



News For And About Residents Of The Palencia Community

Labor Day is Monday,
September 5th



ST. AUGUSTINE

PRESS

SEPTEMBER 2022

Palencia Fishing Club Anglers Out To Hook The Big One!



Just a few members of the Palencia Fishing Club: Brian Warsham, Earl Oltz, Richard Overton, John Van Laere, Ed Willis, Greg Eilers, Doug Senecal, Joe Mathews. Photo by Elizabeth Willis.

If you like to fish or want to learn how-to or where-to fish, you've come to the right place. Palencia's newly formed Fishing Club is made up of novice as well as expert fishermen who talk tackle and gear, artificial lures, inshore and offshore fishing and kayak fishing. Guests are welcome to come and join the monthly meetings, many of which include guest speakers who discuss helpful tips to benefit all anglers.

Continued On Page 5

Palencia Cub Scout Pack Welcoming New Members



The annual Spookeree Cub Family Campout, each October, is for all levels of Cub Scouts and their families.

Cub Scout Pack 023 is back in Palencia Elementary School. The values of Scouting as outlined in the Scout Law – trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent – represent important values for both young men and young women. It's fun, hands-on learning and achievement that puts kids in the middle of the action and prepares them for today – and for life.

See Page 20 For The Complete Article

Palencia Pirates Ready For Successful School Year

The first day back to school in Palencia brought great weather, great energy and great spirit from the students, teachers and families. While kids were feeling excited and maybe a little sad that summer is over, their lives will soon be full of new events and experiences.

A reminder about Back to School safety - Alert authorities to strange vehicles or persons in the vicinity of the school bus stops and/or walkways to/from school bus stops. Prevent children from crossing roadways between motor vehicles and golf carts. Don't park motor vehicles or golf carts within fifty feet of school bus stops from any direction. Don't allow children to enter/exit motor vehicles or golf carts from the roadside of the motor vehicles or golf carts (enter/exit from curbside only). Don't assemble or park in any manner which impedes the safe passage of school buses to and from school bus stops. For kindergarteners and 1st graders, meet the student at the student door of the bus, especially in inclement weather. School bus operators need your assistance with linking parent with child... See Page 24 for School Bus Safety Tips

First day of school at Palencia Elementary, left to right, Tristan Trivedi, Justin Strout, Hunter Hammond and Cash Hammond.



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We had met with a couple other realtors; but for us, it came down to our comfort level and Cammy's **experience** and **expertise** in real estate that convinced us to go with her. She walked us through the entire process from start to finish and kept us up to speed during every step from listing to sale. The entire "Ray Team" was **exceptional** and managed our listing and sale with the utmost **priority**.

We would definitely recommend Cammy and her team to anyone buying or selling a home in NE Florida."

-Al and Sue



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St. Augustine Travel Club

The St. Augustine Travel Club resumes on Wednesday, September 14, at 3 p.m. at the Southeast Branch Public Library, 6670 US 1 South in St. Augustine. Our topic will be **Sweden** and **Stockholm** - Discover the nature beauty of this Scandinavian country and cruise around its capital Stockholm's archipelago. The club, is formatted as an armchair travel presentation with a brief lecture and a video highlighting areas around the world, with focus mostly on Europe. The Travel Club also organizes a cruise in the Caribbean region once a year. Questions? Call Peter Dytrych at (904) 797-3736.

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Words Of Wisdom

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." -John 14: 2-3

The Palencia Press

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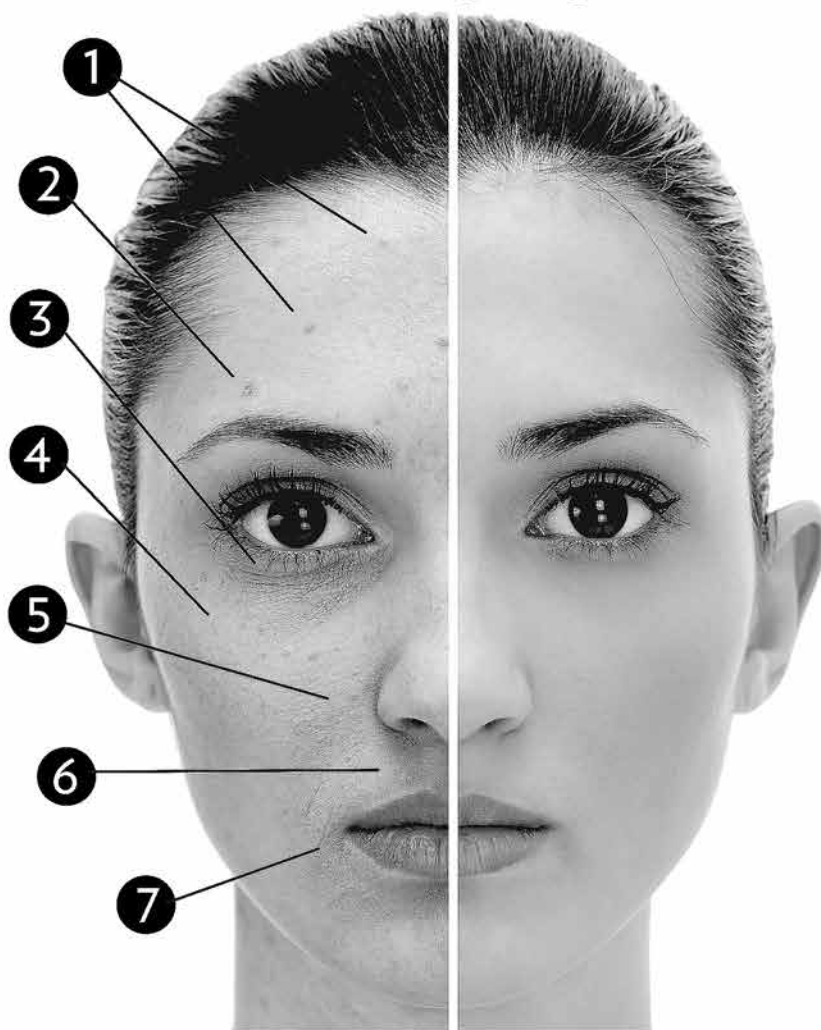
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Thought For The Day

My wife is on a new diet. Coconuts and bananas. She hasn't lost weight, but can she climb a tree! - Henny Youngman

What's Aging You?



- 1 age spots
- 2 acne scars
- 3 sun damage
- 4 rosacea
- 5 uneven skintone
- 6 hair removal
- 7 wrinkles

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Ask Carol B

What Are My Medicare Coverage Options?

Carol Bogart, Palencia Resident
904-648-6488
Carol@AskCarolB.com

We discussed how to enroll in Original Medicare and what you should consider prior to making a decision about Medicare coverage. Now let's review your Medicare options.

Medicare beneficiaries can choose among the following options for their health care and prescription drug coverage:

Original Medicare, managed by the federal government, provides Medicare Part A and Part B coverage.

- Part A (Hospital Insurance) – Helps cover inpatient care in hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, hospice care and some home health care if certain conditions are met.

- Part B (Medical Insurance) – Helps cover doctor's services, outpatient care, other medical services that Part A doesn't cover (like physical and occupational therapists), and some home health and preventative services.

You can stay on Original Medicare, but it only covers about 80% of the cost of Medicare approved services, there is no limit on the amount you pay out of pocket, and there is no prescription drug coverage. It also doesn't cover other services such as dental, vision, hearing, and long-term nursing. Although you are not required to enroll in Part D, there is a penalty of 1% of the average monthly premium for each month you delay enrollment, unless you have creditable drug coverage.

