ST. AUGUSTINE

#### **PRESS**

**MARCH 2020** 

## Nease NJROTC Victorious At 12-School Drill Meet

By Captain Scott LaRochelle. USCG (ret), Nease High School NJROTC



For the past seven years, Nease NJROTC's 40-person drill team has competed at the 12-school Terry Parker Sanctioned Drill Meet in Jacksonville, and for the 7th straight year, the team has returned to Ponte Vedra holding the competition's top prize.

See Story On Page 18

#### Palencia Resident Launching "Become A Vet Contest"

Becoming a veterinarian is the number one career choice of tweens and teens. See The Story On Page 5





#### "SOUPer Bowl" Raises \$40,000

More than 500 guests attended this year's SOUPer Bowl and there were also 80 student volunteers. See The Story On Page 16

PRSRT STD US POSTAGE PAID JACKSONVILLE, FL PERMIT # 315

The Palencia Press P. O. Box 600022 Jacksonville, FL 32260 Palencia POA Annual Meeting in April

#### Five Board Positions Coming Open In April

The Palencia Property Owners of St. Johns County, Inc. (Palencia POA) will hold its annual meeting on or about April 22, 2020. The Palencia POA services residents of the Marshall Creek CDD. Residents in the Sweetwater Creek CDD have a different POA.

All five positions on the Palencia POA Board of Directors will expire at the meeting. Information for residents who are interested in becoming a candidate for these Board positions will be mailed to all property owners later this month.

Additionally, the Palencia Press will publish statements of interest of candidates in next month's edition. All candidate information must be sent to thepaper@bellsouth.net, Palencia Press no later than March 9, 2020, in order to be included in the April edition.



#### Featured Property of the Month



291 Rio Del Norte - Beautiful Open Marsh Views New Price \$940,000

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#### **Palencia Community Classified Ads**

Palencia Press - March 2020

**FOR SALE -** "Hamilton" - Two ticket package. Tuesday, 3-17-20, 7:30 p.m. at the Times Union Center Moran Theatre. Loge, upstairs, Row FFF, seats 15 and 17. Total cost \$333.00 face value. Contact Joseph at 631-463-2708.

FOR SALE - Palencia Club full golf membership. Call 904-687-3000 or johnjax60@yahoo.com.

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#### The Palencia Press

P.O. Box 600022 Jacksonville, FL 32260 Email: thepaper@bellsouth.net



Articles and information must be received by the 10th of the month in order to appear in the following month's issue. Views and opinions expressed are those of the writer and do not express the viewpoint of the publisher or editorial staff. All articles are subject to editing.

Acknowledgements: Image on cover from Freepik.com. The cover was designed using resources from Freepik.

#### **Thought For The Day**

Never be afraid to try something new. Remember that a lone amateur built the Ark. A large group of professionals built the Titanic. -Dave Barry

The objective is not so much to walk your dog, as it is to empty him. -Dave Barry

#### Words Of Wisdom

See you a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope for a fool than for him. - Proverbs 26:12

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#### **Palencia Community Classified Ads**

**Continued From Page 2** 

St. Augustine Travel Club By Peter Dytrych

The St. Augustine Travel Club will be held on Wednesday, March 25 at 2:00 p.m. at the Southeast Branch Library on U.S. 1 near SR 206. Topic will be Gardens and Parks of Europe. Visiting formal and informal gardens in France, England, Italy, Spain, Austria, Germany, Czech Republic, Finland, Ukraine and Russia accompanied by classical symphonies. No reservations are required. We look forward to seeing you! If you have any questions, please contact Peter at 904 797-3736.

**\^<del>\</del>^\\** Pasta Night Every Monday & Tuesday At Jonis Pizza. Choose from Spaghetti & Meatballs, Fettucini Alfredo, Baked Ziti \$7.99 145 Hilden Rd., Suite 118 904-810-0702

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#### iPhone Repair

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#### **Donna Mancini Interiors & Flooring** Sidewalk Sale & 4th Anniversary Celebration

Saturday, March 7th from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 141 Hilden Road

Donna Mancini Interiors & Flooring is celebrating their 4th anniversary with a Sidewalk Sale on Saturday, March 7th. Save up to 75% on discontinued furniture styles and on select accessories. In addition, take 25% off all other furniture, lighting, rugs, wall art, and accessories in the showroom.

A large selection of furniture, lighting, wall art and home accessories will be available.

"Prices have been slashed to make room for our newest arrivals," said Donna Mancini, owner and Palencia resident. "Many one-of-a-kind pieces and specialty items will be available. Plan to come early for the best selection. DIYers ... learn how to apply Jolie Matte furniture paint, an economical and easy way to transform furniture during a demonstration between 10 a.m. and 12 noon.'

Mark your calendar now to attend the Sidewalk Sale, Saturday, March 7th from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Donna Mancini Interiors & Flooring is located off U.S. Highway 1 at 141 Hilden Road, Suite 202, just 4.5 miles North of Palencia in The Shoppes of St. Johns Oaks.

For additional information about the event, please contact Donna Mancini Interiors & Flooring at (904) 810-2027 or email at info@dmiandf.com.

Sale excludes flooring, cabinetry, countertops, tile and construction materials.





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#### **Sweetwater Creek CDD Addresses Challenges**

By Scott McNary, Board Member, Sweetwater Creek CDD

Sweetwater Creek CDD recently completed its first year as a resident controlled Board of Supervisors after taking over from Lennar. Monique Perna and myself, Scott McNary, we're elected to the Board in 2016. Stephen Handler and Rob Lisotta joined the Board in 2019. John Williams replaced Mrs. Perna last year.

