Elementary Run Club.

Started in 2017 by P.E. Coach Kathleen Carney, the Run Club takes place two days a week on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 7:30 a.m. – 8 a.m. More than 120 students from kindergarten through fifth grade enthusiastically participate.



Photos courtesy Bartram Springs Elementary Run Club takes place on Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

Part of the incentive to keep kids moving are the rewards earned for miles run. Currently the students have run more than 1,700 miles collectively. Some parents and other teachers join the students as they run or walk the track in the morning. Teachers have mentioned that they



More than 120 students from kindergarten through fifth grade participate.



Bartram Springs Elementary Run Club received a grant from Action for Healthy Kids in the amount of \$1,000, which allows the students to participate for free this year.

Rachael Sircar is a second grade teacher at Bartram Springs Elementary

have noticed improved behavior and focus on days their students attend Run Club.



Photo courtesy Mary J. Eyer

Glowing fun at Crown Point Elementary

On Friday, Feb. 9, Crown Point Elementary PTA hosted the school's third annual Neon Dance for the students. Parents and faculty took some time off and came to enjoy a fun night of dancing with their students — even Principal Hartley was there dancing with the crowd. The glowing walls and the DJ's light show added lots of fun and excitement to the event. The students, parents, and teachers danced for hours, while “glowing” on the dance floor.



Photo courtesy St. Joseph Catholic School

The St. Joseph Catholic School team won third place at the STEAM Day competition.

St. Joseph Catholic School wins third place at BK STEAM Day competition

By Maya Jokisch
mail@floridanewline.com

On Feb. 24, St. Joseph Catholic School competed against 23 other teams at the second annual STEAM Day at Bishop Kenny High School. The object of the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) competition was to build a bridge out of hot glue and spaghetti. The bridge, crafted by the team from St. Joseph, held a bucket of sand weighing 47 pounds before succumbing to the weight, winning third place for the spaghetti bridge. The bridge judging was not the only event of the morning; there were also many fun science activities such as making foam blob statues and a scavenger hunt.



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Get to Know . . .

By Angela Higginbotham
angela@floridanewsline.com

Jenna Harrington

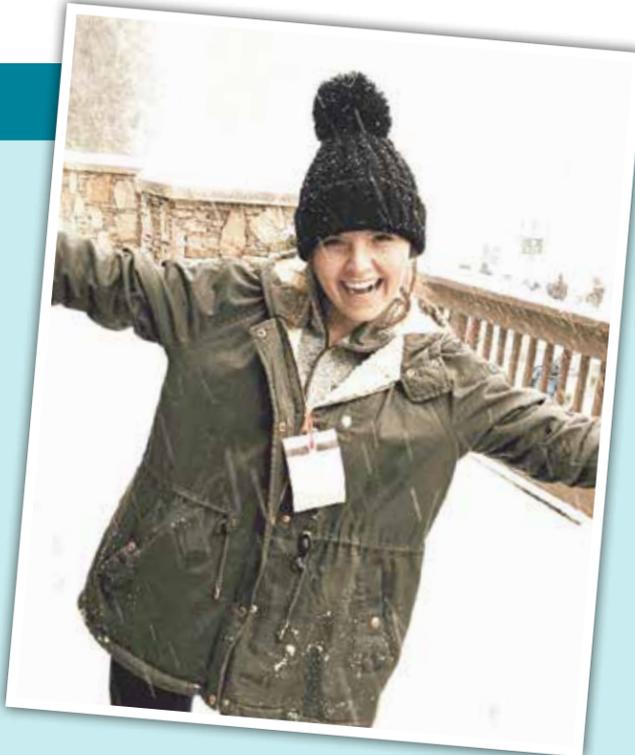


Photo courtesy Jenna Harrington
Jenna Harrington

Wise far beyond her years, 16-year-old Jenna Harrington is a Mandarin High School junior who has lived in the Jacksonville area her entire life. Passionate about cancer research and giving back to others, Harrington sets a strong, positive example for children and young adults. Harrington has been an active volunteer with Relay for Life for the past 12 years. During this time, Harrington and her teams have raised \$100,000 for cancer research and patient services.

She is a member of the National Honor Society and is in the top 5 percent of her class at Mandarin High School. Harrington lives in Mandarin with her mom, Jennifer, her twin brothers and her cousins.

1. What do you enjoy most about living in Mandarin?

I like that it's a big city, but you can still run into people you know everywhere you go. It's like a small town inside of a bigger city.

