

# Ponte Vedra NewsLine

JUNE 2025 Volume 12 Issue 6

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

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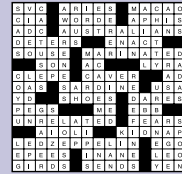
page 3  
BFF Best Furry Friend



page 5  
Q&A with  
Krista Joseph



page 7  
Get To Know ...  
Casey Carroll



page 8  
Puzzles



Photo courtesy DAR Ponte Vedra Chapter  
James Gaskins, president, Florida Society of Sons of the American Revolution (SAR); Cindy Addison, DAR Florida State Society Regent; and Marsha Byers, Ponte Vedra Regent, NSDAR.

## Celebrating America's 250th Anniversary

By Viky Divertie  
mail@floridanewsline.com

Two hundred and fifty years ago on April 19, 1775, the Revolutionary War began. The fighting lasted approximately eight years and with its conclusion our nation was born. To commemorate the men and women who fought to establish our nation,

**DAR America's Anniversary**  
cont. on pg. 7

## Ponte Vedra Beach volunteers help run BEAM's thrift stores

By Maggie FitzRoy  
mail@floridanewsline.com

When Beaches Emergency Assistance Ministry (BEAM) opened a thrift store in Jacksonville Beach nine years ago, Ponte Vedra Beach resident Dottie Gandee volunteered to work there. The store, called 7 North, at 318 7th Ave. North, is stocked with like-new items, including men and women's clothing, furniture, décor, linens, and jewelry.

Gandee is one of more than 100 volunteers from around the Beaches, including many from Ponte Vedra Beach, who help run BEAM's thrift stores.

"We couldn't do it without them," says thrift store manager Jenny Gaynor.

7 North, which resembles a small attractively laid-out department store, "is basically volunteer run," says Gaynor, one of the few paid employees. "Specialty volunteers price items and everybody has their niche, including the cashiers. They are the face, the ambassadors."

Gandee works the cash register every Tuesday afternoon and enjoys volunteering for BEAM so much that she also takes a shift at the nonprofit organization's food bank one day a week.

"I like to volunteer for an organization

that is very effective and a good part of the community," she says. "I'm very impressed with the organization and the people here. It's an inspiration to me to be around people who are happily doing something good."

Founded in 1985, BEAM's mission is to provide emergency assistance and a bridge to financial stability for Beaches area residents in six zip codes. The organization provides food, financial, and special initiative assistance, and sales from its three Jacksonville Beach thrift stores provide 40 percent of the revenue stream. In addition to 7 North — the most popular store — Shetter, at 1110 Shetter Ave., stocks tools, outdoor items, medical and sports equipment and electronics. Another store at 1147 1st Ave. South, called 1 South, carries infant, children, and maternity clothing, crafts, toys, books, and games.

Everything in every store has been donated by people in the community. And the stores draw customers from around the community.

Ponte Vedra Beach resident Gayle Enzel was looking to volunteer somewhere meaningful, and after hearing about BEAM from her friend and neighbor, Dottie Gandee, began working at 7 North in 2019. She works behind the cash register every Wednesday afternoon, which keeps her busy because senior citizens get a 10 percent discount on "Senior Day" Wednesdays.

"We have a lot of high-end merchandise, and the store is beautifully decorated," Enzel says. "For the most



Photos courtesy Maggie FitzRoy  
Mary Quinn Shalz, Dottie Gandee, and Gayle Enzel volunteer at 7 North, a BEAM thrift store in Jacksonville Beach.

part, the stream of customers at the cash register is constant. There's a customer every single minute."

Mary Quinn Shalz, also of Ponte Vedra Beach, has volunteered for BEAM for many years. Her mother, Kay, helped found the organization.

"Things are donated every single day," Shalz says. "We call this store the Neiman Marcus of Thrift. Stuff doesn't stay around long at all. We only put out things that are in good condition."

Donated items can be dropped off at the back of the store, where there is a large loading dock and storage area. "A lot happens before items go out into the store," Shalz says, including sorting, cleaning, and organizing by volunteers who specialize in specific items.

Prices are so fair and affordable that "there's about a 60 to 65 percent turnover of items on display every week," Gandee says. "Sometimes it's difficult to volunteer here because there are so many things to buy."



BEAM volunteer Dottie Gandee admires newly arrived merchandise at 7 North.

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**Briefs**

**School district launches “BusPlanner” for student bus information**

St. Johns County School District has introduced BusPlanner, a new online transportation portal designed to give parents easy access to their students’ bus information. Beginning with the 2025 – 2026 school year, all student pick-up and drop-off times and locations will be provided exclusively through BusPlanner and will no longer be available on Home Access Center (HAC). Parents can access BusPlanner through its web portal at <https://sjcsd.mybusplanner.com> or by downloading the companion mobile app, Chipmunk, available for Android and Apple devices.

BusPlanner will also enhance communication by providing timely updates about bus delays and other important transportation-related notifications. In addition, parents can use the system to send messages directly to the St. Johns County School District Transportation Department.

To get started, families should create an account on the BusPlanner website (<https://sjcsd.mybusplanner.com/>) or on the Chipmunk app using the same email address associated with their Home Access Center (HAC) account. The school district encourages all families with bus riders to register early and stay informed ahead of the upcoming school year.

**Facts about fingerprints: What crime writers need to know**

Fingerprints may sound like yesterday’s news in the day of DNA, but in real-world investigations, they remain a cornerstone of forensic science. New York Times bestselling author and Certified Latent Print Examiner Lisa Black knows exactly how fingerprint science works and is often misrepresented in fiction. She will share her expert insight at the June meeting of Northeast Florida Sisters in Crime.

On Saturday, June 7, Black will present “How Fingerprints Solve Cases: The Facts for Your Fiction” at the local monthly meeting of Sisters in Crime. Join us by Zoom only at 10:15 a.m. to learn how fingerprints are collected, analyzed, and used to solve real cases — and just how accurate (or not) TV shows really are. This event is free and open to all writers and readers interested in crime fiction. Contact [floridasistersincrime@gmail.com](mailto:floridasistersincrime@gmail.com) for more information about how to register.

**Meteorologist to speak at Coastal Friends luncheon**

Coastal Friends will host Mike Buresh, chief meteorologist on Action News Jax and WFOX, as its guest speaker at the June 4 luncheon. Buresh will speak about weather patterns and concerns here in Florida as we approach the summer and hurricane months. He also posts a blog entitled “Talking the Tropics with Mike” during hurricane season June 1 – Nov. 30. The luncheon runs from 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. and will be held at Marsh Landing Country Club, 25655 Marsh Landing Pkwy. It is open to members and guests, as well as the community. The cost to attend is \$25. Reservations must be made in advance by contacting the luncheon chairman at [bartshar@comcast.net](mailto:bartshar@comcast.net) as soon as possible.

