

Mandarin NewsLine

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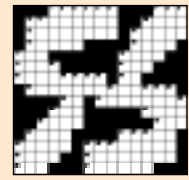
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Photos courtesy Sondie Frus

"Three Travelers in Search of a Vague Notion" by Nikki Hill (2023 Challenge Quilt First Place)

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide seeks volunteers

By NewsLine Staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

The AARP Foundation Tax-Aide program is preparing for the 2024 tax season and is looking for volunteers to provide vital services to the public. Volunteers come from a variety of industries and range from college students to retirees. All levels and types of experience are welcome. Tax-Aide provides all training and support to ensure success. Volunteers fill a variety of roles, including:

- Counselors work with taxpayers directly by filling out tax returns.
- Client Facilitators welcome taxpayers, help organize their paperwork, and manage the overall flow of service.
- Technology Coordinators manage computer equipment, ensure taxpayer data is secure, and provide technical assistance to volunteers.
- Leadership and Administrative volunteers make sure program operations run smoothly, manage volun-

AARP Foundation cont. on pg. 7

Couple serves their community by picking up trash

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewsline.com

If you travel along Greenland Road or Old St. Augustine Road in the morning, you've likely seen a couple with garbage bags picking up trash on a regular basis. Meet Jan and Jack Douglas, 34-year residents of Mandarin, who have been helping to keep their corner of the community clean for the past two years.

"We've experienced many heartwarming displays of appreciation," Jan Douglas said. "Just about every morning we have someone honk and wave to us."

Jan Douglas, a retired property manager, said the whole thing started when her husband Jack, retired from the electrical wholesale business, was diagnosed with cancer a few years ago that required major surgery. During his recovery, all of the household tasks fell to her and she started walking to build up her strength and also so she could clear her mind for a little while each day.

"As I walked, I noticed the trash and one day I came back home and told Jack I couldn't keep walking past it



Photos courtesy Joanne Kazmierski

Jan and Jack Douglas on one of their morning walks in September.

anymore," Jan Douglas said. "I went and bought a trash grabber and took one of our garbage bags — and now it's become a mission in life."

Soon, Jack Douglas was strong enough to join his wife and now their two hour walks are a daily habit (except

they sometimes take Sundays off). The couple has two different routes, one along Greenland Road — they start on one side of the street and then cross to return home, picking up trash on both sides — and one along Old St. Augustine Road. The Greenland route is about three-and-a-quarter miles and the Old St. Augustine Road route is about four miles and Jan Douglas said it takes about two hours to cover each. She said both routes include the St. Joseph's diocese corners and when the weather gets cooler, they plan to expand their routes.

Jan Douglas said the most common items they pick up are cigarette butts, food containers, cans, and a lot of small liquor bottles. Empty mulch bags are also common and she suspects that they have blown off from the trucks of landscaping companies due to not being secured.

"Litter is such a solvable problem if people would just exercise common sense," she said. "I can't think of any place someone would be headed that there wouldn't be a trash receptacle available once there ... headed home, to work, the mall, grocery shopping, the doctor's office, church, etc. We can solve this problem at no cost to anyone."

The Douglases are happy when they learn that they have inspired others to also walk and pick up litter. They are aware of groups of people who are cleaning up Hood Landing Road as well as other roads in Mandarin.

"So much positive has come from this," Jan Douglas said. "We've befriended some of the local landscape contractors and we see that they're starting to pick up litter, too. Also, we have been recognized when standing in line at Publix! 'Aren't you the trash people from Greenland Road?'"



Jan and Jack Douglas are 34-year residents of Mandarin who see it as their mission to keep their community clean.



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Briefs

Game Day at Mandarin Women's Club

On Oct. 24, the Mandarin Women's Club will hold its annual Game Day for members only at the Ramada Inn in Mandarin. This is one of the most popular events of the year, and members will choose to play either Bunco or Mexican Train. Lunch will be served after game play is finished.

Doors open at 9 a.m. and reservations for the luncheon are required. The luncheon cost is \$25 and must be received by Monday, Oct. 14. To make reservations and obtain payment instructions, contact Barbara at (904) 612-6494 or email her at barbara.metallo@outlook.com. Visit www.mandarinwomensclub.com.

com for more information on events, photos, and membership forms.

First Coast Heart Walk scheduled

The First Coast American Heart Association, along with numerous companies, employees and community members, will unite at the Jacksonville Fairgrounds on Saturday, Oct. 5 for the First Coast Heart Walk. The event is the largest family and pet-friendly walk on the First Coast. The festival area will open at 7:30 a.m. and the walk will begin at 9 a.m.

The Heart Walk will honor heart and stroke survivors. By participating and donating to the First Coast Heart Walk,

participants are supporting the lifesaving mission of the American Heart Association and safeguarding that fewer people die from stroke and heart disease. Every walker who joins, every dollar donated, means more people trained in lifesaving CPR, more research, and more lifesaving moments for everyone.

Participants can register for the Heart Walk for free at www.FirstCoastHeartWalk.org. From there, they can create a fundraising page, download the Heart Walk mobile app, invite family and friends to participate and take part in the Heart Walk CPR Digital Experience to learn Hands-Only CPR in 90 seconds.

Making Strides Against Breast Cancer unites community

Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of the First Coast will take place on Saturday, Oct. 19 at EverBank Stadium, providing a supportive community for breast cancer survivors, caregivers, supporters and families alike.

Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among women in the United States, and more than 313,510 new cases of invasive breast cancer will be diagnosed in 2024. Of that number, 23,160 will be Floridians. For more than 30 years, the American Cancer Society Making Strides Against Breast Cancer has united communities across the nation in an effort to end breast cancer as we know it, for everyone.

