

Ponte Vedra NewsLine

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

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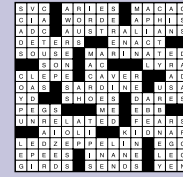
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Photo courtesy First Coast Cultural Center

Registration open for Kick StART

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

Kick StART, an after-school art enrichment program sponsored by First Coast Cultural Center (FCCC), is taking registration through mid-August at participating schools in St. Johns County. Students in kindergarten through sixth grade will embark on weekly, 90-minute adventures into the world of art, incorporating music and culinary experiences along the way.

“We have two fun semesters planned that incorporate a variety of mediums, including oil pastels, watercolors, acrylics, clay, and more,” said Kimberly Sheridan, FCCC events and programs manager. Students will first learn

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Welcome: Link Crew creates a smooth transition for high school freshmen

By Tiffany Merlo Phelps
mail@floridanewsline.com

As a member of the Ponte Vedra High Link Crew, rising junior Megan Yuskis is looking forward to welcoming new students and being helpful to freshmen who might be nervous about coming onto a new campus on Aug. 12. After all, she remembers exactly what that felt like.

“As a freshman, I was nervous coming here, and I did not know many students on campus,” said Yuskis, 16.

She was also inspired by her sister, a Ponte Vedra High graduate now attending the University of Central Florida. Yuskis’ sister was in the Link Crew.

“It made her feel like a leader, and I know that she liked that,” said Yuskis. “I remember that the Link Crew included everyone, especially kids who are maybe not as outgoing.”

Link Crew, founded by The Boomerang Project, is a national high school transition program that is designed to increase freshman success. Members of the junior and senior class are trained to be yearlong Link Leaders who act as positive role models, motivators and mentors during the pivotal transition to high school. The idea is to make connections between students that extend well beyond the first day of school.

Such was the case for 16-year-old Bailee Busch, a rising junior now a Link Crew member, who felt that the Link Crew helped her to find her friend group. Busch is enrolled in the Education Academy and joined the Florida Future Educators of America (FFEA) shortly after starting high school. Now she is looking forward to welcoming the 2028 freshmen class to the campus, especially her little sister, who will be in the Marketing Academy.



Photo courtesy Tiffany Merlo Phelps

Link Crew members Bailee Busch, Reagan Kearney and Megan Yuskis volunteering in the front office over the summer.

Rising Junior Reagan Kearney, 16, said she wants to be a friendly face for freshmen.

“I signed up for Link Crew not only because of my friends, but because I know how it felt to be a freshman and to be lost,” said Kearney, adding that peer to peer interaction is very helpful when sharing important school information.

Both Yuskis and Kearney are in the Drama Department together now. On a recent July morning, Yuskis, Kearney, and Busch manned the front desk at Ponte Vedra High School as part of the Link Crew’s summer duties. They answered phones, made copies, sorted books, gave school tours and fielded any walk-in inquiries.

Lyn Gabrielsen, Link Crew co-advisor alongside social studies teacher Mark Casper, said that there are about 60 Link

Crew members who help man the front office during the summer, give scheduled summer tours and help with the group’s biggest event — Freshmen Fest on Aug. 1. Link Crew members, dressed in purple shirts, lead incoming freshmen through an orientation session on this day, helping them review their tentative class schedule, tour the campus, receive a locker and connect with their peers. There will also be an orientation on the same day for new 10th– 12th graders, a separate event.

Gabrielsen would also like to add some Link Crew social events during the school year to extend that connection with freshmen. The Link Crew includes all different personality types to better serve incoming freshmen, she said. A survey is conducted with each Link

Link Crew cont. on pg. 5



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Briefs

Clerk's Office to hold Passport Saturday event on Aug. 3

The St. Johns County Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller will hold a special Passport Saturday event on Aug. 3 from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Richard O. Watson Judicial Center in St. Augustine. The extended business hours make applying for a passport more convenient for those seeking to travel this upcoming season.

"We recognize the challenges of coordinating schedules for passports during regular business hours," said Clerk Designee John Rundgren. "Holding this Passport Saturday event is our way of making the process easier and more convenient for local families."

The Recording Department will be open on Aug. 3 to accept and review applications for first-time passports, new passports for persons whose previous passport was issued more than 15 years ago, minors under age 16, or whose passport was lost, stolen, or damaged. Other passports must be renewed by mail using Form DS-82, which is available at <https://travel.state.gov/>.

Anyone traveling internationally must have a passport book, including infants, and every applicant for a new passport must appear in person, regardless of age. According to the U.S. Department of State, the current processing times for routine service are between six and eight weeks and expedited service is between two and three weeks.

Visit <https://stjohnsclerk.com/passports/> for more information and details about required documentation, fees, and acceptable forms of payment.

St. Johns County Parks and Recreation launches new app

On July 1, the St. Johns County Parks and Recreation Department launched a brand-new app, giving residents an intuitive platform for community engagement, education, and exploration.

The SJC Parks and Rec app allows users to find parks and beaches (and even individual amenities like skate parks, dog parks, boat ramps, etc.) using intuitive interactive maps, register quickly and easily for programs and events, and listen to region-specific audio tours about county history.

These location-based audio tours can be downloaded by users ahead of visits to different parts of the county, allowing them to listen to the stories of our past and present while enjoying our parks and beaches well into the future.

"There's so much history in St. Johns County, and on park properties, that we thought this would be the best way to let people experience it conveniently," Parks and Recreation Director Ryan Kane said.

"We love that the app gives our residents an easy way to sign up for our park programs as well as learn more about the parks themselves, not to mention our beaches, boat ramps, and everything in between," Community Program Manager Tess Simpson said.

The SJC Parks and Rec app is available to download from the Apple App Store and Google Play. Visit www.sjcfl.us/sjc-parks-rec-app/ for more information.

St. Johns County Public Library System launches revamped Bookmobile

The St. Johns County Public Library System has announced the return of its bookmobile, which provides books

and programs to regional areas of the community. The new bookmobile schedule is in effect until Aug. 26 and includes:

- Mondays: 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. at Faith Community Church, 3450 County Road 210, St. Johns
- Wednesdays: 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at UF Health Nocatee, 351 Town Plaza Ave., Ponte Vedra
- Fridays: 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the World Golf Village Convention Center, 500 S. Legacy Trail, St. Augustine

Additional details are available at www.sjcpls.org/branches/bookmobile.

"After a brief hiatus for mechanical maintenance, the Library System's community outreach team has been busy preparing a revamped summer schedule to ensure the public's browsing experience remains comfortable and enjoyable," St. Johns County Public Library System Director Debra Rhodes Gibson said.

The bookmobile allows patrons to browse onboard items, pick up requested items, return items, and use free Wi-Fi.

ElderSource seeking St. Johns County representation for Advisory Council

ElderSource, a nonprofit organization that works to empower elders, adults with disabilities and their caregivers in order to age with dignity and independence, is seeking volunteer members to its Advisory Council, specifically seniors who reside in St. Johns County. Duties for an Advisory Council member are to report on the needs of elderly and emerging issues in their respective counties; review and comment on the agency's Area Plan; study legislative issues and advocate on behalf of the elderly; assist in promoting

the mission, programs and activities of the agency; and to educate the public about the needs and the contributions of the elderly.

"Our Advisory Council members are an important asset to our organization," said Linda Levin, CEO of ElderSource. "They are an active voice we need to hear in order for us to stay in touch on senior issues affecting the communities in which they live."

Meetings are held the third Thursday of every other month from 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. and conducted virtually using the Zoom platform.

For more information about how to become an ElderSource Advisory Council member, call (904) 391-6690 or email Sherry.Holmes@MyElderSource.org.

ElderSource is a state designated Area Agency on Aging and Aging and Disability Resource Center funded in part by state and federal grants, foundation grants and private donations. It reaches out to more than 12,000 people each year throughout its seven county service area in northeast Florida.

Out of the Darkness community walk scheduled

Suicide is a leading cause of death in the United States and the 12th leading cause of death in Florida, yet suicide can be prevented. Volunteers from Jacksonville are joining thousands of people who are gathering this season in towns across the United States to promote suicide prevention.

The annual Jacksonville Out of the Darkness Community Walk, hosted by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention North Florida Chapter North Florida | AFSP will be held on

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BFF Best Furry Friend of the month

Meet Sadie!



Breed:
Mini Labradoodle
Favorite Activity:
Playing fetch with one of my favorite balls
Favorite Treat:
Milk Bones
Favorite Friend:
Butter, my neighbor, who is a Yellow Lab
How I got my name:
My mom looked on a list of baby girl names

Do you have a cute pet? Send us your pet's picture and the answer to the five questions above before the 10th of the month. Also tell us you saw the BFF contest in Ponte Vedra NewsLine. Your pet could be our BFF of the month and appear in Ponte Vedra NewsLine! Email editor@floridanewline.com to enter your pet.