Coastal Friends luncheons are held on the first Wednesday of every month, except for July and August. New Members are welcome throughout the year. Contact [brookemeister@msn.com](mailto:brookemeister@msn.com) for more information on how to join.

**Florida State Representative Kim Kendall to report on her first legislative session**

The Palm Valley Community Association is set to host a special meeting with State Rep. Kim Kendall on Monday, June 9. All residents are invited to attend this special event at the Palm Valley Community Center, 148 Canal Blvd. from 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Rep. Kendall was elected last November and served in her first legislative session, which began on March 4. Rep. Kendall will share her observations from her first legislative session, reflections on the 2026 state budget, her bill HB 85 on Hazardous Walking Conditions to ensure safe passage for students walking to school, summer beach access in the greater Ponte Vedra Beach area, the state’s perspective on future beach restoration projects, improvements at the Interstate 95 and State Road 16 intersection, and other topics of interest to residents. There will be time for questions.

The Palm Valley Community Association, founded in 1948, is one of the oldest, continuously operating community associations in North Florida. The PVCA works to represent the common interests and shared views of all members in the greater Northeastern St. Johns County area.

**Public awareness campaign reduces park vandalism repair costs**

The St. Johns County Parks and Recreation Department recently celebrated the success of its “Enjoy, Don’t Destroy” anti-vandalism campaign, which has saved the county tens of thousands of dollars in vandalism-related expenses.

From April 2024 to March 2025, following the launch of the Enjoy, Don’t Destroy campaign in March 2024, St. Johns County spent \$18,093 on park vandalism repairs, an approximately 60 percent reduction in costs from the previous year.

Parks and Recreation Director Ryan Kane cheered the department’s outreach success and encouraged residents to continue combating vandalism wherever they encounter it.

Use the SJC Connect app to report vandalism and use the non-emergency

number for the St. Johns County Sheriff’s Office — (904) 824-8304 — to report people caught in the act of vandalism.



**Clerk’s Office launches “Salute to Service” program to honor local veterans**


The St. Johns County Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller’s Office has launched a new initiative to recognize and honor the brave men and women who have served in the United States Armed Forces.

After recording their DD-214 discharge document into St. Johns County’s Official Records, veterans will be issued a free, official ID card that serves as verification. The Salute to Service program also connects veterans with discounts and special offers from participating restaurants, retail shops, service providers, and local attractions as a tangible “thank you” from the community.


To receive a Salute to Service ID card, veterans must record their DD-214 with the Clerk’s Office. The process is free and offered year-round. Once recorded, veterans will have their photo taken and their personalized ID card will be issued within seven business days.

Veterans can visit the Richard O. Watson Judicial Center at 4010 Lewis Speedway in St. Augustine Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. with no appointment needed. The main office and two Annex locations accept appointments during regular business hours; the Julington Creek Annex is located at 725 Flora Branch Blvd and is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. while the Ponte Vedra Beach Annex is located at 151 Sawgrass Corners Drive and is open Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Visit [stjohnsclerk.com](http://stjohnsclerk.com) to make an appointment online or for more information.






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BFF

Best Furry Friend of the month

Meet Buckie!

**Breed:**  
Tuxedo Cat.

**Favorite Activity:**  
Lounging on the couch, watching the stunning marsh and the sun.

**Favorite Treat:**  
Purina Little Soups, particularly salmon flavored.

**Favorite Friend:**  
His human dad.

**How did your BFF get her name?**  
Her name was originally listed as "Lady B," but my sister, our dear friend Eden, and I started jokingly calling her "Bucks."

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@floridanewslines.com to enter your pet.

Class of

2025

Congratulations from your friends at Ponte Vedra NewsLine!

Table of Contents

4

What's Happening in Ponte Vedra

6

Q&A with Krista Joseph

9

PopHistory

12

Gardening

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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 latitude sign in the GTM north parking lot.

A C E R

R O B O T

T I L T S

R A C K S

P R E M A T U R E L Y

R O O M I E R

O W N E R

B A N

R E S O N A T E

M O A B

E L B A

N E B N

D A I

M I R

A G E

D N B

O O U

A M E R I C A S

S T M

B E N N E

C L A R I F Y

U N A V A I L A B L E

D K M

Y E P

N E E

E N D

R O N

H A D E

I C E S

L E S S

C A S

S A B E R

A I L E D

R A B I A

S E N D

Answers

Puzzles

PG 8

CRYPTO FUN

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

A. speed B. height C. tracks D. amusement

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

E D E L G N A R D B B O O R K K S C R A N G U C T T O L W E G E R

U N K P O R D B B O O R K K S C R A N G U C T T O L W E G E R

P V H C B R H U E R S B P N N E R L L A G T

N A M U B A V F R F I C H K O U H

R B I K E V S B P N N E R L L A G T

C C R H U E R S B P N N E R L L A G T

L L O R A R B O C A P E T K A B T

T U R N A R R P E M K W A R B K N A R I S

U N D A P E T K A B T

P S M E N L S E K O B U I D S V T E

I H W C B H S A I S W A R M B D S V T E

D C N R T I L S A R N B D S V T E

K D N R T I L S A R N B D S V T E

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

S F I E B E N F O L U V M N I O V L F

U C G V F I A O O H N N S G K W C S

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E H E K R K K R C A B L E H A C

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# June

## 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. Advance registration for clubs and meetings is required; email [pbrunell@Stjohnscoa.com](mailto:pbrunell@Stjohnscoa.com) or call (904) 814-9407. Tuesday clubs include: Open Card Play, every Tuesday 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. and Caregiver Support Group, every Tuesday 1 p.m. – 2:30 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.

**Ponte Vedra Friday Farmers Market** is held every Friday, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., at Peace of Heart Community Farm. The market features fresh organically grown produce, Florida grass-fed beef, pork, real local honey, pasture-raised chicken and eggs, wholegrain breads, gluten-free sourdough bread, natural botanical skincare, local artisans and more in a family-friendly atmosphere.

