

Ponte Vedra NewsLine

FEBRUARY 2020 Volume 7 Issue 2

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

A Florida NewsLine Publication



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Library patrons support Food for Fines

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewslines.com

St. Johns County Library patrons were exceptionally generous this holiday season, donating nearly 9,000 non-perishable food items for the county's Health and Human Services Food Pantry. Food for Fines, an annual program in place from Thanksgiving through New Year's, enables patrons with overdue fines to instead donate food for families in need.



Photo courtesy St. Johns County Library

Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library staff with some of the items donated by patrons during the Food for Fines drive.

"It's a real benefit to the community we serve to have the Food for Fines Program," said Tracy Dillon, Social Services Manager for St. Johns County. "The food donated by library patrons replenishes our dwindling food supplies and allows us to operate our Food Pantry for nearly the whole year. It's the most effective county-wide food drive that we have."

Health and Human Services provides a wide variety of services for ap-

Food for Fines cont. on pg. 11

Program aims to help cancer survivors reclaim health and well-being

By Tiffany Merlo Phelps
mail@floridanewslines.com

Lisa Chartier endured three rounds of chemotherapy, a stem cell transplant and experimental CAR-T cell therapy after a Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma diagnosis in January of 2017. The cancer returned three times, finally leaving her in remission six months ago. Eighty pounds lighter and very weak, Chartier, encouraged by a Dye Clay YMCA member, joined the support program for adult cancer survivors known as LIVESTRONG® at the YMCA in August 2019 to begin her wellness path.

"I had a lot of family and friends supporting me, but to be in a group with other cancer survivors all in different places and with different types of cancer — people who know what you have been through, know what you are thinking and what you are feeling — it really helps a lot," said Chartier, a mother of four. "They get it."

Now the Ponte Vedra YMCA plans to launch the same national program this spring, said Charlie Chacos, Ponte Vedra and Nocatee Y District Executive Director. Chacos said that fundraising is underway to reach the \$12,000 goal to begin the program at the Ponte Vedra Y and donations are currently being accepted in person at the Ponte Vedra Y branch or online. So far, \$4,000 has been raised, he said.

"I want to bring this signature program to the Ponte Vedra Y because I feel strongly about it. Everyone knows someone who is or has been impacted by cancer. Cancer does



Photos courtesy Marla McGill
Group fitness class

not discriminate, and it affects everyone," said Chacos. "Causes like these are the reason why we raise dollars, and you can see how the money has a direct impact on our community members."



Strength test.

LIVESTRONG® at the YMCA is an evidence-based program that helps adult cancer survivors reclaim their health and well-being following a cancer diagnosis. It is a 12-week program with 12 people in a cohort, said Marla McGill, Director of Association Health Intervention Pro-

grams at the First Coast YMCA. McGill said that it costs \$12,000 to get the first cohort started, and a cancer diagnosis and medical clearance are the only requirements to qualify for the program.

The first cohort began at the Brooks YMCA last year in May.

"You can be at any place in your cancer journey and still participate," said McGill, noting that Y personal trainers take special courses to lead a cohort with emotional, physical and social needs in mind.

Participants get a free membership during the program along with their family members, so that support is felt both at the Y and at home. Once the 12 weeks is over, participants are offered financial assistance to continue their membership, said McGill.

Ponte Vedra YMCA and LIVESTRONG® at the YMCA Trainer Michael Reed said that he feels so passionate about the program that he would do it for free.

Cancer Survivors cont. on pg. 15

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BFF Best Furry Friend of the month

Meet Beau!

BREED:
Bernese Mountain Dog

FAVORITE ACTIVITY:
Laying in front of the fan and watching all the girls go by on the street.

FAVORITE TREAT:
Bones filled with peanut butter

FAVORITE FRIEND:
Chyan from daycare, his human bestie.

HOW YOUR BFF GOT THEIR NAME:
Beau is handsome in French. He was so handsome when we got him.

*This month's contest sponsored by:
Mandarin Animal Hospital
4473 Sunbeam Road
www.mandarinanimalhospital.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?
Email editor@floridanewsline.com to enter your pet or sponsor the BFF contest.

Shop DINE Play & STAY

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around town

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Feb. 3
Current Events Discussion Group
 10 a.m. (repeating event on Mondays)
 Amenities Annex, 625 Market St., Palencia
 adsilby@yahoo.com

Feb. 3
Beaches Toastmasters Club
 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. (Repeating event on Mondays)
 Baptist Hospital Beaches, Wilson
 Epstein Building
 cgsm13@yahoo.com

Feb. 3
Caregiver support meeting
 12 p.m. – 1 p.m. (repeating event on Mondays)
 Ponte Vedra Memory Care Center, 1048 A1A N.
 (904) 297-0061

Feb. 4
Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Ponte Vedra Chapter meeting
 10:45 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 pontevedrachaptersdar@aol.com

Feb. 4
First Coast Card Club – adult card players
 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.
 St. Augustine Main Library, 1960 Ponce de Leon
 Blvd.
 (904) 829-0643

Feb. 4
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 14-4
 7:30 p.m.
 Sea School, 14180 Beach Blvd.
 Bill Hurlburt, (904) 200-9409

Feb. 4
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/

Feb. 5
Toastmasters Club #5199 Ponte Vedra Beach
 7:30 a.m. (repeating event on Wednesdays)
 Players Community Senior Center, 175 Landrum
 Lane
 carmenjsardinas@gmail.com

Feb. 6
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 14-7
 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.
 St. Augustine Yacht Club near the
 St. Augustine Lighthouse
 pa@mysafeboating.com

Feb. 7
GTM Research Reserve new volunteer orientation
 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
 Environmental Education Center,
 505 Guana River Road
 (904) 823-4500

Feb. 8
Family seining
 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.
 Guana Dam, 505 Guana River Road
 (904) 823-4500

Feb. 10
Ponte Vedra Beach Municipal Service District Meeting
 6 p.m.
 Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library, FOL Room
 www.pvmsd.org

Feb. 12
Ponte Vedra Democratic Club meeting
 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.
 Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library
 Newcomers welcome; Facebook.com/PonteVedraDemocrats

Feb. 12
Newcomers of the Beaches luncheon
 11 a.m. (repeating event, second Wednesday of each month)
 Marsh Landing Country Club, 25655 Marsh
 Landing Pkwy.
 RSVP: www.newcomersofthebeaches.com

Feb. 13
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

Feb. 15
Nocatee Farmers Market: Car Show
 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
 Town Center Field, Nocatee

Feb. 18
St. Johns CARES meeting
 6:30 p.m.
 Celebration Lutheran Church, 810 Roberts Road
 www.stjohnscares.org

Feb. 19
Ponte Vedra Beaches Coalition
 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
 Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library, 101 Library
 Blvd.
 www.PVBCoalition.org

Feb. 19
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

Feb. 19
Jacksonville Camera Club
 6:45 p.m.
 Shepherd of the Woods Church, 6595 Columbia
 Park Ct.
 www.jax.jaxcameraclub.com (repeating event,
 first and third Wednesdays)

Feb. 20
Adult Coloring Club
 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
 Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library
 (904) 827-6950

Feb. 25
Ponte Vedra Beach Tuesday Book Club: "The Orphan Keeper" by Cameron Wright
 3 p.m. – 4 p.m.
 Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library
 (904) 827-6950

Feb. 25 – March 31
Free Tobacco Free Florida Quit Your Way Program
 Tuesdays, 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.
 Flagler Health+ Wellness Center, 120 Health Park
 Blvd., St. Augustine
 Call Florida AHEC to register (904) 482-0189

Feb. 27
Savvy Job Hunters Ministry workshop, "Taking the Plunge: Faith to Override Fear"
 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
 Christ Episcopal Church, 400 San Juan Drive
 RSVP: pottesen66@gmail.com

Feb. 28
Food Truck Friday
 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.
 Nocatee's Splash Waterpark

Feb. 29
Gaming for College Students
 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.
 Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library
 (904) 827-6950

Feb. 29
Beth El's annual Night of Giving: An Evening at the Farm
 7 p.m. – 10 p.m.
 Atlantic Beach Urban Farms
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Native landscaping workshop scheduled

On Friday, Feb. 14 from 9:30 a.m. – 11 a.m., “Native Landscaping: Rain Gardens” will be presented at THE PLAYERS Community Center, 175 Landrum Lane. Showing the flow of rainwater from your landscape saves on irrigation, decreases polluted runoff, and helps prevent flooding. St. Johns County has partnered with UF/IFAS Extension St. Johns County to learn tips and tricks for successful rain gardening. This program is free and open to all ages, but you must register to attend. Contact Kelly Ussia at kussia@sjcfl.us or (904) 209-0335 for more information.