2. What or who inspired you to become involved with Relay for Life?

My uncle passed away in 2007 and I joined a team in honor of him. We also just lost my dad in November to lung cancer, so there's even more motivation now for myself and my family to stay involved. We usually have about 20 family members and friends on our team.

3. What do you enjoy doing outside of your volunteer work?

I've been active with PedsCare advisory board. PedsCare is a program for children with life limiting and life threatening conditions. I like to plan events and hang out with the kids there.

I enjoy tennis, going to the beach, and spending time with my friends. I'm also a shopaholic.

4. What are your plans after high school graduation?

I would like to attend the University of Georgia. We took some tours and I just

fell in love with UGA. I want to study communications and event planning. Planning fundraisers and meetings for Relay for Life has shown me my passion for working with people and organizations to plan events.

5. If you could spend the day with anyone, who would it be and why?

I would spend another day with my dad. It's been hard to live without him, so seeing him again would be a dream come true.

Connect for a Cure cont. from pg. 1

Cancer survivors represent hope and prove that cancer can be defeated. The Relay for Life opening ceremony to honor cancer survivors will begin at 12 p.m. Directly following the ceremony, survivors will kick off the relay by walking the first lap around the track. Emotions will be high as survivors will be cheered on by their supportive loved ones, caregivers, and all relay participants. A survivor luncheon with bingo will begin at 1:30 p.m. Caregivers are welcome to join the survivors for lunch. Luminaria bags will be lit at dusk to honor and remember loved ones who fought cancer so bravely.

"At least 40 teams with 10 – 20 people per team are set to participate in the relay," said event lead Becky Kimball. "Relay teams will hold individual fundraisers throughout the day by selling crafts and food. All proceeds will benefit the American Cancer Society and our goal is \$92,000 this year."

Entertainment will include a live performance from the Julington Creek Elementary third – fifth grade chorus, local band Wingfield, Zumba, St. Augustine belly dancers, Pine Forest Elementary School of the Arts, and a talent show.

Visit www.relayforlife.org/nstjfl for additional information or to register as a survivor, participant and/or team. Volunteers are desperately needed and students are welcome. Contact the committee at RFL.northsaintjohnscounty@gmail.com for volunteer information.

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Get your poetry—and health—on at the library

By Kaylee Burke
mail@floridanewline.com

Since its creation in April 1996, National Poetry Month has become the No. 1 literary celebration in the world. It's a great time to focus on the important role poetry plays in our society and to exercise the poetry muscle you might not even know you have.

South Mandarin and Mandarin libraries are a wonderful resource for exploring poetry in many ways. Check out the library's vast collection of poetry books or take part in a related program such as Poetry in Unexpected Places, a lively watch party and discussion at Mandarin Library on April 16 from 2 p.m. – 3 p.m. You'll learn about the powerful impact poetry writing can have on challenging times in life when you watch a special TED Talk about poetry workshops held in prison environments.

Song lyrics and poetry share many similarities. Do you think teens and tweens have the skills to differentiate one from the other? They'll have a blast finding out when they challenge themselves during Game On: Poetry Song Slam from 6 p.m. – 7 p.m. on April 18 at the South Mandarin Branch Library.

What happens when basketball meets poetry? You get Poetry Slam Dunk! School age children will have a ball in this action-packed program that mixes sports with writing. Kids create and share a poem on the spot, then slam dunk a ball into the net at the Mandar

in Library on April 25 from 3 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Jacksonville Public Library wants to help you become your healthiest self. Pop into South Mandarin Library on April 17 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. for a Health Fair for 50+ featuring Thrive Chiropractic, Vitamin Shoppe, Walgreens and more. Learn about the library's databases that promote health, and take advantage of free blood pressure checks, spinal screenings, eye exams, five-minute massages, and a meditation workshop. Pick up nutritional information and stay for a Q&A session.

It's been shown that reading with dogs improves children's attitudes towards reading. It boosts self-confidence, which reduces anxiety levels surrounding reading. In addition to enhancing kids' reading skills, interacting with an animal also helps establish kindness and empathy. Mandarin Library is giving kids of all ages an opportunity to read with local therapy dogs Trey and Shelley on April 7 from 11 a.m. – 12 p.m. and with Diva and Tenor on April 14 from 2 p.m. – 3 p.m. Don't miss out on these "pawsitively" fun reading experiences!