**3rd: Vicar's** Landing monthly Boutique Sale will be held Tuesday, June 3 from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. at 1000 Vicar's Landing Way. The sale includes framed art, antiques, household furnishings, and many \$1 knick-knacks. The public is welcome. Checks or cash only please. The Vicar's Employee Scholarship Fund receives all the proceeds. Call Beverly Webb at (904) 315-2610 for more information.

**3rd: Purely Social** hosted by Ponte Vedra Woman's Club will be held on Tuesday, June 3 from 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. at Argyle Restaurant, inside TPC Sawgrass, 254 Alta Mar Drive. The event is free for members and \$10 for guests. Visit [www.pontevedrawomansclub.com](http://www.pontevedrawomansclub.com) for more information and to register.

**3rd: Bingo** will be held at THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center, 175 Landrum Lane, on Tuesdays from 1 p.m. – 2 p.m. for four weeks beginning Tuesday, June 3. Contact Suzanne Duvall at (904) 209-3659 for more information and to register.

**3rd: Essential** Tremor Support Group Meet, Greet and Educate will be held on Tuesday, June 3 at 11 a.m. at Baptist Health Place in Nocatee, 400 Colonnade Drive. Stephen Morio, MHA, territory manager for Insightec Focused Ultrasound will talk about an incisionless surgical treatment now offered in Jacksonville. All are welcome. RSVP to Jan Kary at [jkary@verizon.net](mailto:jkary@verizon.net) or (202) 438-6750.

**4th: Coastal Friends** will host chief meteorologist Mike Buresh on June 4, 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. at Marsh Landing Country Club. The luncheon is open to members, guests and the community. The cost to attend is \$25. Reservations must be made in advance by contacting [bartshar@comcast.net](mailto:bartshar@comcast.net).

**7th: Wellness** events at Sawgrass Village will be held every Saturday in June 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.

**7th: NE Florida** Sisters in Crime will host Lisa Black who will present "How Fingerprints Solve Cases: The Facts for Your Fiction" via Zoom only on June 7 at 10:15 a.m. Bring your coffee and bring a friend; the group welcomes misters and sisters to learn about writing, promoting, and enjoying crime fiction. Visit [nefloridasistersincrimet.org](http://nefloridasistersincrimet.org) for more information. Contact [floridasistersincrimet@gmail.com](mailto:floridasistersincrimet@gmail.com) for more information about how to register for the Zoom call.

**7th: The Friends** of the Ponte Vedra Beach Library will hold a Silent Art Auction from June 7 – June 28 to support the renovation of the Children's Library, a transformation that will inspire young children and future generations to dream, explore and grow. A selection of art and sculpture, all generously donated by local artists, is available to view and bid on; every bid helps build a better future for young readers.

**12th: Free Tech** Help with David will be held on Thursday, June 12 from 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library. Drop in for tech assistance with your Android, Apple, and Reader devices; no RSVPs required. Visit [sjcpls.org/branches/ponte-vedra-beach-branch/](http://sjcpls.org/branches/ponte-vedra-beach-branch/) for more information.

**14th: Ponte Vedra** Writers will meet on Saturday, June 14 at 11 a.m. at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library. Author Margaret Nicholson will encourage memoir writers to think outside the box in her presentation, "Meandering Memoirs: Innovative Structures." The meetings are free and open to the public. Visit [www.floridawriters.org](http://www.floridawriters.org) for more information.

**17th: Ponte Vedra** Woman's Club general meeting and dinner will be held on June 17 at 12

p.m. at Marsh Landing Country Club. The program will be the club's annual charity and check scholarship presentations. The cost of the lunch is \$30. Registration required; visit [www.pontevedrawomansclub.com](http://www.pontevedrawomansclub.com) for more information.

**18th: Ponte Vedra** Democratic Club will meet on Wednesday, June 18 at 5:30 p.m. for Chat & Chew before the 6 p.m. meeting at Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library. The featured speaker will be attorney Rhona DiCamillo, who will provide updates on pending court actions involving President Trump's executive orders and policies. Email [pvdemclub@gmail.com](mailto:pvdemclub@gmail.com) for more information.

**19th: St. Johns** County Republican Party District 4 monthly meeting will be held on the third Thursday of each month (this month, June 19) at 6:15 p.m. at Palm Valley Community Center, 148 Canal Blvd. Visit [stjohns.gop](http://stjohns.gop) for more information.

**24th: Chef Warren:** The Secret's in the Sauce will be held on June 24 from 5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library. Chef Warren will explain how to elevate a dinner, bar-b-q or dessert with a variety of delicious and easy to prepare sauces. The presentation will end with a cooking demonstration, preparing a healthy entrée with sauce that anyone can replicate in their own home in less than 10 minutes. RSVP required; call (904) 827-6950 or visit [sjcpls.org](http://sjcpls.org).

**28th: GTM Research** Reserve will host its monthly Beach Cleanup on Saturday, June 28 from 9 a.m. – 11 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 [gtmner.org](http://gtmner.org) for more information.



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

**Q: What are your thoughts on the recently concluded search for a new superintendent?**

A: In spite of a very busy month in May, school board members were able to give the superintendent search their full attention. I liked how the interviews on the first day were in public, because it gave an opportunity for people to watch live or later on GTV. We were able to get insight into what each candidate thought on a variety of topics with questions asked by the school board members: community relations, finance/business operations, academics, leadership, and student performance. Each of these are core competencies for a superintendent and are in fact the areas in which they are evaluated.

**Q: Can you share how the meet and greet that evening went?**

A: It was excellent to see how many community members came to this event and to watch their interactions with the candidates. The event was very informal; each candidate had time to introduce and share a bit about themselves and then there was an opportunity to engage with the public, which was hugely beneficial.

**Q: How did the interview sessions conclude?**

A: The next day, each school board member rotated with a one hour interview with each candidate. This gave us an opportunity for deeper follow up questions from the previous day, their vision for the district, and their plans for moving forward. The community was also invited to give feedback on the strengths of each candidate following the public interviews. At our meeting

on May 20, school board members had the opportunity to discuss the strengths each candidate would bring to St. Johns County and who we thought would be the best fit for us.

We are so very pleased to enthusiastically welcome Dr. Brennan Asplen as our new superintendent. We know he will make our school district stronger and provide excellent support to our teachers, staff, students and community as well as the continued excellence of St. Johns County schools. Summer will provide a great opportunity for our new superintendent to settle into his new position before the new school year starts.

**Q: Do you have any kudos to share?**

A: Yes! High School Art winners from District 4 included: Gracie Trantham, Ponte Vedra High School, first place digital art; Laila Amin, Ponte Vedra High School, first place ceramics/pottery; Elizabeth Darnell, Ponte Vedra High School, first place 2-D mixed media and printmaking; and Alexandra Brockwell, Ponte Vedra High School first place drawing.

