

Ponte Vedra NewsLine

JULY 2019 Volume 6 Issue 7

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

A Florida NewsLine Publication



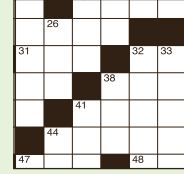
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What you need to know about the new texting and driving law

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewline.com

On July 1, Florida joins most of the rest of the nation by enacting a law making texting and driving illegal. Previously a secondary offense, the new law makes this a primary offense and allows law enforcement to pull over drivers for texting without committing another offense such as speeding. Fines for texting and driving will be about \$116 and three points can be assessed to a driver's license, according to St. Johns County Sheriff's Office NW District Commander Kevin Cronin.



Photo by MetroCreative

Cronin said the law does not permit drivers to do anything with manipulating alpha/numeric digits on a phone or sending / receiving data. He said at this point, the law appears to have an exemption for the use of GPS/navigation equipment, but he plans to wait to see the exact verbiage contained when the final law is issued. Drivers are permitted to use their devices while at a traffic light, as long as they are at a complete stop.

Even holding a phone up to one's face to talk will now be illegal in school and construction zones; hands free devices such as Bluetooth must be used.

Texting and driving cont. on pg. 10

Vicar's Landing scholarship program observes special anniversary

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewline.com

On May 18, the Vicar's Landing Member Trust celebrated its 25th year of granting scholarships to Vicar's Landing employees, continuing a tradition first established in 1994. This year, 88 employees received general awards up to \$2,500. Also, 23 Special Scholarships, ranging in value from \$1,000 to \$3,000, were granted. The special awards are given in addition to the general awards.

According to Bill Tickle, chair of the Scholarship Committee, recipients may use the general scholarships for anything from trade school to college classes to English courses. The Special Scholarships are generally awarded to employees attending a four year college or the equivalent or even post graduate studies.

"General scholarship recipients meet requirements such as length of employment and number of hours worked, plus they need the recommendation of their supervisor," Tickle said. "Special scholarship recipients have to meet these guidelines plus write an essay and have a stronger supervisor recommendation."

Tickle said that more people apply for the special scholarships than the committee

can award, so they rely on the essays and the supervisor recommendations to make their decision.

The total awards this year amounted to \$261,500. Since the scholarship program began, more than \$4.7 million has been awarded. The scholarship program was initially established by a dedicated group of Vicar's Landing members who understood the value of education and wanted to provide opportunities for hard-working employees at Vicar's Landing. Eleven scholarships were awarded in that first year.

Due to the generous support of Vicar's members, the program continues to flourish. Each year, additional funds are received from the annual Vicar's Boutique, other fundraising programs and endowments. This year, the Vicar's Boutique will take place on Nov. 12, 2019.

"I was pleased to be asked to join the Scholarship Committee, made up of about six Vicar's Landing residents, four years ago. This is my third and final year



Photos courtesy Toni Porterfield
Bill Tickle, chair of the scholarship committee.

as chairman of the committee," Tickle said. "It's apparent, and I believe most residents would agree, that awarding the scholarships is one of the most important things we do here at Vicar's Landing, because we are helping our employees."



Scholarship award recipients with Bill Tickle.



Special scholarship recipients Sakinah Jackson and Nicole Audette, both of Health Services, with CEO Bruce Jones.

Ponte Vedra Branch Library encourages summer reading ... for the whole family

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewline.com

It's time to head to the library for summer reading fun — for kids, teens, and adults. This year, the St. Johns County Public Library System is offering a refreshed and fun take on library summer reading — The Best Summer, which features new reading logs and new rewards for readers.

"We are trying to offer programming for all ages," Branch Manager Amy Ring said. "We understand that not everyone is a reader, and we offer so much more than just books. We want to invite people to come into the library."

The local theme for the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library's Kids' Summer Reading Program is "Up, Up, and Away — Read Every Day!" According to Ring, there are three age brackets competing: birth through age five; ages six through eight; and ages nine through 11. For every day a child reads (or is read to by a parent) they put a mark on their reading log. For every fifth day read, the child may come into the library and put their name on a paper hot air balloon and hang it on a specially decorated wall. The library's goal is to have a full wall of colorful hot air balloons by the end of the program on July 27.

Attending library programs that invite kids to visit with animals, learn more about local history, build with LEGO robotics, and more, also count as a day read. Teens, whose summer entry form/reading log is very similar to that of the adults, can connect with their peers in a "Teen Lounge" with programs just for them or meet friends for video games or board games.

The Best Summer invites teens and adults to complete entries from a list of activi-

Summer reading cont. on pg. 10

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BFF Best Furry Friend of the month

Meet Ella!

BREED:

Silver Labrador

FAVORITE ACTIVITY:

Ella loves to eat food, go on walks, and play in the backyard with her toys.

FAVORITE TREAT:

Bananas

FAVORITE FRIEND:

Her human dad, Eric

HOW YOUR BFF GOT THEIR NAME:

When we first saw the picture, my family had to name our new dog something special. We kept thinking of names but didn't like any of them until my mom said "What about we name her Ella?" The whole family loved and agreed on our furry friend's new name.