Friends of Ponte Vedra Beach Library Speaker’s Program to feature retired lieutenant

The Friends of the Ponte Vedra Beach Library Speaker’s Program will feature retired Marine Corps Lieutenant General Rick Tryon on Monday, Feb. 10 at Crosswater Hall in the Nocatee Welcome Center. Doors open at 6 p.m. and the program begins at 6:30 p.m. A graduate of the United States Naval Academy, General Tryon served in operation Desert Storm with Special Operation Task Force in Iraq and Turkey, commanded 2nd Battalion 8th Marines, and graduated with a masters degree in

International Public Policy from Johns Hopkins University. In 2004 General Tryon served as executive officer to the Supreme Allied Commander European Command and as late as 2009 he was again deployed to Iraq. He retired from the Marine Corps in 2014 and joined the Wounded Warrior Project Advisory Council. He now serves on its board of directors. General Tryon lives in Nocatee. The program is free and open to the public.

Newcomers to hold monthly luncheon

The Newcomers of the Beaches invites new members to attend their luncheon: This social club consists of a fun and diverse group of women who have recently moved to the beaches and/or have undergone a major life event. This month’s luncheon will be a birthday celebration and will be held on Feb. 12 at 11 a.m. at Marsh Landing Country Club. Women who are looking for new friends and interesting activities should visit www.newcomersofthebeaches.com for more information and to make a reservation for the luncheon.

First annual Lace Up for Libraries 5K scheduled

The Friends of the Library of St. Johns County, Inc. is hosting the first annual Lace Up for Libraries 5K Run/Walk,

to be held on Feb. 29 in Nocatee. In

addition to the 5K, the event will include a one-mile run/walk and have a Virtual Race option as well! The first 200 5K registrants will receive a commemorative shirt. All proceeds raised from the Lace up for Libraries 5K Run/Walk will benefit St. Johns Reads, a county-wide “One Book, One Community” initiative that targets all ages and in the community. The group’s mission is to enrich lives and build community by providing opportunities to Connect, Learn, and Enjoy at Your Library. Volunteers and sponsors are needed for the race; contact Mary Rice at sjfolmr@gmail.com for more information. Visit laceupforlibraries5k.itsyourrace.com to register for the race.



Photo courtesy MetroCreative

Women entrepreneurs conference to be held in February

SCORE Jacksonville, in cooperation with the Business and Leadership Institute for Early Learning and Children’s Home Society of Florida, will host a conference specifically geared towards

women entrepreneurs on Saturday, Feb. 8 in the Advanced Technology Center on the Downtown campus of the Florida State College of Jacksonville. The theme of the conference is “Engage, Educate, Empower” and will feature several presentations, panel discussions and breakout sessions offering guidance as to how best to launch and operate a business. Among the list of scheduled speakers is Pamela Starr, a leading authority on building customer loyalty and a professional speaker for Grow with Google. Visit www.jacksonville.score.org for more information.




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

Q: What is happening of interest in the State Attorney's Office?

A: I'd like to bring something important to people's attention. Recently, we were prosecuting a man who managed to obtain the Florida Bar Association numbers for two of the prosecuting attorneys working his case for our office. He then fraudulently created an email account and electronic files and sent a case dismissal through the attorney portal to the clerk of court's office. Someone from the clerk's office contacted us about it and we have since charged this man with theft of personal information and forgery among other counts. We have also corrected and strengthened the attorney portal to make it more secure.

The takeaway from this is ... no one, not even the State Attorney's Office, is immune from electronic fraud.

Everything from mobile deposit of checks to online shopping is actually a risk. All the technological things that make life easier create an opportunity for tech savvy criminals to use to their advantage. Florida is the number one state in the country right now for fraud.

Q: As pertains to electronic fraud and personal identity theft, do you have any tips to share?

A: First, check with all three credit reporting agencies, as they can be different, for unauthorized activity. You get one free credit report per year for this purpose. You can subscribe to a service that monitors your credit or do it yourself. You can also freeze your credit.

If you are using wireless internet, invest in a firewall product to protect your computer and any credit card information that you might have stored.

Be sure to do your due diligence about whether you want to share your phone number or email address, even for things like store rewards programs, but especially for things like sweepstakes.

Be aware of what technology can do for you as well as for the pitfalls. It's important to balance the convenience of technology with security.

Readers can visit our website, www.sao7.com and look under the "Protect Yourself" tab for more tips.



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

Q: What is the most timely topic in the school district?

A: It's academy application time. On Jan. 9, we had our Program of Choice Showcase at World Golf Village. More than 3,000 students and family members attended. I'd like to give a shout out to Nease Communications Academy student Joseph Faranda, who designed the program cover for this year's event.

The deadline for applications to all academies, including IB, ROTC, AICE and Murray Middle School of the Arts, is Feb. 3. Each school will have its own academy open house night as well; check the school district website (www.stjohns.k12.fl.us) for dates and times.

Q: Do you have any STEM updates?

A: The district continues to be amazed at what our students who have participated in the Mayo Clinic's SPARK program have accomplished. Students are paired with mentors to work on science projects. Mayo gives these students the opportunity for real world learning; as a school district we are continually seeking ways to give students such opportunities to learn, demonstrate, and do.

Also, on Jan. 11 I attended the STEM Fair at Picolata Elementary School. The students were so well versed and so knowledgeable and confident. Children tend to look at things with a different perspective and this inspires me.

Q: Do you have anything to report from the most recent school board meeting?

A: At our meeting in mid-January, we recognized the Teacher of the Year and Rookie Teacher of the Year nominees.

We also recognized our Spelling Bee winner, Manischa Wijayawardhana, who was a repeat winner from last year. Her sister, Himaschi Wijayawardhana was the runner up. The winner will represent us at the regional competition at Jacksonville University on Feb. 27.

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

A: This year is a textbook adoption year for world languages and career and technical education. We have committees formed which include teachers, parents and subject matter experts to review these textbooks. If anyone has questions or feedback they would like considered, more information is available on the school district website.

Q: What events are upcoming?

A: We have a busy month ahead. The Character Counts! run/walk will be held on Feb. 1. The Science Fair awards will be held on Feb. 6, the History Fair will be held on March 5 and the county Art Show will be held on March 6.

We have a couple of interesting presentations coming up that are open to the public. Both are at Palencia Elementary School. On Feb. 6, Dr. Craig Davis will present "Leveraging your child's neuroplasticity for deep work" at 6 p.m. This is very thought provoking and will include useful tips for parents. On Feb. 19, cybercrime consultant Susan Wind will present "Cybersecurity and Social Media," another important topic which parents need to learn about.

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.