"Making Strides has grown into the nation's largest and most impactful breast cancer movement over the past three decades," said Jaelyn Rodriguez of the American Cancer Society. "Through Making Strides, we are funding critical research and life-saving programs that will ensure a brighter future for everyone who is impacted by breast cancer."

Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of the First Coast will be held at EverBank Stadium on Saturday, Oct. 19. The gates will open at 8 a.m. and the walk begins at 9 a.m. Visit makingstrideswalk.org/jacksonvillefl for more information or to register your team.

Aspiring food entrepreneurs can call UF/IFAS specialist for more information on food safety

Want to make cheesecake from home

and sell it? You're hardly alone, but that's a tricky prospect.

"People love cheesecake. But it doesn't meet Florida's Cottage Food Law. You can't make it from your home. If you have to refrigerate the product, you can't make it there," said Stephanie Brown, the new UF/IFAS Extension statewide specialized agent in food science. "So, I'll say, 'let me give you names of places where you can make cheesecake and still be compliant with state rules.'"

Cheesecake is one food. What about those who want to create other culinary delights from home and sell them elsewhere? Brown has you covered with her expertise.

"The Florida Cottage Food Law is tricky," Brown said. "I imagine I'll get questions along the lines of, 'What does Florida define as a cottage food?' 'What can I sell?' People want to cook food in their home like they did during the pandemic. They'll ask: 'Is that OK to do, and how can I make some extra money or a living cooking from home and selling my foods, sauces and more?'"

She hears all kinds of questions from food entrepreneurs. Among them are:

- I want to make this food. Can I do it in this space?
- Where can I make my food?
- How can I make my food safely?
- Can I change my product in the way that I hope to? I want it to appeal to people in a different way. How do I do that?

Brown is available virtually to any chef or food entrepreneur in Florida by appointment. That includes people looking to sell at a farmer's market, those looking to start a food business from home and others, said Brown, who's stationed at the Southwest Florida Research and Education Center in Immokalee. Contact her at stephaniebrown@ufl.edu to meet with her online.

Visit www.fdacs.gov/Business-Services/Food/Food-Establishments/Cottage-Foods for more information about the Florida Cottage Food Law.

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BFF Best Furry Friend of the month

Meet Cinderella!

Breed:
English Labrador Retriever

Favorite Activities:
Going to daycare, swimming and playing with my friends.

Favorite Food:
Anything and everything!

Favorite Friends:
Winter, a white Husky and Harley, a Chocolate Labrador.

How Did Your BFF Get Her Name:
Cinderella is named after the reference to the black cinders on Cinderella's face in the movie "Cinderella."

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 Mandarin NewsLine. Your pet could be our BFF of the month and appear in Mandarin NewsLine! Email editor@floridanewsline.com to enter your pet.

Senior NewsLine
will appear in our
November issue!
Call Linda Gay
904.607.5062
to include your business!

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Don't miss our November issue
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MYSTERY PHOTO

Can you guess where this is?
Submit your answer to: mail@FloridaNewsLine.com.
Last month's Mystery Photo was the horse at Mandarin High School.

CRYPTO FUN

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

A. autumn B. leaves C. colorful D. chill

Answers to our Puzzles
PG 8

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October

Community Calendar What's Happening in Mandarin

Shuffleboard is played on Tuesdays at 10 a.m. at Tommy Hazouri Park (formerly Mandarin Park). The courts are at the park entrance next to the tennis courts. Try to get there a few minutes early for court assignments. Beginners are welcome. Just show up (a few minutes before playing time), unless it rains.

Toast of Jax Toastmasters meets every Saturday, except on holiday weekends, at 8:30 a.m. at Baha'i Community Center, 5034 Greenland Road. Guests are welcome. The meetings can also be attended online at <https://toastofjax.toastmasterclubs.org/>.

Acoustic Jam Session is held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Kids' Building of Trinity Mandarin, located at 2955 Orange Picker Road. This jam is open to everyone and all levels of ability are welcome. Come to play with the group or just sit back and enjoy the music. For more information, contact Burt Coulliette at (904) 302-0423.

Playing HOOKie, a group for those who enjoy knitting, crocheting and looming (with all items donated to charity) meets every Wednesday from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. at Maple Street Biscuit Company, 1627 Race Track Road in St. Johns. Visit the group's Facebook page (Playing HOOKie) or email playinghookie2022@gmail.com for more information.

MomCo (formerly known as MOPS), a fun and safe place to connect with other moms, share breakfast, and hear from guest speakers on various topics, will meet every other Tuesday from 9:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. on the Mandarin Presbyterian Church /Loretto Road Campus with childcare provided. Space is limited; visit mandarinpres.com/momco to register. Email MOPS@mandarinpres.com for more information.

1st: Honeybee Quilters Guild will meet on Tuesday, Oct. 1 at 6:30 p.m. at Mandarin Presbyterian Church's Mandarin Road Campus in the Woody Room at 11844 Mandarin Road. A QuiltFest 2024 follow-up show and tell with judge's comments will be featured. New members/guests welcome. Visit honeybeequilters.org for more information.

4th -5th: Trash to Treasure Sale will be held at the Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Road on Oct. 4 - 5 from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. each day. The public is welcome. The sale will include food, plants, and treasures. Visit www.mandaringardenclub.org for more information.

5th: Walter Jones Historical Park buildings, including the 1898 St. Joseph's Mission Schoolhouse for African American

Children, the 1875 Webb Jones Farmhouse, the 1876 Barn, and the Losco Winery, will be open on Oct. 5 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Mandarin Frogs will be available for painting at 10 a.m.; the cost is \$22 per person and advanced registration is required (email info@mandarinmuseum.org). The Historic Mandarin Store & Post Office, located at 12471 Mandarin Road, will also be open. Museum volunteers will be inside each building for guided tours. Admission is free; Donations help support the museum's programming and operations. Visit www.mandarinmuseum.org for more information.

