



News For And About Residents Of The Palencia Community

Valentines Day Is  
Friday, February 14th



ST. AUGUSTINE

# PALENCIA PRESS

FEBRUARY 2020

## STEM Fair Highlights Palencia Elementary's Young Scientists

By Ilene Bomser, Palencia Elementary PTO

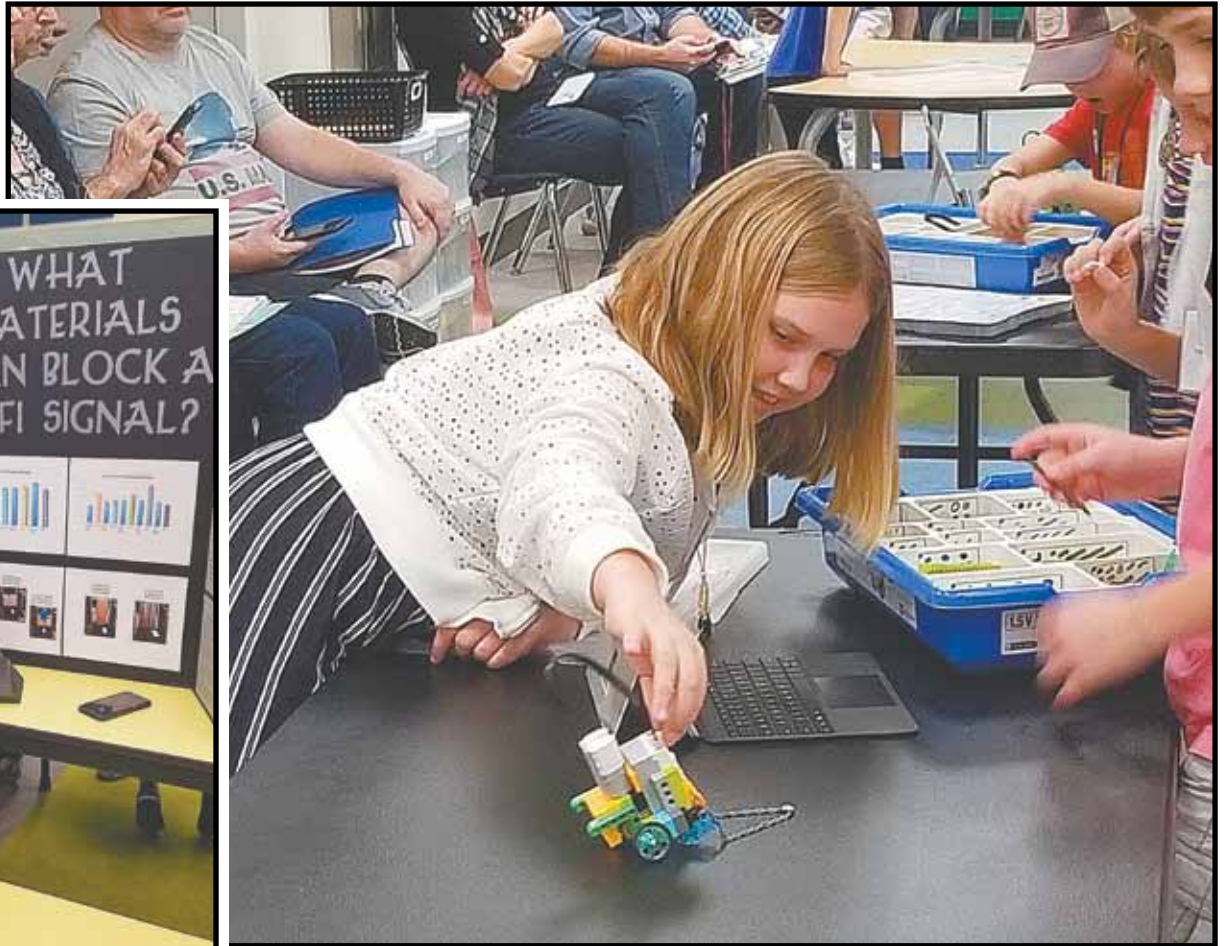
Palencia students and their parents recently came out in force for the St. Johns County STEM Fair held at Picolata Crossing Elementary School.

The purpose of the elementary STEM Fair is to encourage and celebrate student interest. The fair's primary goal being to promote innovative use of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics to solve real world problems.

This was a day to celebrate and honor the school representatives through an engaging hands on experience and to allow them to showcase their projects. See Full Story On Page 8



Right, Derek Baker displays his experiment on What Materials Can Block a Wi-Fi Signal?



Above, Kacie Burkhalter worked with other STEM fair participants in the STEM robotics challenge. For her project, Kacie used a cold laser to show how plants grow.

## Market Street Shops "Evening Stroll" Kicks Off Saturday, Feb. 15th

Looking for a good for an evening stroll? Look no further than the shops on Market Street. Starting Saturday, February 15th, Palencia initiates it's Evening Stroll, an endeavor to be held quarterly by more than 15 unique shops and venues. Market Street is a lovely place to spend an evening, sip a glass of wine, enjoy light hors d'oeuvres and socialize with friends. There will be live music, Lions Bridge Art Center will hold it's "Comedy Uproar" with stand-up comedians, and shops will be open from 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., offering finger food, drink, and tours.

Photo at right, Market Street shops plan "Evening Stroll." Left to right, Lee Osborn of Lions Bridge Arts Center; Kathi Boyd, Lamb Financial; Teri DeLuca, Village Extended Day; Doug Senecal, Market St. Association; Leila Lohr, Etc. Furniture; Erin Gunia, Director of Amenities; and Carol Abrahamson, K. Abrahamson Art Studio.



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## The Palencia Press

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### Thought For The Day

A perfect parent is a person with excellent child-rearing theories and no actual children. -Dave Barry

### Words Of Wisdom

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs." -1 Corinthians 13:4-5

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Continued From Page 2

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### iPhone Repair

Palencia resident repairs iPhones. Specilizing in broken iPhone screens. Call Ben Feldman 904-844-1339.

## Palencia Tennis/Pickleball Social With A Twist Helps St. Johns Food Pantry




Tennis members Kathy Moss, Dick Ray, Jean Sachs and Bob Denman.

For the third year in a row, Palencia's Tennis Advisory Committee along with Tennis Director Tom Salmon, held their New Year's Tennis Social with a Twist! With the holidays winding down, the need for helping those who are struggling in our communities continues. St. Johns Ecumenical Food Pantry relies on the generosity of those more fortunate to contribute food and donations for the needy. Established in 1992, St. Johns Food Pantry offers emergency food assistance, free of charge, to St. Johns County residents who meet qualification guidelines.