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

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

Does your business cater to pets? Would you like to sponsor our contest?
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AUGUST's Enhanced Section BACK TO SCHOOL Guide

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MYSTERY PHOTO



Win two free day passes to Adventure Landing's Shipwreck Island (value \$65) by correctly guessing our Mystery Photo this month. We will hold a random drawing of all correct answers. Email your guess to mail@floridanewslines.com. Good luck!

Last month's Mystery Photo was Redeemer Church on South Roscoe Boulevard. Our winner was Kelley Koors. Congratulations!

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around town

July

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Fireworks over the Matanzas:

Thursday, July 4. Festivities begin at 6 p.m. Fireworks over the bayfront between the Castillo de San Marcos and the Bridge of Lions begin at 9:30 p.m.
www.visitstaugustine.com

American Pride 4th of July:

Thursday, July 4. Festivities begin at Moosehaven at 5 p.m. Fireworks over the St. Johns River begin at 9:20 p.m. www.moosehaven.org

Downtown Jacksonville:

Thursday, July 4. Fireworks over the downtown riverfront will begin at 9:45 p.m.
www.jaxhappenings.com

Jacksonville Beach:

Thursday, July 4. Fireworks from the Jacksonville Beach Pier begin at 9 p.m.
www.jacksonvillebeach.org



July 1

Current Events Discussion Group

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

July 1

Caregiver support meeting

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

July 2

Palm Valley Farmers Market

1 p.m. – 4 p.m. (repeating event on Tuesdays)
 Palm Valley Community Center, 148 Canal Blvd.
www.facebook.com/PalmValleyFarmersMarket/

July 2

Adult Coloring Club

1 p.m. – 4 p.m.
 Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library
 (904) 827-6950

July 3

Toastmasters Club #5199 Ponte Vedra Beach

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

July 5

GTM Research Reserve new volunteer orientation

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

July 8

Beaches Toastmasters Club

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

July 8

Ponte Vedra Beach Municipal Service District Meeting

6 p.m.
 Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library, FOL Room
www.pvmsd.org

July 10

From Hearts to Hands, sponsored by St. Johns County School District

8 a.m. – 11 a.m.
 Fullerwood Training Center, 10 Hildreth Drive
Kelly.Thigpen@stjohns.k12.fl.us or (904) 547-7623

July 11

St. Johns County Chamber Women with Vision Council

11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 The Palencia Club, 600 Palencia Club Drive
 RSVP: Sjcchamber.com

July 11

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

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

July 13

Family seining

9 a.m. – 11 a.m.
 Guana Dam, 505 Guana River Road
 (904) 823-4500

July 16

St. Johns CARES meeting

6:30 p.m.
 Celebration Lutheran Church, 810 Roberts Road
www.stjohnscares.org

July 17

Jacksonville Camera Club

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

July 17

Aging Parent Support Group

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

July 17

Ponte Vedra Beach Wednesday Book Club: "Still Alice" by Lisa Genova

11:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
 Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library
 (904) 827-6950

July 17

The Best Summer: Sharks, Misunderstood Creatures of the Sea

2 p.m. – 3 p.m.
 Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library
 (904) 827-6950

July 20

Nocatee Farmers Market: Gatorland

10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 Town Center Field, Nocatee

July 20

Ancient City Chapter of Florida Writers Association meeting

10 a.m.
 Main Library, 1960 N. Ponce de Leon Blvd., St. Augustine
 Open to the public; fwastaug@gmail.com

July 24

PVB Division Chamber After Hours

5:30 p.m. – 7 p.m.
 Ruth's Chris, 814 A1A N. Ste. 103
 RSVP: Sjcchamber.com

July 26

Food Truck Friday

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

July 27

Guided Kayak Exploration

9 a.m. – 11 a.m.
www.gtmnerr.org or www.northguanaoutpost.com

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take 5

Keepers of the Coast seeks partners for "Day After" beach cleanup, July 5

Keepers of the Coast, a local non-profit dedicated to promoting coastal stewardship and the conservation of coastal habitat, is recruiting volunteers and sponsors for the 10th annual "Day After" Beach Cleanup on Friday, July 5 from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. The purpose of the cleanup is to restore the coastline following the impacts of Fourth of July, traditionally one of the busiest beach days of the year. This community-wide effort will be held at several beach access points throughout St. Johns County, including Mickler's Beachfront Park and Vilano Beachfront Park. So far, Keepers of the Coast has successfully prevented more than 600,000 cigarette butts from entering the ocean. No pre-registration is required, and volunteers may show up at any of the locations to remove cigarette butts from the beach at the "Day After" Beach Cleanup. All participants will be given a bag for trash, a bag for recycling, and a bag for cigarette butts. Learn more about Keepers of the Coast at keepersofthecoast.net or call (904) 814-2172.

Bird Photography 101 class offered

A free seminar on bird photography will be offered at Wild Birds Unlimited in

St. Johns on July 18 at 6:30 p.m. This entertaining and informative program is for beginners through experienced photographers. Regardless of the camera or experience level, attendees will come away inspired with ideas and tips for improving your skills. Presenters Gary Whiting and Cathy Murphy will share their favorite images and secrets on how to get a better shot. Whiting is a certified FMNP Master Naturalist and photography instructor in the OLLI Continuing Education Program at the University of North Florida. Formerly with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Murphy is an experienced photography enthusiast and avid lifelong birder. Both are also staff associates at Wild Birds Unlimited.

