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Members of the Williams Family YMCA's Active Older Adult program gather after a group fitness class.

## Williams Family YMCA celebrates military families, active aging this July

NewsLine staff

The Williams Family YMCA is proud to be a place where community, wellness and service come together. This July, neighbors are invited to join in supporting military families and celebrating the active lifestyles of its 50-and-better members, according to a recent release.

### July 25 Military Back-to-School Bash

On Saturday, July 25, from 10 a.m.-noon, the Williams Family YMCA will host its annual Military Back-to-School Bash. This special event is dedicated to helping military families prepare for a successful school year by providing backpacks

YMCA cont. on pg. 2

# FOUR-PAW APPROVED



The double-gate entry at the new Alberts Field Dog Park on Brady Road provides a secure staging area for dog owners.

## Long-awaited Alberts Field dog park open for business

By Tracy McCormick-Dishman editor@floridanewslines.com

After months of anticipation, the Alberts Field Dog

Park on Brady Road is open, and it has already received four-paw approvals from early visitors: District 6 City Council Member Michael

Boylan's two dogs.

"My wife and I took our two dogs there and it met with their approval," Boylan said.

The park features separate large and small dog runs, each with a double-gate entry

Dog park cont. on pg. 2

# Mandarin Community Club toasts America's 250th

By Brett Nolan

The Mandarin Community Club delivered a memorable celebration on Flag Day, Sunday, June 14, as approximately 100 people filled the Harriet Beecher Stowe Pavilion for its sold-out event honoring America's 250th anniversary. The pavilion was beautifully adorned with decorations celebrating all things America and vibrant red, white and blue accents, creating a festive and spirited atmosphere beneath the shade of the Club's historic oak trees.

The program opened power-

fully with the Jacksonville Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution presenting the colors with their color guard. Their portrayal of George Washington delivered a moving invocation and blessing of the country. Theater Troupe 1776 then led a stirring performance of the National Anthem, with the entire crowd joyfully joining in, filling the pavilion with voices united in patriotism.

Guests had the opportunity to sign a large replica of the

Club cont. on pg. 2



Members of the Jacksonville Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution present the colors during the Mandarin Community Club's sold-out patriotic picnic June 14 at the Harriet Beecher Stowe Pavilion.

Photo courtesy Mandarin Community Club



Photo courtesy City of Jacksonville Parks, Recreation and Community Services  
The Alberts Field Parking Lot and Dog Park tree planting plan shows separate large and small dog runs, a playground, and more than 90 native trees planned for the property.

**Dog park** cont. from pg. 1

system that includes a staging area between the two gates, a safety feature that allows owners to secure one gate before opening the next. A new parking lot is complete and available for use.

Some amenities are still to come, including a water station, picnic tables, benches and additional landscaping around the perimeter. Boylan said the landscaping is particularly important to nearby neighbors.

"They're going to try and get some more landscaping around the perimeter to provide a little more visual distance between it and some of the immediate neighbors," he said.

The full site also includes an existing playground, tennis and pickleball courts. According to the city's tree planting plan, more than 90 native trees are slated for the property, including live oaks, southern magnolias, yaupon hollies and flatwoods plums.

Now that additional parking is in place, Boylan said he is working with Parks and Recreation to discourage parking along Brady Road.

"I'm focused on working with Parks and Recreation to discourage or limit the amount of parking along Brady Road for the safety of the families and their children," he said.

Alberts Field Park is located on Brady Road in Mandarin.

**YMCA** cont. from pg. 1

filled with school supplies and connecting families with valuable community resources, the release said.

The event is a wonderful example of what makes the community so special: neighbors, businesses, organizations and volunteers coming together to support those who sacrifice so much for our country. The YMCA is currently seeking community partners who would like to sponsor supplies, host an informational booth, provide giveaways or simply be part of this meaningful day, according to the release.

Businesses or organizations that would like to participate may contact Julie Pickard, family program coordinator, at [jpickard@fcymca.org](mailto:jpickard@fcymca.org) or Susie Chapman, membership director, at [schapman@fcymca.org](mailto:schapman@fcymca.org).

**Active, connected and thriving at 50-and-better**

At the FCYMCA, wellness is about spirit, mind and body at every age. The Active Older Adult community offers opportunities to stay active, build friendships and continue learning through a wide variety of programs and events, the release said.

Each month, 50-and-better members enjoy eight to 12 social activities in addition to a full schedule of wellness opportunities. Popular classes include SilverSneakers, Chair Yoga, Aqua Fitness, strength training and

many other group exercise offerings designed to meet participants where they are and help them stay healthy and independent.