Winners of the 2025 Crime Stoppers Poster Contest included: Adeline Herzigel and Lily Mae Hooks from Palm Valley Academy, Ariana Bonilla Cuesta and Camila May from Pine Island Academy, and Nora Zelasko from Ponte Vedra High School.

Finally, I'd like to congratulate the Class of 2025 and wish them the very best in their journeys ahead.

**Q: How can our readers contact you?**

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

Pine Island Academy students learn soft skills

By NewsLine Staff  
[mail@floridanewslines.com](mailto:mail@floridanewslines.com)

On Saturday, April 5, Pine Island Academy held its first-ever Amazing Shake Gauntlet at Crosswater Church — a high-energy event inspired by the Ron Clark Academy, designed to help students practice and perfect their soft skills.

Throughout the day, students rotated through a series of fast-paced, real-world challenges that tested their confidence, communication, and character. Gauntlet stations included mock business meetings, dining etiquette roleplay, navigating a difficult customer service interaction, and delivering an Oscar acceptance speech that suddenly goes wrong — requiring quick thinking and grace under pressure.

The event was brought to life by Emily Trimble, the Teaching Essential Career Skills teacher at Pine Island Academy, who believed in giving students a



platform to shine beyond academics. Principal Amanda Riedl was supportive from the start, but initially hesitant — it was hard to imagine an event of this scale. But once she saw it in action and witnessed the students' growth and professionalism, she was completely won over.

"I'm already planning for next year," Riedl said. "This is the kind of experience that truly prepares our kids for life."



with St. Johns County Clerk of the Circuit Court  
and County Comptroller Brandon J. Patty

**Q. Why is it important for homeowners to be aware of property fraud during National Homeownership Month?**

A. Homeownership is a major milestone, but it's also an asset that can be targeted by criminals. Property fraud is when someone illegally records a fraudulent deed, mortgage, or lien, jeopardizing a homeowner's financial security. Staying informed helps protect the property you've worked so hard to own.

**Q. What are the risks if fraudulent property documents go undetected?**

A. If a fraudulent document is recorded against your property and it goes unnoticed, it could delay important financial transactions, or you could lose your home. The FBI lists property and mortgage fraud as the fastest-growing white-collar crime, making vigilance even more critical for today's homeowners.

**Q. How has the St. Johns County Clerk's Office helped residents stay alert to property fraud threats?**

A. Since launching our free recording activity notification system in 2018, nearly 30,000 residents have enrolled, including 2,136 new participants since January 2025. With

more than 100,000 housing units in our county, we remain committed to raising awareness and ensuring every resident knows about this valuable, no-cost resource.

**Q. How does the Clerk's Office's free alert service compare to paid services?**

A. While commercial services charge a monthly fee, our office provides a similar alert system completely free of charge. Though no alert can prevent fraud from occurring, our system gives homeowners an early warning so they can act quickly if suspicious activity appears. Signing up is simple at [www.stjohnsclerk.com](http://www.stjohnsclerk.com).

**Q. What is the best way for people to contact your office with questions?**

A. If residents have questions about how to sign up for the alert system, or any other services we offer, they can contact our Customer Care Call Center Monday – Friday, from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., at (904) 819-3600, and by email at [clerk@stjohnsclerk.com](mailto:clerk@stjohnsclerk.com). I can also be reached directly on my cell at (904) 599-8688 or by email at [BPatty@stjohnsclerk.com](mailto:BPatty@stjohnsclerk.com).



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Guest Column

Busy real estate season is here

By St. Johns County Property Appraiser Eddie Creamer  
The busy season for real estate has arrived. If you're looking to purchase a home, here are important items to keep in mind during the home-buying process.

First, be aware that the previous owner's property taxes will not be the same as your property taxes. Once ownership of a property changes, then all caps and exemptions are removed for the following tax year, and the property's assessed value is reset. To accurately determine what your property taxes will be on a particular property, visit the tax estimator

available on our website at [www.sjcpa.gov](http://www.sjcpa.gov). Once on the website, find the property on the map. Under the report of the property, click the tax estimator button. It will bring you to our tax estimator, and the tax district and millage rate will prepopulate for that property. When filling out the tax estimator fields, always use the property's sale price in the Just (Market) Value field for the most accurate calculation. Our online tax estimator also shows CDD fees, if applicable, and solid waste fees.

Next, if you're selling your home before purchasing your new home, check your

Portability/Save Our Homes total. If you feel this total should be different, contact us, and we will make every effort to work with you. It is important to contact us before your home is sold because we are unable to make updates to a previously owned property. You can find your Portability/Save Our Homes total by either looking at your TRIM notice found on your property record on our website or by contacting our office.

Finally, once you've purchased your home, don't forget to file for homestead exemption, Portability/Save

Our Homes, and any other qualifying exemptions. The deadline to file for personal exemptions is March 1 of the tax year. Property owners can conveniently file for exemptions through our website or by visiting our office. Once you're approved for a homestead exemption, you do not need to reapply each year unless there has been a change in marital status.

I'm available to answer questions or provide additional information at [Eddie@sjcpa.gov](mailto:Eddie@sjcpa.gov) or (904) 827-5500.

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with St. Johns County Commissioner Krista Joseph District 4

**Q: Where do we stand with regards to the 2026 Budget process?**

A: Via the public budget workshops hosted by the county administrator in May, we had our first look at this process. The administrator apparently let the department heads know that at least some of the county commissioners wanted to use the rollback tax rate this year (the tax rate that would generate the same amount of revenue for a taxing authority as the previous year) and it looks like the department heads had this in mind when they submitted their budgets.

**Q: Why do you think this is important?**

A: I think it's important for the county to manage its finances and spend money on what we need rather than what we want. When you have to tighten your household's budget, you look at shopping at places with lower prices, you might conserve gas by combining trips, and prioritizing expenditures. You also look at additional income sources if possible. The county's biggest needs are catching up on infrastructure, funding public safety, and quality of life — and I feel those should be prioritized.

A cool thing about the Parks and Rec budget is that there is the opportunity

to bring in some money; the county dock and county golf course have gift shops that can offset some of the expenditures. Our new parks are coming online partially funded by bonds which, along with our ability to apply for grants for some projects, are new ways to not spend dollars from our general fund.

