Mandarin NewsLine

November 2026 Volume 21 Issue 11

A Florida NewsLine Publication

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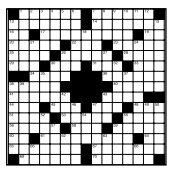
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November 11: A nation says thank you

By NewsLine staff
mail@floridanewsline.com

On November 11, Americans observe Veterans Day, a federal holiday dedicated to honoring all military veterans for their service and patriotism. Unlike Memorial Day, which specifically honors those who died in military service, Veterans Day celebrates all who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces, living or dead.

The holiday has deep historical roots. Originally known as Armistice Day, it commemorated the end of World War I, which concluded at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918. Congress officially renamed it Veterans Day in 1954 to honor American veterans of all wars.

Veterans Day is always observed on November 11, regardless of what day of the week it falls on. This date was chosen to preserve the historical significance of the original armistice.

The purpose of Veterans Day is to show gratitude for the willingness of veterans to serve and sacrifice for our country. It's a time for communities to come together and thank those who have worn the uniform in defense of our nation.

One interesting note: The official spelling is "Veterans Day" without an apostrophe. This is intentional, as the day honors all veterans collectively rather than being a day that "belongs" to veterans.

As November 11 approaches, take a moment to thank a veteran for their service. Their dedication and sacrifice have helped preserve the freedoms we enjoy today.

MANDARIN SHOWS UP



Duval County School Board member Melody Bolduc sits with students during 2025 visits to the book fairs at Twin Lakes Academy Elementary and Crown Point Elementary.

From your school board member: Thankful for the people who show up

By Melody Bolduc
Duval County School Board Member, District 7

When I think about what makes me thankful to call this community home, I think about the people who show up. I think about the teacher who notices that a child is struggling and takes the time to find out why. I think about the parent who volunteers between work shifts, the neighbor who mentors a student and the church congregation that quietly provides food, clothing or school supplies. Their contributions

School board cont. on pg. 5

Gardens are even more special when you share them

By Michele Alex

As November arrives, the Mandarin Garden Club is celebrating the season of giving by collecting donations for underserved communities. We are collecting nonperishable dry food and fresh vegetables for the Mandarin Food Bank, stuffed toys and pop tops for Ronald McDonald House, as well as supporting local organizations such as the City Rescue Mission, St. Johns County Animal Shelter, Jacksonville Humane Society, Meals on Wheels, Divine Mercy House, Isaiah 117 House and local veterans' groups.

We recently hosted the 17th annual

Gardens cont. on pg. 2



A November of gratitude, community and healthy living

By Melinda Lewis
Associate Executive Director and Healthy Living Director, First Coast YMCA

From honoring our veterans to celebrating friendships and inspiring healthier lives, November is a month of connection and community at the Williams Family YMCA.



Photo courtesy First Coast YMCA
Healthy Living Director Amy Mechlowitz celebrates with an EnhanceFitness participant at the Williams Family YMCA.



Photo courtesy First Coast YMCA
Doubles partners show off their plaques at a past Josh Watkins Tennis Tournament.



Photo courtesy First Coast YMCA
Guests enjoy a Thanksgiving meal at the 2025 AOA Friendsgiving at the Williams Family YMCA.

Honoring our heroes: 20th annual Josh Watkins Tennis Tournament

For 20 years, the Williams Family YMCA has proudly honored the life and legacy of Marine Cpl. Joshua Watkins through a tennis tournament that brings together athletes, veterans, families and community supporters for a cause greater than the game. This year's tournament will feature doubles competition and opportunities to give back and honor those who have served our country.

The celebration begins Wednesday, Nov. 11, with the Draw Reveal Party and a University of North Florida Women's Tennis Exhibition. Tournament competition will continue Nov. 12 through 15.

Proceeds will benefit the Marine Corporal Joshua Watkins Memorial Endowed Scholarship Fund at the University of North Florida, which supports military veterans pursuing their education. They also support the Williams Family YMCA's Stronger for Our Community Campaign, which helps provide children and families access to life-changing programs.