5th: Meet the Maple Leaf Divers at the Mandarin Museum, 11964 Mandarin Road, from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 5. This is an informal, conversational-style event; drop in anytime within the two hours to chat with Dr. Keith Holland and his team and view the museum's expanded Maple Leaf exhibit. Admission to Meet the Maple Leaf Divers and Mandarin Museum is free. Donations help support the museum's programming and operations. For more information, visit www.mandarinmuseum.org or call (904) 268-0784.

6th: Music Under the Oaks community music jam, hosted by the Mandarin Museum & Historical Society and North Florida Folk Network will resume on Mandarin Museum's front lawn on Sunday, Oct. 6 from 2 p.m. - 4 p.m. Bring a chair or blanket and relax and listen. This is a free event; donations support the operations and programming at Mandarin Museum. Visit www.mandarinmuseum.org or call (904) 268-0784 for more information.

10th: Daylily Society featuring Connie Gladdin will be the guest of the Magnolia Circle on Oct. 10 at 10 a.m. at the Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Road. The public is invited. Visit www.mandaringardenclub.org for more information.

12th: Second Saturday Arts and Farmers Market at First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd. on Oct. 12 from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Visit www.facebook.com/SecondSatMarket/ for more information.

13th: Unveiling of Brenda Council's "Harriet Beecher Stowe in Mandarin" bronze sculpture in Walter Jones Historical Park will be held on Sunday, Oct. 13 at 3 p.m. This is an outdoor event. Refreshments will be served. Admission is free. Call (904) 268-0784 or visit www.mandarinmuseum.org for more information.

17th: Changing the Landscape of Hunger by Angela Tenbroeck, Manager of Urban Agriculture, City of Jacksonville, will be presented on Oct. 17 at 10 a.m. at the Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Road. The public is

invited. Visit www.mandaringardenclub.org for more information.

17th: Third Thursday Lecture featuring "Andersonville Revisited: An Archeological and Historical Study of the Civil War's Most Infamous Prison Camp" presented by Dr. Guy Prentice, retired National Park Service archaeologist, will be held on Oct. 17 from 6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m. at the Mandarin Community Club, 12447 Mandarin Road. The lecture will be hosted by Mandarin Museum in partnership with the Mandarin Community Club. Admission is free and the event is open to the community.

19th: The Southern Genealogist's Exchange Society will meet from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Oct. 19 at Watson Realty, 4194 San Juan Ave. Paul Howes, president of the St. Augustine Genealogical Society, will present "Get Lucky with Irish Genealogy: Finding your Irish Ancestors." Email Sgesjax@att.net to reserve a space. Visit www.sgesjax.org to register for the meeting or call (904) 778-1000 for more information.

19th: Jacksonville Rose Society will host its annual Rose Show at Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Road, on Oct. 19 from 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. A rose-growing seminar will be held at 1:30 p.m. Consulting rosarians will be available to answer all rose-growing questions and a vendor will be on site selling rose bushes and supplies. The event is free and open to the public. visit jacksonvillerosesociety.org for more information.

19th: Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of the First Coast will be held at EverBank Stadium on Saturday, Oct. 19. Gates will open at 8 a.m. and the walk begins at 9 a.m. Visit makingstrideswalk.org/jacksonvillefl for more information or to register your team.

19th -20th: "Four Old Broads" will be presented by Act II Players in a dinner theater format on Friday, Oct. 19 (dinner at 6:30 p.m. and showtime 7 p.m.) at Blue Bamboo restaurant, 10110 San Jose Blvd. and on Saturday, Oct. 20 (dinner at 6 p.m. and showtime 7 p.m.) at Scottish Rite Theater, 965 Hubbard St. Visit www.actiplayers.org for tickets and more information.

21st: The All Star Quilters Guild will meet at 9:30 a.m. for socializing prior to the 10 a.m. meeting on Monday, Oct. 21 at First Christian Church, 11924 San Jose Blvd. The program will be a mystery quilt reveal. Sew and Tell is always a feature. Guests are welcome. Visit www.allstarquilters.org for more information.

24th: Mandarin Republican Club will meet on Thursday, Oct. 24 at St.

Mary's Seafood, 11290 Old St. Augustine Road. Social time begins at 6 p.m. and the meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. First time visitors are welcome.

24th: "How to Grow and Care For Camellias" by Master Gardener Walter Bryant will be presented to the Live Oak Circle on Oct. 24 at 7 p.m. at the Mandarin Garden Club, 2892 Loretto Road. The public is invited. Visit www.mandaringardenclub.org for more information.

24th: Mandarin Women's Club's Game Day, for members only, will be held on Oct. 24 beginning at 9 a.m. at the Ramada Inn in Mandarin. The luncheon cost is \$25 and must be received by Monday, Oct. 14. To make reservations and obtain payment instructions, contact Barbara at (904) 612-6494 or email her at barbara.metallo@outlook.com. Visit www.mandarinwomensclub.com for more information on events, photos, and membership forms.

25th: The Italian American Club of Jacksonville will hold its popular Spaghetti to Go on Friday, Oct. 25 from 5 p.m. until the spaghetti is gone at the club building, 2838 Westberry Road. Take out only; cash, credit and debit cards are accepted. Dinners cost \$13 and there are small charges for extra meatballs, cannolis and pizza rolls. No phone orders. Call (904) 586-2700 for more information.