Back to School Guide
in next month's issue!
Call Linda Gay 904.607.5062
to include your business!

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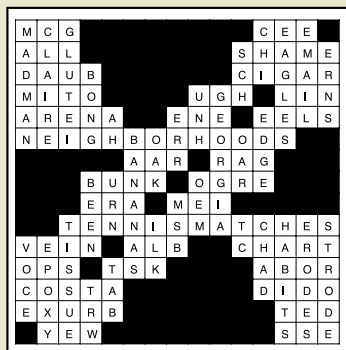
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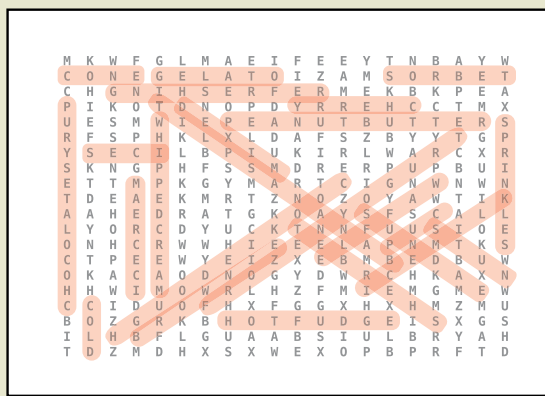
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Last month's Mystery Photo was the building that houses Pusser's Bar and Grille.



Answers
Puzzles
PG 18



A. frozen B. swirl C. topping D. cone



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August

Community Calendar

What's Happening in Ponte Vedra

Council on Aging offers interest groups at the COA Center at UF Health Nocatee. Meetings are free and self-guided except for the Caregiver's Support Group. Advance registration for clubs and meetings is required; email pbrunell@stjohnscoa.com or call (904) 819-3234. Tuesday clubs include: Widows and Widowers social group, second and fourth Tuesday of each month, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Wednesday groups include: Mah Jongg Meet-up, 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

Palm Valley Market is held inside and on the grounds of the Palm Valley Community Center at 148 Canal Road, every Tuesday from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. The market offers organically grown produce, microgreens, eggs, grass-finished beef, all natural chicken, Mayport shrimp, prepared meals, preservative-free bread, honey, tea, natural skincare, custom jewelry and soy candles. Visit the Palm Valley Market Facebook page for more information.

3rd: **The Northeast** Florida Chapter of Sisters in Crime will meet on Aug. 3 at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library, 101 Library Blvd. (FOL Room) on Saturday, Aug. 3. Doors open at 10 a.m. and the meeting starts at 10:15 a.m. The program is "The Magic of Fighting Fraud," presented by forensic accountant John Tonsick, CPA, CFE. Bring your coffee and bring a friend. The group welcomes misters and sisters to learn more about writing, promoting, and enjoying crime fiction. Visit www.nefloridasistersincrime.org for more information.

3rd: **Wellness events** at Sawgrass Village will be held every Saturday in August from 10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Hosted by Mind Body Social, all events are free and open to the community. Events include wellness classes such as yoga and barre, all held on the lawn in front of ABC Liquors. Visit <https://mbs.events/sv/> for more information and to register.

6th: **Essential Tremor** Support Group Meet, Greet and Educate will be

held on Tuesday, Aug. 6 at 11 a.m. at Baptist HealthPlace in Nocatee, 400 Colonnade Drive. Alaine Keebaugh, Ph.D. will present "An Inside Look at Deep Brain Stimulation and Essential Tremor" and will share images of a DBS patient's implanted "leads," how it's controlled and programmed. All are welcome. RSVP to Jan Kary at jkary@verizon.net or (202) 438-6750

6th: **Vicar's Landing** monthly Boutique Sale will be held Tuesday, Aug. 6 from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. at 1000 Vicar's Landing Way. The sale includes framed art, 14k gold, sterling silver, costume and designer jewelry and the annual two for \$5 special sale tables, antique and household furnishings, plus many decorative knick-knack items. The public is welcome. Checks or cash only please. The Vicar's Employee Scholarship Fund receives all the proceeds. Call Janet Nicosia at (904) 607-2078 or Beverly Webb at (904) 315-2610 for more information.

8th: **Bingo will be held** at THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center, 175 Landrum Lane, on Thursdays from 1 p.m. - 2 p.m. for four weeks beginning Thursday, Aug. 8. Contact Suzanne Duvall at (904) 209-3659 for more information and to register.

9th: **Food Truck Friday** will be held on Aug. 9 and Aug. 30 from 5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. at Nocatee Station Field. This event is open to the public.

13th: **Adult Coloring** Club will meet at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library on Aug. 13 from 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. and Aug. 27 from 1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. No RSVP is required; bring a snack or drink for yourself or to share. Visit sjcpls.org/branches/pontevedra-beach-branch/ for more information.

15th: **Check your** blood pressure with Diane DeCarlo at THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center on Thursday, Aug. 15 from 10:30 a.m. - 11a.m. There is no charge for this event. Contact Suzanne Duvall at (904)

209-3659 for more information.

15th: **Ponte Vedra** Woman's Club 2024 New and Prospective Member Social will be held on Thursday, Aug. 15 from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. at a member's private residence in Sawgrass Country Club. Cocktails and hors d'oeuvres provided and there is no cost to attend. Attendees will have the opportunity to meet the board and other members, socialize and get to know this local philanthropic and social organization. Registration required; visit www.pontevedrawomansclub.com for more information.

15th: **St. Johns County** Republican Party District 4 monthly meeting will be held on the third Thursday of each month (this month, Aug. 15) at 6:15 p.m. at Palm Valley Community Center, 148 Canal Blvd. Visit stjohns.gop for more information.

16th: **The Savvy** Job Hunters Ministry of Christ Episcopal Church will host a free Zoom workshop, "Resume Writing," presented by Audra Larsen, Career Counselor, University of North Florida, on Aug. 16 from 10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. Email pottesen66@gmail.com to register. All are welcome to attend.

17th: **The Nocatee** Farmers Market: Island Experience will be held on Saturday, Aug. 17 from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Nocatee Station Field. The Farmers Market is open to the public.

21st: **Genealogy** Group will meet at the OA Center at UF Health Nocatee, 351 Town Plaza Ave. Ste. 205 on the third Wednesday of each month (this month, Aug. 21) from 1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. A genealogy expert will guide attendees in discovering their ancestors. Register by email to pbrunell@stjohnscoa.com or by calling (904) 814-9407.

22nd: **Birthday Celebration** for August babies will be held on Thursday, Aug. 22 from 11 a.m. - 12 p.m. at THE PLAYERS

Community Senior Center, 175 Landrum Lane. Enjoy cake, ice cream and the music of "Hot" Rod Matthew. Contact Suzanne Duvall at (904) 209-3659 for more information.

23rd: **Friday Flicks:** The Wizard of Oz at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library will be held on Aug. 23 from 2 p.m. - 4 p.m. Join your friends at the library to celebrate the 85th anniversary of this award-winning film classic. Call the library at (904) 827-6950 for more information.

24th: **GTM Research** Reserve will host its monthly Beach Cleanup on Saturday, Aug. 24 from 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. No registration is required; meet at the Visitor Center, 505 Guana River Road in Ponte Vedra Beach where gloves and trash bags will be provided. Visit gtmnerr.org for more information.

26th: **Ponte Vedra** Democratic Club will hold its monthly meeting on Monday, Aug. 26, at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library 101 Library Road. Chat and Chew begins at 5:30 p.m. before the meeting begins at 6 p.m. Featured speaker Dr. Ray Oldakowski, Jacksonville University Professor will speak on political polling, methodology and practice. Email PVDemClub@gmail.com for more information.

27th: **Back to School** Celebration will be held at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library on Aug. 27 from 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Visit the library after school for crafts and other fun activities. Visit sjcpls.org or call (904) 827-6950 for more information.

29th: **"Is Probate** a Dirty Word?" a free lecture by Megan Wall, St. Johns County Legal Aid, will be presented at THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center, 175 Landrum Lane, on Aug. 29 at 11 a.m. Contact Suzanne Duvall at (904) 209-3659 for more information and to register.



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BACK TO SCHOOL GUIDE

Contact Linda Gay
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**with St. Johns County Commissioner
Krista Joseph District 4**

Q: What can you tell us about the new company tasked with waste removal for St. Johns County?

A: FCC Environmental Services is taking over waste and recycling pickup for the county on Aug. 1. Only 12 percent of routes will be changed and FCC has hired 80 percent of the workers from the previous contractor. Residents can keep their same trash receptacle. Since mid-July, FCC has been shadowing the routes to make sure they know them well. They've also been meeting with the county weekly to go over any questions and concerns. They're really committed to providing good service and we anticipate that the changeover will go smoothly. Please be sure to let me know if there are any issues with your service.