Can't make it to the tennis courts? The First Coast YMCA's online silent auction lets community members bid on donated items and experiences while helping continue Joshua Watkins' legacy of service and sacrifice.

AOA Friendsgiving: Celebrating friendship, gratitude and community

The Williams Family YMCA invites our Active Older Adults (AOA) community to join us for our annual Friendsgiving celebration on Nov. 13, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Guests will enjoy a catered Thanksgiving meal, complete with all the holiday favorites, along with homemade dishes and special treats brought by our members. We encourage everyone to bring a favorite dish to share and, even more importantly, bring a friend.

For information on AOA clubs, activities and classes, contact Missy Miles at mmiles@fcymca.org.

EnhanceFitness: Improving strength, balance and quality of life

The EnhanceFitness program is an evidence-based group exercise program designed to help older adults improve their physical function, increase strength and maintain independence. Available on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., classes combine cardiovascular exercise, strength training, flexibility and balance in a fun, welcoming and supportive environment.

Participants can work at their own ability level. Whether you are beginning an exercise routine or returning after time away, EnhanceFitness can help you move with greater confidence. EnhanceFitness is available for just $25 per month for both members and nonmembers.

Stronger together, thankful always

From group exercise classes and strength training to personal training, active older adult programs and specialized wellness opportunities, the Williams Family YMCA offers something for individuals at every stage of their health journey. This November, we invite you to experience the difference. Join an event, try a class, bring a friend or discover a new opportunity to give back.

For tournament and sponsorship information, activity details and fitness services, contact Melissa Glasgow at mglasgow@fcymca.org.

Gardens cont. from pg. 1

Mandarin Garden Club Craft Fair, celebrating the creativity of local artists and our Crafty Ladies as we prepare for the holiday season.

Education and community remain central to our mission. We continue to offer "Sprouts," a science program for homeschooled children, alongside garden tours for local groups, volunteer opportunities for Master Gardeners, demonstration gardens and weekly educational lectures with Florida-Friendly Landscaping advice during our plant sales.



Guests fill tables decorated with potted flower centerpieces during a recent gathering.



A local group poses for a photo during a visit to the Mandarin Garden Club.

Our grounds are currently in full bloom with vibrant fall colors, all maintained by our dedicated volunteer members. The public is welcome to visit and stroll the grounds daily from dawn to dusk, except during special events or private rentals.

For more information, please visit www.mandaringardenclub.org.



FLORIDA NewsLine

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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.

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BFF Best Furry Friend of the month

Meet Rigatoni!



Breed:
Domestic Shorthair
Favorite Activity:
Playing with feathers and yarn
Favorite Food:
Chicken Flavored Churu Treats
Favorite Friends:
My parents, Paige and Ryan
How did your BFF get their name:
I am named after Rigatoni pasta, I go by Toni for short

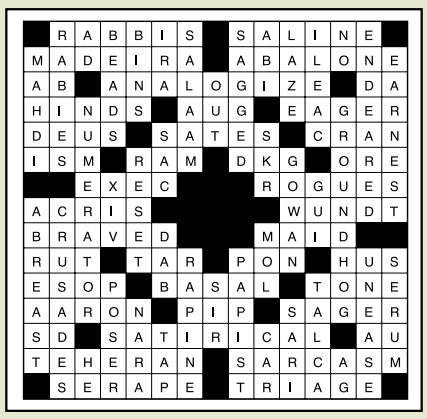
Do you have a cute pet? Send us your pet's picture and the answer to the five questions above before the 10th of the month. Also tell us you saw the BFF contest in Mandarin NewsLine. Your pet could be our BFF of the month and appear in Mandarin NewsLine! Email editor@floridanewsline.com to enter your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

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Answers to our Puzzles PG 6





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November

Community Calendar

What's Happening in Mandarin

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

November 3
Honeybee Quilters Guild meeting

The Honeybee Quilters Guild meets Tuesday, Nov. 3, at 6:30 p.m. at Mandarin Church of Christ, 12791 Old St. Augustine Road. The door, located to the right of the playground in the back, opens at 6 p.m. The program will cover the Hunter's Star block and tools. New members and guests are welcome. Visit honeybeequilters.org for more information.