The resident controlled Board addressed a number of challenges during its first year. Without any reserves in the budget during the years Lennar ran the Board, the new Board raised over \$1.6 million by restructuring the existing CDD bonds to provide funds for new projects as needed to benefit the community. Reserves were established for future maintenance costs such as road repair.

The Board hired a new landscaping company, Yellowstone, to manage the community's landscaping needs. Future Horizons was hired to maintain the numerous ponds located throughout the Sweetwater community. Brian Stephens was hired to supervise maintenance throughout Sweetwater. His job includes supervising landscaping, pond maintenance, storm drain cleaning, light replacement, and the myriad maintenance projects throughout the community. The Board has authorized funds to replace ornamental grass and other planting throughout Sweetwater. This is an ongoing effort. We encourage our residents to inform us of landscaping needs. With over 600 acres of land in our community, the Board welcomes the assistance.

Additional projects authorized by the Board include resurfacing the lap pool and painting the inside and outside of the Fitness Center. One of our Board members is engaged in working with a building contractor to determine if expansion of the Fitness Center is feasible and cost effective. We are also looking at ways to improve the existing structure, repair what needs to be fixed and manage the usage of the building. The Board is considering ways to better utilize the space inside the Fitness Center to provide space for additional equipment and activities.

The Board budgeted funds to satisfy the legal and engineering requirements for road signage and designations to make our roads safe for all golf cart use, including golf carts which are not "street legal." The plans have been presented to St. John's County and are waiting for final approval.

We have requested proposals for a variety of projects identified by our residents in the recent survey we conducted. One project would establish an outside workout facility at the Fitness Center. Another would create a sports field on the Onda Park land the CDD acquired last year from Lennar. Other projects being considered include a beach volleyball court, a skateboard park and other usages for the sports field land. The Board is working with FPL to change all lighting to LED lights.

Sweetwater Creek CDD Board of Supervisors is committed to enhancing the Palencia experience to benefit our residents. Our meetings are held the first Thursday of every month. We welcome resident attendance and your comments. Our agenda for upcoming meetings may be found on our website: sweetwatercreekcdd.com.

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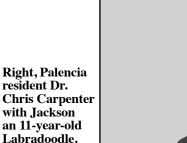
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#### **Spotlight On** Palencia People





attend the camp to learn about veterinary medicine firsthand.

resident Dr.

with Jackson



#### Palencia Resident & Vet Set Go Launching "Become A Vet Contest"

Contest Offers Aspiring Veterinary Students Unique Educational Experience

Becoming a veterinarian is the number one career choice of tweens and teens - meaning one in every five students want to become a future veterinarian. To help students interested in pursuing a career in veterinary medicine, Vet Set Go, the first and only community dedicated to aspiring teen and tween veterinarians, is launching a new contest: "Become A Vet Camp Contest 2020."

The "Become A Vet Camp Contest 2020" offers students entering sixth through eighth grade the chance to win a coveted spot at Auburn University's Junior Vet Camp from July 12-17, 2020. The

prize package includes free tuition, meals and housing.

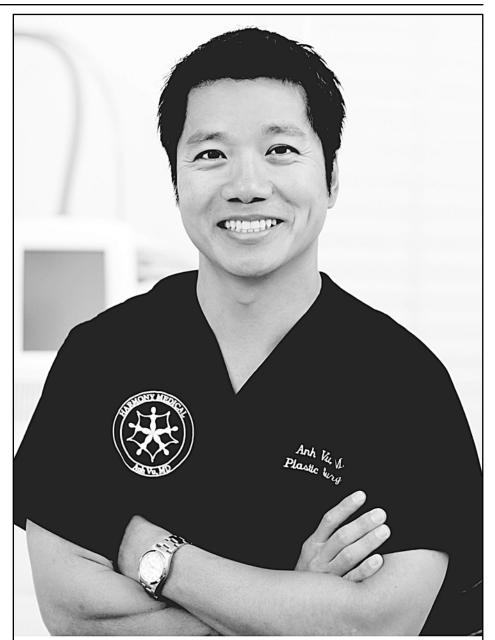
"The love of animals is a very powerful and motivating passion that begins early in future veterinarians," explains Dr. Chris Carpenter, Palencia resident, Founder and President of Vet Set Go. "Sixty-five percent of today's veterinarians decided before the age of 13 that it was the career path they wanted to take, so now is the time to nurture and support these aspiring veterinarians. Veterinary medicine is a calling and we do our best to provide students the tools necessary to **Continued On Page 6** 



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#### Let The Golf Club Work For You

**Tips from Heather Manfredda** Assistant Golf Professional at The Palencia Golf Club **World Long Drive Champion** hmanfredda@hampton.golf

We find ourselves working extremely hard at the game of golf. We all want to enjoy the game of golf and do better. So why not let the club do the work for you? Everyone has heard this expression, but what does it really mean?

The golf club is designed to be a certain distance from our bodies. So don't force the club too close or too far away from yourself.

Allow your posture to be comfortable, but make sure your shoulders are hanging over your shoe laces and your hands hang comfortably from there.

Feel the weight of the club. The amount of pressure on your grip is about the same amount as squeezing a tube of toothpaste, holding a baby bird, or a warm plate on a cold day.

Trust the technology. Avoid creating fancy shots around the green and lifting the ball in the air. I lay the club face into the back of that ball. Whatever happens after contact is truly not in the golfer's control.

Last, don't have an unreal expecta-



tion of the golf ball going further than it is supposed to. Over-powering the golf club does not always lead to a few extra yards, but it does lead to excessive arm involvement and poor shots.

#### "Become A Vet Contest"

**Continued From Page 5** 

follow their dreams."