Q: Do you have an update on the playground at Cornerstone Park?

A: In mid-July I visited the new Cornerstone Park playground for Popsicle Day. I can't believe how much wonderful ADA-compliant equipment they have for children. Some of the ADA-compliant equipment is integrated with the regular equipment; for example on the seesaws, it is possible for children with and without special needs to play together at the same time. There are also two awesome tunnel slides that twist, a climbing wall, and an open field for a variety of activities. One cool thing they

have is a unique swing that allows an adult to swing together with a toddler in a bucket swing, facing each other as they swing back and forth. A lot of the trees were able to be kept, which I really was impressed with. They provide a lot of shade in addition to the shade sails.

Q: Where does the annual St. Johns County Budget process stand at this point?

A: At our Board of County Commissioners meeting in July, I advocated for adopting the roll-back rate to keep the amount of tax dollars the same for our homeowners. Keeping just the tax rate the same will result in higher taxes due to the increase in home values. It's important to me that one of the main, or maybe the only, investment that many people have is their home — and I think we owe it to the public to instead adjust the county's budget to remove wasteful spending or create new revenue through grants or other sources. There will be two public hearings on the budget in September before it is officially adopted and I will continue to advocate for roll-back.

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

A: Readers can email me at bcc4kjoseph@sjcfl.us or call me at (904) 679-2620.

Link Crew cont. from pg.1

Crew member to accurately match them with the right duty and with similar students. Members are also trained to better equip students with the tools to help others.

Gabrielsen, who has had two children graduate from Ponte Vedra High School and was the Ponte Vedra High School Parent Teacher Organization (PVH PTO) president for three years, said her focus is on inclusion and strengthening the happiness and wellness of the student body.

Gabrielsen is now a part-time staff member who works on the Link Crew, Sources of Strength (a mental health initiative), tours and assists with testing. She added that the Link Crew and Sources of Strength both have the same goal and receive the full backing and support of Principal Fredrik Oberkehr who is a big advocate of students being in leadership roles.

"The goal is to direct kids to resources. Happiness and wellness and maintaining a positive school culture is what we remain committed to at Ponte Vedra High," said Gabrielsen.



Photo courtesy Ponte Vedra High School
Link Crew members meeting with freshmen at Freshman Fest last year.

Registration cont. from pg.1

elements of art from master artists throughout history and in modern times. During the second semester, Sheridan said students will "become art detectives and travel to many countries" to create work, such as henna in India, jewelry in Greece, masks in South America, Adinkra patterns in Africa, lapis lazuli in Asia.

Enrollment links are open on FCCC's website at firstcoastculturalcenter.org for the following schools on designated days: Picolata Crossing Elementary

(Monday), PV/PV-Rawlings Elementary (Monday), Palencia Elementary (Tuesday), Ocean Palms Elementary (Tuesday), Freedom Crossing Academy (Wednesday), Palm Valley Academy (Friday), The Nest Christian Co-Op (Friday), and newly-added, Landrum Middle School (TBA). As a bonus, FCCC members receive a discount, and there is a membership sign up link online.

Contact Kimberly Sheridan at (904) 280-0614, Ext. 1205 or email programs@firstcoastculturalcenter.org for more information.

PVHS honor society raises \$600 for Epic Cure

On May 23, the National Honor Society from Ponte Vedra High School took part in the third annual Sand Art Contest to support Epic Cure. More than 100 students competed in groups, creating a total of 20 sand art pieces. One team crafted a replica of Dr. Steve Sanzo, the vice principal at Ponte Vedra High, and won the competition for the second consecutive year. The club collectively raised a little over \$600. Pictured is the winning Sand Art creation.



Photo courtesy Jennifer Werba

"Before moving here, I had to weather several storms. I was alone and I was afraid. But here, I was not afraid. Feeling safe and secure made all the difference during the storm."



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Local school PTOs join forces to support new school

By Lisa Farese
mail@floridanewsline.com

Area Parent-Teacher Organizations (PTOs) from Liberty Pines Academy, Ocean Palms Elementary, and Landrum Middle School came together to support the new St. Johns County school, Lakeside Academy, opening this school year in our community.

Local PTOs help fill gaps in funding at schools through the purchase of technology, teacher grants, and much more each year. As a result, these three schools donated to help Lakeside Academy's PTO hit the ground running. With a collective donation of \$11,000, Lakeside will have a foundation from which they can grow their PTO in the upcoming school year.



Photo courtesy Lisa Farese

PTO presidents from Ocean Palms Elementary, Lakeside Academy, Liberty Pines Academy, and Landrum Middle School joined forces to provide Lakeside Academy PTO with \$11,000 to start the school year.

For more information about how to get involved in your area PTO, visit Liberty Pines PTO at www.lpapto.com, Ocean Palms PTO at oapepto.com, Landrum PTO at www.ptolandrum.membershiptoolkit.com, and Lakeside Academy PTO at lakeside-academypto.org.



Q&A with St. Johns County Property Appraiser Eddie Creamer

Q: What is coming up on the calendar of the Property Appraiser's Office?

A: It is almost time for TRIM (Truth in Millage) notices to be sent out to property owners. It's important to keep in mind that over the past eight years, property values in St. Johns County have increased more than 170 percent, which translates to higher taxes even without a tax increase.

Q: What can you tell us about TRIM notices?

A: TRIM is the most important document a property owner will get in St. Johns County. They will be mailed by our office on Aug. 16 and are also available online (www.sjcpa.us) as of that date. Within the mailing, property owners will receive a copy of the State of Florida Taxpayer's Bill of Rights and a list of exemptions in addition to the TRIM notice. The TRIM notice also contains the date and time of the budget hearing for each of the taxing authorities, so property owners can attend to learn more.

Q: What will the TRIM notice contain?

A: The TRIM notice shows the market value, the assessed value and the taxable value of your property for 2023 and proposed for 2024. It will also show any exemptions for the property. Make sure

you check your TRIM notice for accuracy as to values and exemptions. The taxes are listed by taxable authority and will show what the taxes would be if the county made no changes to the budget. This is called the "rollback rate," essentially what your taxes would be this year to allow the county to collect the same amount of money as last year. TRIM will also show the proposed taxes if the proposed budget is passed; this is what would be on the tax bill.

Q: What should property owners do if they disagree with the value assessed by your office?

A: When the TRIM notice is mailed, a 25-day clock starts. If the taxpayer has any discrepancy with the Property Appraiser's Office, they should contact us to discuss. If we can't come to agreement, the taxpayer can file an appeal with the Value Adjustment Board. It is very important to do this within the 25-day window, because if not, a taxpayer will lose his or her right to appeal.

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 Ed-die@sjcpa.us or call me at (904) 827-5500.

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St Johns County resident since 1993

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

Q: Can you bring us up to date on administrative changes for the new school year in District 4?

A: We have several exciting new leaders to welcome to our schools. Gina Fonseca and her administrative team are moving ahead at Nease. She's enjoying the summer and seeing students she already knew from previous schools as well as looking forward to the new school year. Jill Hillier is taking over for Dr. Jesse Gates at PVPV Rawlings. She's going to be a strong asset to the school. Guy Harris took a position at the district level as Director of Student Services and now we have Troy Kasting taking over at Landrum. He's a great fit since he's served in administration across the district as well as he was a gifted teacher and AP teacher. He was even selected to grade AP exams on the national level, so I think our students should be well prepared for high school under his leadership.

Q: Do you have a message for new students and families about the upcoming school year?

A: Please be sure to register your child as soon as possible. Visit <https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/student/enrollment/> to learn what forms are needed and to register online.

We are especially excited to extend a warm welcome to new families and

students. We have space available for you and are looking forward to you all joining our District 4 family!

Q: What's been happening lately on a district level?

A: Plans and construction are moving ahead for our new K-8 school in the Seabrook area of Nocatee. It's on schedule to open as expected this time next year.

We just completed the first year of having our regional superintendents. In evaluating this, the position was a very positive addition as the regional superintendents provided a lot of support for our schools and families. We look forward to that continuing this year.

Don't be surprised to see our school buses out and about in the last few weeks before school begins. They are getting routes and timing perfected so that we can provide the best and safest transportation for our students.

All of our teachers and staff have been training over the summer to be prepared for the new school year and are excited about the first day of school coming up!

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.

Primary Election Guide

Meet your local candidates

By Martie Thompson
 editor@floridanewslines.com

In advance of the Primary Election to be held on Tuesday, Aug. 20, Ponte Vedra NewsLine invited each of the candidates that will appear on northern St. Johns County voters' ballots for State Senate District 7, Florida House District 18, County Commission Districts 1, 3, and 5, St. Johns County Sheriff, and St. Johns County Clerk of Court to submit a statement for this Primary Election section.