There are two ways you can get additional coverage.

Option 1 – add one or both of the following to Original Medicare:

- Medicare Supplement Plans, offered by private insurance carriers. This helps pay some of the out-of-pocket costs (copays, coinsurance, and deductibles) that come with Original Medicare. This type of plan has its own premium (in addition to the Part B premium). Medicare Supplement plans are identified by letters (such as Plan F, G or N) and must offer the same basic benefits, no matter which carrier you select. The differences between the carrier plans are the cost, underwriting criteria, and value-added services. Costs are set by the carrier and are based on things such as age, tobacco use and your location.

- Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plan (PDP), offered by private insurance carriers. This helps pay for prescription drugs either in a stand-alone Part D plan (there is a separate premium for these plans) or through a Medicare Advantage

Prescription Drug Plan (MAPD). Stand-alone Part D plans have a yearly deductible, copays, and coinsurance based on the tier of the drug (which is based on the carrier's formulary). These plans may also feature preferred pharmacies, where you pay a lower copayment for prescriptions.

This option may be good for those who:

- Are comfortable paying higher monthly premiums because they want to limit out-of-pocket spending on health care.

- Want the freedom to access doctors and/or hospitals throughout the US.

- Can afford to buy extra benefits separately (vision, dental, etc.).

Option 2 – choose a Medicare Advantage plan:

Medicare Advantage Plans (Part C), are sometimes referred to as an "all-in-one" option. They combine Original Medicare services with benefits such as vision, dental, hearing and/or prescription drug coverage. These plans come in different flavors such as HMOs, PPOs, and PFFS, are approved by Medicare, and are run by private insurers. Out-of-pocket costs and cost sharing differ from Original Medicare and may depend on whether you received services in or out of network.

This option may be good for those who:

- Want a lower monthly premium and are comfortable paying copays, coinsurance, and deductibles for health care services.

- Are comfortable seeking care within a defined provider network.

- Want prescription drug coverage and extra benefits included (dental, vision, hearing, gym membership, etc.).

Understanding your Medicare coverage options will help you narrow down the type of plan best fitting your health needs as well as the health of your wallet. You can then obtain more information on these specific plans and carriers to optimize your benefits. I'm more than happy to review these items with you. My services are always of no cost to you. Feel free to reach out if you have questions.

Carol Bogart is a licensed insurance agent with advanced knowledge of Medicare features and intricacies. She is AHIP Certified in compliance with CMS, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and holds Florida Life and Health License #W756153. Visit www.AskCarolB.com.

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COA Presents Herbology At The Players Community Senior Center In Ponte Vedra

The Council On Aging will offer a 4-week course on Herbology on Tuesdays in September at COA's THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center in Ponte Vedra Beach. Led by instructor James Carucci, the course is designed to show participants how herbs can be used to promote health and well-being by looking at specific health concerns and herbal solutions. Classes will be held on Tuesdays from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. on September 6, 13, 20 and 27. The cost to participate in the 4-week session is \$30.00. Registration is required, and space is limited.

To register and for more information, please contact COA's Amanda Jones at (904) 209-3659 or via email at ajones@stjohnscoa.com.

There's A Lot Of Fish Out There! Palencia Fishing Club Catching On

Continued From Page 1

Greg Eilers, Palencia Fishing Club facilitator, has brought in three local guides to talk about saltwater fishing and their services. Most recently Katie Hollis, Marshall Creek General Operations Manager, gave an informative talk about the ponds in Palencia and where anglers can fish and expect to catch some bass.

The club is planning to expand activities in the next year. Eilers sends out newsletters to the members when there is a fishing activity available that may be of interest, along with brief notes about past meetings. There are approximately 50 Palencia resident members registered with the club.

What Are You Catching?



Greg Eilers with a freshly caught Speckled Trout. In the background you can see Palencia.

Greg Eilers recently launched his Hobie kayak at the Nocatee Landing Kayak Launch. The launch is a short drive from Palencia and is accessed from Nocatee Landing Trail in the Southeast corner of the Nocatee development.

"It is down a bumpy road, but there is a parking lot with restroom facilities at the end of the road next to the launch," said Eilers. "This location is great for older kayakers with the available facilities, back down ramp and quick access to the ICW. It is important to watch out for boat traffic. On one occasion I had to ride up and over the high wake of a passing small cruise ship."

There are various options for on-the-water activity, some people launch stand up paddle boards (SUPS), canoes and kayaks to just enjoy the beauty of the area and there are many fishing locations North and South of the launch site.

"I normally cruise around Pine Island, which is best timed with the tidal flow by going South on the outgoing and back North on the incoming," said Eilers. "The opposite approach can be taken by going North to the various little creeks that feed into the ICW, which hold some very nice fish for the catching. On my last trip around Pine Island lots of tailing Redfish were observed, along with a Tripletail that was floating on the surface. Tarpon could be heard slurping the surface. The Redfish weren't biting what we offered, but we did catch Flounder and a variety of what we call trash fish, Catfish and Ladyfish," said Eilers. "On the return trip up the ICW on the incoming tide and just after

riding out the wake of a large yacht, I landed a 20" Speckled Trout. It was the first trout I had seen in quite awhile and was surprised to bring it in."

"Even if you don't catch much on a trip around Pine Island, it is a great nature tour with all the birds, turtles and other wildlife. Be aware that the current can be strong and stay close to shore to lessen the strength of the current flow," Eilers added.



Doug Senecal and friend Charlotte fishing for Flounder.

"Our friend Charlotte caught a 14" flounder with beautiful markings in front of the cross at the St. Augustine inlet," said Palencia Fishing Club member Doug Senecal. "This species is a bottom feeder commonly found in the ever-changing tides of the St. Augustine inlet. Later, the flounder was offered up by the Lord as an appetizer."



Earl Oltz shows off a Large Mouth Bass caught in a pond in Palencia.

"I caught a Large Mouth Bass, weighing about 2 1/2 lbs. in one of the large ponds in Palencia (not in someone's back yard)," said Earl Oltz. "It was caught with a Liquid Stix Rod and Reel with 10 lb. test monofilament line. The bait was a Dirty Green rubber Worm (with Glitter inside) and a medium sized barbless hook. I usually fish along the shore or just outside the weed beds."

"I have found the best time to catch Bass in Palencia ponds is 6:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m., 12:00 to 1:30 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m...Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner," added Oltz.

Continued On Page 6

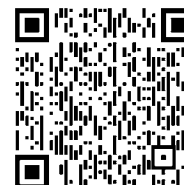
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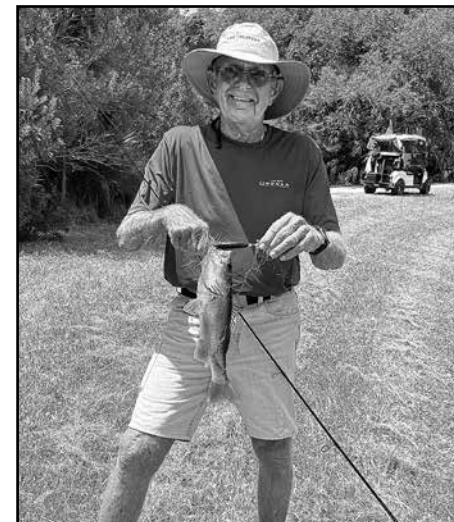
* Some Cars Slightly Higher

Palencia Fishing Club

Continued From Page 5



Joe Mathews with his 3 1/4 lb. Bass caught in the lake beside the golf course near the 18th green.