26th: Walking Tour of the historic Mandarin Cemetery, led by Mandarin Museum Executive Director Brittany Cohill, will be held on Saturday, Oct. 26 at 10 a.m. Advanced registration required; tickets are \$10 per person, available online or in-person at Mandarin Museum Guest Services. Space is limited, call (904) 268-0784 or visit www.mandarinmuseum.org for more information.

26th: Trunk-or-Treat will be held Saturday, Oct. 26 from 5 p.m. - 7 p.m. at Mandarin Lutheran Church, 11900 San Jose Blvd. Bring your costumes for family fun including a bounce house, s'mores, hot dogs, and trunk- or -treating. This is a free event and open to the public. Call the church at (904) 268-4591.

26th: Touch-a-Truck at Trinity Mandarin on Oct. 26 from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. This event features more than 28 trucks including a 40-foot helicopter, Marine Corps vehicles, SWAT, armored vehicles, motorcycles, construction and farm equipment. There will be performances by the Jacksonville ROAR cheerleading squad, train rides, horse rides, and photo ops for free to the community. More information is available at <https://www.facebook.com/share/7E3oPKGyGzXMSzkk/>

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with Jacksonville City Council Member Michael Boylan, District 6

Q: Do you have any advice for residents with drainage concerns following all the wet weather in September?

A: Obviously, we had an unprecedented amount of rain and so standing water is to be expected in Mandarin. While we are happy to assist residents with their drainage complaints, contacting our office actually elongates the process. It's best to call the city's customer support at (904) 630-CITY (2489) or fill out a ticket at www.MyJax.com to create a service request, after which the Public Works department is notified and dispatched accordingly.

Q: Can you give an update on your Town Hall meeting in late August?

A: The attendance at this Town Hall meeting was light and I'm not sure if it was a result of timing (the meeting was held the Thursday prior to Labor Day weekend). Representatives from JSO, Parks and Recreation, and Public Works were all in attendance and we had a great conversation. We plan to host another Town Hall meeting in mid-November.

Q: Are there any rezoning items to discuss [as of interview date of Sept. 17]?

A: Pulte Homes will be submitting an application to develop the property east of Aladdin Road and north of Julington Creek Road. Others who submitted applications to develop this property were not well received by the community mostly due to access problems. The difference this time is that access to the property will be different and we have helped Pulte Homes arrange for a Community Meeting to be held on Sept. 25 so neighbors can learn what is proposed. My office will keep you informed as this application moves through the process.

Q: What is the status of the Orange Picker Road/Brady Road/Alberts Field project?

A: The road is fully completed and by the beginning of October, they should be close to finishing paving the parking lot at Alberts Field, leaving only landscaping and other beautification efforts to be done. I'll be meeting with representatives from Parks and Recreation to identify the location of the dog park with the effort to maximize space for the dog park. The challenge is that when we have finite space for a heavily used facility — especially youth sports — compromises have to be made sometimes so it can be as safe, convenient and as impactful as possible.

Q: Do you have anything to share about the city's Parks Master Recreation Improvement Plan?

A: The Parks and Rec Department held a council workshop to provide an update on the Parks Master Recreation Improvement Plan, and the presentation was focused on the results of their statistically valid survey. I'd encourage Mandarin residents to take the survey and read the plan online (www.imagine-jaxparks.com). Additionally, I'm working with Parks and Rec to identify some smaller neighborhood parks in Mandarin. Residents can mark their calendars for the Southeast Citizens Political Action Committee (CPAC) meeting on Oct. 28 at 6:30 p.m. at the Mandarin Senior Center, where the Parks and Rec representatives will make a presentation covering the 10 year master plan. The meeting is open to the public.

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

A: Community members can email me at MBoylan@coj.net or call (904) 255-5206.

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Take a chance on PTA!

By Mary Eyster
mail@floridanewsline.com

Have you checked your child's school PTA this year? Parent Teacher Association is an honorable organization that was established in 1897 to engage families and communities in the education and the well being of the children.

PTA members are parents, volunteers, teachers, and business partners all working together for the betterment of the children. PTA board members keep you informed about educational and health issues for children. They connect you to staff, administration, and teachers. PTA members are a hardworking, talented, and devoted group of volunteers. They are at your child school for meetings and special events planned for the children and their families. They do so much for the children and schools, yet some schools struggle every year to recruit new officers/ members. PTA board members face many challenges. Board members want to make a difference in the lives of our children.

Joining PTA can be difficult for some parents; however, parents don't have to



Photo courtesy Mary Eyster
Crown Point PTA officers Mona Lisa McKinney, Stacy Flieder, and Annmarie Campos.

attend meetings or volunteer if it's not possible. Parents may still join PTA without making a commitment to volunteer. The money collected from memberships goes back to the children. It is spent on rewards, Birthday Book Club, educational and health and safety programs. PTA is not just for other parents. PTA is for all parents. Join PTA and help make a difference!



with Duval County School Board Member Lori Hershey, District 7

Q: With school safety always an issue, do you have anything to share with Mandarin residents?

A: One of our best options is to keep this topic front and center. For that reason, I encourage the entire community, not just parents, to download the Fortify Florida (FortifyFL) app (getfortifyfl.com), which will allow people to identify and bring to attention any concerns at any of our schools. It's a good way to have more eyes and ears in the community.

Also, parents, please remind your students that threats, whether verbal, written, or on social media, to cause harm to a school are taken very seriously and those who make them could be subject to arrest.

Q: Can you describe the changes to School Choice enrollment dates?

A: For the 2024 – 25 school year, there are some pretty major changes to enrollment dates for School Choice. Parents are so used to Showcase dates being in January or February, but this school year, the dates will be much earlier: the Elementary Showcase will be Saturday, Dec. 7, 2024 from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. and the Secondary Showcase will be Jan. 11, 2025 from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Applications for School Choice will be accepted from Dec. 1, 2024 through

the deadline date of Jan. 31, 2025.