November 7
GriefShare "Surviving the Holidays" seminar

A one-day GriefShare "Surviving the Holidays" seminar takes place Saturday, Nov. 7, from 10 a.m. to noon at the Cody Enrichment Center, 4152 Loretto Road.

November 17
AARP Driver Safety course

River Garden hosts an AARP Driver Safety event Tuesday, Nov. 17, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Cohen Auditorium, 11401 Old St. Augustine Road. Learn more about driving safely as you age and earn a course completion certificate, which leads to discounts with most auto insurance companies. The full-day event includes snacks, drinks and a complimentary lunch. The fee is $25, or $20 for AARP members, payable directly to AARP for program costs. Advance registration is required at shorturl.at/PWV7X. For questions, call 904-288-7855 or email kbell@rivergarden.org.

November 17
Mandarin Garden Club "A Healthy Way to Sleep with Plants"

The Mandarin Garden Club Dogwood Circle hosts "A Healthy Way to Sleep with Plants" Tuesday, Nov. 17, at 10 a.m. Mary Johnstone will present on the benefits of having plants in a healthy sleeping environment. The program is free and open to the public. Visit mandaringardenclub.org for more information.

November 19
Mandarin Women's Club welcomes Tri-M Music Honor Society

The Mandarin Women's Club welcomes the Tri-M Music Honor Society students from Douglas Anderson School of the Arts to its luncheon Thursday, Nov. 19, at the club's new luncheon venue, San Jose Country Club, 7529 San Jose Blvd. The ensemble represents the top tier of the school's major performing arts areas: vocal, band, orchestra, piano, guitar and musical theater. Doors open at 10:30 a.m. Reservations are required. The luncheon is $35, and checks must be received by Monday, Nov. 9. For reservations and payment instructions, call Susie at 904-885-8952 or email spm104@aol.com. For information on events, photos and membership forms, visit mandarinwomensclub.com.

November 19
Mandarin Garden Club "Wine & Plants Pairing"

The Mandarin Garden Club Cherokee Rose Circle hosts "Wine & Plants Pairing" Thursday, Nov. 19, at 10 a.m. Learn about wine and plant pairing from "connoisseur" Bonnie King. The program is free and open to the public. Visit mandaringardenclub.org for more information.

November 19
Mandarin Garden Club "Crafts for the Holidays"

The Mandarin Garden Club Live Oak Circle hosts "Crafts for the Holidays" Thursday, Nov. 19, at 7 p.m. The hands-on workshop teaches how to make easy holiday decorations. The workshop is open to the public. Visit mandaringardenclub.org for more information.

November 21
Archaeological Institute of America lecture

The Archaeological Institute of America—Jacksonville Society meets Saturday, Nov. 21, at noon in Building 51 at the University of North Florida to hear a lecture by Jacqueline Meier, associate professor of anthropology at UNF. The lecture is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served afterward in the anthropology lab. Parking is free on Saturdays, and staff, faculty and vendor spaces are available to everyone. For more information, contact Melva Price at 904-241-9411 or aiajaxsoc@gmail.com.

Ongoing Activities

Monthly Sundays
Mandarin Parkinson's Support Group

The support group meets monthly on Sundays from 2 to 4 p.m. at Church of Eleven22, 4911 Losco Road. Contact Katheryn Donaldson at 904-710-1449.

Tuesdays
Shuffleboard

Shuffleboard is played Tuesdays at 10 a.m. at Tommy Hazouri Park in Mandarin. The courts are located next to the tennis courts at the park entrance. Beginners are welcome; arrive a few minutes early for court assignments, weather permitting.