Three grand prize winners will be chosen to attend the camp to learn about veterinary medicine first-hand in classrooms, laboratories and outdoor facilities. These dedicated students will learn about public health, food animals, wildlife, anatomy, X-rays and first aid, as well as gain valuable mentoring about veterinary science careers while on the campus in Auburn, Ala. Over the course of its 125-year plus history, the Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine has produced more than 6,400 veterinarians and more than 500 specialists and researchers.

This is the fourth year Vet Set Go has sponsored this very popular contest,' said Dr. Carpenter. "I started Vet Set Go to encourage aspiring veterinarians and show them how to explore their dream. I look forward to giving three new students the opportunity of a lifetime to get hands-on experience at the Auburn College of Veterinary Medicine Jr. Veterinary Camp."

I understand that age barriers make it difficult for future veterinarians to find opportunities where they can get animal experience or volunteer at a young age,"

Dr. Carpenter added. "This contest is designed to be a solution to this problem and give students access to the world of veterinary medicine."

To enter, students can share their personal story on why they want to become veterinarian and include a photo of themselves helping or enjoying time with animals. Students, with the help of their parents, can enter the contest at https:// www.vetsetgo.com/about/become-a-vetcamp-contest-2020 between March 2nd and March 28th.

About Vet Set Go:

Vet Set Go is the only web community dedicated to helping teen and tween aspiring veterinarians explore their passion. Founded by Dr. Christopher Carpenter, Vet Set Go works to encourage future veterinarians and show them how to explore their dream today. The goal is simple, encourage future veterinarians to explore their dream and show them how they can do it today. Vet Set Go has connected with hundreds of thousands of aspiring veterinarians and provided free information, books, quizzes and connections to volunteer opportunities.



#### Ask A Master Gardener

#### Flower & Garden Expo This Month

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

Do you have landscape or gardening 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.

Another avenue for gardening advice as well as updates on festivals and events at the St. Johns County Extension Center is the Master Gardener Desk at 904-209-0430, Ext 4782, available most weekdays from 9 am to 12 noon, Monday through Friday.

Here is a listing of some upcoming events and classes at the Extension Center.

**EPIC Flower and Garden Expo** 

A very popular yearly event in our area is the EPIC Flower and Garden Expo held at the St. Johns County Extension Center. It delights gardeners and craft shoppers of all ages and includes growers, nurseries, artisans of all kinds, plant clinics and of course, numerous food vendors. Plant vendors bring a wide array of horticulture for sale such as olive trees, aquatic plants, herbs, ferns, succulents, citrus, bamboo, flowering plants, butterfly plants, native plants and gardening accessories and art. There is a children's activity area with face-painting, potting plant activities and more.

The admission fee is \$5 per person,

valid for both days of the Expo and children under 12 are admitted free of charge.

h Expo will be Saturheld day. March 28th, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, March 29th, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.. The St.

Johns County

Extension Center is located at 3125 Agricultural Center Drive, St. Augustine. Come join the fun!

#### Community Gardens Plots

Have you ever eaten a Florida potato straight out of the ground or fresh lettuce picked directly from a garden? For those fortunate enough to have had these experiences, they never forget them. The St. Johns County Extension Center, just a hop, skip and jump down I-95 (and near the St. Augustine outlets), offers community garden plots for those of you who would like to try your hand at growing your own fresh organic vegetables, herbs, and flowers.

Please contact the phone number listed at the top of this article for more information on plot rentals or me at my email address also listed above. You will join an entire group of other community residents who want an extra special place to get away and experiment with growing favorite fresh fruits and vegetables.

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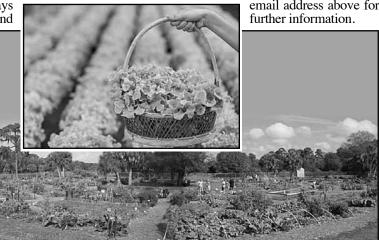
The University of Florida Institute for Food and Agricultural Services (UF/IFAS) offers 50 hours of horticultural training and certification at the St. Johns County Extension Center for County residents interested in learning and then applying techniques specific to North Florida.

Courses are taught by experts from the University of Florida and other experts in the field in every area of horticulture and landscape design.

The fee for the class is \$150, which covers books and training materials. Classes are held Wednesdays from 9:00 to 3:00 p.m. from August to October with an exam at the end of the course. Master Gardeners are then expected to donate 50 volunteer hours yearly to the community. Much of this volunteer work can be done directly at the Extension Center which is housed on 54 acres and includes specialty gardens of all types. It is a great place to further hone your horticultural skills. There are also many other community projects in which to be engaged and they all benefit our local area.

The course application deadline is the end of May. If you are interested, please contact Terra Freeman at terraf@ufl.edu for additional information or me at my

email address above for



This course is not only informative, but extremely valuable for new arrivals to Palencia and Florida at large. Gardening in our subtropics is vastly different from any other area of the country. For example, plants propagated in other hardiness zones, even in South Florida, don't fare well in our zone. So, think about learning how to garden in North Florida and join 30 other students for this great course!

Tip of the Month:

If you have not already done so, it is important to put preemergent herbicide down during dormant season when temperatures drop below 65-70 degrees. This will inhibit weed germination and resulting problems when spring and warmer temperatures arrive. With our warm winter thus far, it is even more critical as pesky weeds are already "on

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

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#### Palencia Elementary School Plans "A Night In The Tropics" For Its Spring Fundraiser

By Tabitha Pattishall, Palencia Resident Palencia Elementary PTO

Get ready for "A Night In The Tropics" as Palencia Elemen-School's PTO prepares for the Sixth Annual Spring Social and Silent Auction. This anticipated sell-out, topnotch event is one of the PTO's biggest fundraisers of the year. Guests are sure to have a fabulous time!