Seating is limited to the first 45 responses. RSVP by calling (904) 230-3242 or emailing wbu-jacksonville@yahoo.com. Wild Birds Unlimited is located in the Julington Village Shopping Center at 450 N State Road 13 N, Suite 108.

Shark lecture scheduled

Sharks are some of the most feared creatures of the sea, but what is really known about them? On Wednesday, July 17 from 2 p.m. – 3 p.m., the community is invited to learn about the shark species that frequent local waters, the unique adaptations these animals have, and the real facts about shark attacks. Kelly Ussia of St. Johns County

Parks and Rec will make the presentation, to be held at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library. No reservations are required; seating is on a first come first served basis. Contact Kelly Ussia at kussia@sjcfl.us or (904) 209-0335 for more information.



Photo courtesy GTM Research Reserve
A volunteer participates in marine turtle patrol.

GTM Research Reserve announces new volunteer orientation

On the first Friday of most months, the GTM Research Reserve offers an introduction of the volunteer program for those who register for the orientation. This month, the orientation will be held on July 5, from 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. at the GTM Research Reserve Visitor Center, located at 505 Guana River Road. Attendees will learn about the background and history of the reserve, volunteer opportunities, expectations and benefits, and tour the Visitor Center. Call Shannon Rininger at (904) 823-4500 for more information or to register.

Kids who read invited to library's ice cream party

Participants in the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library's Kids' Summer Reading Program and their families are invited to celebrate a high-flying summer of reading with yummy ice cream on Wednesday, July 31 from 2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. at the library. The party will include ice cream, fun toppings, music, bubbles, board games, and fun with friends, as well as the raffle drawing (using the summer reading entries, the hot air balloons on the Summer Reading Reward Board) for gift cards to Seymour's Book Store and The Bookmark Bookstore.

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

Q: What can you tell us about your office's new website?

A: Our new website is now online. We just refreshed it with a new look and I invite people to take a look. It has a more modern format that will allow us to focus on voter registration online and allow voters to keep their information up to date with us at all times. There is an announcement page highlighting timely items on the landing page.

Q: Where on your website can citizens stay up to date on the latest candidates in upcoming elections?

A: A good place to visit regularly is our Candidate Information section. There is a list of all offices up for election in the current cycle as well as filed and qualified candidates. This is updated in real time. When the candidates come into our office to file their papers, we put them into our system and they immediately show up on the website.

Q: What offices are up for election in 2020?

A: Next year is a busy year with three elections: the Presidential Preference Election in March, followed by the Primary Election in August and the General Election in November. Of interest to northern St. Johns County voters, Districts 1, 3, and 5 of the Board of County Commissioners are up for election as well as Districts 2 and 5 of the School Board. All five constitutional offices (Sheriff, Tax Collector, Clerk of Courts, Property Appraiser and Supervisor of Elections) are also up for election.

Q: Last month, we discussed the work your office was having to do to comply with the governor's policy decision that all ballots and elections materials be

bilingual in the state of Florida. Do you have any updates on that?

A: The cost to convert my office to bilingual will be \$100,000. Under the judicial order, I have the option to provide separate ballots in English and Spanish, or one bilingual ballot. Both will be costly, especially for the General Election, which will contain Constitutional Amendments that will need to be in two languages. I haven't decided between the two options yet, but would like to hear voters' thoughts. I'm trying to keep my focus on what's best for voters.

Q: You submitted your budget for 2019 - 2020 to the Board of County Commissioners in May and presented to them in person on June 18. Can you let us know an overview?

A: My budget this year represents approximately a 23 percent increase. There are four main reasons for this. First, next year is a presidential election year and contains one extra election (the March Presidential Preference). Secondly, the transition of all items of my office to include Spanish represents about 10 percent of the increase. Many of my expenses, to include advertising, are doubling, as I am now required to have everything in two languages. Third, cybersecurity is adding some costs and finally, the growth in St. Johns County requires my costs to increase. My total budget as presented to the Board of County Commissioners is about \$2.5 million. The entire budget with all the details is available on my office's website, www.votesjc.com.

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

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



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

Q: Can you give us an update on some of the highlights of the recently concluded 2019 legislative session as pertains to criminal justice?

A: There were a number of changes enacted this session. First, there were changes to the grand theft/felony theft statute, which hasn't been modified in decades. Previously, the threshold was \$300 in stolen goods to be classified as grand theft. The legislature increased this to \$750, to try to make it equivalent today to the old amount. The law does allow us to aggregate, so if we can prove that there is an ongoing theft ring of smaller thefts under the felony threshold, we can add them up to charge with grand theft.

Q: What were the changes with suspended driver's licenses?

A: Previously, if a driver had three or more driving while license suspended citations, prosecutors had the discretion to charge them with a felony. Now, these would all be considered misdemeanors, but with a minimum of 10 days in jail. The legislature also did away with some driver's license suspensions for misdemeanors, specifically for some non-driving related offenses. I have dedicated staff to GLAD, which stands for Getting your License Again to Drive. Many people lose their license by failing to pay a fine because they don't have the money. With GLAD, someone in this situation could come to us and we will set up a payment plan, help them get their license back and drop the charges.