Find information about additional upcoming events at Mandarin and South Mandarin branch libraries at jaxpubliclibrary.org/events or call the Mandarin Branch Library at (904) 262-5201 or the South Mandarin Branch Library at (904) 288-6385.

Fishing

Capt. David's Fishing Report

By Captain David Lifka
mail@floridanewline.com

Spring has sprung and so has the fishing. Ideally, by this time of the year you should have the dust off the gear or be shopping many of the great spring time tackle sales that are now taking place.

Recent fishing has been really good and should only improve in the coming weeks. As always for this time of year, the surf is hot with plentiful catches of whiting, and the surf fisherman's favorite, the great tasting pompano.

Shrimp and sand flea baits are both these species' favorite. Being able to long cast past breakers and sandbars is usually a must for catching pompano. Fishing around low tide will help make the long casts needed a bit easier. Fishing for whiting in the surf is less strenuous, usually only requiring shorter casts far enough to get right behind the breakers on the immediate shoreline. Store bought pompano rigs work really well for attracting both species in the surf.

Currently, the freshwater scene is at its finest fishing, if it is trophy largemouth bass that you are wanting to catch. Whether they are going on the bed or coming off the bed, springtime bass are at their hungriest right now and easiest to catch. Trophy size bass can be caught in most any neighborhood pond, area lakes, area creeks, or the St. Johns River shorelines and docks.

Although the purest of bass fishermen will consider artificial bait as the only means to catch a bass, live wild shiners are the one singular bait that no bass can refuse, especially a trophy. Wild shiners can be attracted by tossing bread into the water and then caught with a small hook and line with a bread ball for bait. They are also readily available at area bait stores in Orangedale and Green Cove Springs. An aerated bait bucket will be needed to keep your shiners alive. Remember to always have a scale, a tape measure, and a camera with you to document your trophy of six pounds or larger as the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) does offer a rewards program for trophy catches. Visit myfwc.com to find out more.

Fishing Report: Bass fishing in area freshwater is at its peak and is a "best bet" for anyone wanting to catch a largemouth. Surf fishing is also at its best time of year right now with a variety of species to be caught. Fishing the last and the start of a high or low tide should help improve your chances of bringing home a catch to feed the family.

Whether you catch one, some or none, the family time spent fishing will last a lifetime.

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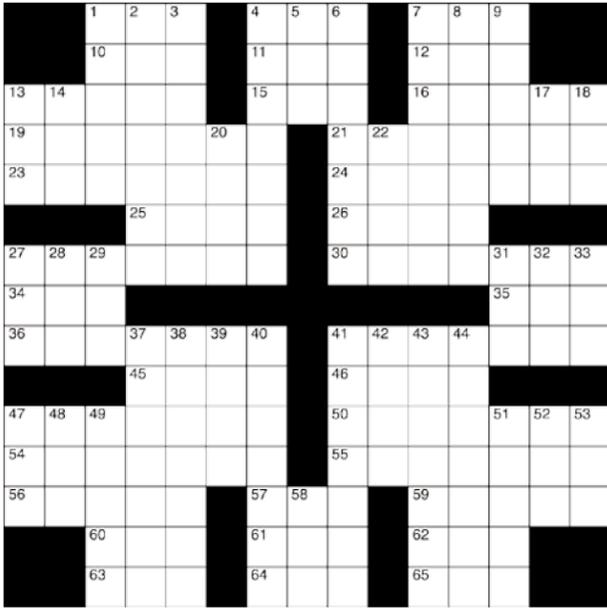


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Puzzles

Answers to puzzles on page 2
Provided by MetroCreative



- CLUES ACROSS**
- Chop or cut
 - Green veggie
 - Bar bill
 - Doctors' group
 - One who buys and sells securities (slang)
 - Be in debt
 - Lively ballroom dance
 - Singer Charles
 - Polish city
 - Former
 - Dismissing from employment
 - Minerals
 - Plotted
 - Consult
 - After a prayer
 - Agents of one's downfall
 - Leaseholders
 - Supervises flying
 - Voodoo god
 - Alfalfa

- Apply another coat to
- Witnesses
- Jai __, sport
- Ones who proof
- Recant
- Small group with shared interests
- Part of warming headgear
- Woolen cloth
- Snag
- Central American fruit tree
- Woman (French)
- The 22nd letter of the Greek alphabet
- Type of bed
- Soviet Socialist Republic
- Consume
- Japanese freight company (abbr.)