Ponte Vedra NewsLine offered this opportunity to all candidates for these Primary Election races as a community service; no purchase of advertising was required. The content of the statements was left up to each candidate; the only stipulation was that the statement could not exceed 200 words. No editing of the statements took place. Each statement is printed in its entirety, as submitted by the candidate.

State Senate, District 7

Gerald James (R)

I am a citizen patriot running to legislate for the people of my district, not for big insurance, big development, or trial attorneys. I have not taken one dime from any of their PACs or lobbyists. My campaign has been funded by small donations of citizens like yourselves and I am fueled by ordinary people who love this country. Folks, an insurance storm is brewing in Florida and we must fix this crisis. We have never been the gold standard for election and hoards of illegals can find their way onto the voter rolls. We must take the lead nationwide in voter election reform and security. These problems are not insurmountable but we need leaders with courage and determination to pass appropriate and permanent legislation. We must secure our borders, airports, waterways, and roads from illegal alien invasion by any means necessary and I have a plan. The establishment political class is content to maintain the status-quo. I am not.

With your vote, I will fight for my constituents, not for big development, the insurance industry or the trial lawyers. I will legislate conservatively and with the Constitution as my guide.

David Shoar (R)

I am running for the Florida Senate because we need consistent Trump conservatives who have the courage to stand for our shared values and fight back against the special interests and liberals who are enriching themselves at the taxpayers' expense. I am a husband, father, and grandfather who has lived in and served this community for decades. I have dedicated my life to service in uniform, from the streets of St. Augustine as a patrolman, to the sands of Iraq as an Army Combat Engineer, to my 16 years as St. Johns County Sheriff. I am proud of my record as Sheriff of cutting crime in half. In Tallahassee, I will take on the politicians and political insiders and hold them accountable. I will stand with President Trump, as I have since 2016, to stop illegal immigration, combat

Biden's inflation and get our insurance costs under control. Together, we will restore a sense of law and justice in our country. As a longtime St. Johns County resident, I also know how important it is to protect against overdevelopment so we can maintain our quality of life. As your State Senator, I will look out for you, not the special interests.

Tom Leek (R)

As a member of the state Senate, I hope to continue serving the people of Northeast Florida by establishing Florida as the most law enforcement friendly state in the union, by working on many of the conservative advances of the past few years in school choice, economic development and important social issues that strengthen the family, and by building upon my current accomplishments in the Florida House. That is why I am proud to have the strong support of all four sheriffs in Senate District 7, along with our great

Candidates cont. on pg. 8

NICK PRIMROSE
 FOR FLORIDA HOUSE

CONSERVATIVE REPUBLICAN
 FOR STATE REPRESENTATIVE
 IN ST. JOHNS COUNTY



ENDORSED BY SEN. RICK SCOTT & REP. CYNDI STEVENSON

PAID BY NICK PRIMROSE, REPUBLICAN, FOR STATE REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT 18.

PRIMARY ELECTION DAY
AUGUST 20TH



★ ★ ★ **LEARN MORE AT NICKPRIMROSE.COM** ★ ★ ★

Primary Election Guide

Candidates cont. from pg. 7

Governor Ron DeSantis, Attorney General Ashley Moody, and others. They know that a strong and safe community allows families and businesses to thrive, and it has been my honor to work together toward those shared goals. My wife, Michelle and I, along with our two daughters, have made

Northeast Florida our home for more than 30 years. We love this community. The people, historic venues, and the beaches and lakes which remain a constant reminder of old Florida. I ask for your vote on Tuesday, Aug. 20 and thank you for participating in the political process to make our community and our state the freest in the nation.

Florida House District 18

Kim Kendall (R)

FAA Air Traffic Controller... small business owner... extensive work and endorsements at state and local levels — yes, these are all a part of who I am, but what makes me uniquely qualified is my heart and fight for this community. Growing up in GTMO, Cuba I saw firsthand Cuban base-workers giving Castro 90% of their wages... these workers who were already limited in their monthly rations of rice and underwear. Now there are those who want that kind of society for us... they want to take away our Faith... they want to break apart our family... and they want the soul of our nation. I have battled the establishment to protect our children, to protect our Faith, to keep our family values intact. I've gone toe to toe with developers and special interest groups who have tried unsuccessfully to make me go away. This is a critical year... we need warriors... those who will not be used as puppets... those who care deeply about our Constitution and our community. I am the one who has and will continue to fight for us. You can count on me to always show up and to never back down.

Nick Primrose (R)

Growing up in apartments with a single mom, my American Dream was owning a home and creating a better future. I found that here in St. Johns County. As a husband and father, I care deeply about protecting our way of life in Florida. Having served as Deputy General Counsel for Governors Rick Scott and Ron DeSantis, I am the most qualified, experienced candidate. From advising on economic prosperity and keeping Florida open during COVID to answering the call during hurricanes, my proven track record will deliver results on Day One. I will: 1) Support our law enforcement so they can continue to protect our communities; 2) Keep our schools #1 by expediting school construction, empowering parents, and improving teachers' quality of life; 3) Secure funding for road projects and infrastructure; 4) Cut red tape to promote small businesses and job creation; and 5) Protect our wildlife corridors, beaches, and the St. Johns River. I'm a proven conservative and honored to have the

Candidates cont. on pg. 10

RE-ELECT



Our Sheriff

Rob Hardwick

Republican for St. Johns County Sheriff

VETERAN

★

CONSERVATIVE LEADER

★

OUR SHERIFF

Rob Hardwick's Record Speaks For Itself

Combated Crime
& Reduced Recidivism

Retained & Recruited Only
The Most Qualified Deputies

Invested In The Latest Technology
To Keep Us Safe

GETTING REAL RESULTS

IT'S THE ROB HARDWICK WAY!



Republican Primary: Tuesday, Aug. 20

Paid for by Rob Hardwick, Republican, for St. Johns County Sheriff. Use of title and pictures in uniform does not imply the endorsement or support of any law enforcement organization.

BRANDON

PATTY

FOR ST. JOHNS COUNTY CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND COMPTROLLER

Devoted Husband & Father

Dedicated Clerk & Comptroller

US Naval Reserve Officer






Paid by Brandon Patty, Republican, for St. Johns County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller. Use of military rank, job titles, and photographs in uniform does not imply endorsement by the Department of the Navy or the Department of Defense.

2024 Primary Election · August 20, 2024

OPEN TO ALL REGISTERED VOTERS IN ST. JOHNS COUNTY



Florida is a Closed Primary State

- Democrats receive a **Democratic** ballot
- Republicans receive a **Republican** ballot
- Voters with No Party Affiliation or a minor party receive a **Nonpartisan** ballot and cannot vote for party candidates

Exception:

Universal Primary Contests are the exception. There is one Universal Primary Contest on the 2024 Primary Election ballot: Clerk of Circuit Court and Comptroller (Rep). This contest is open to all voters and will appear on **all** ballots.

Voting by Mail?

The deadline to request a vote-by-mail ballot to be mailed for the 2024 Primary Election is August 8 by 5 PM. Visit www.votesjc.gov or call the Elections Office to request your ballot.

Vote-by-mail ballots must be returned to the Elections Office by 7 PM on Election Day, August 20, to be counted.

Vote-by-mail ballots can also be returned to Secure Ballot Intake Stations available at all seven early voting locations during the hours of voting.

Election Day

To vote on Election Day, you must go to your assigned polling place between the hours of 7 AM and 7 PM on Tuesday, August 20, 2024.

Some precincts have changed since the last election. Verify your Election Day polling place at www.votesjc.gov before heading out to vote!

Early Voting

August 10 – August 17, 2024
9 AM to 6 PM
Daily at all locations

PONTE VEDRA BRANCH LIBRARY
 101 LIBRARY BLVD
 PONTE VEDRA BEACH

JULINGTON CREEK ANNEX
 725 FLORA BRANCH BLVD
 ST. JOHNS

SILVERLEAF AMENITY CTR
 218 SILVER FOREST DR
 ST. AUGUSTINE



SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS OFFICE
 4455 AVENUE A, SUITE 101
 ST. AUGUSTINE

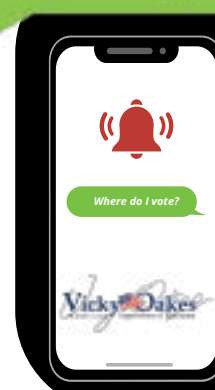
ST. AUGUSTINE BEACH CITY HALL
 2200 A1A SOUTH
 ST. AUGUSTINE

SOUTHEAST BRANCH LIBRARY
 6670 US 1 SOUTH
 ST. AUGUSTINE

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Primary Election Guide

Candidates cont. from pg. 8

endorsements of Senator Rick Scott, Congressman Michael Waltz, our outgoing State Representative Cyndi Stevenson, FOP, PBA and many other trusted leaders and organizations. I humbly ask for your vote to bring strong, conservative leadership to our community.