On Friday, April 17th, guests will be transported to an island

getaway as the PTO works its magic to transform the Reinosa Room at the Palencia Club into a tropical paradise. Doors will open promptly at 6:30 p.m. to allow plenty of time to preview and bid on silent auction items. The price of admission includes a three course dinner and a signature cocktail. Music, dancing, games and a live auction will round out this not-to-be missed evening.

This year, as in years past, there will be a variety of items up for bid with a range of price points as well. Here are just a few of the types of items that are included: spa and fitness packages, retail and restaurant gift cards, golf packages, tickets to cultural and sporting events and gift baskets for everyone in the family, including kids and those of the four-legged variety. In addition, attendees have the opportunity to bid on exclusive PES experiences, such as the chance for their student to serve as Captain (principal) for a day and the muchcoveted private parking space right in front of the school.

While most of the bidding involves silent auction items, a live auction will take place for some of the high-end items and experiences. The live auction will be presided over by an auctioneer



Tiffany Trivedi and Heather Rebella are all smiles at last year's Silent Auction.

where entertaining and good natured bidding wars are certain to ensue. The live auction part of the event always includes some of the evening's most memorable moments.

Sarah Post has returned for the third year in a row to chair this amazing event, along with co-chairs Jen Lee and Kate Lanoue. Post says she is "so grateful for the generosity and support shown by our community and local businesses, as well as the dedication of all of the amazing volunteers who come together to make this event a success."

"The silent auction dinner is a great event to support our amazing local elementary school," Jen Lee said. "I promise you will have a great night out while also having the chance to bid on some enticing auction items. You don't have to be part of the school to be involved. If you haven't attended before, please consider joining us for an evening of great food, music and dancing."

Heather Carbone has attended the Silent Auction the past two years. She sings the event's praises.

"The committee works hard to secure live and silent auction items that are local and unique to our community,"

**Continued On Page 9** 

#### Water Problems? Ask Polly!



Polly Swindull

bu a r ou we

I am continually seeing Angie's list and home advisors advertising about how they research contractors like yourself. My questions is, are they legit?

That is a good question. I cannot speak for Home Advisor, but I can certainly speak for Angie's list. Our company was a member of Angie's list for a few years. The more money our company would spend with them, the more recognition we would get. In my opinion that is not what they portray in their advertising. That being said, the best way to check out a contractor is with your local licensing department and the Better Business Bureau. And as always, word of mouth is the highest form of advertisement. Thanks for the question.

**EAST COAST WELLS & WATER TREATMENT CALL 824-6630** 

#### **Palencia Elementary Spring Fundraiser**

**Continued From Page 8** 

Carbone said. "It's a win-win as we are fundraising for our beloved school and provides a good marketing opportunity to local businesses that many of us already support."

Heather can't wait to purchase her

tickets this year.

#### Funds to Be Put Toward Playground **Enhancements**

All of last year's proceeds from the Spring Social and Silent Auction were used for new playground equipment, playground expansion and shade. As the student population at Palencia Elementary grows, adequate space to play becomes a necessity. These funds allowed PES to fully close its campus for the safety of its students.

This year the PTO will be keeping with the

playground theme by enhancing the current playground spaces. These enhancements include, but aren't limited to, playground equipment, small equipment such as balls and more shade. Research has shown that academic performance and focus increases when children have more physical activity in their day.

"Adding new equipment and refreshing playground accessories encourages creative and group play in a safe space," PTO co-president Amy Gramatges said about the enhancements. "Students deserve a fun environment as a much needed break from the demands of learning each day." These ad-ditions will certainly benefit the entire school community.

#### **Get Your Tickets Now**

Those interested in attending the Spring Social and Silent Auction are encouraged to purchase tickets early. Space is limited to 100 guests. Tickets may be purchased online starting March 30th at www.palenciementarypto.weebly.com.

for a fantastic night out and purchasing a sponsorship table for ten, which includes table signage.

Anyone with questions concerning the silent auction, interested volunteers, merchants interested in donating items,



Emily Turner and Helena Smuckler celebrate a memorable evening at the 2019 Spring fundraiser.

or businesses interested in table sponsorships are encouraged to reach out to the event chairs at pes.ptosachair@gmail.com. The PES PTO looks forward to delighting guests again at the 2020 Spring Social and Silent Auction on April 17th. The PTO appreciates the continued community support of the school and can't wait to see you there.



Above, Amy Gramatges sets up for the Silent Auc-The best value is gathering tion. Proceeds will be used again this year for playfriends, family or colleagues ground enhancement.

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"As Saint Augustine natives, both Gabrielle and I have a passion and genuine love for the area. Having left to join the U.S. Navy at age 18, I finally convinced my lifelong crush to marry me in 2003 and have raised two wonderful children, Mia (17) and Gavin (15) together, during my 21 years serving our country. Fortunately, we were able to head back home for these last few years of service and made the beautiful community of Palencia our home in 2017...and there is no looking back. We love being back in our community and close to family and friends

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Palencia residents since 2017, Kurt and Gabrielle Bogart with Gavin, age 15, and Mia, age 17.

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AST, UNDERSTANDING, RELIABLE, Tremendous teamwork to say the least. I never leave reviews but this was an exceptional experience. Best in the business as far as I'm concerned! Kurt and Gabrielle were simply astonishing. Exceeded every need and want. True professionals. I would recommend and will continue to recommend any person that purchases a house to go with Kurt and Gabrielle. Truly a phenomenal job!!! I couldn't be happier. - E.P.