Tennis and pickleball players who came out to play and socialize at the event also brought food and monetary donations to help re-stock the St. Johns Food Pantry. Suggested donations included rice, cereal, canned fruit, canned vegetables, peanut butter and jelly, canned meats, powdered milk, pastas and sauce, as well as large brown paper bags.

At time of press, tennis members continue to drop off contributions at the tennis center collection boxes. For more information about contributing to the St. Johns Ecumenical Food Pantry, contact tennis Director Tom Salmon at 904-825-4012 or [tom.salmon@fsresidential.com](mailto:tom.salmon@fsresidential.com).



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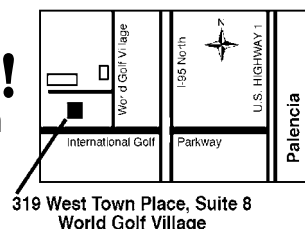
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**Tips from World Long Drive Champion and new Assistant Golf Professional at The Palencia Golf Club**

**Heather Manfredda**  
hmanfredda@hampton.golf

- Stance and ball position are both key to sending the ball flying. With your driver for a right handed player, the ball should be placed closer to your left big toe. Don't be afraid to tee it a bit higher than normal. Keep that left arm extended and bend from the hips.

- In my opinion, in order to hit it further, one must trust that they can swing it faster. Hesitation in the golf swing leads to deceleration. That can cause all kinds of missed shots including shorter drives.

- In lieu of deceleration, turn your club upside down by gripping just below the driver head - swing it without hitting the ground, listen for the "swoosh" noise. The noise should come after where the ball would be.

- The more noise, the better acceleration you're generating.

- Acceleration equals distance. Flip the club back to normal and trust your new technique.

Come see us in the Palencia Club Golf Shop. I will be teaching lessons and hosting many group clinics throughout the year. I am looking forward to meeting each and every one of you!



**First Coast Card Club And Newcomers Club**

**First Coast Card Club**

**Tuesday, February 4th.** Main Library in St. Augustine. Arrive: 12:50 p.m. Bring Refreshments to share - Valentines holiday activity. Free Event.

**Sunday, February 9th.** Lunch/Cards. V-Pizza Restaurant. Arrive: 1:30 p.m. - Dining. Cards: 2:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, February 11th.** Coffee Shop in St. Augustine. Arrive: 5:15 p.m. Cards: 5:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, February 18th.** OP Library. Arrive: 4:45 p.m. Cards: 5 p.m. Big room. Free Event.

**Tuesday, February 25th.** Assoc. Clubhouse in St. Augustine. Arrive: 3:15 p.m. Cards: 3:30 p.m.

Please contact our Club organizers for venues, addresses, and RSVPs to: 904-814-9612. Smoke/Drug Free Club.

**First Coast Newcomers Club**

**Saturday, February 1st.** Ft. Militia Tour/Exhibits in St. Augustine. Arrive: 10 a.m. Free Event.

**Tuesday, February 18th.** Violin Musicians Concert in St. Augustine. 6:30 p.m. Free Event.

**Friday, February 21st.** Dinner/Classics Band Performance. Diner restaurant. Arrive: 6P p.m. Music: 7 p.m.

**Saturday, February 29th.** County Community Band Concert. Library. Big room. Arrive: 1:30 p.m. Concert: 2 p.m. Free Event.

Please call our Club organizer to RSVP, how to join our club and for venues and addresses to: 904-814-9612 days/evenings. Phone calls/texts welcome. Both men and women invited. Smoke/Drug Free Club.

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## Rays Tax Services Opening At 701 Market Street In Palencia

Rays Tax Services is opening a new location in Palencia at Palencia Business Center located at 701 Market Street, Suite 111.

Founder Roshawnda Ray began her tax practice in 2013 in Red Oak, Texas. "Our business' initial goal was to provide our clients with personal and business tax services," Ray said. "Since that time, we increased our scope of services to include personal and business tax consultation, small business bookkeeping utilizing QuickBooks and client specific tax strategy. We file returns currently for Texas, Georgia, South Carolina and Florida across multiple industries."

"Our mission is to provide superior service for all of our client's needs," Ray added. "We have substantially grown from the previous years and grow alongside our clients to handle their increasing tax concerns. Our number one goal is minimizing your tax burden and providing quick tax filings. Our company values consist integrity, morality and professionalism which we implement with all of our clients."

Ray is a Certified Tax Preparer/Enrolled Agent with the Internal Revenue Service. She is also a devoted mother and wife as well as a business owner. Ray is the daughter and third child of former Palencia resident Retired (COL) Dr. Ronald and Shirley Strong. She graduated with a B.S. in Psychology in 2000 from Hampton University. In September 2019, she moved to St. Augustine to be closer to her parents and to allow her daughter the opportunity to make memories with her grandparents.

Rays Tax Services looks forward to providing tax services for the Palencia community and developing strong business relationships as well. Roshawnda Ray can be reached at (904)320-0040 or email roshawndastrong@hotmail.com.



**Roshawnda Ray**  
Certified Tax Preparer/Enrolled Agent,  
Internal Revenue Service

### St. Johns County Mentor Fair

The St. Johns County School District (SJCSD), RSVP of St. Johns County and other local mentor groups will be hosting a mentor fair on Wed., Feb. 5 from 8:30 – 11:30 a.m., at the Fullerwood Center Auditorium, 10 Hildreth Drive in St. Augustine.

Representatives will be on hand to provide information about mentoring students in the SJCSD. Mentor training will also be provided to interested individuals and a continental breakfast will be available.


Mentors give approximately 45 minutes per week to meet with a student and support him/her in academic pursuits and other goals. No prior experience is required and background screening and training are provided at no cost. Contact RSVP/Volunteer Services at 904-547-3945, or Cheryl.Freeman@stjohns.k12.fl.us for more details.

### St. Augustine Travel Club By Peter Dytrych

The St. Augustine Travel Club will be held on Wednesday, February 12, at 3 p.m. at the Southeast Branch Library on U.S. 1 near SR 206. The topic will be: CANADA: Natural Wonders of New Brunswick Plus Vancouver Attractions. Discover some of the highlights of New Brunswick's expansive natural beauty, marine wonder and legendary hospitality. Explore the fascinating attractions of Vancouver and its surroundings. No reservations are required. Questions? Contact Peter Dytrych at 904 797-3736.

### Preserve Area Reminder

Palencia property owners: If your home backs to a preserve area or an upland buffer, please ensure that you are not tampering with these areas as they are protected. St. Johns River Water Management governs our preserve areas and will fine owners a minimum of \$3,000 if the area is altered in any way or personal items are added to the area. Anything that overhangs your property can be cut back to your property line. If you have altered the protected preserve areas, please contact management so they can assist you in getting the protected area back into compliance.