Wednesdays
North Florida Genealogical Society Library

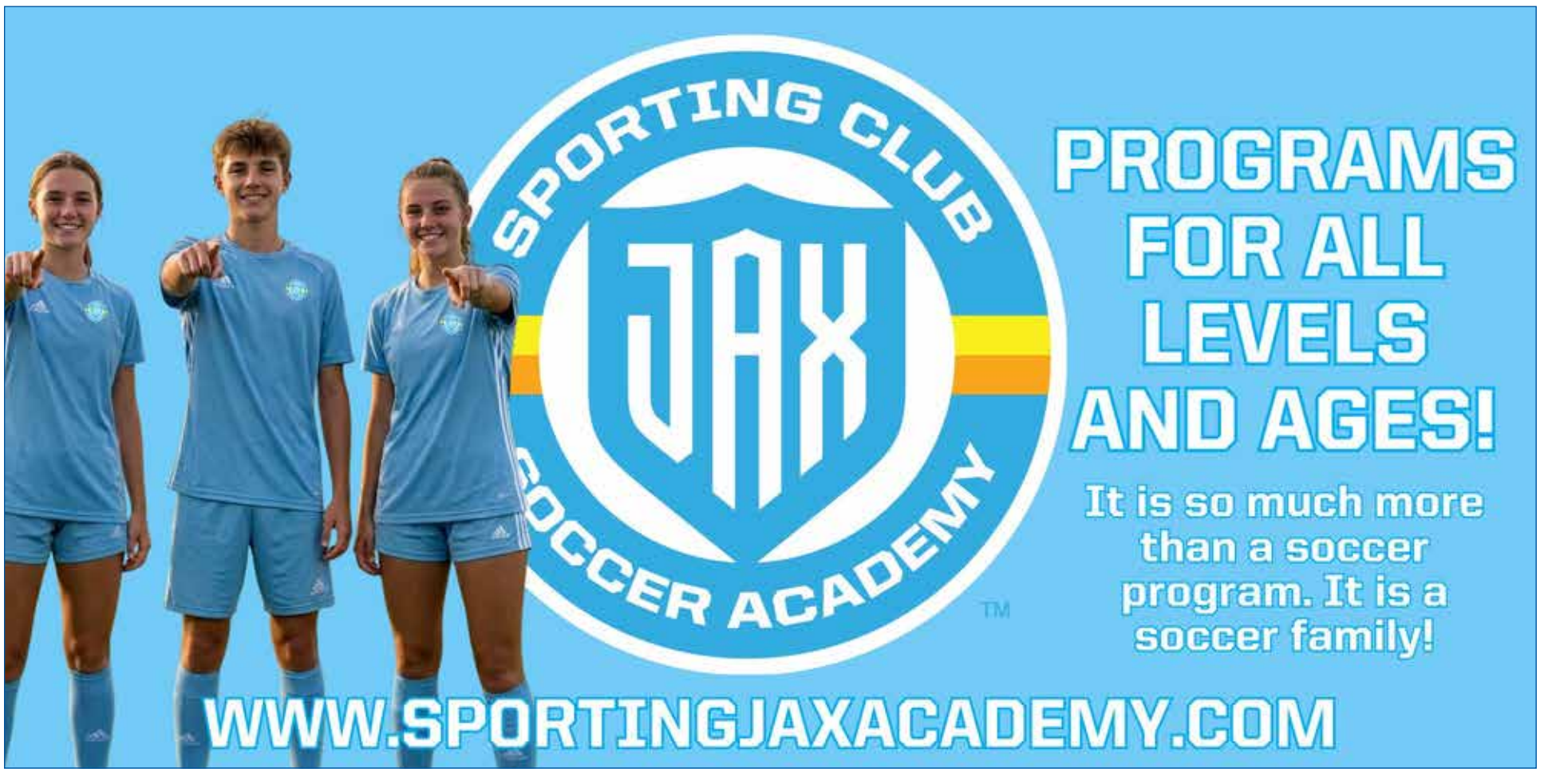
The library at 6215 Sauterne Dr. is open every Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, call 904-778-1000 or visit nfgen.org.