Bob Steck caught his 1 1/2 lb. Bass in a Palencia North pond using a Rapala diving minnow crank bait.

Want to learn how to pond fish?

“Pond fishing in Palencia can be a lot of fun if you know how, when and where to fish,” said Fishing Club member Joe Mathews. “Many of the ponds and lakes in Palencia and Palencia North are accessible for fishing, although fishing is not permitted behind residents houses that border the ponds.”

Mathews, who moved to Palencia about four years ago, is retired and fishes the ponds 4 to 5 times a week. Mathews likes to fish topwater and crank bait lures, but prefers fishing on the bottom using plastic worms and lizards on a Texas rig. He said the weedless Texas rig is easier to fish the ponds with all of the vegetation. Joe caught the 3-1/4 pound bass in the picture in the lake beside the golf course 18th green using a green pumpkin chatterbait, but the majority of the bass he catches are on the Texas rig.

Bob Steck has been pond fishing in Palencia since he moved here 20 years ago and knows all of the good spots (especially the good ones that are accessible on the golf course when there is no play). Steck likes to fish topwater lures and middle water column crank baits, and caught his 1 1/2 pound bass in the picture in a Palencia North pond using a Rapala diving minnow crank bait. Steck, who is retired, spends most of his time playing golf on the Palencia course. He is well-known (legend status) for carrying his fishing pole with him while golfing to stop and fish some of the ponds during a round.

Want to learn how to pond fish here in Palencia, either for bass or bluegill, or both? A few of the club members would be glad to provide on-the-water instruction on fishing gear, locations, techniques, etc.

If you would like to discuss the club give Greg Eilers a call at 303-981-4061.

St. Augustine Garden Club Holiday Tour Tickets Go On Sale October 1st

The Garden club of St. Augustine is planning the 51st Holiday Tour of Homes “Casa y Flores de Navidad.” This lovely St. Augustine Holiday tradition will take place on Sunday Dec. 4th 2022 from Noon-5:00 p.m. Six homes in Downtown Historic St. Augustine will be festively decorated with greenery and fresh flowers by members of the St. Augustine Garden Club.

This is a walking Tour, with limited transportation from the Downtown parking Garage. Three of the homes on Tour are located on Water Street, a short walk from the Parking Garage.

This year’s Tea and Boutique, from Noon until 4:00 p.m., will be at the River House on Marine Street. Holiday crafts, wreaths, baked goods, jams and sweets hand made by the Garden Club members will be available for purchase at the Boutique. The Tea, featuring homemade holiday cookies, punch, tea etc. is part of the ticket price.

Tickets will go on sale October 1st and they sell out quickly.

The Web site www.gardenclubofstau-



gustine.org will have information about the Tour and how to purchase your tickets.

Call Palencia resident Maureen Nightingale (503) 686-1426 to arrange for ticket purchase or stop by one of her Coldwell Banker Premier Property Offices (163 Palencia Village Dr., Suite 110 on Mondays or 600 Market Street on Tuesdays).

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Our Palencia Ladies Are Still Undefeated

By Earline Barnes, President and Laura Mayo, Vice President Women's Golf Association Of Palencia

We are so excited for all of the ladies who have played on the Palencia team this summer and contributed to the team's success. As of today, The Palencia ladies are currently undefeated after their recent match against the Deerwood Team. The Palencia team score was 32.5 points to their 23.5 points. A remarkable result given that our ladies started and finished in the intermittent Florida rain.

the same team," said Diane Robinson. "It's a great way to have fun and make new friends."

The new WGA Board, Earline Barnes, Sandy Brandenburg, Pam Ashburn, Laura Mayo, Sandy Frambes, Marge Stancill, Teresa Serrano and Louise Starmann, conducted several planning sessions during the summer to get ready for the 2022/2023 season.

We would like to welcome several



Team Palencia ladies who won the Deerwood match include, left to right, Linda Carucci, Maria Nilsson, Tricia Luciano, Sandy Brandenburg, Staci Luttrupp and Faye Padulat.

"This latest win is positioning the Palencia ladies to be one of the top teams in the Northeast Regional Playoffs," said Barb Jacobi, co-captain of the Palencia team. "We have a very strong team and our ladies are playing well. We hope to secure one of the top spots in the playoffs." Congratulations ladies and good luck in bringing home a big win! Go team Palencia!

The WGA fall season is getting ready to start with our Opening Day festivities on Saturday, September 10th at 9:00 a.m. with a shotgun start. Cathy Bodenweber, Cary Handley, co-chairs for opening day, have been working very hard in planning a fun day of activities with Diane Robinson, Play Day Chair. Our Opening day event will have a Cash Kicker for the winning team, six Proximity Prizes and a very tasty lunch for all of the ladies.

"This event promises to be a lot of fun for everyone because the teams and skill levels have been mixed up to combine all levels of play with both 18 and 9 hole players on

new members to our WGA organization: Joanne Monahan, Ann Bell and Gail Heagen. We are very excited to have them join our group and look forward to playing with each of them.



The 2022/2023 WGA Board, Earline Barnes, Sandy Brandenburg, Pam Ashburn, Laura Mayo, Sandy Frambes and Marge Stancill (missing from the picture are Teresa Serrano and Louise Starmann).

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Back To School 2022

By Tiffany Trivedi, Palencia Resident
Palencia Elementary PTO

Wednesday, August 10th was the first day back to school for all of our Palencia Elementary School students. The streets were buzzing with children and parents walking together, boys and girls on bikes, school buses lining the streets and lots of smiling teachers waiting to greet their new classes.



Just some of the 5th grade safety patrol at Palencia Elementary.

Children bring so many emotions with them on their first day of school, but luckily for PES families, there are so many ways to help make the best of the new school year.

It all starts with PES's annual Meet The Teacher event. The day before school started, all the students were invited into PES with their families to meet their teacher and explore their new classroom. This gave the children an opportunity to get comfortable, ask questions, and feel acquainted with their teacher to hopefully help eliminate those first day jitters. It also provided the perfect opportunity for parents to gain clarity on expectations throughout the year. There were lots of other helpful resources at the event including the St. Johns County Transportation team, the after school care team and a table to purchase PES Spiritwear. The resource teachers were also present to introduce themselves as well as the PTO to welcome parents and help them understand how to best get involved.

Kindergartener families are provided an event to themselves as the first day



Grant Vu biking to school on opening day.

of school for these children (and parents) can be extra emotional. This helps make the Meet The Teacher event calmer and more intimate to ensure these first time Pirates feel extra comfortable for their first day. But don't worry parents...the

Continued On Page 9

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Palencia Elementary School

Continued From Page 8

PTO also knows this is a hard time for you, so a special Cheers and Tears event was held on August 16th to provide parents an opportunity to mingle, share concerns/successes and meet the PTO chairs for the 2022/2023 school year.

If you are a parent new to the area, or newly interested in getting more involved in the Parent Teacher Organization, please let us know. The Palencia Elementary PTO is run by volunteers who bring together parents, teachers, community sponsors, administrators, and students to foster a sense of community, enhance the educational environment and make the students' and teachers' lives exceptional. So if you want to learn more or just need some guidance or help, please reach out directly to the school or through the PTO's website: <https://palenciapiratespto.com>.

This site is also a wonderful place to learn about upcoming events like the Booster Run kick off in September or the Annual Fore The Kids Golf Tournament in October. You can also "Rent the Rock" for the day. If you're unfamiliar with this, it's a wonderful way to encourage school spirit or help your child feel extra special by reserving the opportunity to paint the giant rock outside of PES.