We need YOU to be our Neighborhood Reporter!
Send in your articles and article ideas!
Email - editor@floridanewline.com

FYI Contact Numbers

St. Johns County Local Government (www.sjcf.us)	bcc4jblocker@sjcf.us , (904) 209-0304
Sheriff's Office: Sheriff David B. Shoar, dshoar@sjso.org , (904) 824-8304 Ponte Vedra Field Office: (904) 209-2215	District 5: Henry Dean, bcc5hdean@sjcf.us , (904) 209-0305
Property Appraiser: Eddie Creamer, sjcpa@sjcpa.us ; (904) 827-5500	St. Johns County School Board (www.stjohns.k12.fl.us)
Supervisor of Elections: Vicky Oakes, voakes@votesjc.com , (904) 823-2238	District 4: Kelly Barrera, kelly.barrera@stjohns.k12.fl.us , (904) 547-7510
Tax Collector: Dennis Hollingworth, taxcollector@sjctax.us , (904) 209-2250	State of Florida Elected Officials
Clerk of Court: Hunter S. Conrad, (904) 819-3600	Governor Ron DeSantis, (850) 488-7146
St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners	State House District 17: Representative Cyndi Stevenson, Cyndi.Stevenson@myfloridahouse.gov , (904) 823-2300
District 1: Jimmy Johns, bcc1johns@sjcf.us , (904) 209-0301	State Senate District 7: Senator Travis Hutson, (386) 446-7610
District 2: Jeb Smith, bcc2jsmith@sjcf.us , (904) 209-0302	Federal Elected Officials
District 3: Paul Waldron, bcc3pwaldron@sjcf.us , (904) 209-0303	U.S. Congress District 4: Representative John Rutherford, (202) 225-2501
District 4: Jeremiah Blocker,	U.S. Senate:
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	Senator Rick Scott, (202) 224-5274





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Angie's List 2019



with St. Johns County Commissioner Jeremiah Blocker, District 4

Q: As of last month, Hunter Conrad had just been hired as the county's interim county administrator. Can you give an update on how this is going so far?

A: He has been on the job for about a month now [as of the date of this interview, Jan. 9, 2020] and I'd say he's doing a great job. He brings great vision, fresh thoughts and innovation to the position. I feel we have been justified in trusting him.

Q: Is the search on for the permanent county administrator yet?

A: Our late January meeting of the board of county commissioners will focus on the process we will use to find a permanent replacement. We have several things to consider: will we hire a search firm to assist us? This has a cost, of course. The Florida Association of Counties also offers support to help us find a candidate. Whatever way we decide to go, I plan to be fair, firm and impartial.

Q: Do you foresee a nationwide search?

A: In talking to other counties in Florida who have undertaken a search, it is unusual and rare to do a nationwide search due to the expense. I believe there is a lot of talent in St. Johns County and it might be in our best interest to look locally, at least at first. We are looking for the best qualified individual as well as the best fit.

Q: What kind of a timetable would you anticipate?

A: I would expect that we will have identified our process in the next month or so and then I'd like to have the candidate identified by late spring, if possible. [Editor's Note: On Jan. 21, the Board of County Commissioners voted 5-0 to hire Hunter Conrad as the permanent county administrator.]

Q: Do you have an update on beach renourishment that you'd like to share?

A: We are hoping to get some FEMA funds released in the next few months to replenish county funds already spent. We are on schedule with the beach renourishment process, about one year into a two year process. We have identified an engineering firm, Olsen and Associates, who are preparing the permits to submit to the Army Corps of Engineers and other government entities, and we are also working to identify some offshore sand sources.

Q: Do you have any plans for Town Hall meetings in the near future?

A: Yes, we are setting up more Town Halls in the spring, to be held in Nocatee and Ponte Vedra Beach. Dates are still to be announced.

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

A: Readers can email me at bcc4jblocker@sjcfl.us or call me at (904) 679-2620.



with St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections Vicky Oakes

Q: What is the focus of your office for the month of February?

A: Keeping in mind that the March 17 Presidential Preference Primary is a closed election, it's important for voters to note that only registered Republicans and Democrats can vote. Of the 193,540 registered voters in St. Johns County, 45,562 of them are registered with no party affiliation or with a minor political party and, in accordance with state law, are not eligible to vote. These voters can change their party affiliation easily online or by calling our office. The deadline to change party affiliation to vote in the March 17 election is Feb. 18.

Q: What else is happening in February?

A: Vote by Mail ballots, for those voters who requested them, are scheduled to be mailed out on Feb. 6. It's not too late to request a Vote by Mail ballot; simply call our office or go online to do so. If you don't remember if you have made a request, go to the "My Voter Status" tab on our website to check.

Q: How long does a Vote by Mail request last?

A: This request lasts for two general elections, which would be four years. We ask voters to specify if they'd like the request for a shorter period of time.

Q: Are there any polling place changes for the March 17 election?

A: Yes, since the last election, in the Northeast we have had a couple of changes. Precinct 406 was a very large precinct in Nocatee. It grew to more than 11,000 registered voters, so we split it into two precincts. Precinct 406 will still vote at St. Francis in the Field on Palm Valley Road. New Precinct 410 will vote at Crosswater Hall in Nocatee. Only voters who received their new Voter Information Cards in the mail will move to Crosswater Hall.

Q: Do you have anything else to share about the Presidential Preference Primary?

A: There are 16 Democrat candidates and four Republican candidates on the ballot. We prepare the ballot based on when the state certifies, which has already occurred. Voters need to pay attention and be aware of which candidates have recently suspended their campaigns. These candidates will still be on the ballot due to the earlier date of the state certification.

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.

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Photo courtesy Nocatee

Nocatee Farmers Market hosts Winter Festival

The Nocatee community celebrated the season at the Nocatee Farmers Market Winter Festival on Saturday, Dec. 21. The festive market included live music by the Crescendo Amelia Big Band, a petting zoo, crafts, and shopping from more than 70 local vendors. This month's Farmers Market will feature a car show and be held on Saturday, Feb. 15.



with St. Johns County Property Appraiser
Eddie Creamer

Q: It's the new year ... what is happening at the Property Appraiser's office?

A: Yes, it's 2020 and property taxation is kicking off another year. We are now in the assessment process and will be until June.

Q: What do you recommend property owners do at this time?

A: We currently have "working values" for properties on our website. I recommend that homeowners review their numbers and if they have any issues they can contact our office now to discuss. The same thing goes for exemptions — they can review them online and make sure the proper exemptions are applied.

Finally, especially if a homeowner is considering selling, they should check their portability on the website for accuracy. The courts have ruled that once a home is sold, you have no standing to appeal the portability amount.

Q: Can you give us some more information about portability?

A: If your property is homesteaded, the most its value can increase is the lower of 3 percent or the increase in the state's cost of living. The state of Florida just released its CPI (Consumer Price Index) and it is 2.3 percent, so this will be the cap for this year (since it is lower than 3 percent).

Q: Is it also time to consider homestead and other exemptions?

A: If you have existing exemptions on your property, they will be automatically renewed for this year unless you notify us. If you are applying for new exemptions in 2020, such as homestead, veteran, senior, or widow/widower, you must do it before the deadline date of March 1, 2020. Homeowners can go online to apply or call our office with questions. The required documentation for each exemption is also available online.

One other note on exemptions: the senior exemption is a low income exemption. The state of Florida just released the required maximum income to qualify; for this year it is \$30,721 adjusted gross income.

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

A: Our office is located at 4030 Lewis Speedway Ste. 203, (904) 827-5500. It is open Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Also, readers can email me at Eddie@sjcpa.us or call me at (904) 827-5500.