Q: What were some other changes?

A: Juvenile "direct file" was repealed. We used to have to charge juveniles as adults for certain offenses. Now, it is discretionary and up to the State Attorney.

Minimum mandatory sentences also saw some changes, especially as pertains to minimum prison time for drug possession and trafficking. The idea is to make the sentences more equitable, while still striking a balance with public safety.

The inmate re-entry system was updated to authorize studies of programs to better prepare prisoners before their release. The new system allows them to transition back to the community earlier in their sentences to allow them to find jobs and also provide for aftercare, all in an effort to make the reentry to society more successful after the prisoner's sentence has been completed.

Q: Do you have any other interesting updates to share?

A: In an effort to provide transparency to the public about the criminal justice system, as well as allow the legislature to review and improve the system, data transparency was addressed. Statistical information will soon be available to the public from the State Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office, the Clerks of Court, the Florida Department of Corrections and the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice. It will likely take some time to define the data needed and collect it to make sure it is accurate and consistent.

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**with Florida State Representative
Cyndi Stevenson, District 17**

Q: Can you give us some highlights of the recently concluded legislative session?

A: Education is so important in St. Johns County and I'm pleased that we had an increase in funding of \$257.30 per student over last year. This increase includes an additional \$13.9 million in flexible funding, an additional \$197,000 for safe schools funding and an additional \$118,000 for school mental health assistance funding.

Q: Will there be another back to school sales tax holiday this year?

A: Yes. Don't forget to take advantage of this Aug. 2 – Aug. 6. The five-day back to school tax holiday will allow shoppers to avoid paying sales tax on clothes costing \$60 or less, school supplies costing \$15 or less and personal computers costing \$1,000 or less.

Q: The texting while driving bill is getting a lot of justified attention. What can you tell us about it?

A: HB 107 — the Wireless Communications while driving bill — authorizes the enforcement of texting and driving as a primary offense. The bill also prohibits a person from operating a motor vehicle while using a wireless communications device in a handheld manner in a designated school crossing, school zone, or work zone, and makes doing so a primary offense. I'd like to say a big congratulations and thank you to Representatives Toledo and Slosberg who were the sponsor and prime-co-sponsor on this bill and for allowing me to co-sponsor it as well.

This bill was signed into law by Gov. DeSantis on May 17 and will take effect on Oct. 1, 2019 with a "warning/educational" period, and full effect on Jan. 1, 2020.

Q: Can you tell us about the outcome of your Peer Specialist bill?

A: HB 1187 passed the Florida House, but did not pass out of the

Senate. I have every intention of pursuing the remaining parts of this bill next session; however, I am very grateful that some of the provisions of HB 1187 were included in HB 369. Because of this, more people will be eligible to serve as a Peer Specialist in Florida; fewer people will be disqualified for non-violent substance abuse related charges in their past. This is a win-win for Florida. We need the workforce to help people recover, and more people will have the opportunity to do this important and meaningful work. Peer Specialists have been proven very effective in helping other people recover from mental health and substance use disorders because of their own experiences. Peer Specialists will have to undergo a rigorous selection, background check and training

Q: What's on the horizon?

A: We are already looking ahead to the next session, with committee weeks beginning on Sept. 16. (The 2020 Session begins on Jan. 14, 2020.) One of the things I am doing now is talking to the school district to come up with ideas to make walking to school safer. What represents hazardous walking conditions and how can we solve them? Transportation is jointly funded by the state and locally, so we need to collaborate.

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

A: Readers can email me at Cyndi.Stevenson@myfloridahouse.gov or call my local office at (904) 823-2300.



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

Q: Can you give us a school security update as pertains to the recently concluded legislative session?

A: We are excited that the new school security bill gives us the flexibility to continue to have a combination of trained, armed guards as well as sheriff's deputies at our schools. Each district is different, and for our district, we feel this is the best way to meet the law and protect our students. As sheriff's officers are trained, we will continue to hire them and bring them into our schools. We're grateful to our sheriff to make these school resource officers available to us. The St. Johns County School District has no plans to arm teachers. Every board member has publicly stated that we are not interested in that.

Q: What can you tell us about the things you learned at the recent Florida School Boards and Superintendents Summer Conference?

A: Representatives from the Marjorie Stoneman Douglas Commission presented to school board members from across the state. Now that time has passed, we can reflect and learn more from their experiences and ask questions. It was very interesting and valuable. Also, we heard of the progress being made on workforce education including expanding opportunities for student internships and alternate graduation paths.

Q: School is out, but summer is a busy time for the school district. Can you let us know some of the activities?