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\* Some Cars Slightly Higher



## 2020 Census Frequently Asked Questions

By Erin Gunia  
 Palencia Director of Amenities

The ten year Census is upon us and needs our help. Palencia residents have an opportunity to help Florida and specifically St. Johns County to have a voice with the Federal Government. Apply to work for the Census and make our community count.

### Why should someone choose to work as a Census Taker?

Census positions provide the perfect opportunity to earn extra income while helping your community. The results of the 2020 Census will help determine the state's representation in Congress, as well as how certain funds are spent for schools, hospitals, roads and more. This is your chance to play a part in history and help ensure everyone in your community is counted.

### What are the benefits of working as a Census Taker?

In addition to supporting your community, census jobs offer great pay every week, flexible hours, and paid training. St. Johns County pay rates are \$17.50-\$19.50 per hour and 58 cents per mile for offi-

cial travel with paid training and flexible hours. Choose when you want to work seven days a week between 9:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m. depending on your availability.

### How does someone apply for a 2020 Census job?

Applying is easy. Visit [2020census.gov](http://2020census.gov) jobs to learn more, then click on Apply Now. Potential applicants can also call 1-855-JOB-2020 (562-2020) or use the Federal

Relay Service at 800-877-8339 for TTY/ASC11 to learn more or for assistance.

### What are the application requirements?

People can apply for 2020 Census work if they are at least 18 years old, a U.S. Citizen, and if they have a valid Social Security number and email address. Males born after December 31, 1959 must also be registered with the Selective Service System or have a qualifying exemption. Please visit [2020census.gov](http://2020census.gov) jobs to learn more about specific application requirements.

**JOIN THE  
 2020 CENSUS TEAM  
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## Final Phase Homesites Now Available At Markland

New estate-sized lots nestled within a wooded preserve mark the final phase of the popular St. Johns County neighborhood

Premier builders CornerStone Homes and Providence Homes have purchased the 15 estate-sized homesites now called The Preserve at Markland. These 93-foot lots are some of the most beautiful in St. Johns County with nature preserve views. Living in the intimately scaled neighborhood of Markland also comes with a full-range of first-class amenities. Now is the time to truly build the home of your dreams in the neighborhood's final phase. Homes in The Preserve will start in the high \$400,000's.

CornerStone Homes is known for their professionalism, responsiveness and attention to detail. CornerStone's nine-step process reinforces the belief that a house should be defined by the people who live in it. To learn more about CornerStone Homes, visit [MyCornerStoneHomes.com](http://MyCornerStoneHomes.com)

Providence Homes, a national leader in energy efficiency offers seven (7) award-winning homes ranging from 3,200 square feet to over 4,200 sq. ft., in The Preserve. All Providence Homes will be 100% ENERGY STAR® Certified and feature elegant interiors, gorgeous kitchens, and inviting outdoor spaces that Jacksonville families have loved to live in for over 25 years. Providence Homes is committed to providing the highest standards in residential construction. In recognition of this commitment, Providence Homes has received the ENERGY STAR® Partner of the Year Award an unprecedented 5 consecutive years honoring their leadership in building comfortable, durable and healthy high performance homes. To learn more visit [myprovidencehome.com](http://myprovidencehome.com) or contact Providence Homes Online Sales Manager – Melissa Matthews at (904) 447-0724.

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## Ask A Master Gardener Muscadine Grapes – A Great Addition To Your Spring Landscape

By **Norie Flowers, Palencia Resident**  
norie.flowers@outlook.com

Do you have landscape questions in which you would like help? I live in Palencia, so please email me at norie.flowers@outlook.com and I will answer you immediately.

If your issues are complex and may require a specific plant or soil field expert, another avenue for help is the St. Johns County Extension Center Master Gardener Desk at **904-209-0430, Ext 4782, available most weekdays from 9 am to 12 noon, Monday through Friday.**



### Muscadine Grapes – A Great Addition To Your Spring Landscape

While we are in the dormant season, this is a good time to think about what kind of plants and styles you would like to add to your spring landscape. You can either go with what you planted last year or this might be the year to think about trying something completely different.

In addition to landscape styles that I wrote about in my June 2019 article (and would be happy to resend to you upon request), another attractive and fun option, especially if grown on a trellis or arbor is Florida's muscadine grape. Muscadine grapes (*Vitis rotundifolia*) of all varieties are native to Florida. They are sometimes called "scuppernongs" and are popular because they are a sustainable fruit crop, have a high degree of tolerance to pests and diseases and can be grown with virtually no use of pesticides.

Muscadines differ from the bunch grapes found in the produce section of our supermarkets in that they are thicker-skinned, somewhat spicy-sweet, and are picked individually from the vine rather than in bunches. They mature in August and early September, when you can pick them and enjoy them fresh or made into jelly, jam or wine.

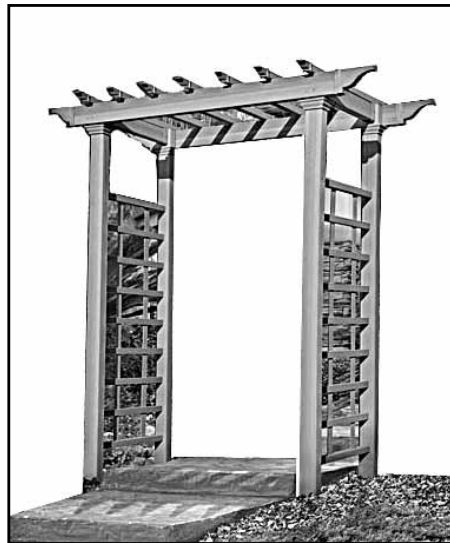
Muscadines are available in a multitude of cultivars. Cultivars such as: Carlos, Granny Val, Pineapple, and Tara, Noble, Pollyanna and Southern Home are self-fertile and therefore produce fruit without cross-pollination.

Muscadines are adapted to a wide range of sandy and clay soils but do best in a soil pH of 5.5 to 6.5 which is the pH of most of our landscapes in Palencia. Locally, these grapes most often come well-rooted in containers and

you can then plant them in any type of landscape style. Bare-root vines do best planted December through February, but container-grown vines can be planted throughout the year. Regardless of the type of planting option you choose, irrigation is important, with well-drained soil.

Muscadine grapes can be planted in an arbor configuration, or in a traditional post-and-wire configuration. A multitude of customized designs can be employed for an overhead arbor, typically with a 7- to 10-foot height requirement. Archways can also be included. Muscadine grapes are fast growers, and after only three years, a grape vine can easily cover a 6-foot by 15-foot horizontal area. Several cultivars could be planted together to enhance the duration of ripening period and also to provide a variety of grape sizes, colors and flavors.