On July 3, immediately following Aqua Fitness, all AOA members are invited to join from 10:30 a.m.-noon on the pool deck for a Red, White & New Pool Party Potluck celebrating America's 250th anniversary, according to the release.

**More than fitness: Building community at every age**

Beyond fitness, AOA programs include activities such as bingo, book club, game days and crochet club. Members of the crochet club create handmade items for infants donated to the Ronald McDonald House, demonstrating how giving back remains an important part of FCYMCA life, the release noted.

One of the best-kept secrets for older adults is that many Medicare Advantage and supplemental insurance plans include a YMCA membership at little to no cost. Programs such as SilverSneakers, Renew Active, Silver&Fit and other insurance-based memberships often provide eligible participants with a free YMCA membership. Those unsure whether they qualify can check with their insurance provider or stop by the Williams Family YMCA.

The Williams Family YMCA is committed to helping individuals stay active, connected and engaged throughout every stage of life, according to the release.

**Club** cont. from pg. 1

Declaration of Independence in a symbolic show of civic pride. This historic document will be preserved in the Mandarin Community Club's archives until America's 300th anniversary in 2076.

Despite the Florida heat, attendees embraced the day's celebratory spirit and made the most of the family-friendly activities. Mandarin Community Club Vice President Brett Nolan, dressed as Thomas Jefferson, delivered a lively read-

ing of the Declaration of Independence. The "We the People's Choice" pie contest drew strong entries, with Mandarin resident Zach Stanch taking first place for his standout Mango Key Lime Pie.


Two lucky winners walked away with impressive America 250 prize baskets filled with special commemorative items from the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission in Washington, D.C., including an official Betsy Ross America 250 flag.

"After months of planning, it was wonderful to see so many people come together to celebrate our great country," Nolan said. "I love America with all my heart, so it was a no-brainer for an organization like the Mandarin Community Club, born in patriotic fervor over 100 years ago, to host this special event."

One attendee captured the spirit of the day: "Fantastic job on the event! We loved it. The food, decorations, program and everything else were excellent. A highlight was my kids getting to hear

the reading of the Declaration of Independence."

The sold-out picnic emphasized the strong community ties fostered by the Mandarin Community Club, which has served the area for over a century. The event provided a meaningful opportunity for neighbors to come together, honor America's founding and create lasting memories before the big Semiquincentennial this July 4th. Happy America 250, Mandarin!






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- Riverside
- Middleburg

# Best of the Best Readers' Choice Awards

For the months of June and July, Mandarin NewsLine will publish the official ballot in every print edition of the newspaper and make a digital version available to download and print at MandarinNewsLine.com. To participate, readers simply need to clip the ballot from the paper or print out the digital copy, fill out the ballot with their favorite local nominees, complete the required contact fields and mail it in for counting.

## Official Contest Rules

To ensure the absolute integrity and fairness of the results, the program enforces official contest rules, a full list

of which can be found at Mandarin-NewsLine.com :

### Ballot Location, Completion &

**Deadlines:** Official ballots can be found in printed editions of Mandarin NewsLine, which can be picked up at Mandarin South Library, Mandarin Kori Rd Library, Mandarin Museum, UPS Store, 10950 San Jose Blvd Ste 6, and Fruit Cove Library, 60 Davis Pond Blvd. Ballots can also be downloaded and printed online at MandarinNewsLine.com. To be counted, all ballots must be at least 50% completed.

**Mailing Address:** Ballots must be mailed to: Mandarin NewsLine, 450-

106 SR 13 N, #101, St. Johns, FL 32259 and postmarked by July 27, 2026.

**Voter Information:** All ballots must include the voter's full name, address, phone number and email address.

**Envelope Limit:** Mailed ballots can only have one ballot per envelope. (The spirit of voting is one vote per person.)

**Final Tabulations:** Once ballots are officially counted, all tabulations are final.

**Results Publication:** Results will be published in the September issue of Mandarin NewsLine as well as online.

Don't let your favorite neighborhood spots go unrecognized. Grab a copy of Mandarin NewsLine and make your voice heard. Submitting a completed ballot is the ultimate way to show support for the local business owners who pour their hearts into serving our neighborhood every day.

For local business owners looking to maximize their visibility during the voting period, or for readers seeking more details on the program, advertising inquiries and information requests can be directed to Haley Cook by email at haley.cook@newslinedigital.com or by phone at 904-886-4919.