County Commission District 1

Ann-Marie Evans (R)

Over the course of my life, I have fought for what's right both in my personal life as well as my professional life. I am ready to fight for you, the people of St. Johns County. Over the course of the incumbent's term, our schools lost their #1 ranking, our roads became increasingly congested and 15,000 more homes/apartments were approved. You've probably seen the attack ads. Ads that suggest I'm a liberal, ambulance chasing, tax raising Seattleite. Let me set things straight — I am a conservative and I fought for injured people. I do not want to raise your taxes and I never lived in Seattle. See my website for further lie debunking. These ads were paid for by a Gainesville PAC chaired by

Commissioner Whitehurst's treasurer. I have worked as an attorney (admitted to practice WA only) and owned a boutique law firm. I have worked as a public records officer, victim advocate and realtor. I'm married to a retired police sergeant. I'm a Mom of seven including a lawyer, Marine and deputy; I have teens in our schools. Together, we can change the trajectory of our county. Endorsed by SJC Republican Party and Republican Liberty Caucus.

Christian Whitehurst (R)

I'm Christian Whitehurst and have the privilege of serving the great people of St. Johns County as County Commissioner, District 1. As a fiscal conservative, I believe the government can operate with less of your hard-earned money. I have never raised taxes and proudly voted against a tree tax that would burden homeowners. As a business owner, I know how to balance a budget and have fought to eliminate wasteful spending. I have slowed the growth of development by denying projects that are incompatible or lack proper infrastructure. We used developer impact fees to fund \$600 million in road projects, four new regional parks, and five new fire stations with sheriff office substations. We also

secured state and federal funding to provide beach renourishment to areas affected by past storms. Our law enforcement and first responders are the reason St. Johns is the safe haven destination to raise a family. I have always supported the Sheriff's Office and Fire Rescue to ensure they have the resources and equipment necessary to keep our community safe. With your vote, I promise to continue fighting for the values of St. Johns County.

They have sacrificed so much for our freedom and way of life, and we must ensure they receive the care and respect they deserve. Additionally, I stand firmly with our first responders, ensuring they have the resources and support needed to keep our community safe. Lastly, I am dedicated to protecting our quality of life, ensuring that St. Johns County remains a wonderful place to live, work, and raise a family.

Heather Harley-Davidson (R)

A 55-year local, Heather Harley Davidson's candidacy is about fiscal responsibility, environmental protection, and the rights and needs of people. 1999 St. Johns County Land Development Code, she lobbied for property rights and environmental protection. She is knowledgeable about land use: a licensed real estate broker and state certified general contractor attending UNF, receiving a Bachelor of Science Industrial Technology Building Construction Management and Minor Business Administration. Married in Grace United Methodist Church St. Augustine 1986, with two children. Her family owned Advanced Building Company of North

County Commission District 3

Roy Alaimo (R)

I'm Roy Alaimo and have humbly served on the St. Johns County Commission in District 3 after being appointed by Governor DeSantis in 2022. I stand for limited government, ensuring that power remains in the hands of the people, and I believe lowering taxes is essential to promote economic prosperity and protect your hard-earned money. I advocated for slow and controlled growth to maintain the character and charm of our community. I also support infrastructure solutions to help ease the traffic congestion we are facing. Supporting our veterans is a top priority.

Candidates cont. on pg. 11

ALERT:
Attack ads filled with lies about us are funded by developer-tied PACs. Please read our statements on our websites that expose the lies.

Overcapacity roads. Overcrowded schools that are no longer ranked #1 in the state. Vote out the commissioners who are overdeveloping our county.

Fl. Dept. of Ed.

Henry Dean approved nearly 30,000 homes in two terms and Christian Whitehurst approved over 15,000 in one term. Both tried to raise our sales tax.* Elect the Anns, Aug. 20.

Endorsed by the St. Johns County Republican Party. Slow the growth. Elect the Anns.



Challenging Whitehurst. Ann-Marie owned a thriving law firm.* Mom to 7, she is the proud wife of a retired police officer. Ann-Marie is exposing wasteful county spending.
*Admitted to practice law in WA only



Challenging Henry Dean. Ann has two sons in our schools and is a former businesswoman of 25 years. A current HOA board president, Ann helped win the fight against a wood burning polluter in our county.

ElectAnn-Marie.com

VoteAnnTaylor.com

Paid for by Ann-Marie Evans and Ann Taylor for St. Johns County Commissioners, Districts 1 and 5

*Homes/housing units per SJC BOCC Agendas; PV Recorder 10/13/22; BOCC 2/15/22

Primary Election Guide

Candidates cont. from pg. 10

Florida for 25 years, decade of restaurants and inn keeping. Currently, she is grandma of five, an award-winning artist, and the commission seat will be her only job. Her critical thinking is her gift she utilized during the week-long 2025 Budget Series, allowing her to delineate many areas of reduction for a fiscally responsible government. The most challenging and critical issues facing St. Johns County are uncontrolled growth, states overreach in development practices, and the road map within 2025 Comprehensive Land Plan map for higher density creating bigger government. We can't close the gates, but we can slow developers' impact on our quality of life and make them pay their share.

Michael McDonald (R)

I am devoted to protecting this beautiful county we call home for generations to come. I was born and raised in St. Johns County, and I am very fortunate to have a lot of family in the area. Throughout my life, I have seen significant change with no signs of growth being managed. I attended our local schools from K-12. From the age of 12, I was working in this community doing whatever I could.

Fresh out of high school, a local painting contractor asked me to lend a hand on a weekend job. I quickly realized this would become a career for me. I truly enjoy seeing projects from start to finish. I have built long lasting relationships, and I have always been accountable to my clients. That's the approach I will take as County Commissioner. I seek the change this county needs: more accountability, more maintenance, more transparency, more local economic opportunities, more checks and balances with less waste and less development! I am a proud local business owner, homeowner, father, husband, and very active community member. I would be more than happy to talk with anyone from my community about my unwavering commitment to St. Johns County.

Clay Murphy (R)

St. Johns County has been my home for 33 years. This is where I raised my family, served as a law enforcement officer and where my wife and I opened our own business — Sonny's BBQ in St. Augustine. I love this area. When I was a State Trooper, I turned down a promotion because I didn't want to leave St. Johns County. This is where I plan to retire and watch my grandchildren

grow up. But I am very concerned that our quality of life is suffering because of rapid overdevelopment. Worse, there are special interests who are trying to accelerate it even more. I disagree strongly. Economically, St. Johns County is one of the wealthiest counties but has been forced to go in debt to pay for public safety and infrastructure because of poor planning. It's time for new leadership who will represent the residents and taxpayers, which is why I'm running. As a former law enforcement officer, I fought to keep NE Florida safe. As your next County Commissioner, I'll fight even harder to control the growth and make it pay for itself, for low taxes, responsible budgeting, and for our time-honored American values.

County Commission District 5

Henry Dean (R)

As a Conservative Republican, I've dedicated my career to serving our community. My proven record of land conservation reflects my deep respect for our natural resources and my determination to preserve them for future generations. Supporting small businesses and fostering economic growth have been

central to my efforts, as I believe a thriving economy benefits us all. Standing with our veterans and first responders is a core value of mine. Their sacrifices deserve our unwavering support, and I am committed to ensuring they receive the recognition and resources they need. I've also been a staunch advocate for our tourism industry, recognizing its vital role in our local economy. Leading the effort to protect our beautiful beaches has been one of my proudest achievements. By investing in infrastructure, I've worked tirelessly to fix our roads and improve our transportation systems. Holding developers accountable is crucial to maintaining the character and sustainability of our communities, and I've always prioritized responsible growth. Throughout my career, I've focused on slowing the rapid growth that can threaten our way of life, ensuring that development is balanced with conservation and community needs. My dedication to these principles guides me every day in my service to you.

Ann Taylor (R)

First, I must explain why it's so important that I have been endorsed by the St.

Candidates cont. on pg. 12



Endorsed by St. Johns County Republican Party



★★★ FEARLESS ★★★
CONSERVATIVE

Kim KENDALL

VoteKimKendall.com

MEET KIM KENDALL

Kim Kendall has been a local community leader and a strong advocate for education and parental rights in Florida for many years, chairing statewide literacy initiatives, working on state-appointed education task forces, and serving as state education chair for the Florida Federation of Republican Women.

AND SHE'S A TRUE LOCAL: Kim and her family have lived in St. Johns County for over 20 years!

- Served as an FAA Air Traffic Controller
- Owned Two Dry Cleaners
- Married to Her Husband, Kelly, for 30 Years and has Two Adult Children
- Grew up on Naval bases, including Guantánamo and the Philippines




KIM KENDALL for STATE HOUSE, DISTRICT 18!