Second Thursdays
American Legion Post 372

The group meets the second Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. on the second floor of the Williams YMCA, 10415 San Jose Blvd. All veterans are welcome.

Third Thursdays
Friends of Mandarin South Library

The group meets at 1 p.m. the third Thursday of each month in the foyer meeting room to sponsor library programs and activities.



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

Q. With the city budget finalized and Oct. 1 being a start of the fiscal year, what are your thoughts about the budget overall?


Michael Boylan

A. First and foremost, the budget fully funds the requests of the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office (JSO) and the Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department. It also increases funding for infrastructure improvements. The millage rate stays the same as last year, when we rolled it back by 0.125 mills. Some items were placed "below the line," meaning their funding depends on the outcome of the Amendment 3 referendum. If the amendment passes, those items will not be funded. All in all, I agree with the council finance chair and others that this was a reasonable compromise.

Q. The council unanimously approved an e-bike ordinance that you introduced and championed. What does it do, and how did it come together?

A. We worked with the auditors, General Counsel, Traffic Engineering and JSO to craft the bill. It encourages the safe and responsible use of e-bikes. It sets practical, enforceable operating standards that improve safety, especially for operators and pedestrians. The bill calls on local e-bike retailers to prominently display safety information from the city's Transportation Planning Department or direct customers to appropriate websites. Duval County Public Schools has fully embraced the ordinance, noting that "it can be seamlessly incorporated into our existing curriculum and safety materials."

Q. Pedestrian safety is important to you, from the e-bike ordinance to the sidewalk projects pending in your district. How did those sidewalk projects come about?

A. During my seven years on council, I regularly heard from constituents in all parts of District 6 who wanted sidewalks installed, many for the safety of their children.

The Mandarin Road extension is being done in conjunction with the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA) and its Complete Streets initiative. The three others (Loretto, Brady and Plummer Grant) came about over the years. Our office asked the city's Traffic Engineering and Public Works departments to add them to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The city recognized them as a way to enhance safety and foster neighborhood connectivity, and they were added.

As for the ongoing opposition, some residents fear the corridors of Mandarin and Brady roads in particular would be compromised. But there is ample evidence throughout the area, including on Mandarin Road itself, that properly constructed walkways can peacefully coexist with the historic trees.

Q. What is the status of the Mandarin Road Sidewalk Project?

A. In a recent email to a constituent, Cleveland Ferguson, JTA's interim director, offered the following. "JTA is in the process of negotiating the design segment for the Mandarin Road project, which has a federal grant and capital funding." He goes on to say, "I believe we can deliver a project that provides safe mobility for the Mandarin Road residents while also protecting the environment." Once the proposed plans are completed, JTA will be hosting another community meeting.

Q. What is the status of the Mandarin Area Preservation Project initiative?

A. Although the initiative has had mixed reviews, the workshops have been well attended and helpful in getting members to appreciate the role a steering committee can play in facilitating community interests and priorities. The consultants the city engaged to manage the project selected 11 individuals to serve on the steering committee, based solely on their applications. Two ad hoc members representing the Mandarin Community Club and the Mandarin Museum and Historical Society also serve on the committee. The steering committee's task is to take the feedback from the workshops and craft a proposed organizational structure, complete with purpose, priorities and a business plan that the community would be willing to support going forward. For information on upcoming meetings and outcomes of prior meetings and workshops, visit jacksonville.gov/city-council/city-council-members/d06/mandarin-area-preservation-project.

School board cont. from pg. 1

may never make a headline, but they make a difference.

After 26 years in education, I am especially grateful for our teachers. We ask so much of them, and their jobs continue to become more demanding. Yet every day, they welcome children with different needs, abilities and circumstances and help them take their next steps forward.