#### Palencia Students To Perform In "Bright Star" Musical March 5th-7th

The SJCCA Musical Theatre program will perform the heartfelt musical "Bright Star," written and composed by Steve Martin and Edie Brickell, on March 5th, 6th and 7th at 7:00 p.m. in the St. Augustine High School auditorium. Palencia residents Maggie Cox, Alexis Tesori, Lauren Casatelli, Drew Fitzgerald and Faith Corneliussen are actors and/or technicians in the play with costume creation by Sandra Casatelli.

The play is set in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina in 1945 with flashbacks to 1923. The musical is inspired by the Grammy-winning 2013 bluegrass album "Love Has Come for You" and the folk story of the Iron Mountain Baby.

Tickets are \$20.00 VIP; \$15.00 adult and \$10.00 student. Buy your tickets for "Bright Star" - SJCCA Musical Theatre Production at: https://www. showtix4u.com/event-details/36844.



#### **Palencia Tennis Tournament Next Month**

By Alexis McDaniel, Palencia Resident

Registration is now open for the 9th Annual Palencia Charity Tennis Tournament. The dates are April 3rd thru 5th.

Tennis Director Tom Salmon said that checks will no longer be accepted at the tennis center and all registrations will be done online at Tenniscores, First Coast Tennis.

The entry fee is \$65 per person. Divisions will consist of Men's Doubles, Ladies Doubles and Mixed Doubles. Registration closes on March 29th at midnight. To play in two events, add \$20 to the **Registration deadline this month** 

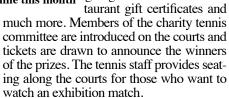
fee. Last year, 160 players participated. The courts can accommodate up to 180.

Here is the web address for registration: https://firstcoast.tenniscores. com/?mod=nndz-SW5uOGcrQ28yTkJI aXo0aVQ4WFVKYkU9&tourid=nndz-WkMrNXlBPT0%3D

The tournament raises funds for Camp Boggy Creek for seriously ill and disabled children. Since the charity event started, the event has brought in more than \$100,000. Kids attend Camp Boggy Creek for free and are provided medical supervision and care while at the camp. Camp Boggy Creek is part of the Serious Fun Children's Network, created by Actor Paul Newman. To date, Camp Boggy Creek has served more than 80,000 chil-

dren with serious illness and their family members. To learn more about Camp Boggy Creek visit www. campboggycreek.org.

The free opening evening on April 3rd is for anyone who wants to visit. It will feature an exhibition match, raffle, food truck and ceremony. Students sell raffle tickets for prizes, which span from tennis and golf gear to lessons and res-



The opening night is a great way to celebrate our community, while raising funds for a fantastic cause that is close to our hearts," Salmon said.

The committee is also seeking sponsors, ranging from \$100 to \$3,000. Contact Tom Salmon at the Palencia Tennis Center 904-825-4012 or email tom.salmon@fsresidential.com

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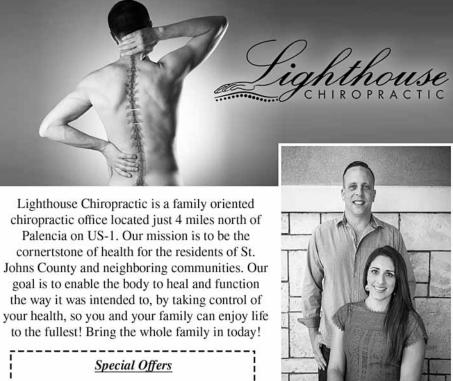




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#### **Home Tree Care Tips And Techniques**

By Heather Fritz, Palencia Resident **Monster Tree Service** 904-719-8499

You don't have to be a tree hugger to take good care of your plants and trees. In the long run, it's far easier and probably less expensive to take preventive measures now than it will be to resolve larger problems which could have been avoided. Here are a few tips and techniques to maintain good tree health. Information is sourced from the University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

#### **Remove Spanish Moss and Ball Moss**

There are two types of moss: Spanish Moss, and Ball Moss. Neither are parasitic plants. While moss won't be the root cause for a tree's decline, moss tends to be

attracted to stressed or slow growing tress. The plant uses the tree limbs and branches for support. While movies romanticize the look and feel of Spanish Moss hanging on large oak limbs, it's really best to remove it before it becomes problematic. Moss can shade tree leaves causing slow

growth. In addition, excess moss can weigh down and sometimes break branches. Hiring a tree care professional to remove moss can be costly, so it is best to remove the moss by hand before it gets out of control or moves into areas of a tree that you can't reach.

Improper Mulch



Sucker" is a common term for the small sprouts or stems that stick up around the base of a tree's trunk. Suckers compete for water and nutrients. Help the tree to focus on growing tall and filling out its canopy by pruning suckers early on. Don't wait until they get thick and difficult to cut. Left ignored, suckers will continue to grow and your tree will become a bushy mess

#### Leave Mistletoe for the Holidays

Like the charming holiday decoration, Mistletoe grows in a round mass attached to a tree branch. Mistletoe's distinctive green leaves, stems, and white berries—each with a sticky seed inside-are easily recognizable. As a small seedling, it roots into the bark and wood of a tree and makes a connection with the vascular system of the host. Although mistletoe makes its own food, it steals water and nutrients from it's host tree. Mistletoe is a parasitic plant and toxic if ingested. Mistletoe can weaken or destroy the trees it infests, especially if the tree has been compromised by pests, storms, or old age.