So start thinking now about School Choice, particularly for middle school and high school.

Q: Would you like to share any thoughts on the upcoming retirement of Dr. Dana Kriznar?

A: I'd like to recognize former superintendent Dr. Kriznar, who is retiring at the end of September. She has served the Duval County School District for more than 30 years; in addition to her years in the district office, she served as principal of several schools in Mandarin. I'd especially like to recognize her dedication to improving student outcomes, which has been the cornerstone of her career. As superintendent, she led the district to the highest gains in reading and also improved graduation rates.

Q: Do you have anything else to share with District 7?

A: I do have something for all the history buffs in Mandarin. My understanding is that there is a white building on the campus of Loretto Elementary that is of historical significance dating back to World War I. It is currently used by the school's PTA. If anyone has any information about this building, please contact me at HersheyL@duvalschools.org or (904) 390-2375."

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Get to Know ...

By Martie Thompson
editor@floridanewline.com

Patty Everett

Patty Everett hails from a long-standing Mandarin family and has lived in Mandarin most of her adult life. A native of Jacksonville, she attended both Florida State College at Jacksonville and the University of North Florida, earning a degree in nursing. She worked for several years as a surgical nurse locally, but after staying at home to homeschool her children, discovered that her passion is really for theater. She has been involved with a number of local theatre groups and productions and also serves on the board of the Mandarin Community Club. Currently, she is founder of Theatre Troupe 1776, which performs at the Mandarin Community Club. She has been married to her husband, Greg, for 30 years and has four children, three grandchildren, and is presently raising her eight-year-old great nephew.

Q: What historical family from Mandarin are you descended from?

A: Pvt. Gabriel Hartley, who is mentioned in the Mandarin Museum, and was married to a Minorcan woman, is in my family tree. So, I'm related to the Hartleys. Also, we know my great grandfather had orange groves in the area; we're trying to find out exactly where they were located. I am fascinated by history and genealogy.

Q: How did you get involved in theatre?



Photo courtesy Patty Everett
Patty Everett

A: More than 10 years ago, I started teaching a homeschool theatre course. We became involved with the Northeast Florida Conservatory; my girls were in plays and I also performed in shows, as well as served as assistant director and stage manager. I was very involved until they closed in 2018. The group kind of spun into the short-lived Fine Arts Conservatory, and I directed "Pride and Prejudice" with them. Next came Act II Players, where I directed "Miracle on 34th Street" and "Unmasked," an original play by McKenna Rowell.

Q: How did Theatre Troupe 1776 come about?

A: When we were performing "Unmasked," we took the show on the road for 14 shows, including as a field trip for children at San Juan del Rio. During this time,

the cast met and decided to form a troupe. A troupe, as opposed to a theatre company, uses the same members in its shows and we focus on original works. Members of the troupe all work together; cast members do the props and the costuming, for instance. In September, we staged "1945 Cabaret 1945" as a fundraiser for the Mandarin Community Club. We covered all the expenses so that all revenues could go right to the club.

Q: What is Theatre Troupe 1776's next production?

A: "Letters to Victoria," set in the 1940s, is being staged at the Mandarin Community Club in late September. We also have shows scheduled for early October: Oct. 3 - 6. Tickets are available at <https://www.showtixnow.com/>.

Q: What is your favorite part about being involved with the troupe?

A: I enjoy watching the young actors as they grow and develop. I also like to bring new things to the community that they haven't seen before, like the play from 1776, which was very well received. "Letters to Victoria" is set in the 1940s and we're trying to bring attention to veterans from that time. We really want to tie in history with art.

AARP Foundation cont. from pg. 1

teers, and maintain quality control.

Tax-Aide provides tax preparation free of charge. Neither volunteers nor taxpayers need to be members of AARP, and there is no sales pitch for other services.

During the 2023 tax season, in Jacksonville, AARP Foundation Tax-Aide volunteers completed 3,187 returns with refunds of more than \$3 million. Visit <https://aarpfoundation.org/taxaidevolunteer> or call 1-888-227-7669, or email dianevtax12@gmail.com to learn more about volunteer opportunities.

Visit <https://taxaide.aarpfoundation.org> to learn more about having AARP Foundation Tax-Aide complete your taxes.

The following sites will be open in Jacksonville this year:

South Mandarin Branch Library, 12125 San Jose Blvd.

Mandarin Branch Library, 3330 Kori Road

San Jose Baptist Church, 6140 San Jose Blvd.

Bradham Brooks Northwest Library, 1755 Edgewood Ave. W.

Regency Square Library, 9900 Regency Square Blvd.

Pablo Creek Library, 13295 Beach Blvd.

Lake Shore Baptist Church, 2363 Blanding Blvd.

Southeast Regional Library, 10599 Deerwood Park Blvd.

University Park Library, 3435 University Blvd. N.