**Q: What is the next step?**

A: The county administrator's budget workshops concluded in May. In June, our constitutional officers will submit their budget requests and then on July 15 at 5:01 p.m., the recommended budget will be submitted to the Board of County Commissioners. We will take public comment at that meeting as well as at every meeting prior to that so that all constituents can have their voices heard regarding their views on how the county is spending their tax payer dollars. [Editor's Note: Details on these public meetings may be found online at [www.sjcfl.us/draft-fiscal-year-2026-budget/](http://www.sjcfl.us/draft-fiscal-year-2026-budget/)]

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

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

Summer reading volunteer opportunities available

By NewsLine Staff  
[mail@floridanewslines.com](mailto:mail@floridanewslines.com)

RSVP of St. Johns County is seeking community members to assist once a week in the summer reading program in the St. Johns County School District. Hours are flexible. Schedules can be adjusted to accommodate any summer vacation plans.

"There are students who can greatly benefit from the help of those willing

to give just a small amount of their time," said Cheryl Freeman, RSVP director. "Assistance from community volunteers can make all the difference in helping these students succeed."

Orientation will be provided, and background screening will be performed free of charge. Contact RSVP at (904) 547-3952 or Cheryl. [Freeman@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:Freeman@stjohns.k12.fl.us) for more information.



# Life

travel • pantry raiders • gardening  
fishing • entertainment • puzzles

## Get to Know ...

By Maggie FitzRoy  
mail@floridanewsline.com

### Casey Carroll

He just turned 18 in April, but Casey Carroll already knows what he wants to do with his life and he's off to a great start. Born into a musical family, he became involved in musical theater at a young age, plays the piano, and during his high school years at Douglas Anderson School of the Arts began composing original musical compositions. This fall the young Ponte Vedra Beach resident heads to Boston to attend Boston Conservatory at Berklee College of Music on a scholarship, where he will major in musical composition at Boston Conservatory while minoring in film music at Berklee. He has won awards in theater and music composition, and in April was the state of Florida High School winner in the National PTSA Reflections competition for his original composition, "Lost to Time."

#### Q: What type of music do you compose?

A: Mostly neo-classical, which is inspired from classical music while putting it into a new light. "Lost to Time" is a solo piano piece.

#### Q: What did you major in at Douglas Anderson School of the Arts?

A: I majored in musical theater. Artistically, I've had two parts in my life. One half has always been theater and performance. The other half is musical composition. I hope to pursue a career in film music, to write the music for movies.

### Get to Know ...

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



Photo courtesy Maggie FitzRoy  
Casey Carroll

#### Q: Was it difficult to get accepted into Boston Conservatory?

A: It's competitive. In the whole department they have about 35 students. They only accept about a dozen a year. The music composition program is one of the best in the country and now I'll have access to the faculty at Boston Conservatory and Berklee.

#### Q: Where did you go to school prior to Douglas Anderson?

A: I've lived my whole life in Ponte Vedra Beach. I went to Ponte Vedra Palm Valley Elementary School and then Landrum Middle School. Getting into D.A. was competitive. When I was accepted my freshman year, about 120 students auditioned and 20 were accepted.

#### Q: When was your first time on the stage?

A: I was in second or third grade and it was in the musical "Peter Pan" at Christ Episcopal Church, where I started singing in the Christ Church Children's Choir when I was in kindergarten.

#### Q: Tell us about your musical family.

A: My mom, Karyn, and my dad, Kevin, met at Indiana University where my mom majored in opera performance and my dad was part of an acapella group called "Straight No Chaser." I loved performing with my mom at first and then my dad and then my younger brother, Keegan. It's fun to perform together as a family — not a lot of people have that. It's pretty special.

#### Q: How did you branch out into writing musical composition?

A: Last year at Douglas Anderson was when my two worlds blended. I was approached by a teacher and asked to compose the music for one of the plays there. I wrote a film score that was background music for "The Crucible." That ended up being a big success; it was received really well by the audience. So, I was asked to write two more scores for two plays this year, "Constellations" by playwright Nick Payne and "Twelfth Night" by William Shakespeare. I personally won an All-Star Performance Award for my composition for "Constellations."

#### Q: Beyond your busy musical world, do you play any sports?

A: I play golf. It's nice to get into nature and have four hours to disconnect. But I haven't had a lot of time to play anymore. I sing in the Christ Church Chancel Choir and the Common Ground Choir, and I take private voice lessons with Jen Schlechte. Through her in February I competed in the National Association of Teachers of Singing vocal competition at Jacksonville University, where I placed first in my upper high school category. This spring at D.A., I had a lead role in the musical "Next to Normal" and was granted an Applause Award nomination for Outstanding Actor and Outstanding Lead Character.

#### DAR America's Anniversary cont. from pg. 1

the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) have launched a campaign for every chapter across the country to honor our forefathers.

The Ponte Vedra Chapter of DAR held a ceremony on April 16, 2025 at 11 a.m. to place a marker in honor of the revolutionary war patriots. The marker was placed at the Jacksonville Beach Veterans Memorial Park at 429 First Street South.

DAR is a non-political, non-religious, genealogical women's service organization whose purpose is to promote historic preservation, education and patriotism. The Ponte Vedra Chapter has been active this year in providing wreaths for the Jacksonville National Cemetery as part of the "Wreaths Across America" program. They have been cleaning gravestones of veterans in area cemeteries and volunteering at the traveling Revolutionary War Exhibit. As always, they have provided multiple scholarships to deserving children in our area. Recently they have raised money to support Canines for Warriors, The St. Augustine School for the Deaf and Blind, and Hubbard House.

Visit [DAR.com](http://DAR.com) or contact [regent.darpon-tevedra@gmail.com](mailto:regent.darpon-tevedra@gmail.com) for more information.

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Eddie Creamer, CFA

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Pursuant to Sections 193.122 and 197.323, Florida Statutes, Notice is Hereby Given that the Tax Roll for St. Johns County was Recertified to the St. Johns County Tax Collector on the 8th day of May, 2025, for the Collection of 2024 Taxes to reflect all changes made by the Value Adjustment Board.