## NAME THE BEST OF THE BEST IN EACH CATEGORY

### Food & Drink

All-Around Restaurant \_\_\_\_\_

Brunch \_\_\_\_\_

Coffee Shop \_\_\_\_\_

Bakery \_\_\_\_\_

Pizza \_\_\_\_\_

Burger \_\_\_\_\_

Sushi \_\_\_\_\_

Mexican \_\_\_\_\_

Italian \_\_\_\_\_

BBQ \_\_\_\_\_

Wings \_\_\_\_\_

Sandwich Shop/Deli \_\_\_\_\_

Dessert/Ice Cream \_\_\_\_\_

Happy Hour \_\_\_\_\_

### Home & Professional Services

Real Estate Agent \_\_\_\_\_

Real Estate Office \_\_\_\_\_

Mortgage Company \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Agency \_\_\_\_\_

Home Builder/Remodeler \_\_\_\_\_

Kitchen & Bath \_\_\_\_\_

Landscaper/Lawn Service \_\_\_\_\_

Plumber \_\_\_\_\_

Electrician \_\_\_\_\_

HVAC \_\_\_\_\_

Pest Control \_\_\_\_\_

Handyman \_\_\_\_\_

Cleaning Services \_\_\_\_\_

### Automotive

Auto Service \_\_\_\_\_

Car Wash/Detailing \_\_\_\_\_

Car Dealership \_\_\_\_\_

### Health, Beauty & Wellness

Hair Salon \_\_\_\_\_

Nail Salon \_\_\_\_\_

Day Spa/Med Spa \_\_\_\_\_

Massage Therapy \_\_\_\_\_

Chiropractor \_\_\_\_\_

Dentist \_\_\_\_\_

Orthodontist \_\_\_\_\_

Medical Practice \_\_\_\_\_

Fitness Center \_\_\_\_\_

Yoga/Pilates \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Trainer \_\_\_\_\_

### Retail & Lifestyle

Women's Boutique \_\_\_\_\_

Men's Clothing \_\_\_\_\_

Jewelry Store \_\_\_\_\_

Home Decor/Gift Shop \_\_\_\_\_

Furniture Store \_\_\_\_\_

Nursery/Garden Center \_\_\_\_\_

Liquor Store \_\_\_\_\_

### Community & Family

Child Care \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

Non-Profit Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Veterinarian \_\_\_\_\_

Dog Groomer \_\_\_\_\_

INCLUDE NAME, ADDRESS, EMAIL, AND PHONE NUMBER

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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One Entry Per Person Per Week, Please!  
Must Complete 50% of Categories To Be Count



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**Submissions**

Community news and photos are due by the 10th of each month to ensure inclusion in the upcoming issue. Thank you for your support of trusted community journalism.

Mandarin NewsLine community newspaper is a free monthly publication delivered to all addresses in Zip Codes 32223, 32258, and selected neighborhoods in 32257. Submission of articles and photographs are received by mail or email, although email to editor@FloridaNewsLine.com is preferred. The writers' opinions do not necessarily reflect the opinion of Florida NewsLine. Advertising Rates are available by request. Florida NewsLine is not responsible for advertisement content or accuracy of information provided by its advertisers. Florida NewsLine reserves the right to refuse advertisement or copy from any advertiser. All rights are reserved and no portion of this publication may be copied without the express written consent of the publisher. ©2026.



# July Community Calendar

## What's Happening in Mandarin

To submit items for the Community Calendar, email editor@floridanewsline.com.

**July 7 Honeybee Quilters Guild Meeting**

The Honeybee Quilters Guild will meet Tuesday, July 7, at 6:30 p.m. at Mandarin Church of Christ, 12791 Old St. Augustine Road. Doors open at 6 p.m. to the right of the playground in the back. Program: Pool Noodle Quilt Sandwich Basting. Bring your Sew and Tell. New members and guests welcome. Visit honeybeequilters.org for more information.

**July 10 Trivia Extravaganza**

Mandarin Lutheran Church will host a Trivia Extravaganza Friday, July 10, to benefit the Baby Pantry, which provides diapers, wipes and formula to local families in need. Doors open at 6 p.m.; trivia starts at 7 p.m. at 11900 San Jose Blvd., Jacksonville. Prizes include gift cards from local

businesses, themed gift baskets and a 50-50 raffle. For more information or to reserve a spot, email office@mandarinlutheran.org.

**July 11 North Florida Genealogical Society Open House**

The North Florida Genealogical Society will host an open house Saturday, July 11, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 6215 Sauterne Drive. The event is free and open to the public.