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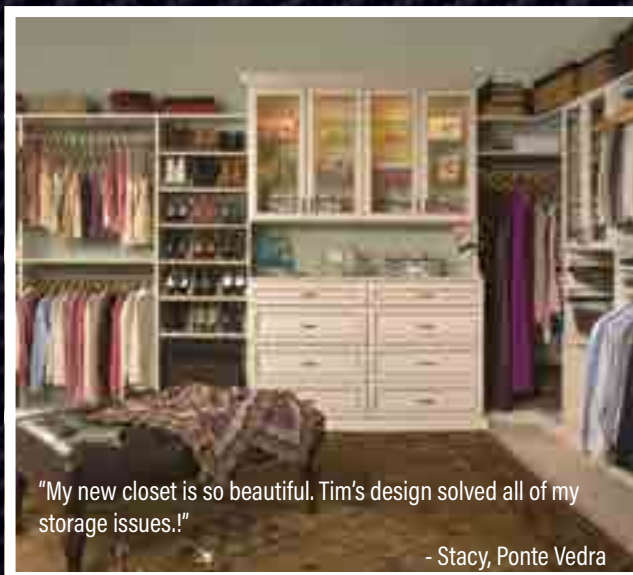
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ST. JOHNS Business Monthly

MarketInsight



The Bull Moose

By Scott Grant
ScottGrant@StJohnsBusinessMonthly.com

Teddy Roosevelt was climbing Mount Marcy in New York State when he learned that President McKinley had died as a result of a gunshot wound received a week earlier. He travelled five hours by wagon and then by train to Buffalo to take the oath of office in the home of a friend. When he took that oath on Sept. 14, 1901, he became the youngest president in history. (I know what you are thinking, what about John F. Kennedy? JFK holds the distinction of being the youngest elected president. Teddy Roosevelt, at 42, is still the youngest man ever to hold the office. Kennedy was 43.)

McKinley had been shot on Sept. 6 while visiting the Pan American Exposition. The assassin was an anarchist named Leon Czolgosz. When you hear the word anarchist, you think of a crazy lone gunman. It turns out that the Anarchists were an organized movement and a world-wide one as well. Tsar Alexander II was killed by an anarchist in 1881.

Teddy Roosevelt would serve as president for seven years. During his re-election campaign of 1904, he promised he would not run for a third term. It was a promise he would regret. In 1908, Teddy turned over the reins to his hand-picked successor, William Howard Taft. The prodigious Taft, who was so heavy that he reputedly once got stuck in the White House bathtub, disappointed his mentor. In 1912, Teddy returned determined to set matters straight. Roosevelt ran a strong primary campaign, but party bosses seated enough delegates to ensure Taft would prevail. Teddy Roosevelt fumed.

Teddy literally pulled his delegates from the Convention and left to form his own party. He called it the Progressive Party, but it would come to be known by a different name. They say William Howard Taft never wanted to be president. He wanted to be Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. In 1921, he got his wish when he was appointed to the position by President Warren G. Harding, becoming the only person in history to hold both offices.

During the campaign, Roosevelt was in Milwaukee to give a speech. He had the speech written on 50 pages of paper, folded twice and stuffed into the pocket of his suit along with his eyeglass container. As he walked out of his hotel, a

man approached and pulled a .32 revolver and shot the former president in the chest at point blank range. Roosevelt went down. The crowd reacted violently, beating the would-be assassin and shouting, "Kill him!" Teddy was calmer. "Bring him here," he said. "I want to see him." He asked the man, "What did you do it for?"

The wadded sheets of paper and steel case slowed the bullet which lodged against the former president's rib. Teddy carried the souvenir with him for the rest of his life. Roosevelt's entourage wanted to rush him to the hospital, but Teddy had other ideas. He coughed into his handkerchief and seeing no blood determined that his lungs had not been pierced. "He pinked me," Roosevelt declared. "You get me to that speech." Less than an hour later, he took the podium and announced, "I don't know whether you fully understand that I have just been shot." The audience gasped audibly as Roosevelt opened his jacket to show his bloodied shirt before adding, "It takes more than that to kill a bull moose!"

From that moment on, Roosevelt's new party was known as the "Bull Moose Party." Teddy got more votes than Taft in the general election. Woodrow Wilson, with only 42 percent of the popular vote, won the presidency in an electoral landslide. Teddy Roosevelt ran the most successful third-party campaign in our history, but for the rest of his life he remained bitter about the result.

Some people look at the two political parties and yearn for a third choice. You have to wonder if Teddy Roosevelt could not make it work, whether anyone can.

Scott A. Grant is a local author, historian, columnist, and speaker. He is president of Standfast Asset Management in Ponte Vedra Beach. He welcomes your comments or questions at scottg@standfastic.com.

Scott Grant's book, "The Merchant of Death is Dead: True Stories of the Progress of Humanity," in which he shares some of his favorite columns, is now available: <https://tinyurl.com/tm7tj65>. Over the last 14 years, Grant has been a regular columnist for two newspapers and has perfected several history presentations. After two years of touring the local northeast Florida civic clubs, museums, and schools, he was asked to produce a book. This is his first publication. He is delighted to share his knowledge of history and investments.

3 strategies to manage your time more effectively

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

Busy professionals juggling the responsibilities of work and family often feel pressed for time. Adding a 25th hour to the day might not be possible, but busy men and women can make more time by managing their existing time more effectively.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention note that stress and time management are linked. People who effectively manage their time may, as a result, prove more capable of handling stressful situations than those who are not as adept at time management.

Effective time management is an ongoing process that often requires people to revisit their approaches as their commitments change. In addition to making such adjustments when necessary, men and women can employ these three strategies to manage their time more effectively.

1. Keep track of yourself. Maintain a log that indicates how much time you're spending on the various tasks you perform throughout the day. Without such a log, it can be difficult to determine where time is being wasted and which activities require the most attention. In addition, maintaining an activity log can shed light on when you tend to be the most productive and when your energy begins to wane. That's an especially beneficial thing to know, as it may compel you to make changes that can boost your energy levels at times of the day when you can most benefit from a little extra energy. For example, if you notice your productivity

routinely slows to a crawl after lunch, you might choose to change your diet so you consume more energy-boosting foods at midday.

2. Steer clear of your mobile devices. A 2019 study from eMarketer.com estimated that people will spend an average of three hours and 43 minutes on their mobile devices each day in 2020. The study found that much of that time was spent using social networking apps. Some professionals may need to use social networking apps as part of their jobs, but those that don't should steer clear of their mobile devices during the day. Doing so may reduce distractions that can have an adverse effect on productivity, thereby helping people get more done in less time. During the workday, turn off unnecessary mobile phone notifications, such as those from sports or social media apps.

3. Make an effort to clear the clutter. Clutter might not seem like too big a threat to productivity, but studies have found that it is. The National Association of Productivity and Organizing Professionals notes that 54 percent of adults are overwhelmed by clutter at home and work, with 78 percent acknowledging they have no idea how to deal with it. One study even found that the average person wastes more than four hours per week searching for papers. That's lost time and time that's certainly not managed effectively. By clearing away clutter at home and at the office, people may be saving themselves an untold number of hours each week.



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ST. JOHNS Business Monthly

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Briefs

Free tax prep offered in St. Johns County

Free tax preparation, by certified tax preparers, is available to individuals and families with a household income of \$69,000 or less through RealSense, a partnership between United Way of St. Johns County and United Way of Northeast Florida. United Way of St. Johns County offers this service to ensure that families and individuals can save the cost of tax preparation and benefit from a properly prepared return. One-on-one appointments are now offered Mondays, Wednesdays, or Saturdays, depending on location.

RealSense appointments can be made online at bit.ly/realsense or by calling (904) 373-8671. Locations and dates/times are:

Vystar Credit Union
3654 N. Ponce de Leon Blvd.
Wednesdays, 2 p.m. – 7 p.m. and Saturdays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Health and Human Services
200 San Sebastian View
Mondays, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

United Way of St. Johns County
117 Bridge St.
Wednesdays, 1 p.m. – 7 p.m. and Saturdays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Bring the following:

- Driver's license or other photo I.D.
- Checkbook for direct deposit of any refund(s)
- Social Security cards (yourself and all dependents)
- W-2 from each employer (no pay stubs)
- Documentation of all other income
- 1095-A if you received health-care coverage through the Marketplace

THE PLAYERS introduces mobile-only tickets

New in 2020, THE PLAYERS Championship's ticketing process is being changed to include mobile-only and day-specific tickets. Additionally, parking passes are now required every day of tournament week, Tuesday through Sunday. THE PLAYERS Championship will be held at TPC Sawgrass, March 10 – 15, 2020.