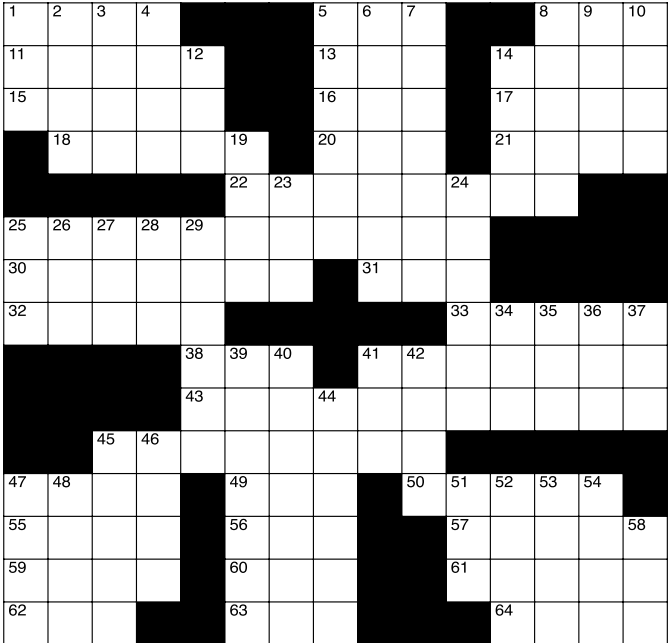
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**ST. JOHNS COUNTY PROPERTY APPRAISER**

For additional information, please visit our website at [www.sjcpa.gov](http://www.sjcpa.gov) or contact us at (904) 827-5500



Puzzles

Answers on page 3  
Provided by MetroCreative



CLUES ACROSS

1. Computer manufacturer  
5. Noted space station  
8. Kurt Russell film “Captain”  
11. Automaton  
13. Everyone has one  
14. Incline from the vertical  
15. Fights  
16. Dunn & Bradstreet (abbr.)  
17. Finishes off  
18. Places to store things  
20. Dutch painter Gerard \_\_\_\_  
21. Smaller quantity  
22. There’s a North, South and Central of these  
25. In an early way  
30. More spacious  
31. Short-term memory  
32. One who possesses
33. Sesame  
38. Forbid  
41. A way to explain  
43. Not around  
45. Evoke or suggest  
47. Ancient kingdom near Dead S  
49. Dekameter  
50. Fencing sword  
55. “Luther” actor Idris  
56. Affirmative (slang)  
57. Afflicted  
59. One point north of northeast  
60. Born of  
61. Arabic name  
62. Hong Kong food stall: \_\_\_\_  
63. Not the start  
64. Post

CLUES DOWN

1. Creative expression  
2. Fiber from the outer husk of a coconut  
3. City in ancient Syria  
4. College army  
5. More disturbed  
6. Pays no attention to  
7. Restored  
8. Competitions  
9. Lyric poems  
10. Famed American lawman  
12. Expression of disappointment  
14. Scars  
19. Satisfy  
23. Central European river  
24. Brass instrument  
25. One who gets paid to perform  
26. Propel with oars  
27. Long period of time  
28. Woman (French)
29. Type of plane  
34. Pitching stat  
35. Pointed end of a pen  
36. Pro sports league  
37. Body part  
39. Inoffensive  
40. Yellowish cotton cloth  
41. Feline  
42. Does not tell the truth  
44. Set out to attract  
45. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation  
46. Abba \_\_, Israeli politician  
47. Repair  
48. Genus of flowering plants  
51. Tributary of the High Rhine  
52. Prejudice  
53. C. European river  
54. Restrain  
58. Father

DIPS AND FLIPS WORD SEARCH

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

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

WORDS

AIRTIME  
ANGLED  
ASCEND  
BANKING  
BARREL ROLL  
BOOMERANG  
BRAKES  
CAMELBACK  
COASTER  
COBRA ROLL  
CORKSCREW  
CURVES  
DIVE  
DROP  
ELEVATED  
FLOORLESS  
GRAB BARS  
INVERSION  
LAUNCH  
LOOPS  
STANDUP  
TURNAROUND  
TWISTER  
WOODEN

CRYPTO FUN

Solve the code to discover words related to roller coasters.  
Each number corresponds to a letter.  
(Hint: 1 = E)

A. 18 24 1 1 22  
Clue: Velocity

B. 2 1 14 25 2 26  
Clue: How tall

C. 26 6 11 3 23 18  
Clue: Rails

D. 11 4 9 18 1 4 1 5 26  
Clue: Diversion

Ponte Vedra Woman’s Club increases giving

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewslines.com

In a season where many charities are challenged with fundraising, the Ponte Vedra Woman’s Club has more than doubled its giving this year. This financial boost will really make a difference in the lives of local St. Johns County women and children.

The club’s charities are receiving 80 percent more this year, due to increased fundraising efforts with quality events and a huge boost in membership. Ponte Vedra Woman’s Club now boasts 190 members. The club has also chosen to add to its scholarship funds. The board voted unanimously to move from three scholarships to five this year.

June 2024 – May 2026 charities are:

Betty Griffin Center: Shelter and services for victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault

BEAM: Helps low income residents in Jacksonville’s beach communities

Mission House: The only day facility to help meet the needs of people who are

Photo courtesy Ponte Vedra Woman’s Club

homeless at the Beaches through compassion, faith, and programs designed to provide assistance at an individual level.

Port in the Storm: This is the only homeless youth shelter in St. Johns County for ages 18 through 24

Florida School for the Deaf and Blind: Educates students from all over Florida, tuition-free, who are deaf/hard of hearing, blind/visually impaired, or deaf and blind.

Checks will be presented to this year’s charities at the club’s May meeting.

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By Scott A. Grant  
[mail@floridanewsline.com](mailto:mail@floridanewsline.com)

# PopHistory

# The Anarchists

During a 40-year period that evenly overlapped the turn of the 20th Century, a group of radicals terrified the established world. They called themselves Anarchists and despite the name, they were actually organized. They had meetings and newspapers and an agenda. That agenda was decidedly anti-government and anti-capitalist.

The Anarchists expressed their dissatisfaction through assassinations. They called the attacks “Propaganda of the Deed.” The idea was that lone assassins sacrificing their lives for the cause and killing government and business leaders would prompt a revolution that would bring down the corrupt institutions of power.

In 1881, an Anarchist exploded a bomb killing Tsar Alexander II. In 1892, a different Anarchist attempted to shoot Carnegie Steel president, Henry Frick. Frick survived and nearly beat his attacker to death. Four attempts were made on the life of John D. Rockefeller. In the 1890s, the president of France and the prime minister of Spain were

both assassinated.

In 1901, an American Anarchist with the unpronounceable name of Leon Czolgosz shot President William McKinley. Despite heightened security following the Anarchist assassination of King Umberto II of Italy earlier that year, Czolgosz was able to approach McKinley in a receiving line with a pistol bandaged in his hand.