**July 16-19 How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying**

Act II Players, Mandarin's community theatre, will present the Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning musical "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying" Thursday through Sunday, July 16-19, at the Mandarin United Methodist Church Theatre, 11270 San Jose Blvd. Directed by Ava and Juliet Fixel with

choreography by Juliet Fixel, the production features a book by Abe Burrows, Jack Weinstock and Willie Gilbert, with music and lyrics by Frank Loesser. Five performances are scheduled: July 16 and 17 at 7:30 p.m.; July 18 at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.; and July 19 at 3 p.m. The show is presented through special arrangements with Musical Theatre International (MTI). To purchase tickets, visit actiplayers.org.

**July 19 Memory Café**

River Garden will host a Memory Café on Sunday, July 19, from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. at 11401 Old St. Augustine Road. Caregivers are invited to bring a loved one with a mild cognitive impairment or early stage Alzheimer's disease to enjoy stimulating activities including art, music and movement, and to socialize. The event is designed as a supportive experience for both parties;

drop-offs are not permitted. There is no cost to attend, but an RSVP is requested. To register, visit shorturl.at/q8kgR or contact Kari Bell at 904-288-7855 or kbell@rivergarden.org.

**July 23 Mandarin Republican Club Meeting**

The Mandarin Republican Club will meet Thursday, July 23, 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.

**Ongoing Activities Shuffleboard**

Shuffleboard is played Tuesdays at 10 a.m. at Tommy Hazouri Park in Mandarin. The courts are located at the park entrance next to the tennis courts. Beginners are welcome. Arrive a few minutes early for court assignments. Games are canceled if it rains.

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## Q&A with Jacksonville City Council Member Michael Boylan, District 6

**Q: City Council is seeing a change in leadership. What can you tell us about that?**

**A:** Nick Howland is president-elect and will be sworn in shortly, with Joe Carlucci serving as vice president. I'm looking forward to it. We've seen a lot of missteps on the part of leadership at City Council this past year, creating unnecessary drama in many instances. I think this change will be a good thing for the council.

**Q: You are introducing an e-bike bill. What does it cover?**

**A:** It runs somewhat parallel to what the state is putting out, but is more specific to our community. The bill sets clear rules for where and how e-bikes can be operated. On sidewalks, riders must stay under 10 mph, yield to pedestrians at all times and give an audible signal before passing. No child under 11 may operate an e-bike on any city road, path or sidewalk. Operators or passengers under 16 must wear a properly fitted, securely fastened bicycle helmet on their head. We were very deliberate about the phrase "on their head" because there are going to be people who have that helmet strapped to their waist. The bill will go through committee in July and likely come before the full council for a vote at the first meeting in August.

**Q: You are also introducing a bill addressing invasive plants. Why is that needed?**

**A:** Jacksonville currently has no ordinance that addresses invasive plants on residential or commercial properties. The state maintains a list of noxious weeds through the Florida Depart-



Michael Boylan

ment of Agriculture and Consumer Services, but enforcement stops there. This bill formally defines "noxious weed" in city code and adds invasive plant species to the category of nuisance vegetation. Importantly, it applies only to plants that are intentionally planted or propagated, so naturally occurring invasive plants are not covered. It gives residents a mechanism to address situations where a neighbor is deliberately growing plants that threaten surrounding properties. It follows the same timeline as the e-bike bill, with a council vote expected in August.

**Q: What new restaurants are coming to the San Jose Boulevard corridor?**

**A:** A Texas Roadhouse is planned for the corner of Corey and San Jose Boulevard. It is going to be a particularly large restaurant, as you can tell by its request for increased parking. And where the old Pollo Tropical was, they are putting in a Raising Cane's chicken restaurant.

**Q: City Council has a busy summer schedule. What should constituents know?**

**A:** The council is wrapping up with its final meeting on June 23 and will take a break, particularly the week of July 12. The next committee week is July 20 and the next full City Council meeting is July 28. Constituents should not expect my next biweekly email until around July 31. If something urgent comes up in the meantime, I will get something out sooner.

Contact Council Member Boylan at [MBoylan@coj.net](mailto:MBoylan@coj.net) or (904) 255-5206.



Photo courtesy Mandarin Garden Club

Newly installed Mandarin Garden Club officers celebrate at the club's recent awards ceremony.

## Mandarin Garden Club honors members

By Michele Alex

Mandarin Garden Club recently gathered to celebrate another year of growth and community service, honoring members whose dedication has helped the organization flourish.

Lifetime Member awards were presented to Pam Morgan, Sue Esser, Jessie Hillard, Michele Glavich, Vickie Silves, Judy Moran and Sue Kelly for providing outstanding service to their circles and the club.