"THE PLAYERS earns its gold-standard label by continuously elevating itself in all areas, year after year," said Executive Director of THE PLAYERS Jared Rice. "Our move to mobile-only and day-specific tickets is part of a strategic effort to ensure a best-in-class experience for our fans, better anticipate attendance for each day and ultimately increase our impact on the Northeast Florida community."

Ticket options include the following (prices below do not include taxes; parking must be purchased separately):

Day-specific Stadium Pass: Provides access to nearly 20 venues, numerous local food and beverage options, rope-side access to the best players in the world and much more.

Tuesday — \$45, which includes access to The Chainsmokers concert after the Military Appreciation Ceremony at 5 p.m.

Wednesday — \$25
Thursday and Sunday — \$65
Friday and Saturday — \$70

Day-specific Captain's Club: Includes premium club space with views of the 16th and 18th holes at TPC Sawgrass. Beer, wine and soda are included; full bar and food are available for purchase. Tickets are \$250 per day for Thursday through Sunday.

Other hospitality options include the Benefactor, the Turn and THE PLAYERS Club and are still available at www.THEPLAYERS.com/hospitality.html.

Military Tickets: Complimentary admission is provided each day of the tournament to active duty, military re-

tirees, military reserve, National Guard, military spouses and accompanied dependents with valid credentials and identification. Veterans are provided an exclusive offer, permitting them to purchase one ticket for themselves and one ticket for a guest at a discounted rate per day (\$20 each, Tuesday and Wednesday; \$30 each, Thursday through Sunday). All military personnel must verify their military status by visiting THEPLAYERS.com/tickets and clicking "Claim Tickets" under the Military Admissions section.

Additionally, THE PLAYERS allows youth 15-and-under to attend for free when accompanied by a ticketed adult.

Also new in 2020, parking passes are required all days of tournament week, Tuesday through Sunday. All parking passes are daily passes and must be purchased online in advance via THEPLAYERS.com/parking. Tuesday and Wednesday parking costs \$15 per day and Thursday — Sunday costs \$40 per day. Parking will not be sold on-site, and parking passes are required for all vehicles. As in years past, THE PLAYERS will offer fans free parking passes if they carpool with four or more people. These passes are limited and must be downloaded in advance.



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Get to Know . . .

Jessica Richardson

By Tiffany Merlo Phelps
mail@floridanewsline.com



Photo courtesy Jessica Richardson
Jessica Richardson and family.

Palm Valley Academy Principal Jessica Richardson is in her 20th year as a St. Johns County educator and was recently named the 2019 St. Johns County Principal of the Year — but her path to becoming an educator unknowingly began when she was in the second grade and moved to the Middle East. Richardson's family moved to Saudi Arabia because of a job opportunity that Richardson's father took as an engineer for an oil company. Attending Jubail Academy, an international school, exposed Richardson to a culturally diverse group of people, teaching her about empathy, tolerance and diversity — all tools that she finds invaluable to her current position.

With no television, restaurants or fast food, Richardson said her time in the Middle East was unique and special and afforded her a chance to travel. At 15, Richardson attended high school at a boarding school, The Mercersburg Academy, in Mercersburg, Pa. Her parents remained in the Middle East for 27 years. In Pennsylvania, Richardson felt very close to her teachers since they all lived there together, and that experience made her appreciate the job of a teacher. Richardson next spent a year in Salisbury, NC, attending Catawba College (which she notes is smaller than Palm Valley Academy) and she ultimately transferred to the University of North Florida where she earned her bachelor's degree. Richardson also holds a master's degree from Grand Canyon University.

Q: How do you feel about being named the 2019 St. Johns County Principal of the Year?

A: I am very humbled and honored to represent our school district and to represent the work of my colleagues. It is nice to be recognized individually, but I hope that I am highlighting and showcasing all of us as servant leaders in our county. We have a fabulous school system, and it is great to use this platform to celebrate our staff, teachers and the children. I don't love the recognition for myself, but I do like to highlight the amazing team of people around me.

Q. What are some of the challenges that you face at Palm Valley Academy, and how do you approach them as a school leader?

A: We are located in one of the fastest growing communities in the nation, so we face a lot of challenges and opportunities with this massive growth. We are around 1,900 for student population, and we were built for 1,500. We try to focus on what we can control, so that we are able to take care of anyone who comes through the door. We care about people, both adults and children, and that will always remain our main focus. I am very proud of the amazing team of people we have hired in the past two years, and it is great to see this team become a family. We implemented the nationwide program "Capturing Kids' Hearts" before we even moved into the school two years ago. Once someone feels comfortable and safe, then they can learn and thrive. We do this by having a consistent way to greet each other with handshakes, looking each other in the eye and using positive affirmations.

Q: Tell me about your family and any hobbies you have?

A: My husband Scott and I have two children — Pretoria, who is a junior, and Tyler, a freshman, both at Ponte Vedra High School. We love to be together at their sporting events, competitive cheer for Pretoria and soccer for Tyler. We also enjoy hanging out at our beautiful beaches as often as we can. I like to jog and exercise whenever I have time. I definitely would call myself a jogger though, not a runner.

Q: Did you always know that you wanted to enter the field of education?

A: My career happened a little bit by chance. I originally started as a communications major, but I was naturally drawn to kids. My middle school band teacher and my fourth and my fifth-grade teachers all stand out in my mind. I think about them and how they made me feel. I quickly realized that the classroom is where my heart is, and that is when I became an education major.

Q: Do you have a school motto or life philosophy that guides you?

A: In my office, I have a framed mission

statement from my time as principal at Ocean Palms Elementary School. It reads, "Every day, everyone, everything matters." This is important to me because you have to focus on everything — the intricate details and the big picture — or something will get lost. We are responsible for the growth and development of our children, and I feel like people are chosen to do this profession. Our motto for Palm Valley Academy this year is "I can, I will, I must." And I like to sign everything with a saying that I borrowed from another administrator and mentor, "Until next time, be well."

Get to Know . . .

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editor@FloridaNewsLine.com

Food for Fines cont. from pg. 1

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Food for Fines is one of several collaborative programs that the St. Johns County Library System participates in with other county departments, extending its reach to county residents. Visit www.sjcpls.org for more information.

Vicky Dakes
St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections

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PRIMARY ELECTION
AUGUST 18, 2020

GENERAL ELECTION
NOVEMBER 3, 2020

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REGISTER BY OCTOBER 5, 2020



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

Q: When did session begin and what is on the schedule at this time?

A: Session began on Jan. 14. All bills have been filed and the next thing approaching is the budget. Leadership decides the big pieces, basically the five major categories of the budget, and then it's up to the budget chairs to get everything to fit in. Eventually, the budget will be sent to the governor, who has a line item veto. He can take items out of the budget, but not put them in.

Q: Can you give an overview of Florida's budget?

A: First, money is very limited and entitlement costs are growing rapidly. It used to be that K-12 funding was the largest part of the budget, but now healthcare is largest.

Q: Can you expand upon how limited the money is?

A: I don't think people realize how slow the recovery since the recession has been for the State of Florida. The state's general revenue didn't recover to its pre-recession level, on a per-person basis, until 2018. Put another way, we are in the 11th year of economic expansion, but it took nine years to get revenue to pre-recession levels. Recovery has been slow. Yes, revenues have increased, but demands have grown as well. It's only in the last two years that we have been able to spend funds on non-obligations, like water resources and land acquisition (i.e. Florida Forever).

Q: So, the amount of entitlements (obligations) make it challenging to fund other items?