Vice President Teddy Roosevelt was sworn in as the new president. Eleven years later, Teddy had his own run in with an Anarchist. On the way to give a speech in Milwaukee, Roosevelt was shot. His lengthy 50-page speech, folded in his breast pocket, slowed the bullet and saved his life. Famously, Teddy went and gave his speech despite a bullet hole in his chest.

Meanwhile, in the heart of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Hapsburgs were suffering through their own version of hell. Crown Prince Rudolf, the only son of Emperor Franz-Josef and his spouse,

the Empress Elisabeth, was unhappy. He did not like his pretty wife. Like many unhappy men, he sought solace in booze and other women. He contracted a venereal disease that made him infertile. Princess Stephanie of Belgium had borne him a daughter. Now, she too was infected and infertile.

Rudolf wanted to ask the Pope for an annulment, but Franz-Josef forbade it. The 30-year-old Crown Prince locked himself away in his grand hunting lodge with his favorite mistress, a curvy 17-year-old Baroness named Maria. They wrote each other emo-like letters expressing their soulful angst. Then one day, overcome by their misery, they entered into a suicide pact. They were found dead in a pool of their own blood. The Empress Elisabeth never recovered. She wore black for the rest of her life.

This left the Empire without a direct heir. The crown would now pass to Franz-Josef's younger brother and when he died in 1898, to his nephew Archduke Franz Ferdinand.

That same year, the Empress Elisabeth was vacationing incognito in Switzerland. When a local paper announced her presence, she caught the attention of an Anarchist. Luigi Lucheni had travelled to Geneva hoping to kill the French Dauphin. The Dauphin slipped through his fingers. The distraught Empress presented a second opportunity. He stabbed her through the heart with an industrial file.

In June of 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand travelled to Sarajevo with his wife. Bosnian Anarchists planned to blow up his car. They failed, but injured some of the guards in the trailing car. Franz Ferdinand insisted on visiting the injured in hospital. He got lost on the way and ran into another Bosnian Anarchist named Gavrillo Princip. Princip shot him dead. The world was plunged into a bloody war that brought down three monarchies.

Scott A. Grant is a historian and author. By day, he is the chief investment officer of Standfast Asset Management.



Travel

Barcelona Travel Tips: Gaudí, Gothic Charm, and Culinary Delights

By Debi Lander  
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Barcelona ranks as one of Spain’s top tourist destinations — for good reasons. This dynamic Mediterranean city of more than 1.6 million residents offers a rich blend of architecture, culture, history, and food.

Gaudí’s Barcelona: The city’s most iconic landmarks are the creations of hometown superstar architect Antoni Gaudí. His whimsical, imaginative

the city. While the park is stunning — with colorful mosaics, serpentine benches, and fairytale-like buildings — it can be hard to reach. Unless you enjoy long uphill climbs and staircases, take a taxi or public transport. You can tour a former Gaudí residence and others looking like Hansel and Gretel gingerbread cottages. My personal favorite Gaudí creation? Casa Vicens, the first house he designed in Barcelona.

Originally a summer home, it’s a delightful mix of color, pattern, and Moorish-inspired fantasy. It’s less crowded than his more famous works, and the audio guide is excellent — just bring your own earbuds.

Music and Architecture: If you have time, attend a concert at the Palau de la Música. If not, take the guided tour. Built in 1908, this Art Nouveau concert hall feels like it was constructed yesterday, thanks to its brilliant design and restoration. Ex-

pect stained glass, mosaic tiles, and ornate sculptural details — truly one of the most beautiful performance spaces I’ve ever seen.

Culinary Highlights: Foodies should consider a hands-on experience at the Barcelona Cooking School. My class included traditional dishes like tomato-rubbed bread, chicken paella, and a silky Spanish crema, similar to crème brûlée. Before class, we toured the fabulous Boqueria Market — a vibrant explosion of color, smells, and flavors. I only wish I’d discovered it earlier!

Neighborhood Strolls: Las Ramblas, the city’s famous pedestrian boulevard, is lined with shops, cafés, and street performers. Though it can be



Photos courtesy Debi Lander  
Dramatic mountains of Montserrat.

touristy, it’s a fun stroll. The Gothic Quarter is a maze of medieval lanes, tucked-away plazas, and Roman ruins. While I skipped the interior of the Barcelona Cathedral, the exterior is breathtaking, especially when lit up at night. Nearby, check out the Picasso Museum, home to hundreds of early works that show a different side of the famous artist. Also consider the Museum of the History of Barcelona where you can walk through underground Roman ruins.

Day Trip: Montserrat: One of my favorite experiences was a day trip to Montserrat, a jagged mountain range about an hour outside Barcelona. A cogwheel train took us up to the monastery complex and the Basilica of

Montserrat, home to the revered Black Madonna statue. Note: If you want to get up close to the Madonna, you’ll need a timed ticket — I didn’t have one, so I viewed her from below the altar. Afterward, my tour included lunch and a wine tasting at a centuries-old vineyard. The views of the Catalan countryside were the perfect contrast to the buzz of the city.

What I Missed: I didn’t have time to visit (and wish I had), Montjuïc, the hill above the city with its Magic Fountain show, Olympic venues, or Barcelona’s beaches.

Visit [www.bylandersea.com](http://www.bylandersea.com) to read more of local travel writer Debi Lander’s stories and travel tips.



Park Güell with a gingerbread style house.

style defines much of Barcelona’s architecture.

The crown jewel is La Sagrada Família, the still-unfinished basilica that has become a symbol of the city. Construction began in 1882 and continues to this day, with projected completion in the late 2020s. The Nativity façade resembles a drippy sandcastle, with intricate sculptures of people, animals, and biblical scenes. The Passion façade is stark, angular, and emotional — conveying the suffering of Christ. Be sure to book tickets well in advance; they sell out. Personally, I’d skip the tower tour — the views were mostly blocked by scaffolding.

Next is Park Güell, another Gaudí masterpiece, located on a hill above



Nativity side of Sagrada Família looks like drippy sandcastle sculptures.

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# Pine Island Academy Odyssey of the Mind teams advance

By NewsLine Staff  
mail@floridanewsline.com

Pine Island Academy recently had a record-breaking showing at the Florida Odyssey of the Mind State Finals, held earlier this month at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando. All six of the school’s participating teams delivered exceptional performances — and for the first time in Pine Island history, three teams advanced to the Odyssey of the Mind World Finals, taking place May 21 – 24 at Michigan State University in East Lansing.