If you elect to make your own trellis, the three most common designs are 1) a single-wire design for vines destined to be trained to a bilateral training system five to six feet above the ground; 2) a two-wire vertical design with two wires at a height of approximately three and six feet; and 3) a two-wire horizontal design whereby vines are trained to two wires two feet to either side of the post at a height of about 5 to 6 feet. This last system is known as a Geneva double curtain system.



There are also numerous attractive trellis and arbor options available online that are not expensive and they are also sold in local nurseries.

Whatever option you choose for your muscadine project, be sure to check your vines on a daily basis for a few weeks to be sure your sun, soil and irrigation conditions are a good fit for your new plants. The first principle of Florida Friendly Landscaping is "Right Plant, Right Place." So, don't hesitate to try something new in your own landscape and have fun!

Information contained in this article was derived from the University of Florida Institute for Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS).

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## Palencia Elementary's Young Scientists Take Part In District STEM Fair

By Ilene Bomser, Palencia Elementary PTO

On Saturday, January 11th, three fifth graders, Kacie Burkhalter, Derek Baker, and Colin O'Brien, represented Palencia Elementary School at the St. Johns County STEM Fair held at Picolata Crossing Elementary School.

"The purpose of the elementary STEM Fair in St. Johns County is to encourage and celebrate student interest in STEM, with the primary goal being to promote innovative use of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to solve real world problems," Laclede Rudin, Science and Social Studies Program Specialist for St. Johns County Schools said.

While students were judged at the school level STEM Fair, the district level STEM Fair does not judge the projects. This is a day to celebrate and honor the school representatives through an engaging hands on experience and to allow them to showcase their projects.

Last fall, all PES 5th graders were required to do a STEM experiment and, according to 5th grade teacher and STEM Fair liaison Joanna Holmes, after the assignments were completed, the students held a discussion.

"We brought our 5th grade projects together to discuss which projects were most creative as well as projects that followed the scientific method to pick our representatives," Holmes said. "We had so many projects that were done incredibly well that it was a tough decision for our team. Only three 5th grade projects per school in the district can be invited and you can imagine how hard it is to choose from more than 145 projects at Palencia," she explained.

Inspiration for STEM projects can



Kacie Burkhalter's project was titled "Laser Therapy and Plant Growth." Prior to conducting the experiment, Kacie had to learn what the laser does and how it works.

come from many places. In the case of Kacie Burkhalter, the idea came from her mother's career as a veterinarian.

"I wasn't allowed to use animals, people, bacteria, or other ideas that had too many variables," explained Kacie. "I decided to do something with plants. My mom uses a cold laser on animals, and I really like it. So I decided to use it on plants."

Kacie's project was titled "Laser Therapy and Plant Growth." Prior to conducting the experiment, Kacie had to learn what the laser does and how it works. Then, she had to research how plants grow, and how the laser might affect how the plants grow. During the project, her mother, Dr. Brooke Burkhalter of The Sea Turtle Hospital at UF Whitney Lab, taught her how to safely use the laser on the plants, and using the laser turned out to be Kacie's favorite part of the project.

The hypothesis of Kacie's experiment was "If I use the cold laser at 3 Joules/cm<sup>2</sup> once every other day, the plant will grow faster because cold laser stimulates mitochondria." And while the experiment confirmed the hypothesis

Continued On Page 9



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So, bottom line, if you've been ignoring an area that has weighted heavy in your heart, contact Alejandra and Sonia at Your Organizing Studio." **-A. Cuartas**



## Palencia Elementary's Young Scientists

Continued From Page 8

was correct, there were challenges.

"The biggest challenge was that it was winter, so the plants didn't grow very well," Kacie explained. "It was also very quick, so they only had a few weeks."

"I didn't enjoy how delicate the plants were," Kacie added. "I am not a very delicate person, so I broke a few of them during the experiment."

While not every student has access to laser technology, Wi-Fi is something most use on a regular basis. This led Derek Baker to his idea for an experiment on What Materials Can Block a Wi-Fi Signal?

"I stumbled on the topic when discussing how far my grandparents Wi-Fi signal has to travel," Baker said.

Like any good scientist, Derek needed to conduct some research prior to beginning his experiment.

"I needed to figure out what exactly I was measuring, what Wi-Fi does and is," explained Baker. "Finally, I needed to know how Wi-Fi travels."

Derek's hypothesis was "If you cover your router with cardboard, wood, plastic, and metal (not at the same time), the metal would block the Wi-Fi the most." Over the course of his experiment it was proven that metal blocked the signal the most.

"Getting to go to the District STEM Fair is really cool," says Baker. "All of us who were selected were very excited about it. It was also cool seeing my classmates work."

For Colin O'Brien, an interest in engineering and his experience with the Club Scientific program, provided inspiration for his project.

"This was a labor of love for our family," said Colin's mother, Michele O'Brien. "Colin's grandfather, who joined us at the STEM Expo, is a career Civil Engineer. He helped Colin design the beam bridge (which won the test). Rory (Colin's dad) put his artistic touch



For Colin O'Brien, an interest in engineering and his experience with the Club Scientific program provided inspiration for his project TSB Test: Trestle, Suspension & Beam Bridges, three types of bridge were tested to determine which bridge could hold the most mass. "Papa" Bob O'Brien, right, helped Colin with the project.

on the suspension bridge. Now, Colin wants to be a Civil Engineer, just like his Papa!"

Not every experiment supports the initial hypothesis. In the case of Colin's project, TSB Test: Trestle, Suspension & Beam Bridges, three types of bridges were tested to determine which bridge could hold the most mass.

"My hypothesis was that the suspension bridge would hold the most mass, but that was disproven," Collin said. "The beam bridge held the most mass."

In fact the O'Briens were surprised by just how strong the bridges turned out to be.

"We used every weight in our house to break the trestle and beam bridges and were unsuccessful," Collin explained. "We reached out to our friends the Donaldsons to borrow their weights and set up a test area in the cul-de-sac to test the bridges. Ultimately, the beam bridge held over 310 pounds."

Ms. Holmes shares the students' enthusiasm about the annual event.

"The STEM projects are one of my favorite things the students do during the year because I often times learn something new from their experimentation," Holmes said. "When students are allowed to choose projects that they are passionate about, it is amazing what they can do."

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## You Get What You Pay For

By Heather Fritz, Palencia Resident  
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Tree removal may give you sticker shock, but it's one of those jobs that may be safest when left to the experts. A tree removal gone wrong can be very dangerous and isn't worth endangering lives. The Tree Care Industry Association says many homeowners are severely injured or killed each year while trying to cut down a tree or large tree limbs.