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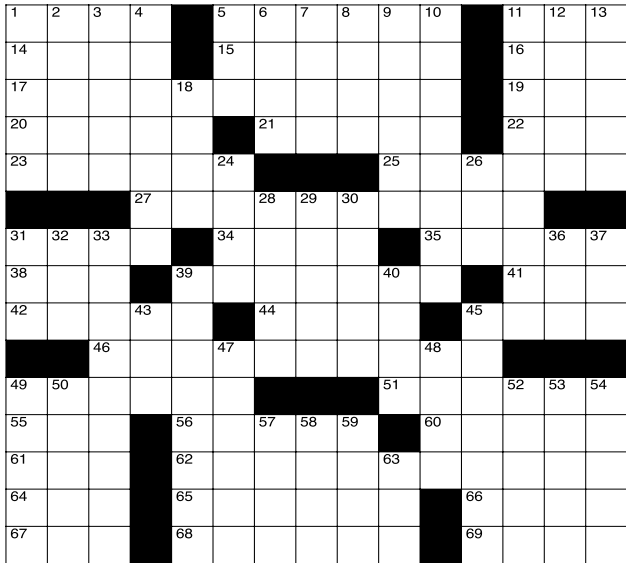
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Puzzles

Answers on page 3
Provided by MetroCreative



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Separate with an instrument
- 5. State clearly
- 11. One-time MLB speedster Gordon
- 14. Broad in scope
- 15. Lacking social polish
- 16. Amount of time
- 17. Frame
- 19. Automobile
- 20. Caps
- 21. High school dances
- 22. Utilize
- 23. Checked
- 25. One-sided
- 27. Having an extreme greed for wealth
- 31. Potted plants
- 34. We all have one
- 35. Lake north of the Kalahari
- 38. Unidentified flying object
- 39. Aging persons
- 41. Small amount
- 42. Mother of Perseus
- 44. Ornamental waist box
- 45. Officials
- 46. Uncertain
- 49. A cotton fabric with a satiny finish
- 51. Extensive, treeless plains
- 55. Your consciousness of your own identity
- 56. Consumer advocate Ralph
- 60. Notable Spanish sports club
- 61. Body part
- 62. One's responsiveness
- 64. Woman (French)
- 65. Ready and willing to be taught
- 66. Muslim ruler title
- 67. Unhappy
- 68. Gradually disappeared
- 69. Able to think clearly

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Brushed
- 2. Water sprite
- 3. Ones to look up to
- 4. Monetary units
- 5. We all have one
- 6. Marine invertebrate
- 7. One who institutes a legal proceeding
- 8. Outer
- 9. Parallelograms
- 10. Uncomfortable feelings
- 11. Cross to form an X
- 12. Remove
- 13. Some pages are dog-__
- 18. Capital of Ukraine
- 24. A citizen of Denmark
- 26. Eighth month (abbr.)
- 28. Hindu queens
- 29. Acids structurally related to amino acids
- 30. Rider of Rohan in Tolkien
- 31. Wet dirt
- 32. Russian city
- 33. Observed
- 36. Irate
- 37. Travelers need them
- 39. Musical composition
- 40. Auction
- 43. Form of "to be"
- 45. Women
- 47. Inspire with love
- 48. Think Japanese ankle sock
- 49. Appears
- 50. Old World lizard
- 52. The lead dancer: __ ballerina
- 53. Protein involved in motion
- 54. Rosalind Franklin biographer
- 57. Popular 1920s style art __
- 58. __ Blyton, children's author
- 59. Abnormal breathing
- 63. A place to rest

CLUES ACROSS

FALL SEASON WORD SEARCH

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

WORDS

- APPLES
- AUTUMNAL
- CHESTNUT
- CHILLY
- COOLER
- CORN
- CORNUCOPIA
- COZY
- CRISP
- EQUINOX
- FALL
- FIREPLACE
- FOGGY
- FOLIAGE
- GOURD
- HARVEST
- HARVESTING
- HAY
- LEAF
- OCTOBER
- PUMPKIN
- RAKE
- SCARECROW
- SWEATER

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

CRYPTO FUN



Solve the code to discover words related to fall.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 13= L)

- A. 15 14 8 14 9 10**
Clue: Another name for "fall"
- B. 13 19 15 4 19 3**
Clue: Parts of trees
- C. 20 2 13 2 11 23 14 13**
Clue: Vivid
- D. 20 1 24 13 13**
Clue: Feels cool

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The Mandarin/St. Johns Elks Lodge #2866
is providing a grant to fund The Seamark Ranch in Green Cove Springs food bank and also provide gardening starting kits for the agriculture program for the 2024-2025 year. The Seamark Ranch in Green Cove Springs is a non-profit organization that provides a community for foster children to include an elementary through 12th grade school and a working ranch where the children participate in daily chores and activities. One of the many programs is Urban Agriculture to teach the gardening process.

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Mandarin Garden Club gears up for fall

By Joann Butler
mail@floridanewsline.com

The 15th annual Mandarin Garden Club Craft Fair will be held on Saturday, Nov. 9 from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. It is the perfect time to start or continue your shopping for those special Christmas gifts. There will be crafts made by Garden Club members plus a variety of items available for purchase from other local vendors, including homemade chocolates, ornaments, embroidery, jewelry, soaps, natural fiber bags, hot sauces, wreaths, handmade

towels, crafted greeting cards, original artwork, African violets, plants, decoupage flower pots, woven/knitted/crochet items, seashell/driftwood art, handmade woodcraft items, floral designs, hanging suncatchers and hand painted gourds. The Garden Club will have a Café with all kinds of goodies, plus plants and garden items will be for sale. The Masons will have hamburgers and hotdogs for sale. If you are interested in participating as a crafter or artist, there are outdoor 10' x 10' spaces available for \$40. Email

mgcraftyladies@gmail.com or contact Joyce Datz at (904) 287-3602 or jdatz@bellsouth.net for more information.

After taking a summer break, the four Mandarin Garden Club Circles started their meetings again in September. Check the calendar each month in Mandarin NewsLine for more information on the circle meetings. All circle meetings are open to the public.

A special new member reception was

held on Sept. 4 for the club members that joined in the last year. There were 19 new members attending and they had a fun time learning more about the club and sharing lunch with some of the members.

The Marden Garden Club is available for rent for parties, weddings, reunions, and all kinds of special occasions. Visit www.mandaringardenclub.org for more information about the club and its activities, including photos of the club.