Principal, Catherine Goodrich also shared a special message with all the PES families. She shared that "The school's tight-knit community creates a home away from home atmosphere where we all work hard, embrace a



Cheryl Flostrand hugging her son Nils goodbye for his first day of Kindergarten.

growth mindset, laugh and look out for one another. Although we've all encountered rough waters these past years, it's safe to say we've proven to ourselves how resilient we are and how important it is to make the most of each day." She then continued "we continue our work towards shared commitments to school safety, student growth, and high levels of academic and personal achievements."

The PTO looks forward to meeting many new families this school year.

Students, Put Your Best Foot Forward

By Susan Rieger, Palencia Resident

It's time to merge the academic, athletic and work schedules in order to create an organized plan so that you can put your best foot forward.

Students who prioritize with a planner or calendar create more success in their day. Beyond using a calendar to keep yourself organized, there are many tips and tricks to keep your life in order. For instance, one useful way to approach classroom assignments is to complete them in a chronological order.

When you get an assignment in school, write it down in your planner as well as the due date in your calendar

and begin working on the assignment that day.

The best way to not feel that sense of panic or rush is to avoid procrastination and this is accomplished through planning a study schedule. Becoming organized in this way guarantees you will have plenty of time to prepare for an exam, quiz, or presentation.

Lastly, maintaining a consistent sleep schedule will always help fuel your fire. This way you will be prepared to complete the tasks ahead and face your week with the energy to carry out your organized plans.

NEASE VARSITY ATHLETICS						
September 2022						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 -Boys Golf vs. Episcopal (MLCC)	2 -Football @ Creekside	3 -Boys & Girls XC @ Special Invitational @ PV
4	5	6 -Girls Golf vs. Buchholz @ Stammer -Girls Volleyball @ Bolles	7 -Boys Golf vs. Fletcher @ Atlantic Beach CC -Swim Meet @ Bolles	8 -Girls Volleyball @ Pedro Hernandez	9 -Football vs. Fleming Island	10 -Boys and Girls XC (Ridgeview Meet)
11 -Boys Golf (Randy Invitational - GFL)	12 -Girls Volleyball vs. Bartram	13 -Swim Meet vs. Creekside	14 -Boys Golf vs. Fletcher (Palencia CC) -Girls Volleyball @ St. Augustine	15 -Girls Volleyball @ Lake Howell Invitational -Football vs. Fletcher	16 -Girls Volleyball @ Lake Howell Invitational -Boys Golf Providence Inv. JBCC -Boys XC @ Bartram Trail	17
18 -Boys Golf vs. Tocol @ Atlantic Coast (SIS)	19 -Girls Golf vs. PV @ Palencia -Girls Volleyball @ Bishop Kenny	20 -Boys Golf Fletcher Invitational @ ABCC	21 -Girls Golf vs. Buchholz @ Hawkstone -Girls Volleyball vs. Tocol	22 -Boys Golf Titan Invitational -Football @ Orange Park	23 -BBG XC Katie Caples Invitational -Varsity Dye Meet -Swim Meet - Frank Holman Invitational -Girls V-ball Middleburg/Tyler	24
25	26 -Girls Golf vs. Creekside @ Stammer -Girls Volleyball @ Fletcher	27 -Boys Golf SJC Championship -Swim Meet vs. Beachside	28 -Girls Volleyball vs. Beachside	29 -Football vs. Sandalwood	30	

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What Should You Know About IRA Rollovers?

By Renae Aiple, CRPC, Edward Jones Financial Advisor

If you've been contributing to an IRA, you've chosen a great way to save and invest for retirement. All IRAs have potential tax benefits and a range of investment possibilities, but not all IRA providers offer the same features. So, if you decide that your current IRA provider is charging higher fees than you'd like, or perhaps doesn't offer as many investment choices as you want, then you might choose to move your IRA assets to another provider. How should you go about making this switch?

Here are some options to consider:

- Trustee-to-trustee transfer or direct rollover – You can ask the financial institution holding your IRA to move the money directly to another IRA. No taxes will be withheld from the amount transferred at the time of the transfer. This method is generally hassle-free, but some IRA sponsors will still only mail the check to your address of record, so you'd have to forward it to your new IRA.

- Indirect rollover – If you take an indirect rollover, also known as a 60-day rollover, the assets from your existing IRA will be liquidated and the custodian or plan sponsor will send you a check or deposit the funds directly into your bank or brokerage account. This payment may be subject to withholding for federal taxes, and possibly state taxes, unless you opt out of withholding. You have 60 calendar days from the time the funds were withdrawn to deposit the money, including any amount withheld, into a new IRA. If you miss this 60-day deadline, the withdrawal may be taxable at your personal income tax rate, and it could also be subject to an early with-

drawal penalty if you're younger than 59 ½.

Given the immediate withholding and the possibility of further taxes if you don't move the money into a new IRA before the 60 days are up, you've got much to consider before initiating an indirect rollover. Consequently, you should consult with a financial advisor and tax professional before you make this type of move.

In addition to a rollover from an existing IRA, you may someday want to move the money from your 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored retirement plan to an IRA. This can occur when you retire or change jobs, although if you do take on another job, you might have the options of leaving your 401(k) with your former employer or rolling it over into your new employer's plan. However, if you do want to move your 401(k) funds into an IRA, you can make what's known as a direct rollover, in which the administrator of your old retirement plan will send you a check made payable to the custodian of your IRA. No taxes will be withheld, but you need to get the funds transferred within 60 days to avoid any potential tax issues.

You spend years contributing to your IRA and 401(k) — and for good reason. So, when it's time to move that money, be careful and consider getting help from your financial and tax professionals. These funds can play a big role in your retirement income, so manage them wisely.

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Newcomers Of North St. Johns Announces September Luncheon At Serenata Beach Club

By Michele Oliver

Newcomers of North Saint Johns (NNSJ) invites any resident of the St. Johns County area to our September luncheon on Tuesday, September 20 held at the exclusive members-only Serenata Beach Club, 3175 South Ponte Vedra Boulevard; Ponte Vedra Beach. The event features a delicious lunch and renowned pianist Carl Grant. Doors will open at 10:30 a.m. with the meeting beginning at 11:00 a.m.

Cost for the luncheon and program is \$35 for members and \$40 for guests. All reservations must be received by September 12th.

"This is our first luncheon of the season and we're thrilled to be back together and catch up on news and vacation travel after this long hot summer," said Co-President Pat Lett.

Luncheon choices include Chicken Marsala with Basil Pesto Potato Puree a; or Mediterranean Pasta served with Artichoke Hearts, Kalamata Olives and Tomatoes tossed in a White Wine Garlic

Sauce with Extra Virgin Olive Oil and Lemon.

During lunch, accomplished pianist Carl Grant will entertain members with a medley of soft ballads and soothing love songs.

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, email membership@newcomersofnorthstjohns.org. We offer a wide variety of activities for you to get acquainted, have fun and meet your new best friend including wine socials, golf, Mahjonn, holiday parties, day trips and cultural events. Visit our website at www.newcomersofnorthstjohns.org to learn more about the club and view the upcoming calendar of events.