There are many factors that go into creating an estimate. Price should not be the sole deciding factor when choosing a tree care company. The estimated price directly corresponds to the amount of time spent on the job. A company can offer a low price based on speed. However, with speed comes a new set of risks such as cutting corners on the job and possibly ignoring safety standards both of which reduce the quality of the outcome. Bottom line: You get what you pay for.

### Why Is It So Expensive?

A big factor in the cost is insurance. Responsible levels of insurance coverage differentiate reputable tree care companies from suspect companies. As you consider estimates, I highly recommend that you look beyond getting a bargain.

The tree removal business is a high risk business. A qualified tree care company will have a minimum of a million dollars in comprehensive liability insurance to cover any property damage that may occur in the event of an accident. Additionally, the company will carry workman's compensation insurance. As a homeowner, do your due diligence. Comprehensive coverage is very important. Accidents happen. An out of state friend hired a handyman to remove a large oak branch growing over the house. She was delighted with the bargain price. Unfortunately, the limb was dropped and caused significant damage to her roof. Then the nightmare began - the handyman had let his insurance lapse. He asked her to change the job date so that it was within the time frame when he was covered - this is insurance fraud and illegal!

Don't hesitate to ask the tree care company to have their insurance agency email you proof of insurance. They may try to convince you that a dog-eared, printed copy of their Certificate Of Insurance (COI) is sufficient evidence-

however, there's no way to validate that premiums are paid up to date and that the business is in good standing with the insurance carrier unless the COI is directly emailed to you by the insurance agency. Tree care companies pay hefty insurance premiums - compliant companies will gladly accommodate your request.

### How Do Tree Care Companies Determine The Estimate?

All tree care companies evaluate jobs by estimating the hours to complete the work and the cost of disposing debris. Reputable companies have better equipment to protect your lawn or fence, and highly-trained employees who value safety protocols. It is vitally important that the team working on your trees is protected with the proper safety gear like eye goggles, helmets and chain saw pants. If someone shows up with just a ladder and no safety gear, tell them you won't be needing their services. Skilled labor allows the team to work smart and efficiently.

### Make Sure You're Dealing With A Legitimate Company.

As you consider tree work proposals, examine the insurance liability coverage; how well the equipment is maintained; check out the safety gear and research the reputation of the business. If you choose a company that is significantly less expensive, be prepared to assume more risk in case something goes wrong.

Sources: Tree Care Industry Association; Karen Gardner, The Nest; Steve Turner, Certified Arborist, Michigan.

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## High School Seniors – Avoid Senioritis!

By Ginny Wirzbicki, Palencia Resident,  
College Planning Consultant  
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After an autumn of filling out college applications, taking college entrance exams, and the overall frenzy of your first semester, you may feel that the most challenging part of your last year of school is over. But you're not there just yet.

Be careful of the lax attitude that can spread through the class, commonly known as "senioritis." Be aware that just because you've been accepted to college doesn't mean your schoolwork can wind down or stop. Colleges will see your final transcript, and they reserve the right to rescind an offer of admission and/or financial aid if they see a decline in a student's grades. It's also important for students who have been deferred in the early round to keep up the pace as a strong, final academic report is crucial to improving your chances of admission in the regular round.

So, how do you overcome laziness and avoid catching the "Senioritis" bug? Here are a few suggestions.

**Set Goals:** Write down the goals you hope to accomplish from now to graduation. They don't need to be grandiose; they can include just your usual tasks but stated more pointedly. Examples: Maintain a 3.8 gpa, add a few more volunteer hours at the hospital, or help my little brother with his homework. This will keep you motivated and help you prioritize your basic responsibilities.

**Make a Plan of Action:** Now that you know your goals, develop a strategy to achieve them. If you haven't already, create a calendar for the new year. Note all assignments and exam dates, after-school activities, work obligations, and

any other deadlines. Schedule blocks of time and set reminders for training, studying, and organizing. You may also want to schedule free time vs. having blank time.

**Take on a New Activity:** Prevent complacency by taking on new responsibilities. When making your goals, come up with a new project. Are there any activities you've always wanted to try but were too busy? Now is a great time to start. One suggestion: go scholarship hunting.

**Recruit Your Friends:** There's a reason they call it "senioritis." Like a virus, the impulse to procrastinate spreads rapidly and infects almost everyone with whom it comes in contact. When your friends skip studying for shopping, it becomes difficult to stay focused. Make yourself the cure by influencing others in a positive, productive way. Avoid "hive-mind" by leading the pack.

**Study Smart:** Many seniors take a heavy course load their last year, and maintaining good grades in difficult courses is tough enough without having to resist the temptation to put off your responsibilities. It's important to keep up good study practices now more than ever, because the habit of procrastinating will hurt you in the fall when you have to be prepared to manage a college-level workload.

**Think About Your College Decision:** You may already know where you are headed next year, but most students will soon have to choose where to spend the next four years. To get a better sense of where you want to end up, do some additional research on your prospective schools and be prepared for all admissions outcomes. Managing your expectations will help avoid anxiety and keep you focused on the main goal: finding your best-fit school.

**Apply to Additional Schools, If Needed:** If you got a late start on the college admissions process or find yourself questioning your current college list, consider applying to additional schools. Not only will this keep you productive, it will give you motivation to continue to work hard throughout the spring as you await additional admissions decisions.

After all your hard work, now is not the time to drop the ball. You have done a great job so far. Keep it up; your reward is just around the corner!

Horizon College Planning works with students at all stages in the college planning process. If you're a high school senior still not sure of your college plans this fall, it's not too late! Contact us today for assistance with finding your best-fit college.

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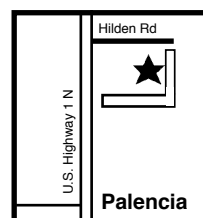
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By Jeff & Jami Lind, Palencia Residents  
[www.ourwonderfuljourney.com](http://www.ourwonderfuljourney.com)

On our six week trip, we had the opportunity to spend about ten days in Oregon. Jeff had never been and I had spent part of one day in Portland many, many years ago when I was playing softball. We had been in Washington several years ago, as part of a trip to Vancouver, BC, so I knew the Pacific Northwest was beautiful country, but I was just not really prepared for the vast beauty that was Oregon. We drove up from Las Vegas, through Reno and Susanville, California, riding through the Modoc National Forest before entering southern, central Oregon, then spending the first night in Klamath Falls.