Recently, I had the opportunity to welcome our school-level Teachers of the Year and celebrate these remarkable educators. Each honoree represents a school community filled with people who work hard for children. They deserve our appreciation, and that appreciation should be reflected in how we support them throughout the year.

I am also thankful for the families who entrust us with their children and remain involved in their education. As a mother and teacher, I know how deeply personal that trust is. Behind every student is someone who hopes that child will be safe, understood, challenged and prepared for the future.

Here in Mandarin, we have neighbors, businesses, civic organizations and faith communities that are willing to help make those hopes possible. Whether they are reading with a child, supporting the arts, coaching a team or meeting a practical need, they give our schools something invaluable: a community that cares.

There is also progress to celebrate. We recently broke ground on improvements at Loretto Elementary, supported by the voter-approved half-penny sales tax for school facilities. I am thankful for the community's investment in our schools and excited about what these improvements will mean for Loretto's students, families and staff.

This school year has also brought challenges, including air-conditioning problems that have made some classrooms uncomfortable. I am grateful for the patience of our students, teachers and families, and for the maintenance teams and school staff working to bring relief. Comfortable classrooms matter, and addressing these problems must remain a priority. After this start to the school


Melody Bolduc

year, I suspect many of us are feeling especially thankful for the prospect of cooler weather!

Serving on the school board has also deepened my gratitude for the people who speak up. They ask questions, share concerns and offer ideas because they care about our schools and our neighborhoods. We may not always agree, but listening carefully is part of serving well.

This November, I hope we will turn our gratitude into something tangible. Consider sending a teacher a thoughtful note. Thank a school employee whose work often goes unnoticed. Volunteer your time, or ask a nearby school what is needed.

My personal mission is to "unearth the treasure in every one." I am thankful for the many people in our community who help children discover their gifts and give them opportunities to use those gifts.

Thank you for making Mandarin a place where so many people are willing to show up for one another. It is an honor to call this community home and to serve you.

Please join Councilman Michael Boylan and me for a community meeting on Nov. 12 at 6 p.m. at Mandarin Oaks Elementary School. I'll share an update on the state of our district and our Mandarin schools, and we'll welcome your questions, concerns and ideas. Boylan will listen for opportunities for the city and school district to work together on solutions.

I welcome your questions, ideas and concerns. Email me at bolducm@duvalschools.org or call me at 904-927-1699.

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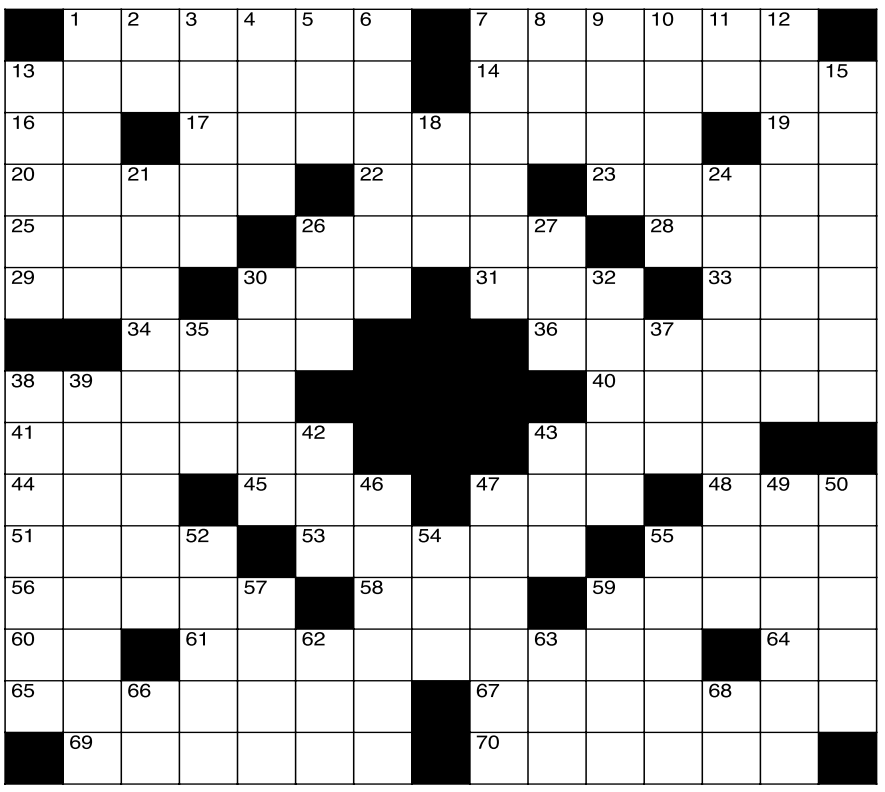
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CLUES ACROSS