A: In late June, we had our Character Counts! retreat for the representatives from each school. There are also various training sessions for administrators and on June 25, we will hold our strategic

Kelly Barrera cont. on pg. 8

FYI Contact Numbers

St. Johns County Local Government (www.sjcl.us)

Sheriff's Office: Sheriff David B. Shoar, dshoar@sjso.org, (904) 824-8304
Ponte Vedra Field Office: (904) 209-2215

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

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

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

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

St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners

District 1: Jimmy Johns, bcc1jjohns@sjcl.us, (904) 209-0301
District 2: Jeb Smith, bcc2jsmith@sjcl.us, (904) 209-0302
District 3: Paul Waldron, bcc3pwaldron@sjcl.us, (904) 209-0303
District 4: Jeremiah Blocker,

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

St. Johns County School Board

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

State of Florida Elected Officials

Governor Ron DeSantis, (850) 488-7146

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

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

Federal Elected Officials

U.S. Congress District 4: Representative John Rutherford, (202) 225-2501

U.S. Senate:
Senator Marco Rubio, (202) 224-3041
Senator Rick Scott, (202) 224-5274

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Kelly Barrera cont. from pg. 7

planning meeting to look at what was accomplished last year and what we hope to do next year. Principals are actively recruiting and hiring teachers and staff and the school board is working on the budget to determine what we can provide for our students. On July 10, we will host the From Heart to Hands Expo, which brings together non-profit organizations from the community that support our schools to network and relay their missions. This will be held from 8 a.m. – 11 a.m. at the Fullerwood Training Center in St. Augustine and is open to the public.

Florida Department of Education and the Florida Education Foundation. This event recognizes businesses for their extraordinary contributions to public education in Florida. This year, the St. Johns County Business Partner of the Year, THE PLAYERS, was selected as one of seven statewide finalists. We are so grateful for the significant contributions that THE PLAYERS makes to the St. Johns County School District and were delighted that they were honored. They have committed \$500,000 to the school district for activities like Character Counts!, Pursuing Victory with Honor, and via their First Tee program, have provided golf equipment for each elementary and K – 8 school in the district.

Q: Do you have anything else to share with District 4?

A: On June 18, I travelled to Orlando with Superintendent Tim Forson and representatives from THE PLAYERS, Marsha Oliver and Ryan Hart, to attend the 2019 Commissioner's Business Recognition Awards put on by the

Q: How can our readers contact you?

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

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Answers to puzzles on page 12

Answers

to our Puzzles

B	C	E	T	R	A	P	S	M	E	T	A	L	
R	O	D	R	A	N	E	I	N	A	R	I		
A	V	E	A	N	A	P	O	L	I	S	M	D	
G	E	N	E	V	A	T	A	N	G	S			
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A	G	H	A	N	S	I	R	E	E	L	C	D	
G	E	E	S	E	S	P	E	C	S	E	T	A	



Answers: A. sunshine B. pool C. ocean D. amusement

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

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MarketInsight



Fear itself

By Scott Grant
ScottGrant@StJohnsBusinessMonthly.com

Franklin Delano Roosevelt famously remarked in his first inaugural address that “the only thing we have to fear is fear itself.”

In 1904, Russian was at war with Japan. The Japanese started the war with a Sunday morning surprise attack on Port Arthur, eerily similar to the Sunday morning surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. Port Arthur was Imperial Russia’s main Pacific base. In response, Tsar Nicholas decided to dispatch the Russian Baltic fleet of 11 iron-clad battleships. Tsar Nicholas had a problem. The ships were fueled with coal and the tsar had no overseas bases where they could refuel. Fortunately, his cousin, Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany offered to provide coal for his cousin’s ships as they cruised half a world away, which is a pretty clever way to get rid of a potential enemy, when you think about it.

The Russian fleet was a lot more powerful looking on paper than in actuality. The long journey was fraught by bad seamanship, terror, and depression. From the beginning, the fleet lived in constant fear of being attacked by the Japanese. A rumor that the Japanese had mined the Baltic Sea had the crews so on edge that they fired on a launch delivering last minute instructions from home. Only the terrible Russian gunnery allowed the mail to get through. A week later, the Russian fleet mistook an English fishing fleet for attacking Japanese torpedo boats and opened fire with all guns. Over the next 20 minutes, the Russians fired more than a thousand large caliber shells at the fishermen, who could not flee because they had their nets down. Once again, poor Russian gunnery would save the day. The Russians only managed to sink one boat. In the panic, they did more damage to their own fleet than the unfortunate English fishing fleet. Paranoia ran so deep that at one point, sailors on the

battleship Borodino drew sabers to fight off an imagined Japanese boarding party.

The British were angry. As a result, the Russian Baltic fleet was denied access to the Suez Canal and had to endure a seven-month-long grueling cruise around Africa and across the Indian Ocean. Along the way, the crews collected exotic animals at each port of call. Poisonous snakes, crocodiles, and birds of every feather roamed the decks. The ships were rat-infested and overloaded with coal. The air was foul, disease was rampant and many of the crew suffered from depression. A number decided to jump overboard rather than endure the agony of the voyage.

Eventually, the Russians limped north through the Sea of Japan, making for the safety of Kamchatka. It was there that they were intercepted by the Japanese battle fleet commanded by Admiral Togo. The Japanese famously pounded the exhausted enemy into oblivion. The Japanese had spent the seven months practicing their gunnery and preparing. The Russians, low on ammunition after the debacle with the fishing fleet, had only practiced once. The Battle of Tsushima Straits is one of the most decisive of all time. Togo was lauded as the reincarnation of the famous British Admiral, Lord Nelson. Russia, humiliated, was forced to sue for peace. Teddy Roosevelt negotiated the peace treaty and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

This is a story about fear and preparation. One side in a panic, the other prepared and confident. And, as it does so often in life, preparation and execution made all the difference.