### Klamath Falls, Ranches and Farmland

My first impression of Oregon was one of lush green farmland, hills and countless cow pastures. We came through very pretty, small towns that just exuded an air of friendliness and quality of life. I had not known that Oregon was so full of farms and cattle, but we saw them all over the state. As we drove through, I told Jeff that if I was a cow, I would want to live in Oregon! There was water and green grass everywhere, as well as trees for shade and it was not too hot, like Texas, Oklahoma or Florida cows would have to endure. I was so convinced that they were well fed, hence, happy cows, and would make delicious steaks, that when we ate dinner at Mr. B's Steakhouse, Klamath Falls, <https://www.facebook.com/Mr-Bs-Steakhouse-298480290930570/>, I opted for the filet. The whole meal was delicious and the service was awesome. The filet was incredibly tender and tasty. They use beef from a local rancher's co-op, as well as local produce. It was a nice, welcome to Oregon! Before we headed to Oak Ridge on Saturday, we stopped at the Saturday Farmer's Market in downtown Klamath Falls and enjoyed a nice stroll, a great, fresh fruit cup and I got a wonderful chair massage.

### On to Eugene, Oregon

On this trip, we did not really have a set agenda, but wanted to explore Oregon. We had to be in Portland, for a softball event on June 13th and had reservations at the Awtrey House, <https://ourwonderfuljourney.com/the-awtrey-house-at-neah-kahnie-beach/>, Neahkahnie Beach, for 11/12 of June. Other than that, we decided

to drive and stop where we wanted and just see how much time we wanted to spend in any one place. We had a stop planned in Oakridge and on the way saw some of the most beautiful and largest lakes that I have ever seen. Upper Klamath Lake was absolutely amazing and set the bar high for the rest of the state, but I must say that the ever-changing scenery did not disappoint. We only spent the night in Eugene, but on the way out, stopped on the campus of the University of Oregon, as I wanted to see their softball facility. The campus was beautiful and the athletics facilities complex was awesome.

We drove through the old town downtown on the way out and the tree lined streets and shops were nice.

### The Oregon Coast

Next on our agenda was the coast of Oregon. We were going to go south, then work our way up the coast to the Awtrey House and then over to Portland. Coos Bay was one of the more southern cities on the coast, so we headed there, planning to then go north on 101. This is where one of our first surprises came and we discovered that coastal cities and highways here are not quite like the coastal cities in Florida and on the east coast, where you can see the ocean and the shops and restaurants are right on the beach. The area of Coos Bay, that I had seen online was actually a waterfront district, but it was a river, not the Ocean. It was also the downtown and we were there on a Sunday so most of it was closed, including the visitor's center. If we were making that trip again, I would start further north on the coast, bypassing Coos Bay. The drive was still pretty, but more of a drive through trees and mountains rather than a normal coastal drive. We enjoyed a lunch in Reedsport, at Bedrock's Chowder House and Grill, <http://bedrocksrestaurants.com/bedrocks-on-the-bay-menus.html>, where Jeff had clam chowder and I had a grilled cheese with crab, then stopped at the Chocolate Frog, <http://www.thechocolatefrog.org>, in Waldport and enjoyed both stops. The Chocolate Frog, not only had a myriad of chocolate treats, but also a great selection of salt water taffy as well as other confections.

Next Month: Fun Cities Along the Northern Oregon Coast

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Polly Swindull

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## Valentine's Day: Share Fondness And Admiration

By Michael Brown, MSC, LMFT  
904-289-2954

Valentine's Day is a time to rekindle the flames of romance and passion in our intimate relationship and to share our fondness and admiration for our partner with him or her. It is also a time to remember why we chose this person as our intimate partner in the first place. All too often in long-term intimate relationships, we neglect to nurture and express our fondness and admiration for our partner and we start to forget why we love this person.

However, in Dr. John Gottman's 40 years plus of multi-dimensional and extensive research with over 3,000 couples, he found that the "Masters of Relationship" genuinely like and enjoy one another, share their fondness and admiration for each other on a regular basis, and can access their positive feelings for each other even in the midst of conflict. As a result of these findings, Share Fondness and Admiration is the second of John Gottman's Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work and the second level of his "Sound Relationship House."

John Gottman also found that there is hope for couples who are struggling with their relationship if they still access or remember the fondness and admiration that initially brought them together. On the other hand, if couples are unable to access or remember their initial fondness and admiration, their marriage or relationship is in serious trouble.

Fortunately, it is not terribly difficult to revive or increase the fondness and admiration in a relationship. Even positive feelings that have been buried for a long time can be brought into the light simply by thinking or talking about them. You can do this by thinking about your partner and what you appreciate about him or her. Try to come up with three or four positive adjectives that describe your partner and what you like or appreciate about him or her. Then come up with a concrete example of each, i.e. a time when your partner demonstrated this quality. Then share this with your partner. Another way to do this is to think about what you are grate-

ful for in your relationship. Try doing one or both of these on your Valentine's Day date. My wife and I have done this several Valentine's Days and have found it to be very beneficial.

If you are having difficulty accessing fondness and admiration for your partner in the moment, it might help to think about what first attracted you to your partner and the larger history of your relationship. What first attracted you to your partner? What were your first impressions of each other? What do you remember most about the time that you were dating? What stands out? If you are married, how did you decide to get married? What do you remember about your wedding and honeymoon? What have been some of the best times in your marriage or relationship? Despite the difficulties, what has kept you together? Thinking about and discussing questions like these can help you revive and increase the fondness and admiration in your marriage or relationship.

So, this Valentine's Day, in addition to the chocolates, flowers, cards, gifts, and romantic getaway or dinner, take some time to share fondness and admiration in your marriage or relationship. Your marriage or relationship will be happier because you did.

Reference: Gottman, J., & Silver, N. (1999, 2015). The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work. New York, NY: Three Rivers.

Michael Brown is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and a Certified Gottman Therapist, Couples Workshop Leader, and Clinical Trainer. If you would like to learn more about the "Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work" or want to repair or enhance your relationship, consider attending an Art and Science of Love Weekend Workshop for Couples in Jacksonville or seeing Michael for couples therapy. For more information, contact Michael at 904-289-2954 or visit [www.happycoupleshealthycommunities.com](http://www.happycoupleshealthycommunities.com).



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- Friday, February 21st - Food Trucks and Artisan Night

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## Newcomers Of North St. Johns February Luncheon At The DoubleTree In St. Augustine

By Michele Oliver

Newcomers of North Saint Johns (NNSJ) invites any resident of the St. Johns County area to our February luncheon on Tuesday, February 18 beginning at 11:00 a.m. at the DoubleTree, 116 San Marco Avenue in St. Augustine, Florida. The event features a delicious lunch and wonderful presentation on the historic and fun attractions in St. Augustine.

Cost for the luncheon and program is \$30 for members and \$35 for guests. All reservations must be received by February 12th.

Luncheon features a choice of Chicken Marsala served with Green Beans and Garlic Mashed Potatoes or Gnocchi and Italian Sausage topped with a Vodka Cream Sauce. Both entrées include a House Salad and choice of Iced Tea, Hot Tea, or Coffee. New York Cheesecake will be served for dessert. A cash bar is also available.