A: Yes. From 2000 – 2015, 91 percent of revenue went to obligations rather than discretionary spending. Entitlement costs are consuming more and more of our budget and putting pressure on everything else. We have kept Florida a relatively low-tax state and kept our pension funds funded, but it makes it harder to fund other items like infrastructure. And when voters pass Constitutional Amendments that either give tax breaks to certain groups or pin down part of the budget for certain things, these give us even less flexibility.

I think we need to be very careful with Constitutional Amendments, as these are forever.

Q: What do you see as the top priorities in funding this year?

A: The governor has advocated for affordable workforce housing, so I believe that is a priority. I believe teacher funding is a need and will be a priority in session, along with prison funding and mental health and substance abuse funding. We still have a lot of work to do, but we will keep chipping away at it.

Q: What insight can you give us on St. Johns County?

A: It's interesting that, statewide, tourism led us out of the recession and housing has been very slow. This is hard for us in St. Johns County to believe and why it's important for our local delegation to advocate for us because we are different. St. Johns County is a bit of an aberration in the state as it grew throughout the recession and attracted more and more families. The legislature needs to advocate for line items to help our high growth areas, because we still have unmet needs in St. Johns County: we need more judges to service our increased population, we need more mental health services and on top of that, we've had major hurricanes.

Q: Do you have any bills that you are sponsoring?

A: Yes, I have several. There are two bills related to mental health (one for early identification and treatment for those with psychosis and one for Baker Act reforms); a bill to allow physical therapists to more fully practice; a bill for recovery care centers to provide a more affordable option for those who don't have enough care at home; and a bill that will help us have a state estimate for resiliency projects related to sea-level rise.

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.

The Sheriff Reports

By St. Johns County Sheriff David B. Shoar

9-1-1

St. Johns County implemented the 911 system 33 years ago this month. In order to report crimes in progress or an emergency that is — or could become life threatening — you should use the 9-1-1 system. Examples of this are serious medical issues like a heart attack, stroke, seizure, uncontrolled asthma attack, childbirth in progress or anything involving serious bodily injury.

You should NOT call 9-1-1 to report a burglary or theft that is not in progress or other non-emergency events. For that you will find the various non-emergency numbers in the front pages of the phone book, or to contact our office, call (904) 824-8304, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

In St. Johns County, our office has been designated to operate the enhanced 9-1-1 system. The "enhanced" indicates that for all landline calls, the location from where the call is originating is displayed on the dispatcher's screen. Most cell phone providers are now sending us the coordinates to help identify the location of mobile calls, but even with this advanced technology there are important procedures the caller can follow to make the response quicker and more efficient. First, stay calm. The 9-1-1 dispatcher is well trained to gather from you the information necessary. Answer their questions with brief responses based on the best knowledge you have available at the time. Follow instructions, and if there is something you are not clear about or don't understand ask to have it repeated. Above all, stay on the line until the dispatcher tells you to hang up.

As soon as your children are old enough to understand, start teaching them how and when to use 9-1-1. Be sure they know their name, address and phone number and situations where they may

need to call for help — such as finding someone who won't wake up and there are no other people around to tell or to ask for help. Practice dialing 9-1-1 with them on a play telephone, stressing they need to use a real phone if there is an emergency, and to not "practice" on a real phone. Always refer to the emergency number as 9-1-1 and never "nine eleven."

As technology grows, so must emergency services. Thus you may now Text-to-911 as well as the Sheriff's Office non-emergency line. This is for times that those in need of help are unable to speak about the emergency. This feature follows the same guidelines as a landline and cellular call and should only be used for emergencies and if you cannot talk. Remember if there is an emergency and you are unable to make a call, be sure to send the location and type of emergency in your first text message to 911. Text in simple words without abbreviations or slang. Be prepared to answer questions and follow instructions from the 9-1-1 call taker. You can also text to our administration or non-emergency line for routine situations not requiring an immediate response. Just type in the Sheriff's Office phone number (904) 824-8304 as the recipient of the text and send the message.

Finally, our Social Media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Nextdoor) are a great place to ask general questions that do not require an immediate response, as we do not monitor these sites continuously.

Email me at dshoar@sjsco.org if you have a suggestion for a future topic or any other issue involving county law enforcement.



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Valentines traditions from around the world

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewline.com

The origins of Valentine's Day are largely unknown. Some suggest Valentine's Day was initially a way to honor St. Valentine on the anniversary of his death. Others believe it was the Christian church's way of Christianizing the Pagan celebration of Lupercalia, a fertility festival dedicated to Faunus, the Roman god of agriculture.

Regardless of its origins, Valentine's Day is now celebrated by millions and is one of the retail industry's most lucrative shopping holidays. Many different traditions can be linked to Valentine's Day. Here is a list of the interesting ways Valentine's Day is celebrated across the globe.

In South Korea, men get to enjoy the spotlight on Valentine's Day, as women bestow gifts of chocolate on them. In return, a month later men reciprocate with gifts for women on White Day. South Koreans take Valentine's Day a step further on Black Day, which falls on April 14. This is an opportunity for all single people who may not have received Valentine's Day gifts to gather at restaurants and eat a dish called "black noodles" as they celebrate their singleton status.

Denmark and Norway didn't really celebrate Valentine's Day until recently, but have now put their own spin on the traditions. Men write funny poems or rhyming love notes called Gaekkebreve and send them to women anonymously. Women must try to guess their admirers by counting dots that are put on the note that correspond to the number of letters in the man's name.

In Estonia, Valentine's Day is a day more devoted to friendship than ro-

mantic love. It is called "Sõbrapäev" in Estonian, which translates to "Friend's Day." Cards and gifts are exchanged among friends.

In Wales, Valentine's Day is not celebrated. Rather, the Welsh commemorate St. Dwynwen's Day, who is their patron saint of lovers on Jan. 25. It is customary to gift love-spoons, a tradition that likely stems from the practice of sailors carving intricately decorated spoons of wood and presenting them to women they were interested in courting or marrying.

Considered to be one of the most romantic countries in the world, France can be an ideal place to participate in Valentine's Day traditions. The French have an old custom called "une loterie d'amour," which is a drawing for love. Single men and women of all ages once entered houses that faced one another and took turns calling out to one another to find romantic matches. The men could refuse the match and leave the woman looking for another man to call on. Women who were not paired up would light a bonfire and damn the men who rejected them. The French government eventually banned the practice because of rowdy crowds.

Italian lovers celebrate Valentine's Day in much the same way as Americans. One interesting Valentine's tradition in Italy is locking padlocks to different structures, which is called "Lucchetti dell'Amore (locks of love)." Couples attach the locks to bridges, railings and lamp posts, inscribe their names and throw away the key. The action suggests the couple will be together forever.

The Pantry Raiders

Do dessert at home this Valentine's Day

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewline.com

Couples who want to add a special twist to Valentine's Day date night can enjoy a nice meal out before returning home for some homemade dessert. Whether couples prepare it together or surprise their significant others, the following recipe for "Coffee Crisp" from Bob Blumer's "Surreal Gourmet Bites" (Chronicle Books) can make for the perfect ending to a Valentine's Day date night.

Coffee Crisp

(Yields 12 bites)

- 6 egg yolks
- 8 tbsp. sugar
- 2 tbsp. instant espresso or coffee powder
- 1 ½ cups heavy cream
- ½ tsp. vanilla extract

Preheat the oven to 300 F.

In a medium bowl, whisk egg yolks and 6 tablespoons of the sugar for 1 minute, or until smooth and pale yellow in color. Reserve.

In a second medium bowl, add espresso granules and one-quarter cup of the cream. Whisk until smooth, then add remaining cream and vanilla, and whisk until well blended.

Very gently, fold espresso cream mixture into egg yolks.

Use a ladle to pour custard mixture into espresso cups, filling them three-fourths of the way to the top. Place cups in a baking dish or roasting pan and transfer to oven. Fill a pitcher with warm tap water. Before closing oven door, pour water into pan (but not into the cups themselves!) until it reaches halfway up the sides of the cups.