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

Ways to keep employees satisfied

By Marge Cirillo
mail@floridanewsline.com

With the unemployment rate in St. Johns County under 3 percent, employers are finding it difficult to find good staff. Respecting and trusting your employees goes a long way. Here are some things to do that might keep your existing employees and help to attract new ones.

Recognize your employees. You need to learn how to reward and recognize them. Unfortunately, most leaders are concerned about their own recognition so much that they don’t notice those around them. The truth of the matter is, that it is hard to earn one’s trust if it’s all about you. Take the time to understand what your workers need and make it more about their advancement. Reward them when they deserve it. Recognize their value. This can become a real game changer; we are all credit addicts after all.

Don’t show favoritism. According to the study by Georgetown University’s McDonough School of Business, more than 90 percent of business executives have noticed favoritism in promotions; managers and supervisors do practice favoritism (intentionally or unintentionally). By showing favoritism you are not treating your employees equally, damaging team unity and demotivating your

staff. It is really easy to fall into this trap because it is in our human nature. If you are serious about attracting and retaining new staff, you have to make sure you don’t show special treatment

Listen. It can be one of the hardest things to do for employers. When you put away your phone and listen attentively, it means that you are genuinely interested in what people have to say.

Help. The fact that you are their boss doesn’t mean you shouldn’t help your employees. In fact, it’s the opposite. Sometimes offering some advice or giving them some of your time means a lot.

Congratulate. Reward people for a job well done, even if it is a kind word in front of everybody. People work harder knowing their efforts are recognized.

Lastly, say “Thank You.” This simple action helps employees understand you appreciate them and what they do. Something as simple as two words can make an impact.

Marge Cirillo is the St. Johns County Consultant for the Florida Small Business Development Center at the University of North Florida. Email her at m.cirillo@unf.edu or call her at (904) 209-1295 for more information.

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Texting and driving cont. from pg. 1

According to Cronin, there will be a grace period with this new law. Until Jan. 1, 2020, citations probably will not be written; drivers should expect a verbal or written warning if pulled over during this period.

As for enforcement in St. Johns County, Cronin said deputies will be given the directive that the new law treats texting while driving as a primary offense.

“We will treat this as an educational

opportunity for our citizens, especially until Jan. 1,” Cronin said. “It is up to the deputy to decide if they want to pull a driver over.”

Cronin continued, “We all know distracted driving is a leading cause of accidents. There were more than 3,000 traffic fatalities statewide last year and 50,000 accidents. Statistics show that you are eight times more likely to have an accident if you’re driving while distracted by texting.”

Summer reading cont. from pg. 1

ties (“read a graphic novel” or “introduce yourself to a librarian” or “listen to an audiobook”) to earn local branch prizes. Younger readers’ hot air balloons will count as their entries. Ring said the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library will offer gift cards for teen and child winners. All adult entries will be entered into a system-wide grand prize drawing for a \$140 VISA gift card at the end of the summer.

“Librarians understand that children who don’t read and learn during the summer

months fall behind. It’s called the ‘summer slide.’ The Best Summer offers incentives to keep reading skills sharp ahead of the new school year,” said Library System Director Debra Rhodes Gibson.

To register for the library’s summer reading program, The Best Summer, visit the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library or visit the library’s website www.sjcpls.org to learn more about all of the summer programs, activities and resources at your library.



Photo courtesy Ponte Vedra DAR Chapter

Ponte Vedra DAR Chapter observes Memorial Day

The morning of May 25 was clear and sunny as members of the Ponte Vedra DAR chapter saluted the fallen soldiers who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our country on a beautiful Memorial Day observance weekend. Judy Delmar, regent of the Ponte Vedra DAR Chapter, along with other representatives, laid memorial wreaths honoring military men and women at the Jacksonville National Cemetery. Keynote speakers were Cheryl L. Mason, chairman, Board of Veteran Appeals and Brigadier General FLNG (Ret), Michael P. Fleming. Under a sunny blue sky, the closing ceremony concluded with the three-volley salute and taps.

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Get to Know . . .

Ken Overman

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewslines.com



Photo courtesy Ken Overman
Ken Overman

Ken Overman is a natural storyteller... which is good, since that is his latest business. Over his lifetime, he has been a world traveler with a wide assortment of jobs; he has written four memoirs. He has extensive knowledge of foreign countries and cultures and many more stories than space here will permit. From his upbringing in Southern California, to a tour with the Army in Turkey, to stints with late wife Barbara in Germany, Spain, and Greece, he has, by his own count, visited 106 countries. Twenty-four years ago, he and his family made Ponte Vedra Beach their home. He started his business, BiographyMasters, nine years ago and now helps others write their biographies. He says it's an honor to have people tell him their life stories.

Q: What can you tell us about growing up in Southern California?

A: I lived outside Long Beach and my mom raised me with my three brothers. I had mediocre grades in high school. I grew up on a surf board and later was taught to sail on a dragon-class sloop by the millionaire who lived across the street from us. (We were not millionaires.) By 11th grade, I had fixed up an old star-class sloop and sailed her out into the Pacific every day after school. After I graduated I went to junior college, but I didn't attend my classes. When I received my

draft notice for the Vietnam War, I decided to enlist instead. I was in Airborne for awhile and then went into communications and was sent to Turkey.