Pruning may help your tree survive. Remove the mistletoe roots by pruning the infested branch at least six inches below the

spot where the mistletoe is attached. You can avoid climbing into trees by using a pruning pole. Be sure to take safety precautions when cutting branches out of trees, including wearing head and eye protection. After handling mistletoe plants, wash your hands thoroughly with hot, soapy water.

#### Yellow Palm Fronds

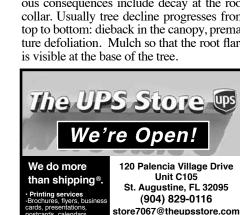
Proper Mulch

Palms require more care than most people think. Palm fronds naturally turn yellow, then brown as they age. However, yellowing that occurs in patterns or on a large number of fronds is not normal aging. Yellowing could be the result of disease, however Florida's nutrient deficient, sandy soil is the

more common culprit of yellowing fronds. Fertilize established plants with a palm special fertilizer four times per year. Palm fertilizer can be found at most hardware stores. Make sure all the nitrogen, potassium, and magnesium are in a slow-release form.

#### Tree Suffocation

It's true- you can suffocate a tree. Tree roots need access to oxygen. Excessive amounts of soil added around the base of the tree reduces the amount of oxygen available to the roots. The density of the soil may retain either too much or not enough moisture around the tree roots causing the tree to decline. Often this happens accidentally when extra soil is added for a flower bed around the tree or if your tree is a victim of "volcano mulching." Volcano mulching is the practice of heaping mulch mounds high around the base and trunk of the trees. Serious consequences include decay at the root collar. Usually tree decline progresses from top to bottom: dieback in the canopy, premature defoliation. Mulch so that the root flare



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#### Most Relational Conflict Is Not Resolvable

By Michael Brown, MSC, LMFT 904-289-2954 www.happycoupleshealthycommunities.com

Do you and your partner find yourselves arguing over the same issue(s) and you feel like you get nowhere on it (them)? Do you find that it is frustrating, it hurts, and that each of you starts to entrench in your own position and to see each other as adversaries rather than friends? Well, that is probably because you are struggling with a perpetual issue, and, perhaps, a gridlocked perpetual issue.

In 40 years of research with over 3,000

In 40 years of research with over 3,000 couples, Dr. John Gottman found that 69% of what couples fight about are not solvable problems. They are perpetual conflicts that have to do with fundamental differences between couples, differences in personality or needs that are fundamental to their core definition of self. These are issues without resolution that the couple has often been dealing with for many years. They may make some progress on the issue for a time, but the issue inevitably reemerges. Each time, the discussion is an attempt to establish a dialogue with the problem, which, admittedly, will never go away or be fully resolved.

Dan Wile, a marriage and family therapist, wrote in After the Honeymoon (1988) that "choosing a partner is choosing a set of problems" (p. 12). No matter who we partner with, we partner with a set of problems, because each of us brings into a relationship our own "enduring vulnerabilities." Wile also wrote, "...there is value, when choosing a long-term partner, in realizing that you will inevitably be choosing a particular set of unsolvable problems that you'll be grappling with for the next ten, twenty, or fifty years" (p. 13). John Gottman maintains that, "Relationships will work to the extent that you have wound up with a set of perpetual problems you can learn to live with."

When a problem is a perpetual problem, rather than solving it, a couple needs to learn how to dialogue well about their different subjective realities. John Gottman observed that what he called the "Masters of Relationship," the couples that stay together and are relatively happy, seem to be able to come to some acceptance of their problem. They are able to communicate simultaneously acceptance of the partner and the desire to improve this problem, often with amusement, respect and affection.

However, if a couple cannot establish a dialogue, the conflict may become grid-locked and gridlocked conflict eventually leads to emotional disengagement, which is the leading cause of divorce. John Gottman found that 16% of perpetual conflict becomes gridlocked. The research revealed that there is a very good reason most people cannot yield on gridlocked problems. Be-

hind each person's position lies something deep and meaningful—something core to that person's belief system or personality. It might be a strongly held value or perhaps a dream not yet lived. There is probably a personal story behind their position.

Gridlock is the result of dreams in opposition and fear of accepting influence on the issue. When people get stuck in gridlock, they are usually not talking about the problem, rather about some core part of self, some aspect of what the problem means to them. For example, a conflict about money that is gridlocked is probably not about money. Instead, it could be about the experience of power, or competence, or security, or even about independence and freedom. Therefore, we have three suggestions to help you move from gridlock to dialogue on your perpetual conflict.

First, the relationship has to become safe enough so that each person's dreams or values or histories (which have often gone 'underground,' hidden within each person's entrenched positions), can come forth, be heard and accepted as valid.

Second, we suggest that you have a speaker-listener dialogue about the dreams, values, or histories behind each of your positions. As speaker, remember that you are not trying to persuade or convince your partner of your point of view. Rather, your goal is to help your partner understand the dream or story behind your position.

Third, remember that the goal is not to solve the problem at this point. Instead, focus on truly understanding each other and your positions at a very deep level. Try to suspend your own judgment and agenda and be a good listener. As good listeners, we need to explore what our partner's dream is really about; why it carries so much meaning for them: why it is so core to their sense of self.

You may be able to do this on your own, but you may need some help, particularly if you have gridlocked perpetual conflict. You may want to consider seeking the assistance of a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and Certified Gottman Therapist who has been trained in helping couples with these dynamics or attending an Art and Science of Love: A Weekend Workshop for Couples developed by Drs. John and Julie Gottman to help couples improve their friendship and intimacy and better manage conflict in their relationship.

Michael Brown is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Certified Gottman Therapist, Couples Workshop Leader, and Clinical Trainer in private practice in Bartram Park.