Bake for 40 minutes, or until the custards jiggle just slightly when you shake the pan. Remove pan from oven and leave out on counter, allowing the residual heat of the water to finish the cooking process.

When custards have fully solidified, refrigerate for 2 hours.

Just before serving, sprinkle 1/2 teaspoon of sugar evenly overtop each custard. Use a small blowtorch to caramelize the sugar. Alternatively, place cups 1 inch below oven broiler under a watchful eye for approximately 2 minutes, or until sugar caramelizes.



Photo courtesy MetroCreative
Coffee Crisp



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Photo courtesy Fort Mose Historical Society

Flight to Freedom at Fort Mose Historic State Park on Feb. 8

Follow the journey of freedom seekers to Spanish St. Augustine from South Carolina on Saturday, Feb. 8 from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. at Fort Mose Historic State Park. The first documented escaped slaves arrived in St. Augustine in 1687. From 1687 through the end of the First Spanish Period in 1763, freedom seekers in ever increasing numbers made the dangerous and arduous journey from the rice and indigo plantations in coastal South Carolina to the sanctity of Spanish Florida by the granting of freedom according to Carlos II's Royal Proclamation of 1693. Flight to Freedom tells the story of their journey. Participants will learn about the Spanish, African, and Native American food traditions and culture from guest speakers and demonstrators. Demonstrations by the Fort Mose militia as well as musket and cannon demonstrations are scheduled. This event is provided by Fort Mose Historic State Park, The Fort Mose Historical Society, Florida Living History and The Florida Humanities Council. Fort Mose Historic State Park is located just off U.S. Highway 1 at 15 Fort Mose Trail, north of St. Augustine. Visit www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/fort-mose-historic-state-park for more information.

What you need to know about SPARK

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

The SPARK Research Mentorship Program at Mayo Clinic's campus in Jacksonville, provides high school students in Duval and St. Johns counties mentored research experiences in world-class laboratories. This program enables students to develop a basic understanding of scientific research and produce a highly competitive science fair project.

SPARK is a Science Program for the Advancement of Research Knowledge started in the summer of 2017 as an opportunity for students to be mentored by some of the top researchers in the world.

Students who are interested in biomedical science and enrolled as juniors or seniors for the upcoming school year

in either Duval or St. Johns Counties, will have an opportunity to design and carry out research projects within the Discovery and Translation Labs at Mayo Clinic's campus for science fair competitions.

A minimum of 20 lab hours per week (weekdays and weekends) are required during the summer break for a successful project to be completed for the science fair competitions. When school resumes, a flexible schedule is set up between the student and faculty mentor.

The deadline for applications is Feb. 24. Visit www.mayo.edu/research/centers-programs/spark-research-mentorship-program/overview for more information, including eligibility requirements and application details.

An Evening at the Farm: Beth El's annual Night of Giving



Photo courtesy Sherill Herzfeld

Beth El The Beaches Synagogue announces its annual Night of Giving, "An Evening at the Farm" to be held Feb. 29, 2020 from 7 p.m. – 10 p.m. This year's event will be held at Atlantic Beach Urban Farms, a climate-controlled, pristine greenhouse featuring aeroponic technology. To add to the casual, comfortable atmosphere, the food for the evening will be catered by Berry Good Farms Food Truck. The fundraising efforts this year will include sponsorship levels as well as a "Giving Tree," a display of leaves demarcating different levels of commitment. The annual Night of Giving is Beth El's most attended and anticipated event and it is open to the community. Pictured are some of Beth El's annual Night of Giving committee members: Abby Steele, Donne' Ordle, Rachel Marcus-Mitchell, Tracy Aquila, Sherill Herzfeld and Betsy Siegel. Reservations are being taken at beth-el-gala-2020.eventbrite.com. Contact the synagogue office at (904) 273-9100 for more information on this event and all other programs.



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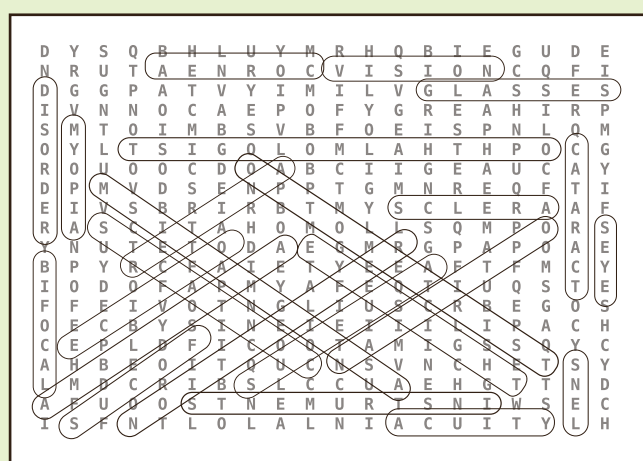
Answers to puzzles on page 16

Answers to our Puzzles

E	P	A	C	T		E	T	A		P	E	R	M		
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E	D	E	R		D	A	S			B	R	I	N	G	



Answers: A. eyes B. exam C. vision D. healthy



Cancer Survivors cont. from pg. 1

“When you are a trainer, you get to see the results of what a human being can become and how magnificent we can be,” said Reed, a 25-year cancer survivor. “When you have been diagnosed with cancer, you become a cancer survivor.”

Reed, a personal trainer for 42 years, worked on the first LIVESTRONG® at the YMCA initiative at the Brooks YMCA and cannot wait to serve the Ponte Vedra YMCA members. He said the program begins with a meet and greet and then a personal assessment.

“It is such a wonderful thing to see them progress not just as survivors but to become warriors,” said Reed, adding that the bonding between participants is also crucial to the success of the program. “Everyone becomes a personal trainer for each other. It is a lovely environment that we create.”

Ponte Vedra Y board member and fundraising chair Laura Cowie said she wholeheartedly believes in the LIVESTRONG® at the YMCA program because experiencing cancer can be extremely isolating and can put a tremendous amount of emotional and financial stress on the diagnosed individuals and their families.

“LIVESTRONG® at the YMCA is an incredible program that can help form a cocoon of caring through classes, personal training and invaluable support groups. The statistics of cancer are staggering, affecting one in two women and one in three men. Most all of our lives have been touched by cancer in one way or another,” said Cowie. “The best part about the 12-week program is that the \$1,000 cost is covered entirely from our fundraising efforts and is free to those individuals and their immediate family.”

Cowie asked that the community let friends and family know about the program, and, if a person is able, make a tax-deductible donation to the Ponte Vedra Y to help support the community and a life changing program.

The link to give online is <https://app.mobilecause.com/vf/FCYMCA/team/PonteVedraYMCA>. All inquiries for survivors and donors may also go to my-health@fcymca.org. Also, Chacos said community members should feel free to call him directly with any questions at (904) 543-9622, ext. 104 or email him at cchacos@fcymca.org.