The Super Star Award was presented to Mary Forester, Joyce Datz and Michele Glavich for their hard work, passion and continuous help offered to the club during the year.

Club President Marvine Thompson also presented the President's Award to Sandra Varner and Betty Waldrep for their support of many club activities and the club's 80th celebration.

Special guest Mandarin Museum

Director Britney Cohill attended the award ceremony and received a plaque naming her an Honorary Member of the Mandarin Garden Club for her contributions to organizing the club's 80th anniversary party.

Honorary Membership was also awarded to Marty Gottlieb for his role in recruiting volunteers and helping clear out the back of the club's property.

Mary Forester presented a Pioneer of the Mandarin Club Plaque honoring Carolyn Adams, James A. Austine, Bert Forshee, Marjorie and Sam Folds, Louise Hill, Bess Permenter, Mary Howe and Terry DelValle for making the Mandarin Garden Club possible.

The meeting also featured the installation of 2026-27 club officers: Mary Johnston, president; Marvine Thompson, first vice president; Michele Glavich, second vice president; Debra Mraz, treasurer; and Mary Kay Weis, recording secretary.

## Summer reading fun continues at Jax Library through Aug. 1

By Jeremy Yates

Kids and teens: If you've read for at least 20 minutes a day for 20 days, it's time to exchange your Summer Reading Tracker for another free prize book! If you read every day, you can complete multiple trackers throughout the summer. It's all thanks to Tenikka's Books for Kids and donations to the Library Foundation of Jacksonville. Just be sure to return all trackers by Aug. 1 to redeem your prize book(s).

Don't forget to bring your in-progress reading tracker to the library each week to pick up new "Reading Dragons and Friends" playing cards! Originally created by youth librarians at Dover Public Li-

brary, these cards feature playable dragons, unicorns and other mythical creatures — perfect for fans of Pokémon.

Bring all the cards you've collected to date and battle other players at a Dragon Duel from 3-5 p.m. on Wednesday, July 8, at South Mandarin Library. All tournament participants will receive a special card just for playing.

Learn more about the Summer Reading Challenge at [jaxlibrary.org/Summer](http://jaxlibrary.org/Summer).

Kids ages 5-12 and their families: Learn how to be an inventor from award-winning STEM author Jennifer Swanson from 11 a.m.-noon on July 9 at Mandarin Library.

Kids in grades 3-8: Discover what makes sea turtles unique, what they eat, how they nest and what we can do to protect them in "Turtles to Go" from 2-3:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 9, at South Mandarin Library. Note: The program includes a hands-on activity where kids collect data using a model sea turtle. No live turtles are included in this program.

Families: Join us on July 16 from 11 a.m.-noon at Mandarin Library and 2-3 p.m. at South Mandarin Library for one of two "Live from the Library" performances with Wild Wonders Animal Show, generously sponsored by the Friends of the Mandarin Branch Library and the Friends of the South Mandarin Branch Library.

Then, meet the team from Fire Engine No. 51 from 11-11:45 a.m. on Saturday, July 18, at Mandarin Branch. Kids will first meet the firefighters in the Children's Room before heading outside to see the fire truck. As a reminder, JFRD crews remain "in service" during community visits. This means they may need to arrive late, depart early or leave the library entirely if an emergency call occurs in the area.

Find more at [jaxlibrary.org/events](http://jaxlibrary.org/events).

Jeremy Yates is a marketing specialist for the Jacksonville Public Library. He may be reached by email at [jjates@coj.net](mailto:jjates@coj.net) or by phone at (904) 255-6111.

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# Mandarin Women's Club installs new officers before summer hiatus

By Gail Packard

The newly elected board members for 2026-27 were installed at the Mandarin Women's Club's May meeting. The new board members are Vickie Rumber, president; Andrea Braun, Linda Yocum, Susie Marshall, Judy Baier, Lisa Steely, Judy Witte and Jo-Ellen Baxley.

After the installation ceremony, club members enjoyed playing "50s and

'60s" trivia. All members were presented a small token of appreciation for their contributions to the ongoing success of the club.

There will be no luncheons during July or August, but active members will still enjoy Bunco, Continental Rummy, Hand & Foot, Mah Jongg, Mexican Train and other events. For more information and to obtain a membership form, visit [mandarinwomensclub.com](http://mandarinwomensclub.com).



Photo courtesy Mandarin Women's Club  
Newly installed Mandarin Women's Club board members gather at the club's May meeting.



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Source: John Hopkins University

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