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#### Nease SOUPer Bowl Raises \$40,000

By Caroline Hunt, Palencia Resident, Nease High School

Right, Students from Freedom **Crossing Academy** 4H Culinary club serve a tortellini soup at the Nease SOÛPer Bowl.

Below, Beneficiary of the SOUPer **Bowl, Hugs Across** the County, accept a check for \$39,342. The check does not include the amount of money that was raised the night of the event.





Approximately 500 guests attended this year's SOUPer Bowl at Nease High School, and there were also 80 student volunteers present from the Hospitality and Tourism and IB Programs. The school ended up surpassing their goal, raising over \$40,000. This makes for combined total of approximately \$140,000 that was raised by the SOUPer Bowl in the last five years, or since the start of the event.



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#### **Minimizing The Risk Of Infections At Communal Play Areas**

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

As we stood in the examination room discussing Tucker's tummy issues, a troubled pet parent asked me "He got this because of the dog park didn't he!?' Often that question is a challenging one to answer, because the answer is a hard "maybe." Here, we will discuss some of those risks, along with how pet parents may further mitigate them so that you can relax and enjoy your time with your pets.

Some illnesses are able to be vaccinated against to provide protection for your pets. Examples include the kidney infection leptospirosis, for which vaccination against the most common strains are readily available. Another group of contagious diseases we aim to prevent are respiratory infections caused by bacteria (Bordetella) or viruses (parainfluenza, distemper, influenza, etc). Consulting with your veterinarian to discuss which vaccines are appropriate for your individual pet based upon their age, lifestyle and risk factors is recommended.

Vaccination will dramatically reduce, however cannot fully eliminate, the chance of contracting an upper respiratory infection. Respiratory infections are particularly difficult to prevent, as only the four most common agents causing upper respiratory tract infections have a vaccine available. If your pet is exposed to one of the other eight (less common) causes of infectious canine respiratory disease, they may still fall ill. Just like the human flu, there are also some "mutations" that occur with the viruses that make the vaccine less effective against new strains of the bug. This is why minimizing exposure to ill dogs is important, through keeping your pet home if they are ill and asking others to do the same.

#### Intestinal parasites

Intestinal parasites are everywhere. In the soil of your yard, in a puddle on the street, or in the moist area under the bushes where Tucker likes to dig. Wildlife and feral cats are the primary culprits, though even your neighbor's dog may be unwittingly harboring and spreading a parasite. The CAPC (Companion Animal Parasite Council) recommends screening your pet twice yearly for intestinal parasites, because often we don't even know our pets have them until the signs appear several weeks or months later (if at all).

Fortunately, the most common causes of infectious intestinal diseases are preventable by keeping your pet on a monthly heartworm and intestinal parasite preventative, available from your veterinarian. These preventable parasites include roundworms, hookworms and whipworms.

One "nonpreventable" intestinal parasite is Giardia, as there is no prophylactic deworming available for this organism. Keeping your dog hydrated is important, but letting them use a communal water dish can be risky if there are sick dogs sharing that water.

Giardia can live in a wet or damp environment for long periods of time. If a dog catches this parasite, it then multiplies to the point where it infiltrates the lining of a dog's intestines and blocks normal digestion and absorption of nutrients.

Giardia can cause diarrhea, which contains infective cysts that can be passed to other dogs. The good news is that most dogs are relatively resistant to the Giardia bug. Young dogs, old dogs and dogs with compromised immune systems or GI tracts are most at risk. Many dogs will clear the infection by themselves with minimal signs, but often a course of antibiotic is necessary to help the body fight off the bug. Immune-suppressive medications, such as corticosteroids, can also re-activate an old Giardia infection. We do not know why some infected hosts get diarrhea while others never do.

Most progressive pet care facilities and dog parks take extra steps to fight Giardia and other intestinal parasites and are very successful at limiting exposure. Though those steps create a much safer environment, if you are concerned about your pet sharing water, it may bring you peace of mind to bring a foldable water bowl of

While there are many steps that can be taken to minimize the occurrences of these conditions, there are inherent risks associated with taking your pets out into the world to enjoy their lives. If you notice any unusual signs such as a pet with a hacking cough or diarrhea, alert the parents that their pet has those signs. Sometimes they may not know that it's a problem, or perhaps they will share with you that the problem has already been diagnosed as being related to a condition that is not contagious.

Taking the steps discussed above for your pets will further reduce their risks, allowing you to have a clear mind while enjoying the outdoors with your pooch pal. Now that's all covered, lets get those pups out there and play!



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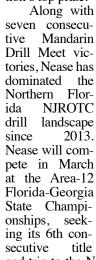
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#### Nease NJROTC Victorious At Terry Parker Drill Meet

By Captain Scott LaRochelle. USCG (ret), Nease High School NJROTC

For seven past years, Nease NJROTC's Nease 40-person drill team has competed at the 12-school Terry Sanc-Parker tioned Drill Meet in Jacksonville. For the 7th straight year, the team has returned to Ponte Vedra holding competition's top prize.



and trip to the Navy National Championships in April.

"Every JROTC program has a reputation," said Cadet Battalion Chief of Staff Yuan Tian. "...and at Nease it's drill."

Drill is much more than a marching

Drill is much more than a marching competition. Drill meet championships include a series of 10 individual events including unarmed and armed marching, color guard, personnel inspection, academics, pushups, situps, and running relays. Points awarded in each event are combined to determine the day's overall winner.

This year Nease won 1st place in Personnel Inspection, Academics, Athletics Overall, Situps, Pushups, Overall Drill, Color Guard and Unarmed Basic Drill.

Thirteen cadets took home individual medals for top five finishes in academics or athletics. Leading the way



Nease NJROTC's Armed Exhibition drill team led by Cadet Ethan Wissel competes at the Terry Parker Drill Meet.