Following lunch, NNSJ members and their guests will enjoy a presentation by Mia Bain who will talk about all the wonderful aspects of St. Augustine – things to do, places to eat, fun tours to take and also, where to park! She'll help us find the best ways to enjoy this historic city and how to obtain discounts to many of the popular attractions and restaurants.

Mia grew up just 90 miles away from St. Augustine in Sanford, Florida.

She graduated from Seminole High and attended the University of Central Florida. While at UCF, Mia started her work in the tourism industry with a stint at Walt Disney World. She then moved into a tour and travel marketing job with a large night-time attraction in the Orlando area. After graduation from UCF, Mia moved to Nashville where she worked in the music/entertainment field for 10 years working with some of the biggest names in Country music. A few years ago, she returned to St. Augustine and has been a tour guide for the past nine years. In 2011, she was a finalist for the St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra and The Beaches Visitors & Convention Bureau's Tourism "Employee of the Year" award.

As always, raffles for gift baskets and a fun 50/50 drawing spice up our NNSJ luncheons. And, perhaps you will win one of our beautiful centerpieces! You won't want to miss this fun afternoon, so register today.

If you are interested in a registration form for the luncheon, NNSJ membership information or about upcoming activities, please contact Sue Aird at sjaird@comcast.net. NNSJ offers a wide variety of activities for you to get acquainted and have fun including smaller lunch groups, wine socials, golf, Mah Jongg, holiday parties, day trips and cultural events.



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## Ringworm In Pets

By Dr. Jacob Vencil, Veterinarian  
Palencia Pet Clinic  
904-824-1622

Although the name has a nice “ring” to it, dermatophytosis may be the most misleadingly named skin condition in pets. This is because ringworm is not a worm, and often cases do not show a circular lesion on a pet’s skin. So what’s the deal? Ringworm is a skin disease caused by fungi. It gets its name from the characteristic ring-like rash on the skin that occurs in people who contract the infection. The disease is spread by touching an infected animal or person.

Many different kinds of animals can transmit ringworm to people. Dogs and cats, especially kittens or puppies, can have ringworm that can be passed to people. Cows, goats, pigs, and horses can also pass ringworm to people. It can also be spread by touching objects or surfaces that had contact with the infection. If infected, people often begin itching four to fourteen days after contact. The rash may be scaly, reddened, and circular. Ringworm on the scalp usually makes a bald patch of scaly skin.

### Ringworm appearance in pets

Adult animals, especially long-haired cats, do not always show signs of ringworm infection. Puppies and kittens most often have patches that are hairless, however the lesions may be circular, or irregularly shaped areas of scaling, crusting, and redness that may or may not be itchy. The area may not be completely hairless, and instead have brittle, broken hairs. If the claws are affected, they may have a whitish, opaque appearance with shredding of the claw’s surface.

Your veterinarian may test some fur

for the fungus. Treating animals for ringworm can help them clear the infection sooner and prevent spreading the infection to other animals or people. Your veterinarian will prescribe anti-fungal shampoos or creams, dips, or anti-fungal pills. During this time, the pet should be handled as little as possible until the infection is cleared.

### If your pet has Ringworm- Things To Do

Wash your hands with soap and running water after playing with or petting your pet.

Wear gloves and long sleeves if you must handle animals with ringworm, and always wash your hands after handling the animal.

Vacuum the areas of the home that the infected pet commonly visits. This will help to remove infected fur or flakes of skin.

Disinfect areas the pet has spent time in, including surfaces and bedding.

The spores of this fungus can be killed with common disinfectants like chlorine bleach diluted 1:10 (1/4 cup in 1 gallon of water).

Do not handle animals with ringworm if your immune system is weak in any way (if you have viral diseases, are undergoing cancer treatment, or are taking medications that suppress the immune system, for example).

### Protect your pet’s health

If you suspect that your pet has ringworm, make sure it is seen by a veterinarian so treatment can be started. Also, keep in mind, if one of your pets has ringworm, make sure you have every pet in the household checked for ringworm infection.



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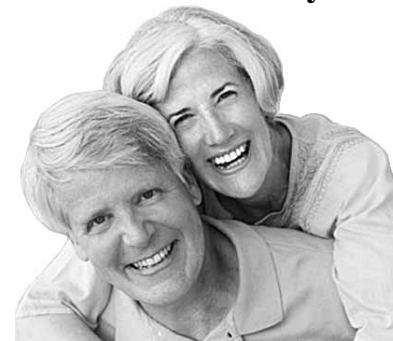
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## St. Johns County Sheriff's Corner

By David Shoar, St. Johns County Sheriff  
**Citizen Self Defense**



This month I would like to address an important issue, Citizen Self Defense.

There are many types of questions about this topic and I would like to address some of those during this month's column. Specifically what legal issues would occur if a gun was used outside your house (Stand Your Ground) and what the law says about shooting someone entering your home. Is there a difference in shooting someone trying to enter as opposed to shooting the entrant once he is inside?

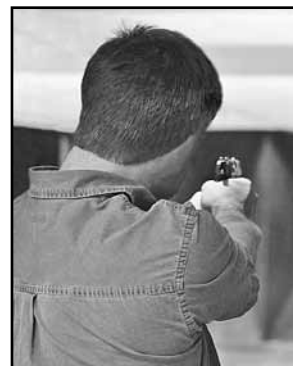
Every set of circumstances can and will be different in the real world, therefore, the determination on justifiable force is difficult to assume by guessing what the scenario could be. The law addresses the justifiable use of force related to persons, not property, so utilizing deadly force over a television (for example), when there is no presumed fear of great bodily harm or death, could be legally problematic for the intended victim.

Under the circumstances of an individual forcibly entering a residence, car, or "aggressing" you on the street; there remains a need to articulate what the individual's actions were to cause your "presumption of fear of death or great bodily harm." While the chain of events will be different, so will each person involved, as well as the perceptions of the incident. For example, the presumptive fear of death or great bodily harm involving a female senior citizen may be quite different than a six foot tall, 20 year old, given the same set of circumstances. The law does address "the process of unlawfully and forcefully entering," but remember the law is based on a reasonable belief as it relates to your actions.

Following a use of force incident, law enforcement will compare and contrast the statements, the evidence, eyewitness accounts of the events, and many times will confer with the State Attorney's Office before a final ruling

on justification is made.