- CLUES DOWN**
- Czech monetary unit
 - Able to arouse intense feeling
 - Elk
 - Muscular weaknesses
 - Geological time
 - Depths of the ocean
 - Burns to the ground
 - Becomes cognizant of
 - Cause to shade
 - US political party
 - Refers to some of a thing
 - Single
 - Type of beer
 - Ancient Iranian people
 - Grocery chain
 - Gridiron league
 - English river
 - __ and cheese
 - Peyton's younger brother
 - Long time
 - High schoolers' test
 - Respects
 - Organize anew

- Filippo __, Saint
- Intrinsic nature of something
- Cheese dish
- Ancient Greek City
- Patron saint of Ireland
- Produced by moving aircraft or vehicle
- Shock treatment
- __ Jones
- Things
- Having wings
- Panthers' QB Newton
- Third-party access
- Satisfaction



Solve the code to discover words related to tropical destinations. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 4 = a)

A. 17 1 24 9 21 5 4 16
Clue: Hot and humid

B. 21 25 16 4 11 7
Clue: Surrounded by water

C. 13 4 5 4 17 21 24 11
Clue: Getaway

D. 5 24 4 25 17 4 16
Clue: Near the beach

ISLAND VACATION WORD SEARCH

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

WORDS

- BEACH
- BIRDS
- BLUE
- BOARDWALK
- BOATING
- CONCH
- CORAL
- COVE
- CRUISE
- CULTURE
- DESTINATION
- DOCK
- DUNE
- EXPLORE
- FISH
- FOLIAGE
- GULL
- HUMIDITY
- ISLAND
- LUSH
- OCEAN
- PALM
- PEBBLES
- PENINSULA
- SAND
- SCUBA
- SEASHELLS
- SHORELINE
- SNORKEL
- SUNSHINE
- SWIMSUIT
- TIDE
- TROPICS
- VACATION
- WARMTH
- WAVES

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally & diagonally throughout the puzzle.



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Gardening

Spring greening

By Master Gardener Lesley Arrandale
mail@floridanewslines.com

There has been much discussion — both here and worldwide — about the effects of neonicotinoid chemicals (neonics) on bees and their colonies, and now more studies have shown that these effects are wide-ranging and very damaging. According to the European Food Safety Authority (<https://tinyurl.com/yao3ynk6>), not only are honey bees being harmed, but native bees are suffering too, which is problematic as they also play an important role in crop production. (There have been proposals in Europe for a total field ban of the three most damaging neonics: clothianidin, imidacloprid, and thia-

methoxam, which are already subject to restrictions.) Because they are persistent in soil for some years, neonics can be taken up by other plants well after the initially treated crop was harvested, and their effects on bees is therefore not limited to a one-time application.

Homeowners have a perfect role here, and that would be to avoid using pesticides that contain neonics. Reading the label is of paramount importance with any chemical, and you will find that many of the products available for home use do indeed include neonics. The Xerces Society has a useful table

of the chemical names of neonics, and some of the products that contain them: <https://tinyurl.com/y87c38sl>. Apart from bees, any pollinator species that works the pollen or nectar of flowers is potentially at risk, and unfortunately that includes our beloved butterflies (<https://tinyurl.com/ybvzjgow>).

The Florida-Friendly Landscaping program advocates the use of Integrated Pest Management, or IPM, when dealing with pests. With spring moving on apace and our landscapes coming to life, it's well worth looking again at the nine principles governing the program: Right Plant, Right Place; Water Efficiently; Fertilize Appropriately; Mulch; Attract Wildlife; Manage Yard Pests Responsibly; Recycle Yard Waste; Reduce Stormwater Runoff; and Protect the Waterfront: <https://tinyurl.com/ksuclf>. Each heading in the article is a link to more detailed information on how to achieve a Florida-Friendly yard and an explanation of why it's important to do so.

By early to mid-April lawns will have started to green up and at this stage it's time to fertilize. The Florida-Friendly website has detailed information about the types of fertilizer and recommended application rates for specific grasses, and is well worth reading before going to the store. Slow release fertilizers are the way to go; they contain some nitrogen that will be available immediately and the remainder is released gradually, allowing your grass to make the best use of the entire product. Without that slow release component, most of the nitrogen would be released during the first big rain, and be lost in run-off, to the detriment of our waterways and your pocketbook. For more detailed advice, check out <https://tinyurl.com/yjarjhf>.

If you have weed problems avoid "weed and feed" products as the best application times for herbicides and fertilizers don't usually coincide (<https://tinyurl.com/y8adxd92>).