Nease NJROTC's Unarmed Basic Drill winning team led by Cadet Elkhan Bagirov performs during the Terry Parker Drill Meet in Jacksonville.

with 1st place medals were Lindy Gostage – Female Pushups (89), Brogan Donnelly – Male Situps (303) and Emmelie Neff – Female Situps (318).

Nease is currently the #1 ranked NJROTC drill team in Area 12 (59 programs covering Northern Florida and the state of Georgia), having won the Area-12 Drill Championship each of the past five years. The team has won all three of its drill competitions this season and will seek to make it six state championships in a row March 7 in Douglas, Georgia where the best 16 schools in Area-12 will vie for top honors and the right to compete at the Navy National Drill Championships in April.

"This group of cadets has worked harder than any other team," said Naval science instructor Master Chief Duane Spears. "The commitment, motivation, energy and enthusiasm is unlike any I've seen."



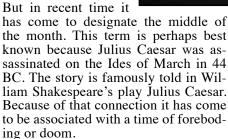


#### The Ides of March

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

The "eyes of March" or Ides of March is a term from the ancient Roman calendar. The term "Ides" has meaning only to the Roman calendar, which was displaced by the Julian calendar in 46 BC. Months of the Roman calendar were arranged around three named days, the

Kalends, the Nones and the Ides. The Kalends referenced the 1st day of the month, the Nones referenced the 7th day in March, May, July and October and the 5th day in other months, and Ides, which fell on the 15th day of March, May, July and October or the 13th day of the other months.



The expression "Beware of the Ides of March" was first found in Shakespeare's Julius Caesar in 1601. The line is the soothsayer's message to Julius Caesar, warning of his death. It did not mean or signify anything outside of the story other than a normal way of saying March 15th. Any danger associated with the "Ides of March" was purely an invention of Shakespeare.

In the Christian Church, Lent will take place during the month of March.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday (February 26), lasts 6 weeks and ends before Easter. Lent is a time to prepare our souls through prayer, repenting of our sins and denying ourselves. Many will take this opportunity to Fast or "give up something" i.e, meat, chocolate, Facebook, etc. In doing so we are replicating Jesus' jour-

ney into the desert for 40 days. I encourage people to not just give something up, but to also take something on i.e. read the Bible, pray through a Lenten devotional, or attend a Bible study. This is an opportunity, planned into the Christian Calendar, to draw near to God.

My hope and prayer is that each of us will not see March as a time of doom and gloom, but rather as an opportunity to grow in our relationship with God through Jesus Christ. God is always drawing near to us. How will we draw close to God?

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19



Let my teaching fall like rain and my words descend like dew, like showers on new grass, like abundant rain on new plants.

-Deuteronomy 32:2

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#### 5 Moments When You Should Check Your Insurance

By Craig Dewhurst, State Farm Agent, Palencia Resident

Thanks to the life insurance Maria Loera's husband Roberto bought she was able to pay for funeral costs, medical bills and day-to-day expenses after his passing. It even helped her set up college savings accounts for their children. "Roberto's life insurance was such a blessing," said Maria. "It's something every family should have."

Insurance protects you, your family, and your home from the unexpected, but it can only do its job if the coverage is up to date. Review your insurance annually or during key life changes such as these:

Your family status changes. If you're marrying, expecting a baby, or adopting a child, you'll want to protect your growing family with adequate life insurance and disability income insurance. Losing a family member through death or divorce should also prompt a policy review. Remember to change the beneficiary designations on your existing policies as needed.

Your children grow up. When you have a new teen driver, adequate auto insurance is a must. Your State Farm® agent can tell you about what may be available. If your student is leaving for college or has recently graduated, it's a good time to consider personal property, liability, and renters insurance for the new living arrangements.

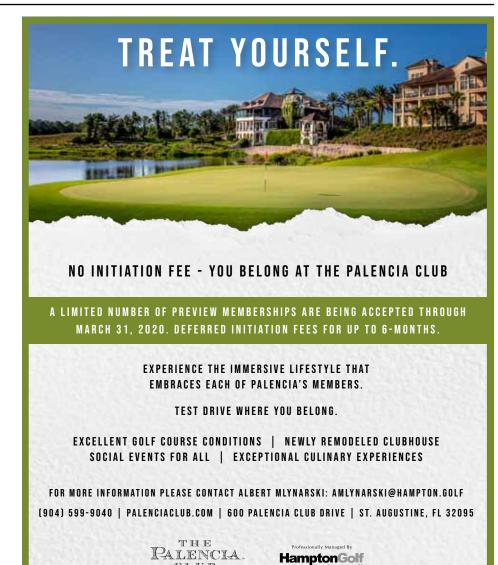
You're moving or remodeling. Whenever your address changes, review

your homeowners insurance to make sure the new property is adequately protected. It's also a good time to update your home inventory - whether you're adding items such as new furniture or scaling back for a move to a smaller home. Also, be sure to update your coverage if you renovate your current home.

You're starting a business. Whether you're going to rent office space or open a home-based business, include a thorough insurance review in your start-up plans. Depending on the size of your operation, you may have to consider property and liability, commercial vehicle, and workers' compensation coverage, as well as a health care plan for employees. If you're a sole proprietor working from home, be sure to review your homeowners plan to see that your business and equipment are fully covered.

You need health insurance options. In today's rapidly changing health care environment, protecting your family's health can be a challenge. If your current plan is up for renewal or if you've been downsized and need brandnew coverage, take the time to compare plan features against your family's current or anticipated needs.

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.





#### Craig Dewhurst, Agent Palencia Resident

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