Let me provide one example, although it is slightly different. Several years ago members of the media came to one of our training sessions involving an interactive use of force simulator. As one reporter role-played the "law enforcement officer" the suspect held a knife to the throat of a victim. After several minutes of negotiating with the suspect, the suspect made a sudden move, while dropping the knife. It was at this



time that the reporter felt the victim could be safely defended and fired. It was determined the reporter had made an unlawful use of force decision as the threat had ended. Had the reporter defended the victim while the knife was still a threat, the action may have been justified. The elapsed time between the sudden movement, the knife dropping and the application of force

was approximately two to three seconds. The point is, situations like this are fluid and many factors can determine lawful or unlawful force. The reporter later remarked that she had a new-found respect for the complexities of this issue.

Regarding a concealed weapons permit; once you have acquired the appropriate training and permit you are allowed to carry a firearm concealed on your person. Feeling comfortable doing so, which is equally important, is another issue and hopefully this limited explanation helps. The Florida State Statute that addresses justifiable use of force is 776.013 and can be found on the internet for further review. I recommend the review of this statute and its exemptions, for anyone who may have similar questions.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any issues regarding law enforcement and/or public safety, or if you would like to see a particular topic for this column by email at [dshoar@sjso.org](mailto:dshoar@sjso.org). You can also follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Nextdoor.

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## Presidents' Day

By Rev. Alan J. Liphart, M.Div  
The Village Church  
4229 Pacetti Rd., World Golf Village

For the last two years I have been writing about February's other holiday. This year I thought it time to rediscover President's Day. I found this information on the us.gov website and thought you might find it interesting as well.

Since 1971, federal employees and school children have enjoyed a three-day holiday weekend each February. The long weekend is often filled with President's Day sales—no long weekend for many hardworking retail employees—family time and relaxing.

Yet despite the holiday often being referred to as "President's Day" in practice, the official federal holiday continues to be known as "Washington's Birthday." When George Washington himself was alive, people honored the occasion with balls and banquets. The celebration continued after his death as a way to remember what America's first president did for the Nation.

February 22, the date of Washington's birth in 1732, became a federal holiday in 1879. Today, we celebrate Washington's Birthday on the third Monday of February each year—the result of the 1968 law mandating that a number of federal holidays occur on Mondays.

Incidentally, the third Monday in February can never fall on the 22nd, meaning the federal holiday will never land on Washington's actual birth date.

Rep. Robert McClory (R-IL), representing "the land of Lincoln," attempted to change the name of the holiday to "President's Day" in 1968. But that measure proved to be particularly controversial for legislators from Virginia, Washington's home state. The provision was soon dropped.

McClory did gain the concession of having the holiday celebrated on the third Monday in February, which falls between Abraham Lincoln's birthday on February 12 and Washington's ten days later. It appeared to many that a federal holiday now existed to celebrate both Washington and Lincoln—as well as America's other 43 commanders in chief. This interpretation was fueled by the numerous states that adopted "President's Day" as the holiday's name, rather than the traditional "Washington's Birthday."

Past Presidents have often recog-

nized the holiday with visits to Washington's tomb. Franklin Delano Roosevelt did so on Washington's 211th birthday in 1943, and Ronald Reagan followed suit on the 250th anniversary in 1982. President George W. Bush visited Mount Vernon in 2007.

During the Civil War, the Senate remembered George Washington with a reading of his Farewell Address. "In view of the perilous condition of the country, I think the time has arrived when we should recur back to the days, the times, and the doings of Washington and the patriots of the Revolution, who founded the government under which we live," future President Andrew Johnson said on Feb. 22, 1862.


By 1896, reading Washington's Farewell Address in the Senate had become an annual event. The parties take turns having a senator read the speech each year, and they now record their names in a notebook that has been used since 1900.

In his address, Washington advised the new Nation to keep the union together, beware of misrepresentations of political factions and parties, keep debt to a minimum and govern morally.

By taking the time to remember and celebrate George Washington's life each February, all Americans have the opportunity to be grateful for the sacred Founding of this country and the values for which it stands. When Washington resigned from the presidency after two terms, he set a precedent for the peaceful transfer of power that continues to stand out as a moral example to the free world.


With his characteristic humility, Washington said, "I have, with good intentions, contributed towards the organization and administration of the government the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable."

May we strive as a nation to remember Washington's advice to keep the union together, beware of misrepresentations of political factions and parties, keep debt to a minimum, and govern morally. On February 17th, 2020, I encourage you to raise the flag in remembrance to those whose time in office has shaped the great country we have become, pray for our current president, and for those who will lead in the years to come.



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**Tuesday & Thursday 8:15 am**

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## Ways To Help Your Teen Driver Stay Safe

By Craig Dewhurst, State Farm Agent, Palencia Resident

According to the Governors Highway Safety Administration (GHSA), inexperience and immaturity are often to blame for risky teen driving behavior. This may explain why motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of teen fatalities in the U.S.

Here are tips to help avoid teen crashes and stay safe on the road:

- **Restrict Night Driving.** Close to two-thirds of fatal crashes that happen at night are speed related and involve 16-year-old drivers.

- **Keep a Safe Following Distance.** In normal driving conditions, the general rule is "three seconds plus." When the vehicle in front of you passes a stationary object, begin counting. You should reach that same object no sooner than three seconds, four seconds ideally. Increase following distance when visibility is poor or you're in traffic.

- **Enforce Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) Laws.** Many states have rules that prevent teens from driving at night or with other teens. Know the laws in your state and possibly set stricter standards.

- **Limit Teen Passengers.** Research has shown significant reductions in deaths were associated with graduated driving laws, including a restriction on carrying passengers or the number and age of passengers carried.

- **Share the Car to Prevent Speeding.** Parents can also set a good example by practicing safe driving themselves.

- **Discuss Consequences.** Teenage speeding puts lives and licenses on the

line. It can also be expensive, and pricey tickets can increase insurance rates.

- **Be Involved.** Frequently ride with your teens to be sure they're being safe. And when you're driving, be a good role model. Always travel at a speed appropriate for the road conditions.

### Insurance Discounts for Teens

State Farm offers several discounts that may help teen drivers lower their car insurance costs.

### Good Student Discount

You could save up to 25% if your teen driver gets good grades! The savings may last until your teen turns 25.

### Driver Training Discount

You could qualify for a discount if all the operators of your vehicle under the age of 21 complete an approved driver education course.

### Student Away at School Discount

If one of the operators of a covered vehicle is a student under the age of 25 who moves away to school and only uses the car while at home during school vacations and holidays, you could be eligible for this discount.

### Discounts Based on Safe Driving Habits

Our Steer Clear and Drive Safe & Save™ programs could help lower your car insurance costs while teaching young motorists how to drive more safely.

*No one serves you better than State Farm. Craig Dewhurst, a Palencia resident, is committed to supporting the neighborhoods he serves. Call his office at (904) 940-9740.*

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