Jimmy's Fishing Report

By Jimmy Tomazinis
mail@floridanewsline.com

Get out there. Those three words should be all you need this month. October is arguably one of the best months to fish here and one of the last months before we start losing the fair weather angling crowd. The pleasure boaters have already started to dwindle, which means we have even more peaceful moments on the water to enjoy.

Shrimp are peaking in size and quantity if they didn't at the end of last month. Lots of limits in less than two hours were reported. Any small ones that might be left can be used to catch literally anything. We still have all the saltwater species in the river, but they will be leaving as soon as temperatures drop and the shrimp leave. At the same time many freshwater species will be gorging before the bountiful warm season is over. I can't name a bad spot to fish except dry land. Bridges,

docks, ledges, shell beds — they all are worth trying.

In the surf the mullet are still moving south with hungry predators after them. Find the bait and find the fish. At the same time pompano and whiting are moving south as the waters cool and they won't stay long. Fresh bait and clean water is what you want and something you can control — as in getting live shrimp, clams, and sand fleas, nothing dead or salted. Then spend the time to find the conditions you want and then start fishing. The only time to fish dirty water is when that's all there is like during storms.

I'm going to keep it short this month so you can spend less time reading and more time fishing. I'm going to get back to it myself. Let's recap how great October was on a cold November day next month.

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Gardening

Autumn and looking forward

By Master Gardener Volunteer Lesley Arrandale
mail@floridanewline.com

By Master Volunteer Lesley Arrandale
mail@floridanewline.com

As the hurricane season reaches its peak, in Jacksonville we've been lucky, so far, to escape the worst that the weather might throw at us. Despite that, some areas of town have experienced bad flooding. If your yard was under water for any length of time, as the water subsides and you start to clean up, let plants and lawn recover and then determine what permanent damage there is, if any.

Immediate clean up might simply

involve removing debris that has washed onto beds and lawns. Lawns especially could suffer as it doesn't take long before diseases can take hold, so rake it off carefully and dispose of it, either by composting or bagging it for collection if you suspect problems with sewage. In any case, wear disposable gloves, long pants, and waterproof boots that can be washed easily. Plants will need their crowns cleared of debris so remove anything that has washed into the center of the plant. If it isn't contaminated, and there isn't a lot of it, that material could simply be pulled away from the plant

and left in place as mulch.

Here are some links to an article with more advice: <https://tinyurl.com/4up4hszy>.

Fall migrating birds are moving through our area, and in my garden, where there are wildflowers to attract them, I'm seeing a wide variety of pollinators feeding on dotted horsemint (*Monarda punctata*) and anise scented goldenrod (*Solidago odora*). Two particularly lovely warblers, the American redstart and black-headed blue warbler, have been taking advantage of the insects as well as the fruits of the beautyberry bushes (*Callicarpa americana*). I had a great view of a male black-headed blue warbler as it feasted on beauty berries just a couple of yards from my kitchen window.



Photo courtesy Lesley Arrandale
Dotted horsemint (*Monarda punctata*)

It's tricky to get a show of flowers throughout the year. The Xerces Society has compiled lists for most regions of the US which include the flowering times of common wildflowers. You can find the list for Florida here: <https://tinyurl.com/49cjpwpw>. Make sure to check soil, water, and light requirements. Even so-called "low maintenance" native plants must be in the right place if they are going to be successful in our gardens. Otherwise they become high maintenance!

When growing native wildflowers from seed, some are more successful if they are sown in the fall, which is often when seeds naturally mature and drop from the plant. The Florida Wildflower Cooperative sells a variety of wildflower seeds. Check out what's available here: <https://tinyurl.com/4z3p3uvb>.

Make sure to take advantage of all the information available on the website, particularly if you envision a wildflower bed. To be successful, you will probably need to deal with weeds before you start. For me, I sow seeds in small trays, not directly in the garden, and pot them on until they are large enough to plant out. I have found it takes time for some perennials to mature, but it can be satisfying for anyone who enjoys new plants for almost free!

If you want to simply purchase plants, and I completely understand why, there are only a few local native plant nurseries. You can search online for information and for online nurseries here: <https://www.plantrealflorida.org/professionals>. Duval County master gardener volunteers hold a popular plant sale in the spring, usually with a good selection of native plants, and so do surrounding counties. You may know that sourcing native plants propagated in their home range makes it more likely that you have "the right plant in the right place." They are genetically a good match to local conditions, whereas the same species grown further north will likely be from seed that is adapted to entirely different conditions. If you see "Florida ecotype" in a plant's description, it means it's truly a Florida native.

The latest issue of A New Leaf newsletter is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/65frterd>. As you will see, the format has been updated and has links to articles of current interest. Enjoy!

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Travel

The Highland Games at Grandfather Mountain, NC

By Debi Lander
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I'm not of Scottish heritage, but have very fond memories of visiting Scotland, eating haggis, and listening to the haunting sound of bagpipes. On one trip to Scotland, I needed to buy a fleece vest and some gloves because I hadn't realized it would be so cool — in August. Visiting the Highlands of Scotland provides relief from our Florida heat, but so does a visit to the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina.

I'd heard great things about the Highland Games on Grandfather Mountain and jumped at the chance to join two girlfriends who were hoping to learn more about their Scottish ancestry. The Grandfather Mountain games are the largest gathering in the US, attracting more than 100 clans over four days.

The history of the Highland Games goes back nearly 1,000 years. Some historians

trace their roots to the times of Celtic warriors, who would use athletic contests as a way to demonstrate strength, agility, and endurance. The gatherings are known for their unique blend of athletic competitions, music, dancing and celebrating Scottish heritage.