Q: How was living in Turkey?

A: It was in Turkey that I met Barbara. She was the associate director of the USO and our first date was going to a showing of the movie "Doctor Zhivago." Six months later, the day after my honorable discharge, we were married in a little Anglican church in Turkey. One of our premises of getting married was we wanted to see the world and not live in the U.S.

Q: So where did you live abroad?

A: We worked at a ski lodge in Germany. We moved to Spain and lived on the Atlantic Coast where I developed two businesses: a leather goods boutique and a water skiing/boat rental business. We were hippies by this time, known as "Barbie and Ken" since we were both blonde. We also became Christians in Spain via some missionary friends. Shortly after this, we decided it was time to "grow up" and I decided to go back to school via the GI Bill. I was accepted at the American College of Greece, so we packed up our three dogs and moved to Greece, where we ended up living for nine years. We also adopted our daughter, Lisa, in Greece. She is now a diplomat with the State Department in Lebanon.

Q: What was your next step?

A: After living abroad for 15 years, we decided it was time to go back to the

States, but we didn't know where to settle. So first we prayed, then we saw a magazine in a kiosk in downtown Athens featuring an aerial shot of an in-water boat show in Annapolis, Maryland. So we moved there. We experienced reverse culture shock; after being Americans living overseas as Europeans, it took about three years to feel like we were on an even keel.

Q: How did you end up in Ponte Vedra Beach?

A: Our daughter, Lisa, had joined Youth with a Mission and was doing relief work on a mercy ship that stopped in Jacksonville. Barbara had a friend with a summer home in Ponte Vedra Beach and wanted to visit. As soon as we came across the J. Turner Butler bridge to the beach, we knew we were home. We moved to Ponte Vedra in 1994. Since I've lived here I've taught at Florida State College at Jacksonville, worked in international marketing for a marine company, served as president of a luxury yacht company that unfortunately was one of the first dominoes to fall in the recession, and worked in relief and development in Afghanistan for USAID (United States Agency for International Development). I started my biography business nine years ago and I'm currently working on my third novel.

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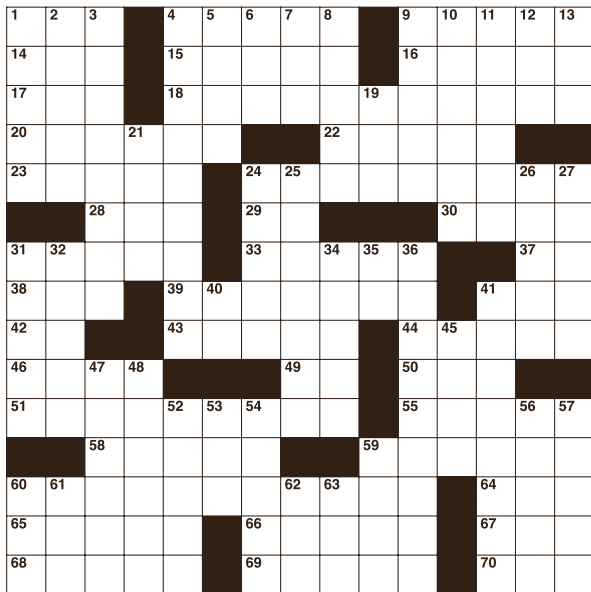
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Puzzles

Answers to puzzles on page 8
Provided by MetroCreative



CLUES ACROSS

1. Bridge building degree
4. Catches
9. A heavy type of music
14. Original "Twilight Zone" host Serling
15. Rodent species
16. Finnish lake
17. Street (abbr.)
18. Home of the US Naval Academy
20. It held a convention once
22. Makes a loud, ringing sound
23. Cave
24. Lessening of something
28. MJ's nickname "___ Jordan"
29. One's way of doing things
30. Wings
31. Quotes as evidence for
33. Acts glumly
37. A man's title
38. It comes first
39. Edible mollusk
41. Resembles a pouch

42. He/she checks your health
43. Nobel Prize-winning biochemist
44. Stop momentarily
46. Formerly (archaic)
49. Commercial
50. White vestment worn by clergy
51. Island people of the Mediterranean
55. Prices
58. On a line at right angles to a ship's length
59. Where boats are parked
60. One who values reason
64. It might be on your driveway
65. Small Iranian village
66. Used to emphasize
67. Mathematical term (abbr.)
68. Long necked birds
69. Eyeglasses
70. When you hope to get there

CLUES DOWN

1. Portuguese district
2. An assembly of witches
3. Having few teeth
4. The act of going across
5. Nepalese dynasty
6. "Bye Bye Birdie" actress ___-Margaret
7. What the princess found beneath her mattress
8. Pennsylvania transit organization
9. Winnie the Pooh creator
10. Riddle
11. Grads wear one
12. Body part
13. The top of a pot
19. A type of meal
21. Lake ___, one of the Great
24. Capital of Jordan
25. A type of logic
26. Khoikhoi peoples
27. A fixed time of prayer in Christian liturgies
31. Arrives
32. Lemur
34. Small bodies of still water
35. ___ route
36. Breaks apart
40. A type of line
41. Caption that translates
45. Winged
47. Criticize severely
48. Leg bones
52. Monetary unit
53. 007's creator
54. Accumulate
56. Establish by law or with authority
57. Breed of goat
59. Millisecond
60. Mock
61. Make older
62. Some don't want to be given any
63. Wrath