Although weed and feed products are covered here <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep141>, it is simpler to apply the fertilizer and herbicide separately to be sure that your application rates are correct for each. And if the weed problem is not across the whole lawn, then a combined product is even less economical.

As we move into spring, remember that it's usually one of the drier times of year. Vegetable crops need enough irrigation to keep producing well, and newly installed landscape plants can't be ignored if they are to become well established. Trees in particular, if they were planted in recent months, will still need supplemental watering: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep113>.

It astonishes me how quickly our deciduous trees unfurl their spring show. Just driving around town the difference in appearance from day to day is really striking. Each species has its own timetable, with red maples coming to life particularly early, but it seems that individual trees within a species green up to their own schedule. There are three huge hickory trees in my street, and each begins putting on its spring show at a slightly different time. And at the other end of the year, they drop their leaves independently. Cultural practices must play a role, but genetics also factor in, which leads me to believe that if we enjoy propagating our own plants, we should aim to grow them from seed as far as possible, and not just root our plants from cuttings. That way we keep the genetic diversity of a species, since each seed is truly unique. (Hybrid seeds are the exception, being produced for guaranteed uniform plants.) This is a great resource about both types of propagation for those of you who are interested: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/mg108>.

For those timely tips, the current issue of A New Leaf is available at <https://tinyurl.com/y9yfxd89>. Happy spring.

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Travel

Butterfly Rainforest in Gainesville

By Debi Lander
mail@floridanewslines.com

Recently, two of my grandchildren visited and we headed to the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville. The museum includes an awe-inspiring Butterfly Rainforest filled with numerous species of free-flying butterflies. A serpentine trail through the aviary passes cascading waterfalls and small bridges over pools with fish and turtles.

Enter the main lobby of the museum and the always popular, giant dinosaur skeleton pulls you in. On the left, the Discovery Zone offers fun, hands-on exhibits where kids and adults engage, unknowingly learning scientific principles. My grandsons loved the microscopes. They put their fingers under the scope and saw the magnification displayed on a TV screen. Nearby, many encased insects or objects were ready for further observation and manipulation. Younger children pretended to navigate a boat model and explore the Gulf of Mexico and its marine life. The curious opened the discovery drawers, while others attempted to assemble archeological pieces like a 3-D puzzle, or looked into a terrarium and an aquarium.

The Natural History pathway weaves through a timeline of Florida's history, exploring the various habitats and creatures that thrive in the different ecosystems. We strolled through a full-scale mangrove forest and mud flat filled with plants, animals, light and sound. The boys ran ahead into the replica of a Florida cave holding (non-living

bats, fossils, minerals, stalactites and stalagmites. But soon, they found the darkened interior a bit creepy!

Before entering the Butterfly Rainforest, visitors pass several live video cam screens displaying thousands of monarch butterflies in Mexico. Then, guests approach a kaleidoscope of color that simply wows. A massive glass wall showcases hundreds of spectacular butterfly specimens allowing close-up inspection of the colorful wing patterns and designs.

Finally, you walk through a series of doorways (to prevent butterfly escapes), and enter the magical world of the rainforest. Informative signage tells visitors about the habits and life cycle (metamorphosis) of butterflies and moths, known collectively as lepidopterans. Benches are interspersed along the trail so you can sit and leisurely observe. You'll notice that certain plants attract only specific species. The museum also places food around, such as ripe bananas, to entice the hungry creatures.

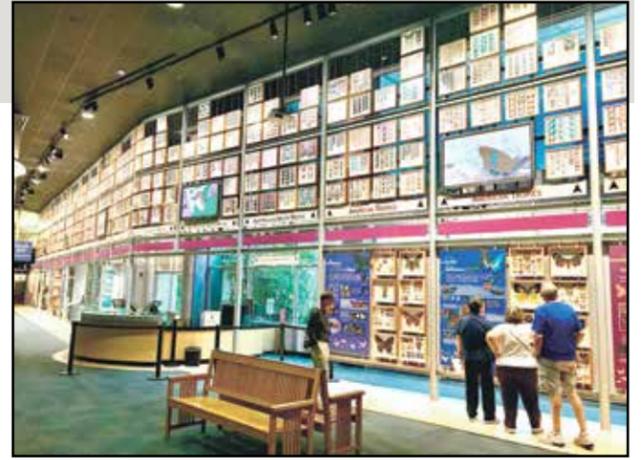
Careful scrutiny reveals tiny birds living near the base of plants and trees. I didn't see these little birds fly, but the airspace bursts with a bevy of butterflies. If you stand still and are lucky, one might land on your head or sleeve.