**Proudly Supported by
Veterans and Law Enforcement**



Jim's Experience and Leadership

**4th Generation Law Enforcement Officer
27 Year Career at the St. Johns Sheriff's Office
Began as Reserve Deputy and promoted through the
ranks to Lieutenant**

**Experience in every department:
SWAT Team - 13 Years
Dive Team - 8 Years
Bomb Squad - 6 Years**



**Leadership. Transparency.
Fiscal Responsibility.**

Paid by Jim Priester, Republican, for St. Johns County Sheriff.

Primary Election Guide

Candidates cont. from pg. 11

Johns County Republican Party. My opponent is supported by PACs that have ruthlessly broadcast and mailed the most profound lies about me — lies that cut to the very core of who I am and what I stand for. It won't matter what my goals and qualifications are if you believe I'm a "woke liberal" who has supported "sex changes for children." That is how desperately the developers are trying to keep my opponent in his seat. I stand for slowing the growth; he has approved nearly 30,000 housing units. That's just one difference between us. I would rather have devoted this space to telling you about my 25 years experience as a businesswoman; how I'm an HOA president who has advocated on behalf of my neighbors; and how my two sons and my husband are my inspiration. I will never call for a tax of any kind as my opponent has done — and as I have been falsely accused of. Please learn more about me on my website. Thank you for allowing me to correct a grievous misrepresentation of who I am.

St. Johns County Sheriff

Rob Hardwick (R)

I am Rob Hardwick and I have the honor of serving as your St. Johns County Sheriff. My agency has accomplished a lot during the last four years. Through our community policing and use of technology, we have fought crime, reduced recidivism by nearly 10 percent, provided first-class customer service, and saved taxpayer dollars. We are consistently out in the community building relationships between our citizens and SJSO. Additionally, we have made recruiting and retention a top priority. We went to work and successfully advocated to raise the base pay and benefits package for our agency personnel. Now, the agency is almost fully staffed for the first time in its history.

As a combat veteran who served 25 years in the United States Army and the Florida National Guard and after 30 years in law enforcement, I remain as committed as the day I started to serve my fellow citizens. My wife, Kendell, and I have been married for 33 years and have two amazing adult sons. We are active in various community organizations and I am a proud local youth coach. I would be honored to earn your vote on Aug. 20 for St. Johns County Sheriff.

Jim Priester (R)

I'm Jim Priester, a recent retiree of the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office after a highly decorated 27 year career and now a candidate for St. Johns County Sheriff. I am a fourth generation Florida law-enforcement officer, not a politician. My campaign is focused on being fiscally responsible, demonstrating what it means to be transparent with our community and being the leader our agency so desperately needs. I will host Public Safety town hall meetings to engage and communicate directly with our community because public safety will always be my number one prior-

ity. We will openly communicate on our social media networks allowing our citizens to comment publicly; we will never censor your right to free speech. We will post our budget and expenses quarterly so our taxpayers can see where their money is being spent. I will lead by example and set the positive tone for the agency so our deputies know we support them. I will streamline every part of the budget in order to pay our deputies a competitive wage comparable to surrounding agencies. I've spent my life serving St. Johns County and I'd be honored to earn your vote for Sheriff on August 20. Thank you.

St. Johns County Clerk of Court

Denver Cook (R)

I am proud of my service as a USAF Veteran and military intelligence analyst and as a former gang intelligence officer. I am also proud of my years working as a general contractor managing millions of dollars in government infrastructure projects. What I am most proud of however, is being the father of three amazing young adults. As a father I have been able to advocate for better spending behaviors at the county and school district, served as chairman and vice-chairman of several youth risk prevention and diversion committees. We are all concerned about how growth impacts our daily lives and our families. As Clerk I will bring daylight to the decisions and ensure the taxpayers have the visibility and information needed to advocate for a better community. Only through transparency, oversight and accountability can we have the responsiveness in government and in Florida; this is the Constitutional role of the Clerk of Court. As your next Clerk of Court and Comptroller I will use the Constitutional Power of this office to ensure there real fiscal transparency of your tax dollars, real oversight of county spending, and real accountability over county programs and services.

Brandon Patty (R)

Brandon Patty, a proud Conservative Republican, serves St. Johns County with integrity and dedication. As a devoted husband and father, his family values guide his work as Clerk and Comptroller. His experience as a U.S. Naval Reserve Officer has instilled the discipline and dedication necessary to serve the community effectively. In 2020, Brandon successfully advocated for and secured an additional judge to facilitate justice and improve the efficiency of the legal system. He launched the Property Fraud Notification and Prevention Campaign to protect residents from the growing threat of white-collar crime. Brandon has been awarded the Certificate for Excellence in Financial Reporting, the gold standard in governmental accounting and financial reporting, for four consecutive years. This recognition underscores his commitment to transparency and fiscal responsibility. He has worked tirelessly to alert residents to various scams, including false missed jury notifications and false

Candidates cont. on pg. 15

VoteTomLeek.com



TOM LEEK

THE REAL CONSERVATIVE FOR
ST. JOHNS COUNTY
IN THE FLORIDA SENATE



Endorsed by
Governor Ron DeSantis

“I’m happy to endorse Tom Leek, a proven conservative, for the Florida Senate. In the Florida House, he has fought alongside us on the countless initiatives that have made Florida the freest state in the union. I look forward to continuing to work with him as District 7’s next Senator.”

VOTE FOR TOM LEEK

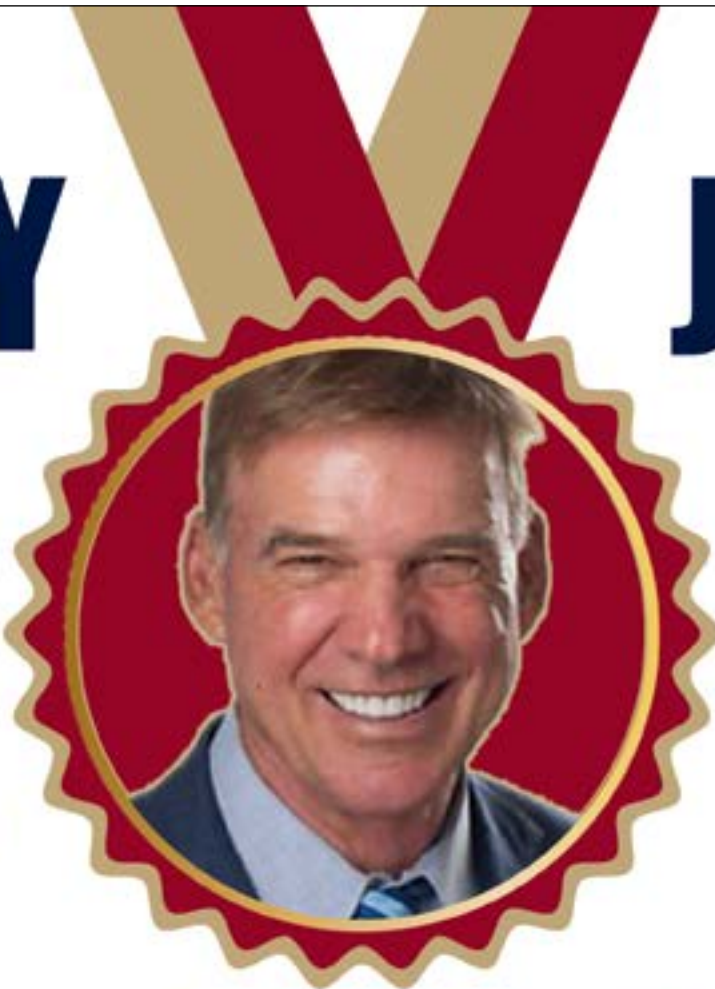
**IN THE REPUBLICAN PRIMARY
FLORIDA STATE SENATE DISTRICT 7**

**EARLY VOTING IN ST. JOHNS BEGINS AUGUST 10
ELECTION DAY IS TUESDAY, AUGUST 20**

GERRY

JAMES

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BIG INSURANCE,
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OR
TRIAL LAWYERS



FUELED BY
THE PEOPLE
POWERED BY
PATRIOTS

Vote August 20th Primaries

An America First Patriot

The Real Conservative, Constitutional, and Christian Candidate

Paid for by Gerry James Republican for State Senate District 7



CHRISTIAN WHITEHURST

County Commission



Fighting For St. Johns

- ✔ Slowed the Growth
- ✔ Led Effort for 4 New Regional Parks
- ✔ Increased Infrastructure
- ✔ Protected Our Beaches
- ✔ Held Developers Accountable
- ✔ Supports Veterans & First Responders

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Endorsed by:



Promises Made, Promises Kept.