Happy Valentines Day



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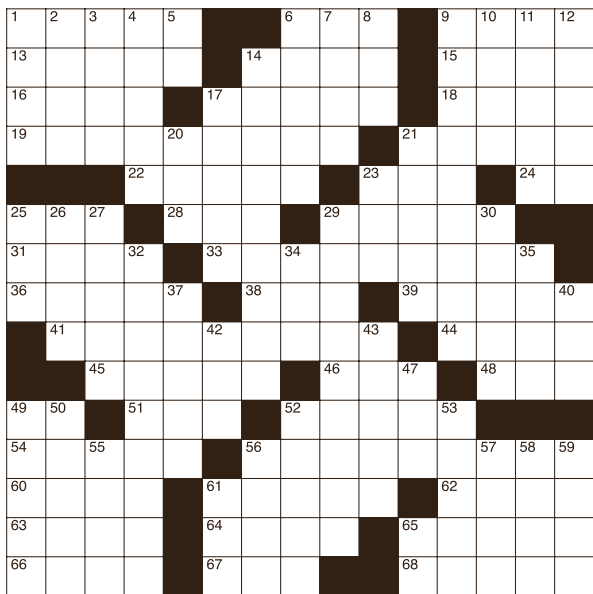
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Puzzles

Answers to puzzles on page 14
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CLUES ACROSS

1. Indicates number of days
6. When you hope to get there
9. Hairstyle
13. Black (Spanish)
14. Expresses pleasure
15. Away from wind
16. Tech pros organization
17. Wile E. Coyote is familiar with it
18. Clean
19. Saints' signal caller
21. A way to hunt
22. Poetries
23. Automobile
24. Secondary school (abbr.)
25. Indicates before
28. Male parent
29. Short-billed rails
31. It pays to keep you
33. On occasion
36. David __, US playwright
38. Slang for cigarette

CLUES DOWN

1. __ Blyton, children's author
2. Colleague
3. "The African Queen" writer
4. Crater on the moon
5. Toward
6. Overhang
7. Identifies something close at hand
8. Sign language
9. Unbroken views
10. Ancient Greek City
11. Stretch out to grasp
12. Alcohols that are unfit for drinking
14. Humorous stories
17. Long song for a solo
20. Barrels per day (abbr.)
21. City of Lights
23. A place to sleep
25. Advanced degree (abbr.)
26. The back

CLUES DOWN

27. Furniture-makers Charles and "Ray"
29. Songs to a lover
30. Gland secretion
32. 10 meters
34. Disfigure
35. Stores grain
37. Sacred book of Judaism
40. Catch
42. Promise
43. Challenges
47. Russian space station
49. Banking giant
50. Served as an omen
52. Drenches
53. Type of sword
55. Minor planet
56. Messenger ribonucleic acid
57. Japanese ankle sock
58. Obtain in return for services
59. Waste matter
61. A proposal to buy at a specified price
65. Unit of loudness

GOOD SIGHT WORD SEARCH

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

WORDS

- ACUITY
- AMBLYOPIA
- AQUEOUS
- ASTIGMATISM
- BIFOCAL
- CATARACT
- CONTACTS
- CORNEA
- DISORDER
- EYES
- EYEGHIGHT
- FOCUS
- GLASSES
- INSTRUMENTS
- LENS
- MYOPIA
- OFFICE
- OPHTHALMOLOGIST
- OPTICIAN
- OPTOMETRIST
- REFLECTION
- RETINA
- SCLERA
- VISION

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Solve the code to discover words related to vision.
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(Hint: 8 = e)

A. 8 13 8 2
Clue: Used for sight

B. 8 21 25 3
Clue: Test

C. 16 9 2 9 15 23
Clue: Sight

D. 20 8 25 10 4 20 13
Clue: Free of illness

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M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

- Teacher Optional Planning
- 8 Teacher Planning (non-student day)
- 2 Teacher Inservice (non-student day)
- Classes Resume
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Travel

A weekend in Wytheville, Virginia

By Debi Lander
mail@floridanewsline.com

Travelers often find unexpected joys, fewer crowds, and budget-friendly prices in smaller cities. I recently discovered these advantages in Wytheville, located in Southwest Virginia, at the intersection of highways Interstate-81 and Interstate-77, not far from the Tennessee border. Wytheville's population numbers just 8,500, but there's plenty to see and do.

My first stroll down Main Street brought me to the Edith Bolling Wilson Museum. Who? Edith Bolling, a child born and raised in Wytheville, became the first lady when she married Woodrow Wilson in 1915, during his first term as President. (I can only imagine the media frenzy that would cause today.) When Wilson suffered a stroke in 1919, Edith actually made many presidential decisions on his behalf.

Her birthplace sits next door to the museum. The house has yet to be restored, but the near-empty rooms speak loudly of the past. I was fascinated by Edith and her place in American history. (She was born during the Civil War Reconstruction and has a 10th generation link to Pocahontas.)

The Thomas A. Boyd Museum focuses on Wytheville's history, including a reasonably recent, but sad, chapter. In 1950, Wytheville had more polio

cases than any other city in the state. The year became known as the Summer Without Children. Accounts say it was as if the Pied Piper spirited all the children out of town. Parents would not permit the kids to play outdoors. Several iron lungs of various sizes are displayed, a poignant reminder of how polio victims were affected and treated at this time.

Today's outdoor enthusiasts will find a variety of hiking, biking, horseback riding, and boating options among Big Walker Mountain Trail, New River State Park, and Crystal Springs. Drive up to Big Walker Mountain Lookout (elevation of 3,405 feet) and climb the 100-foot tower for endless views of beautiful Appalachian Mountains. Motorcycle riders find the epicenter of the "Claw of the Dragon" in Wytheville, a 200-mile scenic trail running through the Blue Ridge Mountains.

The Fort Chiswell Animal Park grew from the childhood dream of Jeff Arches. The 45-acre safari park features animals from six continents, mostly rescued animals.



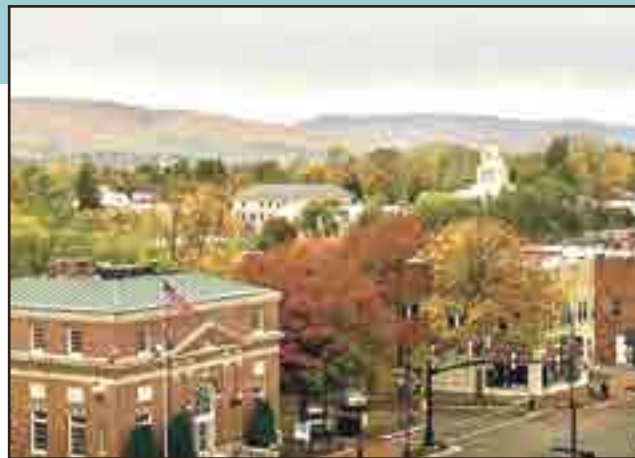
Fun at the Fort Chiswell Animal Park.



Edith Bolling Wilson birthplace museum.

You ride along with windows open on an old school bus, and exotic animals come up to the vehicle. The guide tells you how you can feed them. I turned my back, and a camel pushed his head in the window and stole the entire bag of animal feed off the seat. He enjoyed quite a feast while we all laughed. The attraction runs on an abundance of love and care. It's a happy place that I feel comfortable recommending, especially if traveling with children.

As far as food and beverage, Wytheville's got it covered. The West Wind Farm Winery does everything from grape to glass by hand. They hand-



Photos courtesy Debi Lander
Wytheville Main Street.

pick, crush, bottle and label wines from the five-acre vineyard. Wytheville welcomes beer enthusiasts to two trendy craft breweries.

The Wohlfahrt Haus Dinner Theatre presents musicals to 50,000 guests per year in a 250-seat arena. With those numbers, you know they must be doing something right. The three-course meal and the show were excellent. Another night, I suggest dining at the atmospheric Log House 1776 Restaurant. Plan to stay and browse the gardens, antique, and gift shops in outer buildings.

Wytheville draws a crowd to its annual Chautauqua Festival and Balloon Rally, an eight-day family-oriented music and arts festival from the third to the fourth Saturday every June. The spectacular evening balloon glow earns rave reviews. Balloon rides are available the next morning.

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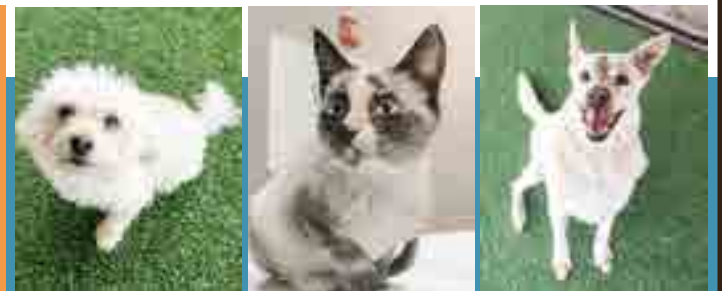
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