1. Spiritual leaders
7. Containing salt
13. Fortified wine
14. Edible mollusk
16. Blood type
17. Make a comparison
19. Government lawyer
20. "Game of Thrones" actor Ciaran
22. 8th month of the year (abbr.)
23. Very willing
25. __ ex machina
26. Satisfies
28. New Zealand mountain
29. A doctrine
30. Popular Dodge truck model
31. Dekagram
33. Naturally occurring solid material
34. Company higher-up
36. Villains
38. Cricket frog genus
40. Influential early psychologist
41. Endured
43. Servant
44. You can get stuck in one
45. __ and feather
47. Passive optical network
48. French ballet dynasty
51. Employee stock ownership plan
53. Forming a bottom layer
55. Sound
56. Yankees slugger Judge
58. Dickens character
59. Beloved late sportscaster Craig
60. "The Mount Rushmore State"
61. Sarcastic and critical
64. Atomic #79
65. Longtime Atlanta Braves pitcher
67. Humor
69. Shawl
70. Preliminary assessment of patients

CLUES DOWN

1. Animal disease
2. Commercial
3. Craft supplies
4. Containers
5. A way to save for your golden years
6. Common Arabic greeting
7. Bulged downward
8. Acquired brain injury
9. Lay about
10. Intestinal
11. Not yes
12. In a way, pleased
13. Messianic figure in Islam
15. Resulting from intense conviction
18. Not in
21. Number above the line in a fraction
24. Lawn pest
26. Pouch
27. Ancient language (abbr.)
30. Start anew
32. Wild flower
35. Fourteen
37. Graphical user interface
38. Facing the same way
39. Campaigns
42. Touch lightly
43. "Boardwalk Empire" actress Gretchen
46. Violent seizure of property
47. One who supports the Pope
49. Malaise
50. Body fluid
52. Inauthentic person
54. Title of respect
55. Moth genus
57. Central Japan city
59. Silk garment
62. Draw from
63. Automobile
66. A male
68. Powerful government lawyer

THANKSGIVING TABLE WORD SEARCH

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

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

WORDS

CASSEROLE
CENTERPIECE
CORNBREAD
CORNUCOPIA
CRANBERRY
DESSERT
DINNER
FEAST
GATHERING
GOURD
GRATITUDE
GRAVY
HARVEST
LEFTOVERS
MAYFLOWER
PARADE
PILGRIMS
PUMPKIN PIE
STUFFING
SWEET POTATOES
TABLE
TURKEY
WAMPANOAG
WISHBONE

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2026 change to retirement catch-up contribution rule

By Chris Thompson

The year is already rapidly coming to a close, making it peak season for assessing (and, in many cases, reassessing) contribution options related to retirement savings accounts. A major factor worth considering heading into the new year is changes to the SECURE 2.0 Act's catch-up contribution rule. The changes began on Jan. 1, 2026, and could have a significant impact on individuals 50 years of age and older who earned more than $150,000* in 2025.

What is a catch-up contribution?