Solve the code to discover words related to summer recreation. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 14 = e)

A. 11 4 24 11 6 18 24 14
Clue: Warm rays

B. 5 23 23 8
Clue: Swimming area

C. 23 13 14 3 24
Clue: Salt water

D. 3 15 4 11 14 15 14 24 21
Clue: For fun

SUMMERTIME WORD SEARCH

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

WORDS

- BARBECUE
- BEACH
- BIKINI
- BOARDWALK
- BOAT
- COAST
- DIVE
- FAIR
- FIREWORKS
- FROLIC
- PADDLEBOARD
- SANDY
- SCUBA
- SEASIDE
- SNORKEL
- SUNLIGHT
- SUNSCREEN
- SWIMMING
- SWIMSUIT
- TRAVEL
- UMBRELLA
- VACATION
- WARMTH
- WAVES

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

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Ponte Vedra Woman's Club holds year-end meeting

By Sharon Jones
 mail@floridanewsline.com

The Ponte Vedra Woman's Club, a 501(c) 3 organization, held its last meeting of the year at the Casa Marina Hotel restaurant on May 21 and distributed monies raised for the charities for the 2018-2019 year.

Lori Marjerison, chairperson for Charity and Scholarships, handed out the donations. Emily Richards from BEAM, a community-based organization serving low income residents in Jacksonville's beaches communities, received \$1,000.

Mary McLaughlin, Ponte Vedra Woman's Club Volunteer Advocate, received \$1,000 for 210 girls' conference entry fees for an all day workshop at UNF in April. These girls were able to work on STEM projects and learn more about science, technology, engineering and math.

Nicole Pece, Development Director of the Betty Griffin House, received \$2,000 in December of which they were able to receive matching funds and

\$2,000 at this meeting.

Chelsea Rippin from the Saint Augustine Youth Services received \$3,500 for a newly started Community Action Team of therapeutic mentors and licensed counselors to provide care in the homes.

Tanya Rhodes, Florida School for the Deaf and Blind, received \$2,000 for their independent living programs like the culinary arts.

Because of such a successful year raising funds for charities, the club was able to give a scholarship of \$5,000 to one student to help with tuition at Daytona State College where she will major in Dentistry. Kilmaried Janet Muniz Rivera is a recent graduate of the Florida School of the Deaf and Blind.

Monitor the club's Facebook page (PonteVedraWomansClub) for the upcoming new and prospective member social on Aug. 22.

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Jacksonville Jaguars Rally at Nocatee Farmers Market

There was no shortage of team spirit at the Nocatee Farmers Market: Jacksonville Jaguars Rally on Saturday, May 18. Jaxson de Ville, members of The Roar, past and present players, and members of the D-Line all stopped by to entertain attendees. There was also a football toss, the Jax Prowler, crafts and bounce houses, and shopping from more than 70 local vendors.



Photo courtesy John Grier

Church celebrates high school grads

First Baptist of Ponte Vedra Beach recently recognized four 2019 high school graduates and their families. Graduates pictured with their families are Austin Dickson, Robert Cook, Austin Hill and Nate Vanderbilt.



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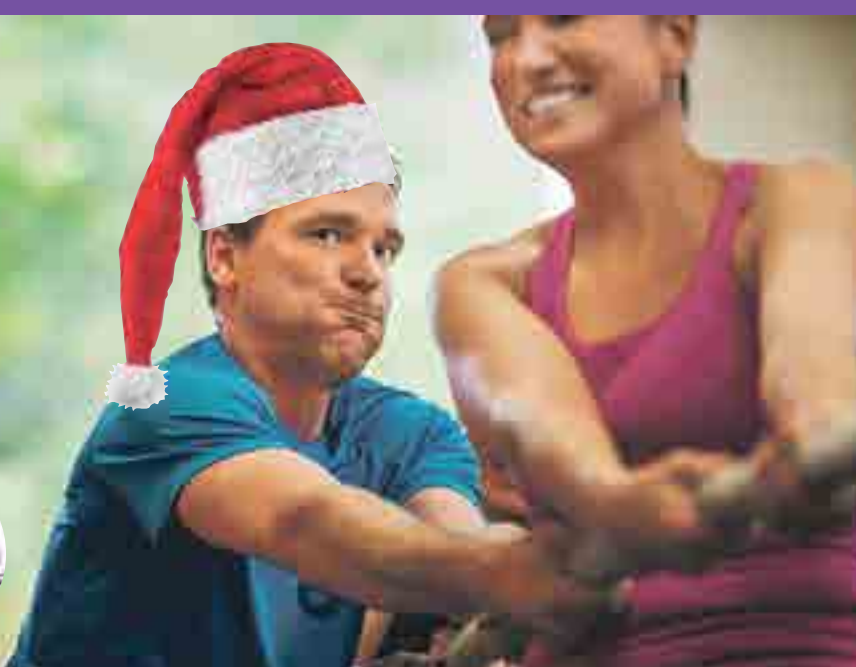
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