When I was elected in 2020 I promised to fight for St. Johns County, and that's exactly what I did. I led the charge for four new regional parks, providing more ballfields, green space and recreational opportunities for our children and families. As a conservative Republican, I fought to eliminate wasteful spending and keep taxes low to protect our quality of life. I've fought to slow the growth by denying incompatible developments to allow our infrastructure to catch up and ensure developers pay their fair share. With your vote, I will continue fighting for our St. Johns values every day.

-Christian Whitehurst

Primary Election Guide

Candidates cont. from pg. 12

county deed records solicitations, thereby protecting the community from fraud. By leveraging cutting-edge technology such as artificial intelligence, Brandon

has enhanced efficiencies and service delivery in county offices. Brandon Patty's commitment to these values guides his daily service to the community, ensuring that St. Johns County remains a safe and prosperous place to live.

Voter Bill of Rights

- Vote and have his or her vote accurately counted.
- Cast a vote if he or she is in line at the official closing of the polls in that county.
- Ask for and receive assistance in voting.
- Receive up to two replacement ballots if he or she makes a mistake prior to the ballot being cast.
- An explanation if his or her registration, or identity, is in question.
- If his or her registration, or identity, is in question, cast a provisional ballot.
- Written instructions to use when voting, and, upon request, oral instructions in voting from elections officers.
- Vote free from coercion or intimidation by elections officers or any other person.
- Vote on a voting system that is in working condition and that will allow votes to be accurately cast.


Hometown Conservative

Roy ALAIMO

FOR ST. JOHNS COUNTY COMMISSION

APPOINTED by GOVERNOR DESANTIS

- Protected Our Beaches
- Limited Government
- Slowed the Growth
- Invested in Public Safety
- No New Taxes



Paid by Roy Alaimo, Republican, for St. Johns County Commission.

TRUMP REPUBLICAN Shoar

FOR STATE SENATE

A TRUSTED CONSERVATIVE LEADER Looking Out For Us!

- ✓ Secure the Border
- ✓ Lower the Cost of Living
- ✓ Gulf War Veteran
- ✓ 40 Year Law Enforcement Career
- ✓ Former Chief of Police, City of St Augustine
- ✓ Former Sheriff, St Johns County



VOTE TRUMP REPUBLICAN DAVID SHOAR FOR STATE SENATE AUGUST 20



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/VoteShoar

Paid by David Shoar, Republican, for State Senate.

Primary Election Guide



with St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections Vicky Oakes

Q: When is the 2024 Primary Election?

A: Election Day for the 2024 Primary Election is Tuesday, Aug. 20, 2024. Polls are open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., and voters must vote at their assigned polling place. Some Election Day polling places have changed since the last election. To find your polling place, check your voter information card or visit www.votesjc.gov.

Q: How do I know what's on my ballot?

A: Sample ballots have been mailed to all registered voters who have not requested a vote-by-mail ballot or requested to receive sample ballots by email. To view your sample ballot online, visit www.votesjc.gov and click My Voter Status.

Q: I have recently moved. Is it too late to update my registration?

A: No! To update your address online, visit www.votesjc.gov. If you are unsure if your

record is up to date, use the My Voter Status tool to verify your information.

Q: I requested a vote-by-mail ballot. Can I still vote in person?

A: Yes, if you have not returned your vote-by-mail ballot, you can still vote in person. New procedures recently issued by the State require poll workers to ask a voter who was mailed a vote-by-mail ballot if they brought it to the polling place. If yes, the vote-by-mail ballot must be surrendered prior to voting. A vote-by-mail ballot cannot be taken into the voting booth at the polling place.

Q: If I make a mistake on my ballot, can I get a new one?

A: Yes! If a voter makes a mistake on their first ballot, they are entitled to up to two additional replacement ballots. If you make a mistake while marking your ballot, you must return to the poll worker WITH your ballot in hand. A ballot with a mistake on it returned to the poll worker is called a "spoiled bal-

lot." To ensure a spoiled ballot cannot be counted, it must be physically altered. Before surrendering the spoiled ballot, the poll worker will ask the voter to fold the ballot in half and tear the wcorner.

Q: Will there be law enforcement at my voting location to keep the workers and voters safe?

A: All polling places in St. Johns County are assigned a team member called a Poll Deputy. At the completion of training, Poll Deputies are sworn in and deputized by the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office. The deputy is the eyes and ears

of law enforcement at the polling place; they are always present during Early Voting and Election Day to maintain order and ensure a safe voting experience for St. Johns County voters.

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

A: Readers can email me at voakes@votesjc.gov or call the Elections Office at (904) 823-2238, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Our website, www.votesjc.gov also has a wealth of information.

**Vote as you please,
but please vote!**
Aug. 20, 2024




HENRY DEAN



FOR COUNTY COMMISSION - DISTRICT 5

- ✓ Proud Conservative Republican
- ✓ Proven Record of Land Conservation
- ✓ Supports Small Business & Economic Growth
- ✓ Stands with Our Veterans & First Responders
- ✓ Backs Our Tourism Industry
- ✓ Led Effort to Protect Our Beaches
- ✓ Invested in Infrastructure to Fix Our Roads
- ✓ Held Developers Accountable
- ✓ Slowed the Growth


Protect St. Johns



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Paid by Henry Dean, Republican, for St. Johns County Commission.

Life

travel • pantry raiders • gardening
fishing • entertainment • puzzles

Get to Know ...

By Tiffany Merlo Phelps
mail@floridanewsline.com

Tracy Tripp and Edward Mickolus

Authors Tracy Tripp and Edward Mickolus may have taken very different paths in life, but their passion for books, writing and fulfilling their purpose in life is very much the same. The two decided to collaborate on a crime thriller book after meeting at a St. Augustine book fair in 2018 and becoming friends. The book, "White Noise Whispers," won the duo second place at the Florida Writers Association Royal Palm Literary Awards in the Mystery or Crime category. Mickolus gives all the credit to Tripp, the principal author. "She is able to sit in the heads of all of her characters and make them all sensitive, understandable and likable," said Mickolus.

Tripp, 54, grew up in a small town in upstate New York on a dairy farm, one of seven children, working to put herself through college at SUNY Oswego and then Buffalo State College for graduate school to become a teacher. She taught both English and science, but ended up focusing on language arts. After having three children and later moving to Julington Creek in 2012, she took a class through a children's writing institute and Gotham Writers' Workshop. She started to write and eventually published her first novel "Parting



Photo by Tiffany Merlo Phelps
Tracy Tripp and Edward Mickolus

Gifts" in 2021. "It is such a journey to go from a thought to a book," said Tripp, who now has written five novels and two children's books. Tripp is also a substitute teacher in St. Johns County.

Mickolus, 73, grew up in Michigan, the son of a Ford Motor Company dynamometer test engineer. He attended Georgetown University on a Ford Motor Company scholarship and then pursued graduate studies at Yale University via a National Science Foundation fellowship. He then served in various positions in the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) for 33 years, where he was CIA's first full time analyst on international terrorism; analyzed African political economic, social, military and leadership issues; wrote political-psychological assessments of world leaders; and managed collection, counterintelligence and covert action programs against terrorist,

drug traffickers, weapons proliferators and hostile espionage services. He has written 50 books so far, ranging from terrorism studies to humor. Mickolus moved to Nocatee in 2013.

Q: What future projects do you have in the works?

TT: I have a sixth novel currently in the editing phase. I used my life as a backdrop, and I weaved in a mafia and a murder that did not happen.

EM: I have five books in the works, including International Terrorist Events 2023-2024, All the Presidents' Heroes: Inspirational Stories from State of the Union Honorees, Famous Last Meals, Naked Came the Spy and its sequel and Stories by the Side of the Road.

Q: Who are some of your favorite authors?

TT: I like Jodi Picoult, Abraham Verghese and Jojo Moyes to name a few.

EM: Tracy Tripp, Dave Berry, Jeffrey Deaver, Carl Hiaasen, Roger von Oech, Joseph Wambaugh, Ed McBain also just to name a few.

Q: What are your hobbies?

TT: I like to play tennis, practice yoga and workout. I love to spend time with my family and to travel.

EM: I have collected 1,700 fashion challenged neck ties from about 30 nations. Ties are one of the few pieces of men's clothing that allow us to express our individuality. I also love classic cars, acting in the Performing Arts Club of Del Webb, teaching at the University of North Florida, stand-up comedy and trivia.

Q: What is your life philosophy?

TT: I once heard this at church, and it really spoke to me. God is going to call you to do something, and your job is to do it. The outcome is up to Him. Accept it. Success is that you followed through.

EM: I am really motivated by service and assisting others. I was able to do that by working at the agency. Now, I really enjoy mentoring and teaching students and serving as a lector at church.

Q: Share a little about your family.

TT: My husband of 29 years is Steve Tripp. We have three adult children, two daughters, 21 and 20, and a 24-year-old son (first grandchild in October).