Daily, at 2 p.m. (more often on busy days) a research student releases newly hatched butterflies and answers questions. When you exit the aviary, you can pass by the lab and see others in

various stages of development.

The museum is free except for the Butterfly Rainforest; its cost is \$11 for Florida residents or seniors, and \$6 for ages three – 17.

You can't miss the two gift shops; one filled with everything concerning butterflies, and the main gift shop offering science-oriented books, games, puzzles, and toys. There's a café across the way, and a covered patio with tables and chairs so you can bring your



Photos courtesy Debi Lander
At the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville.

own food. This is a great activity for a rainy day.

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

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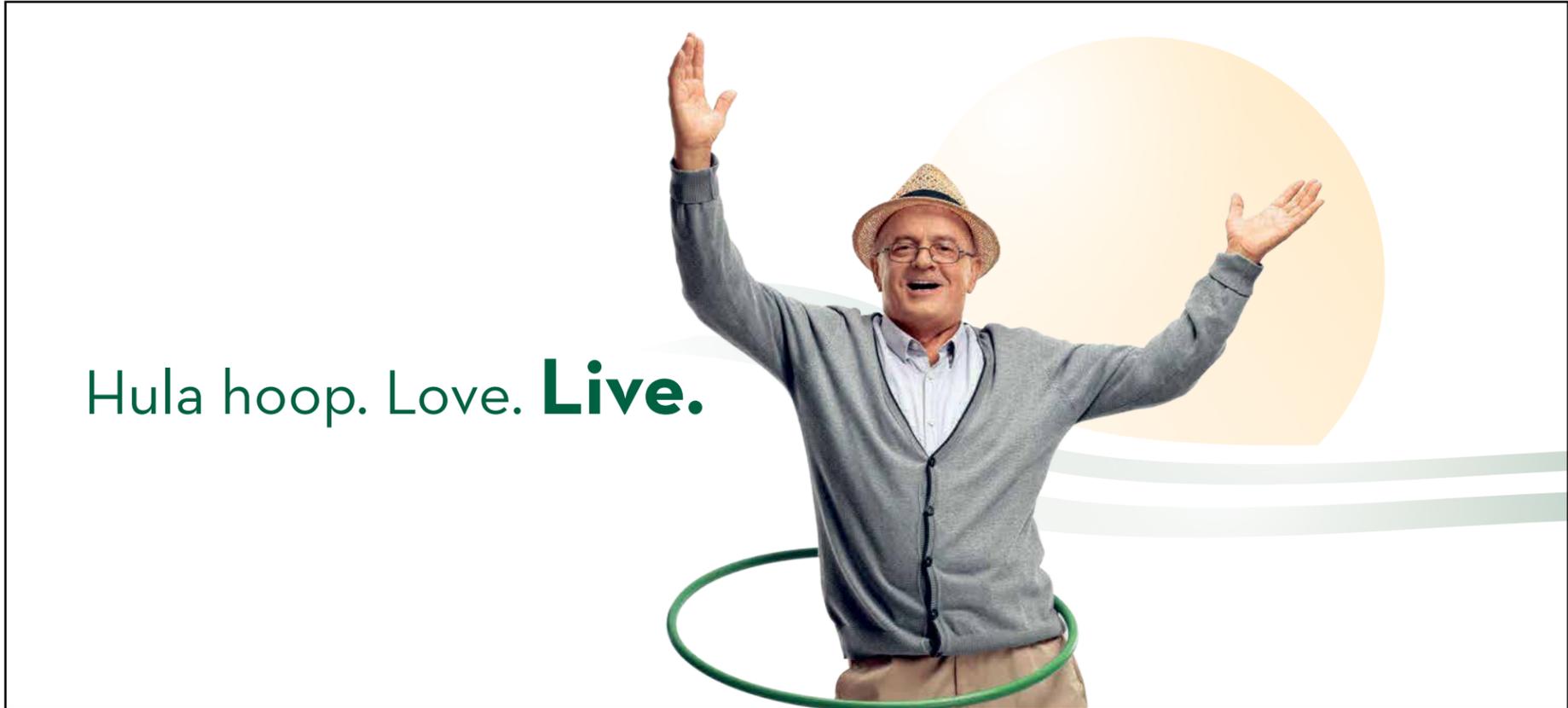
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