The events at Grandfather Mountain take place at McRae Meadows in mid-July, from Thursday to Sunday. The central venue is a football field surrounded by the clan and society tents. Beginning with Thursday's opening Torchlight Ceremony, Raising the Clans, which was quite impressive. No sooner did we arrive than the hum of bagpipes filled the air.

The Celtic festival attracts many colorful characters, often wearing kilts and traditional dress, but take my word, you don't have to be Scottish to enjoy it. Each clan proudly welcomes and connects its members in special ways by showing the clan tartan, a map of their



Photos courtesy Debi Lander
Bagpipers parade around the track.

ancestral territory, help with tracing family roots, membership and activities. You'll find food trucks, merchandise shops, and plenty of bleachers. Food includes shepherd's or meat pies, haggis and mash, sticky toffee pudding, shortbread, and typical state fair-style food.

The athletic games are the highlight with the iconic caber toss my favorite. A contestant lifts a telephone-like pole, steadies it, then tosses it upward so it flips over (sometimes adding a warrior's cry or grunt). Other events include the stone throw for distance, hammer throw, and sheaf toss. Women also compete in some of the events. Passionate, skilled competitors who train faithfully come from a variety of backgrounds and professions. I met a teacher, a paramedic, a gym owner, and a farmer.

Between events spectators watch demonstrations like sheep herding, with the dogs rounding up the sheep let loose on the field, parades, musical entertainment, children's events and crafts. Cultural sessions offer educational presentations such as clan history, understanding the coat of arms, the Real Outlander, and whiskey tasting.

Many young girls to young adult women compete in the spirited dance competitions. They all wear kilts, usu-

ally with a vest over a white blouse, and special dance shoes. A piper plays the appropriate traditional melody whether it is a highland fling, jig, or the sword dance. Solo bagpipers and the pipe and drum corps also compete, so the sound of their instruments permeates the air. At various times, they parade around the track giving a wonderful display of precision marching in full-dress uniforms.

I stayed in nearby Banner Elk, a town with only one stop light but a surprising variety of activities and shops. One morning I enjoyed riding the Wilderness Run Alpine Coaster through the woods. I recommend Stonewalls Restaurant for an incredibly delicious steak dinner and Grandfather Vineyard Winery for a fine wine tasting. The architecture at Lees-McRae College is worth a look.

Banner Elk is a seven-hour drive from Jacksonville.

BannerElk.com, Highland Games Info: gmhg.org

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



Iconic caber toss.



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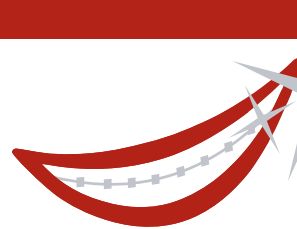
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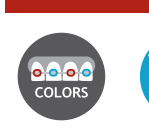


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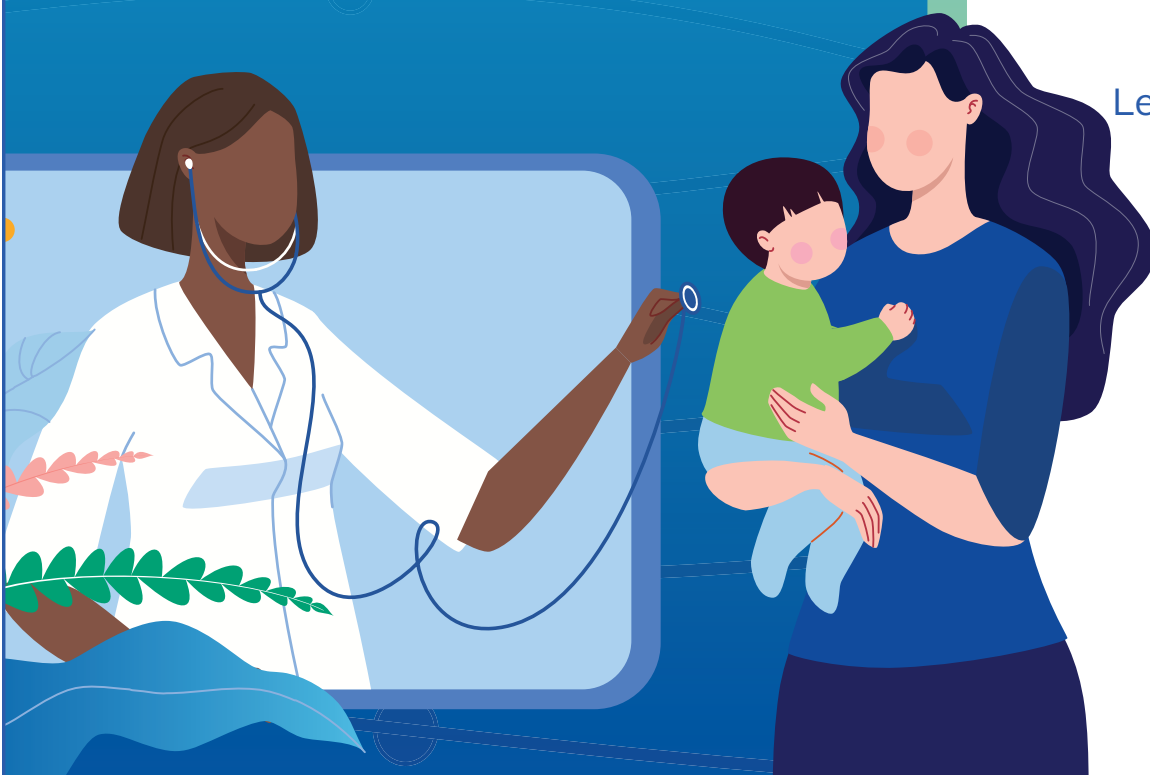
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