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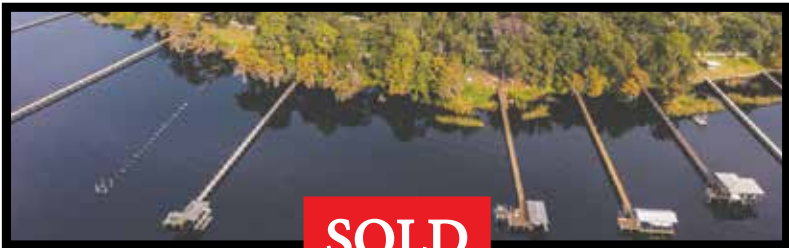
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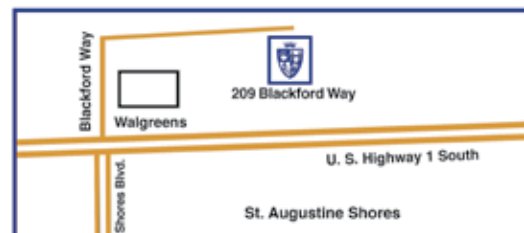
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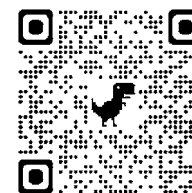
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Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (EDS)

By Rob Stanborough
PT, DPT, MHSc, MTC, CMTPT, FAAOMPT
First Coast Rehabilitation
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While sitting down to write this month's column on fascia and how it works, I decided to postpone that a month and thought I would first write about what happens when fascia does not work. Stretching and staying mobile is a good thing and something I usually encourage. It is important to keep our fascia mobile as many of us grow "tighter" with age and lose range of motion. Fascia can grow stiff making staying mobile or unrestricted a constant challenge. But for some the opposite is true. Fascia can become like puddy, allowing too much movement.



Imagine being Gumby the Claymation figure – able to take any form due to extremely pliability. If that analogy is dated, perhaps Mr. Fantastic of the Fantastic Four is better. After being exposed to radiation, he gained the ability to stretch to any length and take any shape, which is a great skill to have if you are a superhero but not one for everyday life. Individuals diagnosed with EDS, or Ehlers-Danlos syndrome live with just that – extreme pliability. Due to a connective tissue disorder, their joints are extremely hypermobile, which can be painful and quite debilitating. Because connective tissue is found throughout the body, it effects their entire body. They are often labeled as "double-jointed."

Fascia is a type of connective tissue and can be found everywhere in our bodies. It "connects" us and holds us together. It helps give us structure as it surrounds and infiltrates muscles, joints, organs, nerves, blood vessels, etc. It also resists and transmits forces from one muscle to another, one joint to another. It can become stiff, as in a frozen shoulder, but for those who have EDS, it acts quite the opposite.

Imagine sitting in a chair reading this column. The longer you sat, the more your tissues would adapt, slowly "melting" or giving way to gravity and the force of the chair. As your joints started to gradually stretch, the muscles

respond by tightening, attempting to stabilize the joints. This process takes place regardless of the structure: chair, couch, bed or car – to name a few. Every night's sleep becomes a challenge, first to get comfortable and second, to stay comfortable. Whether you sleep on



your back, side or stomach, your tissues gradually give way to the force of gravity and the mattress. Maintaining any one position for too long will produce the same result, even to the point of joint subluxation (popping out and then back in). This happens because the connective tissue lacks the inert stability it should normally provide.

EDS may be misdiagnosed and can be very painful. IF your connective tissue provides the stability its intended to, muscles work harder and longer than usual, becoming sore and riddled with myofascial trigger points. Overworked muscles and trigger points can lead to central sensitization, which is where your nervous system becomes over excited or sensitized (something I've written about in previous columns). For the patient with EDS, if left untreated, the product is chronic pain.

Fortunately manual therapy, balanced exercise and education can help. If you think you may have EDS, consult your doctor or physical therapists. It can be managed.

You can get more information at <http://www.ehlersdanlossyndrome.org/> or review EDS posts provided on the Facebook page of First Coast Rehabilitation.

*Rob Stanborough was one of the first PT's to be permitted to use DN in FL and doing so since 2017. He has trained others in DN since 2010 both nationally and internationally as a Senior Instructor for Myopain Seminars (www.myopainseminars.com). He is a co-owner of First Coast Rehabilitation (www.firstcoastrehab.com), presented and published about DN and co-author of *Myofascial Manipulation: Theory & Application*, 3rd ed by Proed Inc.*

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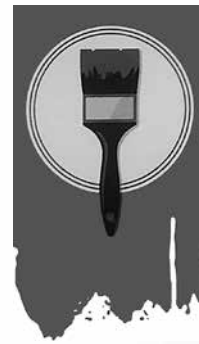
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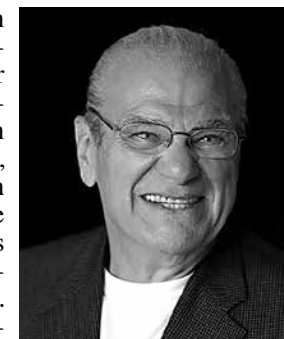


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Jewish Historical Society Presents Lee Weaver In His Play "The Secret" Sept. 8th

"The Secret," a one-man play by award winning playwright and actor Lee Weaver will be staged at the St. Augustine Waterworks, 184 San Marco Ave., St. Augustine, at 7 p.m. on September 8th as part of the St. Augustine Jewish Historical Society's celebration of the 457th anniversary of the founding of St. Augustine. Weaver will portray a man in search of Jews, forbidden in the New World by the tribulations of the Spanish Inquisition.

This program is made possible through the generosity of the St. Johns



Cultural Council and the City of St. Augustine.

All are welcome, there is no charge. For further information contact SA-JHS at www.sajhs.com, sajhs1565@gmail.com or 804-914-4460.

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Tips For Creating A Study Area

By **Maria Alejandra Rivera, Palencia Resident**
www.yourorganizingstudio.com

Creating a study area for your student (or students) can be an essential part of their school success. This should not only include a nice physical setting for your child to do their work, but also a functional routine that is conducive to your child's learning.

My three best tips for creating a study area are:

1. Have a distraction-free area dedicated to learning.

Some older children may already have a desk or area dedicated for homework. If not, you might have an extra bedroom or a nook in your home that would be perfect for your children to use. For families with younger children, setting up a space that allows parents to supervise (while still working from home) is vital.



The biggest goal for your child's workspace is to make it functional for them. Involving them while creating it and asking them what they want is the perfect way to create a space that caters to your child's educational needs.

2. Have all learning items within reach

Your child needs to have all their most frequently used utensils contained in one place. This way they spend less time looking for what they need and more time studying.



I bought this 360° rotating pencil holder with a lot of divisions for my daughter. I was able to paint it the same color as her furniture and apply a glaze finish for antiquing. I love the results. Now everything looks great, goes well with the room, and, most importantly, everything is organized!

3. Establish a routine / Build structure

Routines and structures help children thrive. It gives them a sense of security and helps them develop self-discipline. It's crucial to teach them how to organize at a young age.



Planning their days is vital, so they can visualize what they need to focus on during the day and for the week.

Like everything in life, there is no one style that fits all approach. It would be best if you considered your child's individual needs and learning style. As we all deal with the changes to our lives, it's important to have a lot of flexibility to optimize your child's new normal to learning.



Don't hesitate to contact us if you need help to set up your child's room, playroom or study area!

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Ask A Certified Master Gardener Let's Get Ready - Hurricane Season

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

The official hurricane season for the Atlantic basin is from June 1 to November 30, but tropical cyclone activity sometimes occurs before and after these dates. The peak of the Atlantic hurricane season is September 10, with most activity occurring between mid-August and mid-October. Meteorologists at the National Hurricane Center have issued daily reports about tropical activity in the Atlantic Ocean amid a seven-year streak of pre-season storms.