EM: My wife of 41 years is Susan Schjelderup. We have one 36-year-old daughter and an 18-month old granddaughter.

Get to Know ...

Interested in being featured? Email Martie Thompson at editor@FloridaNewsLine.com

NEW WASTE COLLECTION VENDOR FOR ST. JOHNS COUNTY



Effective August 1, 2024 FCC Environmental Services will begin providing residential wasteand recycling collection in St. Johns County. To prepare for this transition, the county has published information on its website at www.RecycleStJohns.com. Additionally, residents will receive a postcard in the mail during the week of July 8-12, providing essential details about FCC's services and scheduled collection days.

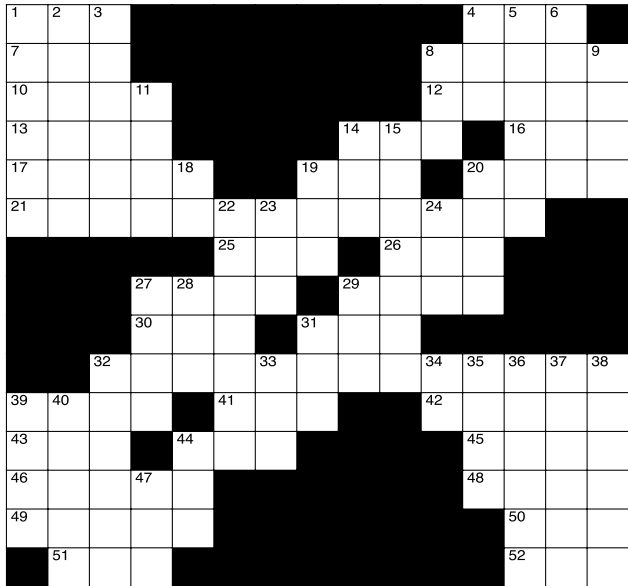
For more information, please contact SJC Solid Waste Division at (904) 827-6980.



PROUDLY SERVING ST. JOHNS COUNTY BEGINNING AUGUST 1, 2024

Puzzles

Answers on page 3
Provided by MetroCreative



CLUES ACROSS

1. Microgram
4. After B
7. Everything
8. An unfortunate development
10. Coat with sticky substance
12. Cylinder of tobacco for smoking
13. Minimum interval take off
14. Yuck!
16. NBA sensation Jeremy
17. Where some rockers work
19. Midway between northeast and east
20. Snake-like fishes
21. Groups of homes
25. Swiss river
26. Useful towel
27. "The Wire" character "Moreland"

29. Oafish creature
30. A major division of geological time
31. Bird-like Chinese dinosaur
32. Sporting events
39. Body part
41. Clerical vestment
42. Shows data
43. Some are "special"
44. Expression of disappointment
45. Students' rights document (abbr.)
46. Vacation locale Costa ___
48. Pop singer
49. Distract outside a city
50. Mark Wahlberg comedy
51. Coniferous tree
52. Midway between south and southeast

CLUES DOWN

1. Lunatic
2. Actress Danes
3. Buttock muscles
4. The 22nd letter of the Greek alphabet
5. Popular 70s rockers
6. Electronic communication
8. Trigraph
9. Sea eagles
11. Low-pitched, resonant sound
14. Northeastern US university (abbr.)
15. Home of the Bulldogs
18. Exclamation of surprise
19. Make a mistake
20. Advantage
22. Monkeys love them
23. Wood
24. Paddle
27. Past participle of be
28. Tall, rounded vase
29. Device manufacturers
31. Financial institution (abbr.)
32. Paper product
33. A type
34. Atomic #43
35. Red Hot Chili Peppers' drummer
36. Behaviors
37. Decays
38. Walked confidently
39. Voice (Italian)
40. Class of adhesives
44. Bar bill
47. One-time aerospace firm

FROZEN DESSERT WORD SEARCH

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

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

WORDS

- BANANA SPLIT
- BROWNIE
- CHERRY
- CHOCOLATE SYRUP
- COLD
- CONE
- COOKIE DOUGH
- CUP
- FROZEN YOGURT
- GELATO
- HOT FUDGE
- ICE CREAM
- ICE MILK
- ICES
- MIXED
- NUTS
- PEANUT BUTTER
- REFRESHING
- SHERBET
- SORBET
- SPRINKLES
- SUNDAE
- WAFFLE
- WHIPPED CREAM

⊙ * ☼ ☽ ☿ ♀ ♁ ♃ ♄ ♅ ♆ ♇ ♈ ♉ ♊ ♋ ♌ ♍ ♎ ♏ ♐ ♑ ♒ ♓

CRYPTO FUN

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to ice cream.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 12 = N)

A. 20 15 5 16 10 12

Clue: Cold and solid

B. 18 25 26 15 23

Clue: Twisted together

C. 8 5 19 19 26 12 17

Clue: Ice cream addition

D. 13 5 12 10

Clue: Ice cream holder

Briefs cont. from pg.2

Oct. 26 at 9 a.m. at the Jacksonville Seawalk Pavilion.

This gathering will support the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's education, research and support for survivors of suicide loss. In addition to raising awareness and funds to fight suicide, the walks give those who attend a chance to connect with others, whether they walk in memory or in support of a loved one or in honor of their own mental health journey.

"Suicide touches one in five American families. We hope that by connecting with one another, we will draw attention to this issue and keep

other families from experiencing a suicide loss. Our goal is to save lives and bring hope to those affected by suicide," said Wendy Thompson, AFSP North Florida area director. "The walk is also a space of healing and a place to have honest conversations about mental health. The more we openly and directly talk about suicide, the more we can help to prevent it."

Explore the campaign and what more you can do during September and beyond to make a difference by joining a local AFSP chapter, learning more about suicide, and advocating for legislation supporting prevention. Visit <https://afsp.org/> for more information or to donate or join this event.

Coming in September!

BACK TO SCHOOL

GUIDE

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PopHistory



By Scott A. Grant
mail@floridanewslines.com

Madame President

In October 1919, President Woodrow Wilson had a massive stroke. The stroke was not his first, but it was his worst. It left the president, who had intended on seeking a third term in office, largely debilitated for the last 17 months of his tenure in the White House. Many believe that during those last months in office, the duties of the presidency fell upon Wilson's second-wife, Edith Bolling Wilson.

Wilson, the former governor of New Jersey and president of Princeton University, sought to keep his disability a secret as he had done with at least two other prior strokes. Those first strokes caused him to lose sensation in his fingertips and the sight in his left eye. He experienced frequent pain in first his right and then his left arm. Some say it also caused a substantial change in his personality.

Observers at the time and since have suggested that Edith Wilson was a "secret President" and the first woman to run a government. The first lady denied she was in charge and suggested she was acting as a mere "steward." She acted as a gatekeeper, deciding what items required the president's attention. She would then consult with him privately, presenting the question in a condensed form before emerging from

the president's study to announce, "Mr. Wilson says...."

In her biography, Edith Wilson, who married Woodrow during his first term after the death of his first wife, Ellen, stated; "I, myself, never made a single decision regarding the disposition of public affairs. The only decision that was mine was what was important and what was not, and the very important decision of when to present matters to my husband."

Historians have increasingly suggested that Edith Wilson acted as more than a mere steward, that she was, in fact, acting as chief executive of the nation from October 1919 until the end of her husband's second term in March 1921.

At the time, it became increasingly obvious that President Wilson was having severe problems. There was a clamoring for Wilson to resign or be replaced by Vice President Thomas Marshall of Indiana. Marshall, who is perhaps

best remembered for his wit, had joked upon assuming the second highest office in the land that "once there were two brothers: one ran away to sea, the other was elected vice-president and nothing was ever heard from either of them again."

Now he refused to assume office unless Edith Wilson and the president's doctor certified Wilson's "inability to discharge the powers and duties of said office." That language comes out of Article 2 of the Constitution. At the time, there was no way for outsiders to enforce that clause. It was not until 1967, with the passage of the 25th Amendment, that a procedure for removing a president against his or her will was adopted. That procedure has never been used. It remains unclear what the threshold for "inability" might be.

Woodrow Wilson first became president following the election of 1912, when the Republican vote was split

between incumbent William Howard Taft and former president and national hero, Teddy Roosevelt, who was running as a third-party candidate. Wilson received less than 42 percent of the popular vote, but won in an electoral landslide over Roosevelt and Taft, who split 51 percent of the popular vote between them.

The final months of his presidency were bitter. He had pushed for and helped establish a League of Nations after World War I. The League was founded, but the United States refused to join. The Senate did not ratify the treaty.

The Wilsons retired in Washington and the former president died less than three years later. His final words were "Edith."

Scott A. Grant is a local author and historian. By day, he is president of Standfast Asset Management, LLC. He welcomes your comments at scottg@standfast.com

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