Among the three advancing teams, two earned first place finishes and one placed second, securing invitations to compete alongside top student teams from more than 20 countries in a global celebration of creativity, critical thinking, and student-driven problem-solving.

First Place – Division II, Problem 5: AstronOMical Odyssey. This team wowed judges with a comedic, space-

themed performance set in a Candy-land-inspired galaxy. Their creative set and costumes were made from Sour Patch Kids and M&Ms wrappers, Behr paint samples, PVC piping, and materials sourced from Home Depot, Lowe’s, and students’ homes. The imaginative storyline, meteor twist, and entirely student-built elements earned them first place and a trip to World Finals.

First Place – Division II, Problem 2: Mech-Animal Sidekick. Another team claimed first place for designing and programming a fully functioning dinosaur robot sidekick. Their performance combined engineering ingenuity with engaging storytelling and earned high marks for both creativity and technical execution.

Second Place – Division II, Problem 1: The OM-Mazing Race. This team earned second place with their original theme, “Fractured Fairytale Car.” They reimagined Cinderella’s carriage as a beach-ready ride, crafted from Kroger



Photo courtesy Pine Island Academy  
Odyssey of the Mind State 2025 Champions.

plastic bags, pool noodles, and other repurposed materials. The whimsical, coastal twist on a classic tale impressed the judges and secured their spot at the World Finals.

“This is the result of months of dedication and imaginative problem-solving from every single student involved,” said Shanon Cally, Pine Island Academy’s Odyssey of the Mind coordinator. “Whether they’re

heading to World Finals or just wrapping up an incredible season, every team member should be extremely proud of what they’ve accomplished.”

*Odyssey of the Mind is an international program that encourages student-driven, STEAM-based solutions to long-term challenges, blending science, engineering, art and performance. Visit [www.odysseyofthemind.com](http://www.odysseyofthemind.com) for more information.*

# Ocean Palms brings sunshine to staff



Photo courtesy Lisa Farese

Ocean Palms celebrated Staff Appreciation Week with nothing but sunshine for its sun-sational staff. The sun rose with a breakfast by Chick-fil-A and coffee from Starbucks on Monday. The next ray of sunshine came with cookies, brownies and fruit from Trasca for a treat Tuesday. On Wednesday, families pooled their resources to provide the staff with \$100 Amazon gift cards. Thursday brought a catered lunch from Teriyaki Madness, and, finally, the sun set with ice cream from Millie’s ice cream truck on Friday.



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# Landrum Sawgrass JV tennis team wins championship title

By Jennifer Werba  
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The Landrum Sawgrass JV tennis team captured the JV Tennis Championship, winning in dominant fashion with a final score of 4 – 1. Their dedication, teamwork, and sportsmanship were on full display throughout the season.

The outstanding student-athletes who contributed to this incredible season and championship victory are Elise Bond, Ethan Bond, Mackenzie Blunk, Wyatt Darling, Harper Knarr, James Makey, Madeline Makey, Emery Massotti, Harper McClure, Brian Ostfeld, Poppy Smith, and Juliette Werba.



Photo courtesy Jennifer Werba  
The Landrum Sawgrass JV Team with their medals.



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## Gardening

### The Good Earth

By Connie Doyle, Florida Master Gardener, UF | IFAS Extension  
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The heat is on! And I'm not talking about the song made famous by Glenn Frey and the motion picture "Beverly Hills Cop." I'm talking about summer at the beach and "feels like" temperatures of 100 degrees and higher. So ... what do we do to keep our gardens alive and healthy with triple digit heat approaching? Let's look at some basics:

It's always preferable to work and water our gardens in the morning. Why? Besides the obvious, (it being the coolest part of the day), if watering later than 10 a.m. you lose a lot of water from sheer evaporation and that's not efficient or cost effective. Watering after 4 p.m. is inviting fungus. With the double whammy of heat and humidity we experience during summer, plants that stay wet all night from a prior evening's watering can easily become infected with fungus which, untreated, can kill a healthy plant in short order (meaning more money, more time, and more back aches). It's simply good gardening practice to water before 10 a.m. if possible. So set those sprinkler systems to start early in the morning and your plants and your back will thank you.

If you are installing new plants, you will need to hand water these daily or almost daily, depending on where they are planted (sun or shade), for two weeks. Then start backing off to every other day until the sprinkler system provides adequate water. If you like to grow in pots, my suggestion is to have as many drip lines to the pots as possible. You can eat up a lot of your day hand watering potted plants. Another option would be to place the pots in the beds where the sprinkler system will water them;

however, they will still need additional hand watering in times of extreme heat and drought.

A few pointers about St. Augustine grass. St. Augustine grass is overwhelmingly the most popular grass grown in our area. It is best

not to plant sod or plugs when it is too hot or too cold, which would suggest the best planting time is spring and late summer to early fall. Grass grows more slowly when there's less water available, so you'll typically mow less during a drought or water shortage. When you do mow, always mow at the highest recommended height for your grass species which, for St. Augustine grass, would be 3 1/2 to 4 inches. Never remove more than one-third of the leaf blade at any one mowing as this will stress the drought-stressed grass further. Higher mowing encourages deeper rooting, one of the key mechanisms of drought tolerance.

And finally, a friendly reminder of the St. Johns County seasonal watering restrictions:

Homes with odds-numbered or no addresses water Wednesday and Saturday.

Homes with even-numbered addresses water Thursday and Sunday

Nonresidential properties: Tuesday and Friday

We continue "digging" into summer gardening tips in the July and August issues, so stay tuned. Happy gardening!

## Ponte Vedra Jaws 8U take home championship

By Jennifer Werba  
mail@floridanewslines.com

The Thresher Sharks 8U team from Ponte Vedra Jaws Lacrosse went undefeated to win the Sunshine State Summer Kickoff Tournament in Wellington. The Sharks posted a perfect 5 – 0 record, clinching the championship with a thrilling 8 – 7 victory over the Leatherbacks.

Coaches Steve Baumgartner, Dan Johnson, Graham Gill, and Will

Grimsley led the team with energy and enthusiasm. The championship roster includes: Casen Mesaros, Christian Gill, Coen Jones, Jackson Wotiz, Liam Grimsley, Preston Johnson, Quinn Burke, Reid Hensley, Shep Wilensky, Wells Barnes, Will Polniak, and Zac Baumgartner.

"These boys gave it everything," said Coach Baumgartner. "They played with heart, hustle, and true teamwork."



Photo courtesy Jennifer Werba  
The 8U Thresher Sharks team