This year, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration forecasts an above-normal Atlantic season, with 14 to 21 strong storm events – compared with 14 in an average year – and three to six major hurricanes, rated Category 3 or higher.



Aftermath of 2017 storm in Palencia caused tree damage.

Connecting climate change to a single weather event is difficult, but scientific studies have now shown that collectively, extreme-weather events are linked, and, with resulting warmer air, stronger storm events and increased precipitation have now become the norm.

Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria in 2017 and Hurricanes Florence and Michael in 2018 were all examples of hurricanes with greater wind speeds and rainfall totals. Here in Florida, the low topography makes us particularly vulnerable to increasing sea levels combined with storm surge from tropical storms and hurricanes. The Florida Panhandle is the most prone to hurricanes as we all are aware. It has surpassed every other state, including Texas, the second most prone state. The official peak of hurricane season in Florida is September 10.

You are probably aware of preparations you need to make inside your home, but there are a few basic areas to survey in your landscape ahead of the fall storm season. These include potential areas that may flood, be susceptible to high winds and/or may cause tree failure.

Trees generate the highest potential danger in Palencia, and we all have numerous trees of all sizes on our landscapes. It is especially important to look at those trees close to your house to be sure they are sturdy enough to withstand high winds without toppling over. To protect our trees to the extent possible,

here is a reminder of things to do long before a storm hits:

- Examine your trees and remove any dead or broken branches, and trim the longest branches or those with defects that will help reduce the mass and weight of the tree.

- Stake leaning trees especially small or newly planted trees. Citrus trees can be more vulnerable and with fruit on the trees at this time, branches are heavier.

- Prune your trees with a healthy central leader in mind and well-spaced scaffold branches versus co-dominant stems. The term "codominant stems" is used to describe two or more main stems (or "leaders") that are about the same diameter and emerge from the same location on the main trunk. As the tree grows older, the stems remain similar in size without any single one becoming dominant. This type of tree growth greatly weakens the entire tree as neither stem is strong enough.

- Refrain from what experts call "Lions-tailing," removing inner branches, which then makes trees more susceptible to hurricane damage.

- On palms, remove dead leaves (only those that are completely brown) and refrain from pruning above 3:00 and 9:00 on a

clock, the uppermost areas.

After a storm hits, the cleanup can be minimal or massive, and any storm damage cleanup can be dangerous, even for professionals. When working with trees in the aftermath of a hurricane, first, look all around the tree and be aware of dangerous broken limbs that are hanging or caught in other branches overhead and may fall.

We usually receive hurricane and storm announcements ahead of time from St. Johns County through their alert system. If you don't already have the notification system, you can set this messaging system up by going to: <http://www.alertstjohns.com/> Those who sign up can choose to receive notifications via a phone call to their homes, business, or cell phone, by email, or text message of all of these options. The Alert St. Johns system has replaced the former Code Red notification system.

Every area of the country has its own specific weather concerns. Ours is hurricanes, so take some time right now to examine your landscape. It will then be one less issue in which to be concerned when bad weather begins.

Do you have garden questions in which you would like help? I live in Palencia, so please email me at norie.flowers@outlook.com. Facts contained in this article are derived from the University of Florida Institute for Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) and St. Johns County Government.

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Mike Weitz

My wife's car gets a rotten egg smell every time she cranks it. I have refused to let her keep it in the garage due to the smell. What's the fix?

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Beware Of Negative Sentiment Override

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

When your partner directs negative affect towards you, do you find yourself saying to yourself something like, “My partner is in a bad mood. He (or she) is so selfish. I’m not going to be controlled and manipulated by my partner’s mean traits!”? If so, you may be caught in negative sentiment override.

In the state of negative sentiment override, we do not give our negative-affect partner the benefit of the doubt. Our negative sentiments about our partner override any momentary positivity of the partner. We may even take neutral statements from our partner as if they were hostile attacks.

Dr. John Gottman found that when couples don’t attune to each other emotionally and they dismiss each other’s pain, they fail to build up what he calls an emotional bank account, a reserve of good will in the relationship that can be drawn upon during difficult times in order to repair interactions. “Running on empty” emotionally in the relationship puts us into negative sentiment override, and we are unable to repair negative interactions.

The consequence is that negative affect during conflict becomes an absorbing state, and negativity is like stepping into a quicksand bog—no matter how much you wriggle, you sink deeper into negative affect. We then find ourselves in “the Roach Motel” model of negativity—it’s easy to check in (to negative emotions, and they get reciprocated), and it’s hard to check out.

The opposite of negative sentiment override is the positive perspective or positive sentiment override. In the state of positive sentiment override, partners give their negative-affect partner the benefit of the doubt. They say to themselves something like, “My partner is in a bad mood. He (or she) must be stressed out.” Their positive sentiments

about their partner override momentary negativity of the partner. They take even negative statements as if they were indications that the partner needs comfort and support.

The trick is, if you are caught in negative sentiment override, you cannot make yourself have a positive perspective: you either do or you don’t. You can tell yourself, “I’m going to have a more positive perspective on my partner and my relationship today,” but it probably won’t last very long. The first misunderstanding or miscommunication that you have, your intention will probably go out the window and you will find yourself back in negative sentiment override.



The way to get to the positive perspective is to build your emotional bank account by building your intimate knowledge of your partner and your relationship (building Love Maps), sharing fondness and admiration

(i.e., telling your partner the ways that you are fond of them and the things that you admire about them), turning towards each other’s bids for connection, and attuning to each other emotionally when there is no conflict. Therefore, if you find yourself in a state of negative sentiment override, work on your friendship and your emotional connection, and, then, you may find yourself moving out of the Roach Motel, having money in your emotional bank account, and having a more positive perspective on your partner and your 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. He is currently offering both in-office and secure video appointments. If you are interested in couples or family therapy, contact Michael at 904-289-2954 or visit www.happycoupleshealthycommunities.com.

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Michael Brown, MSC, LMFT



Cover The Golf Ball

Tips from Laura Baugh
 Certified PGA Teaching Professional
 The Palencia Golf Club
 laura@laurabaughgolf.com.



Wrigley's Field Of View

Things That Go BOOM!

By Wrigley Steck
 A Dog About Town In Palencia's Village

Hello Fellow Golfers,
 The start of your golf swing includes your pre-shot routine, a nice athletic stance, transferring your power back to the right side and then once that transfer is complete you make your transition forward, but it is important to "cover the ball" while doing so.

You may ask what does "covering the ball mean?" It means keeping your eye on the ball and your spine and posture at a consistent position over the golf ball at impact, not letting your spine tilt back or move forward.

If you cover the golf ball you can turn your shoulders back, you can transfer your weight back, you can have the width of a straight left arm on your backswing, and all that movement will be consistent as long as you continue to keep your spine over the ball, that allows you a place to return with power and accuracy.

After impact, if you have covered the ball, it allows you to have that beautiful full extension towards your target and you can only do that if you have covered the ball.



This move is extremely important in building power and width in your golf swing.

Connect with me at laurabaughgolf.com to see if you are covering the golf ball and getting your maximum distance and accuracy.

Things that go BOOM, and not necessarily in the dark, frighten me. And, I'm not the only one. I woof with a lot of my four-legged buds and they agree!

I don't know what it is but when the thunder-boomers are around I'm looking for a place to hide. The bag-man's hearers don't work, so he pays no attention. The bag-lady is a lot more sensitive. She even bought me a thunder vest to help protect me.