If you're age 50 or older and have any variety of qualifying retirement savings accounts — including 401(k)s, 403(b)s and 457(b)s — you have the option of contributing additional pretax funds beyond the standard contribution limits set by the Internal Revenue Service. 1 These catch-up contributions are designed to help people nearing retirement give their investments an extra boost.

How did the SECURE 2.0 Act affect investors?



Christopher Thompson

Passed in December 2022, the SECURE 2.0 Act was created to encourage greater use of retirement plans that allow Americans to prepare for their golden years. The catch-up contribution limit for participants ages 60 to 63 remained unchanged in 2025 at $11,250 and is dubbed a "super catch-up" contribution. 2 This allows individuals within this age group to contribute well above the standard catch-up amount and take advantage of their peak earning years.

What is the new catch-up contribution rule?

Beginning in the new year, individuals with employer-sponsored 401(k), 403(b) and 457(b) government retirement plans who are 50 years of age or older and who earned more than $150,000* in FICA wages the previous taxable year must put their catch-up contributions into a designated Roth account after taxes. 3 Simply put, this means any catch-up or super catch-up contributions for these high-income earners will be subject to tax deductions. This change does not impact a participant's standard contributions to their employer-sponsored retirement savings, which will continue to be able to be contributed pretax and will not impact individuals who made less than $150,000 in FICA wages the prior year.

How can I prepare for this change?

For individuals nearing retirement, it's important to regularly reassess your contributions and make sure they're aligned with upcoming regulatory changes, shifts in late-career professional plans and your personal income needs and financial goals. A financial advisor can help navigate these decisions and diversify investments to set you up for success in retirement.

* In Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) wages and adjusted for inflation

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Book sale, therapy dogs and more at Mandarin libraries



Volunteers with the Friends of the South Mandarin Library gather at a past book sale.

By Jeremy Yates
Marketing Specialist, Jacksonville Public Library

The Friends of the South Mandarin Library is hosting another book sale Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 17-19, at 12125 San Jose Blvd. Stock up and save on books for readers of every age! Individual items are $1 and up. For the best deal, fill a paper grocery bag with books for just $10, or fill up a plastic bag for $5. Please note: Bags are provided by the Friends. Book sale hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday and Friday, and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday.

Teens: Unravel the secrets of distant galaxies in "Teen Lab" from 11 a.m. to noon Fridays, Nov. 6 through Dec. 4, at South Mandarin Library. Then, join other teens for an epic roleplaying game inspired by "Sunrise on the Reaping" by Suzanne Collins at Teen Advisory Board, starting at 4:45 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 13.

Families: Build and play arcade games with Snap Circuits from 4 to 5 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 12, at South Mandarin Library! At Turn Up for Tech, there's an exciting new challenge or robot every month. Note: Adult supervision is required for participants ages 7 and under.

Bring your reluctant readers, and their favorite book, to read to a therapy dog. Meet Yona, the Newfoundland dog, from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 14, at South Mandarin Library, or Saturday, Nov. 28, at Mandarin Library. The gentle JC, the yellow Labrador retriever, returns at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 23, at South Mandarin Library. Please note: Spots are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Jacksonville Humane Society joins us from 4 to 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 17, at Mandarin Library for a "pawesome" educational visit with animal-themed children's books, Q&A and a fun service project for children ages 5-12, benefiting the dogs and cats at JHS.

On Monday, Nov. 23, the Friends of the South Mandarin Library brings the STEAM Squad to conduct a series of mind-blowing experiments with color-changing chemistry. Join us from 2 to 3 p.m. for a "Colorful Science Spectacular" live from the South Mandarin Library. Note: Attendance is first-come, first-served. Please arrive early.

Children, ages 5-12, whisk up delicious dishes inspired by your favorite books at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 24, at Mandarin Library. At "Cooks and Books" with Sticky Fingers Cooking School, story time turns into snack time. Note: This program is sponsored by the Friends of the Mandarin Branch Library.

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