I really hate my birthday, the fourth day of July. It seems like all the Palencian's are determined to explode our wonderful abode! And, on top of the thunder, they light the place up with fireballs, flares and sparkling sticks. It's supposed to be one day, but it seems like a week.

And then, we have the New Year to not look forward to, with more crashing and banging.



But the *really* scary parts are the flash-bangs that come with the thunder-boomers in the rain. I love the rain, but when the flashers and the boomers start, this Doodle is history. Gotta find a good place to hide.

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Palencia Families Embrace Cub Scouts Pack 023 At Palencia Elementary School

By Amanda Edwards, Palencia Resident



The Scouting program at Palencia Elementary School is for all levels of Cub Scouts and their families.

Beginning this 2022/2023 School Year, The North Florida Council, BSA Scouts Pack 023 is moving (back) into Palencia Elementary School.

Please join us in the Palencia cafeteria on the first, second, or third Tuesday of the month from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. to learn more or register your scout.

During these meetings you can meet current members of Pack 023, as well as pack leaders and parents to ask questions or learn more. Here your little ones will be able to meet the cub scouts and hear directly from them about some of the wonderful adventures they participated in this past year.

Here is a sample of some of those adventures:

The annual **Spookeree Cub Family Campout**, each October, is for all levels of Cub Scouts and their families. Organized by the NFC, the camp provides breakfast, lunch, and dinner while the Scouts participate in awesome Programs to include, BB's, Archery, Sports, Aquatics Center Pool and Splash Pad, STEM Activities, Climbing, Campsite Smore's Party and much, much more.

In February, Pack 23 spent an incredible evening exploring, discovering and dreaming at a one-of-a-kind **Overnight Adventures Program at the Kennedy Space Center**, designed specifically for Boy and Girl Scouts, ages 7-14. The overnight Adventure welcomed Scouts to meet and mingle with other Scouts from all over, for a night

of space and science while space shuttle Atlantis floats overhead. It included a private guided tour, dinner, interactive exhibits and the following day free to explore Kennedy Space Center before heading home.

The Raingutter Regatta is a fun favorite Cub Scout activity. The Scouts use a kit to build a trimaran sailboat that



The Overnight Adventures Program at the Kennedy Space Center was designed specifically for Boy and Girl Scouts.

is "wind-powered" by blowing on the sail. They learn how to make their boat more aerodynamic, and they can decorate it. The Cub Scouts then race their boats in water-filled rain gutters at a pack meeting.

Both Boys And Girls Are Welcome

Did you know that girls can also participate in scouts? The photo at right shows our female scouts of pack 23 joining in and learning during one of our many adventures.

In addition to all these wonderful opportunities, Cub Scouts Pack 23 meets

every first, second, and third Tuesday of the month in the Palencia Elementary School cafeteria from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Here they participate in activities and adventures towards earning their merit badges and completing adventures. Merit badges are awards earned by members of the Boy Scouts of America, based on activities within the area of study by completing a list of periodically updated requirements. Adventures are based on different topics such as hiking, nature, science, citizenship, first aid, sports, and more. Adventures are earned as a Cub Scout advances toward their badge of rank. Once an adventure is completed, a Cub Scout receives recognition in the form of an adventure loop or adventure pin. These weekly meetings are also time for coordinating events and hearing about wonderful council opportunities that are optional for all scouts' families.

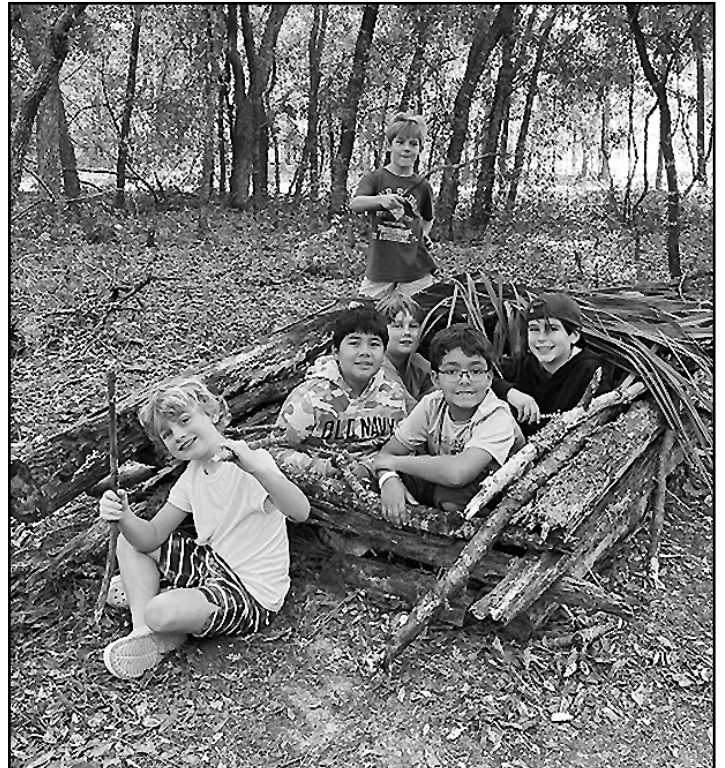
Still not sure? No problem. Pop in and see us at any regular scouts meeting to get more information.

Love everything you hear already? There is no need to wait! Go ahead and register at <http://www.nfc-scouting.org/join>.

"Scouting is fun for the whole family. In Cub Scouting, boys and girls in grades K-5 start with their best right now selves and grow into their very best future selves. It's fun, hands-on learning and achievement that puts kids in the middle of the action and prepares them for today and life."(scouting.org).



Girls are welcome to join Cub Scouts. Girls participate during the same activities with the rest of the scouts.



Scout adventures are based on different topics such as hiking, nature, science, citizenship, first aid, sports and more.



The Raingutter Regatta is a fun favorite Cub Scout activity. The Scouts use a kit to build a trimaran sailboat that is "wind-powered" by blowing on the sail.



Cloudy Eyes - "Normal" Aging Or Cause For Concern?

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

Inside of your pet's eyes, there is a lens that is similar to the lens of a camera. The purpose of this lens is to focus your pet's vision and provide clear sight. There are two common issues that cause cloudiness of the lens.

The first is nuclear sclerosis. Nuclear sclerosis occurs in humans as well and is the reason we need bifocals as we age (a condition known as presbyopia in the human medical field). Luckily, nuclear sclerosis will not lead to blindness and it affects only depth perception. As our pets do not read, nuclear sclerosis has little effect on their daily lives, therefore no treatment is necessary. In the worst cases, you may notice that they are a little more hesitant on stairs or curbs and may take some additional time to jump up on familiar furniture.

The second common cause of "cloudy" lenses is cataracts. The difference between cataracts and nuclear sclerosis lies in the fact that cataracts will reduce vision and nuclear sclerosis affects only depth perception.

Cataracts occur when proteins in the lens of the eye start to break down and clump together. This clumping is what causes the cloudy area on the lens. Cataracts in dogs can occur for a number of reasons including hereditary predisposition (often seen in poodles, cocker



spaniels, and huskies), high blood sugar levels associated with diabetes, damage from exposure to UV light, trauma, or glaucoma.

Cataracts can be painful or uncomfortable for pets. Discomfort is caused by the inflammation that often accompanies cataracts as the protein structure of the lens changes. Inflammation of the eye, if left untreated, may also lead to glaucoma which is very painful for dogs. Once cataracts have been diagnosed, your veterinarian may prescribe anti-inflammatory eye drops for your pup to help fight the inflammation and soothe your dog's eyes. In most cases these drops will be required throughout the dog's lifespan.

The surgical removal of the damaged lens is the only way to restore your dog's sight once cataracts have developed. Unfortunately, not all dogs are suitable candidates for cataract surgery. Dogs that do undergo surgery will need to be monitored carefully, with regular veterinary examinations throughout their lifetime and may also require the ongoing use of medicated eyedrops to keep the eyes healthy.

If you think that your pet may have cataracts, contact your veterinarian to discuss what the appropriate next steps are.

Fitness Classes In Palencia

Please visit the Palenciaonline website and click the links for the current fitness class calendars.

Aqua Aerobics - Aqua Aerobics is comprised of aerobic exercises performed in shallow water, such as a swimming pool. It typically uses the water as resistance for exercises.

Aqua Zumba - Aqua Zumba is classic aqua aerobics with Latin flavor added. You perform large muscle movements by reaching your arms and lifting your legs in the water.

Cardio Step - A 60 minute athletic workout that uses the step as a training tool. It will get your heart pounding and sweat pouring as you improve your fitness, agility, coordination, and strength. It's not an "old school" step class,

Cardio X-Training - Get ready to sweat in Cardio X-Training! A 45 minute Boot-Camp style format that includes cardio, strength and flexibility. Every class is different and incorporates a variety of equipment for the moderate to high level fitness enthusiast.

Gentle Yoga - Gentle yoga equally strengthens and stretches, increasing flexibility and repairing muscles that are in need of love. There is no hurry to finish a sequence. It's all about relaxing and allowing yourself and your body to have as much relaxation as you want.

HIIT - High Intensity Interval Training- HIIT involves short bursts of intense exercise alternated with low-intensity recovery periods.

Kid's Fitness Class - a class for kids ages 7-14 that increases strength, flexibility, and mobility with the use of body-weight and other forms of resistance.

Pilates- provides overall strengthening, toning, and stretching engaging the body's core. (Low impact)

Senior Wellness - This class is a low-intensity exercise program for a beginner level and for those who are starting, restarting or desire to maintain their fitness and wellness.



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The Blessing That Counts!

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

In times of trouble, a well-meaning friend may counsel us: "Just count your blessings. Look on the bright side. Concentrate on the good things in life; look away from the bad!"

The world is always eager to count blessings. Look how blessed they are, with the fine house, the classy car, and high-tech gadgets to play with.

Even those who have little in the way of material goods are quick to count — in some very visible ways — what blessings they do have. How else to explain the exorbitant prices charged for certain designer basketball shoes? One person's pair of Air Jordans is another person's Mercedes-Benz.

The world has its own set of beatitudes, in contrast to Jesus' list: Blessed are the rich; the famous; those who have big houses on the beach. Blessed are those with perfect children; who move and shake even the movers and shakers; who have their photo on the cover of People magazine. Blessed are those who know what they want — and take it!

As Luke tells it, Jesus has no time for any of this. In the Sermon on the Plain, Jesus turns the world's values upside-down. He blesses those whom the world calls accursed, and he preaches woe upon those whom the world admires. Those Beatitudes of his are revolutionary stuff!

Oscar Wilde once quipped: "In this world there are only two tragedies. One is not getting what one wants; the other is getting it."

The wonder of God's power to bless is that it happens regardless of our circumstances. It was Helen Keller — the blind and deaf mute who triumphed over her disabilities — who wisely pointed out, "Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it." God's way of blessing us sometimes, is not to remove the cause of our complaint, but to give us power to prevail over it. It's like the remark of the philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson: "It is the wounded oyster that mends its shell with pearl."

Who's to say what's a blessing and what's a curse in the great scheme of things? From our human perspective, what looks like the greatest of calamities may, in a God's-eye view, really be

our salvation.

It really doesn't do us much good to count our blessings. Nor does it help to count our misfortunes, either. The Bible, in Romans 8:28, promises that "all things work together for good for those who love God." Somehow, we've got to learn to trust that word, as hard as it may be to do at times.

When Jesus says, "Blessed are the poor...the hungry...and those who weep," he's bearing witness to the truth that God is in charge of creation, and that God isn't finished with us yet. God will inevitably bless us if we have faith. God may bless us some day with what we most desire. Or, perhaps more likely, God may bless us through what we desire but don't receive.

It's not counting our blessing that's important. It's the blessing itself that counts: God's blessing that journeys with us through wealth and poverty, health and sickness, laughter and tears. Praise to God, for knowing us better than we know ourselves, and for blessing us in every circumstance!

In 1979, archaeologists began excavating in the area that is believed to be ancient Gehenna. Not far from the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem, they found what is considered to be one of the oldest bits of Scripture that exists in the world, more than 400 years older than the Dead Sea Scrolls. It dates from the time just before the destruction of the first temple, the Temple of Solomon, in 586 B.C. The scorched ground yielded two rolled-up silver amulets that are on display to this day in the Israel Museum. When painstakingly unfurled, the text was almost verbatim to the Bible verses:

"May God bless you and keep you. May God's face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May God turn His face toward you and give you peace" (Numbers 6:24-26).

This is the priestly blessing, one parents recite for their children each night, a fervent prayer for the future. In other words, the oldest bit of scripture that exists in the world is a blessing of peace that was snatched from hell. In that beleaguered and beautiful land, the prayer endures. May the blessings of God keep you and your family, be gracious unto you, and give you peace.



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- 2 Timothy 2:15



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School Bus Safety Tips

Whether it's back to school time or later during the school year, here are some tips about school bus safety rules for children, parents and school bus drivers.

School bus safety facts

- Back to school means taking extra precautions.

- According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), less than 1% of all traffic fatalities nationwide are on school transportation vehicles.

- Every year preventable crashes occur involving school buses.

- Every state has school bus traffic laws, and it is important for everyone to know what those are.

- Everything about a school bus is specifically designed for safety — the flashing lights, giant mirrors, color, shape and even the high seat backs.

- Seat belts play an important role in keeping passengers safe, but school buses have a different kind of safety restraint system than other vehicles that has proven to work well.

- School bus designs and regulations have changed over the years which helps reduce the risk of injury or accidents for riders.

- The NHTSA does not regulate vehicles or buses used for transportation to daycares, childcare centers or preschools.

Safety tips for children and parents

- Review bus stop rules such as waiting away from the road and always crossing in front of the bus, not behind.

- Wait with the little ones at the bus stop. Make sure you and your child are visible.

- Teach your kids to stand, at a minimum, three giant steps from the curb and

board one at a time using the handrail when getting on and off the bus.

- If your child needs to cross the street after exiting the bus, teach them to:

- Look both ways before crossing the street.

- Look carefully to make sure the bus driver sees them.

- Take five giant steps in front of the bus.

- Cross the street only when the driver gives them the go-ahead that it's safe.

- Teach your kids to wait until the school bus completely stops before getting off, and always walk in front of the bus, not behind.

- Remind kids to sit quietly while the bus is in motion and follow any additional rules the bus driver has.

- Teach your child the importance of behaving on the bus since any disruption can cause the bus driver to become distracted and could result in a crash.

Safety tips for drivers

- Follow the speed limit and laws especially in school zones and at bus stops.

- Never drive distracted or use a phone or device while driving. Know the cell phone laws in your state.

- Pay attention to flashing lights and never pass another vehicle with the stop-arm extended.

- Slow down and watch for children walking in the street, especially when there are no sidewalks.

- When backing out of a driveway or leaving a garage, watch out for children walking or bicycling to school.

For more information or for questions about home, auto, or life insurance, contact Palencia neighbor and local State Farm Agent Craig Dewhurst at 904-940-9740.



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