



Palencia

ST. AUGUSTINE

PRESS

FEBRUARY 2024

Palencia Tennis B Team Serves Up An Ace - Donates To Local Shelter

By Kathy Moss
Palencia Resident



Front Row: left to right, Lilian Wilson, Mary Topping (Captain), Susan Thompson, Scott Lefteris (Coach), Molly Moseley and Hillary Vogel. Middle Row: Susan McCarthy, Kathy Collins, Lotes Nelson, Kathy Evans, Trudy Hensley, Kathy Moss, Jackie Hagerty and Andy Craig. Back Row: Donna Whitehead, Anai Tipton, Glo MacDonald and Rita Geronimo (Co-Captain).



Continuing its annual tradition of outreach during the Christmas season, the Women's Palencia Tennis "B" Team set out to help Port In The Storm Homeless Youth Shelter located in St. Augustine. The Shelter's mission is to provide unaccompanied youth in crisis, ages 18 to 24, with a safe place off the streets where caring adults provide "stability, hope and a path to a successful future." Daily drop-in programs provide services such as life skills, job skills and more. There are 16 beds available for those who need overnight shelter.

Under the leadership of Donna Whitehead and Molly Moseley, what began as donation collections from the "B" team, blossomed into a spirited fund raising campaign that was supplemented by many of Palencia's tennis family members.

Story continued on Page 4

A Beautiful Slice Of The Mediterranean In Palencia Landscapes Growing Olive Trees In Palencia



Florida may be the next agricultural region for commercial olive production, a solution for citrus farmers who have lost all of their orange crops as a direct result of climate change and citrus greening. Olives (*Olea europaea*) also have great potential as a landscape ornamental in Palencia and may also provide opportunities for home fruit production. A number of olive cultivars are available at nurseries and garden centers locally. Palencia resident and Certified Master Gardener Norie Flowers recently planted a Manzanilla olive tree in her landscape in Palencia. Read about Norie's adventures as an olive grower in the article on Page 14.

Nease Pantherettes & Cheer Team Win Regionals

By Kathy Wachala

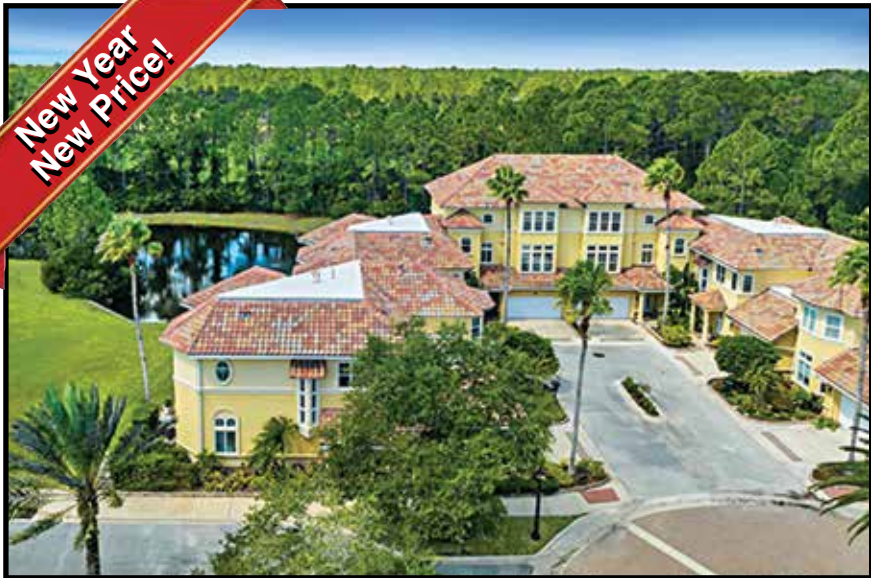
First year Nease Pantherette Dance Coach Jordann Pierluissi is living up to the #NewEra tag line in the last DTU Regional battle at Lake Mary. Two First Place wins, a school record for the dance team! The team trained hard leading up to the competition. Congrats Girls! Now they're on to UDA and DTU Nationals. On the Cheer side (inset), this is the first year for Nease Cheer to compete in GameDay Division and they brought home First Place from Chase the State! Then, making history, they brought home not one but two First Place wins with both their traditional routine and their GameDay routine at the Clay Classic. Most recently they brought home National bids again for both their traditional routine and their GameDay routine earning the opportunity to compete with the best of the best from around the country at ESPN Wide World of Sports in February. Congrats girls and bravo to coaches and assistants Brook Lovelace and Dionne Sanders.



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You Are Invited

Singles United is holding a "Palentine Party" February 10th, 7-10 p.m. at Pussers Bar & Grill, 816 Highway, A1A N., Ponte Vedra, FL 32082. We are a Christian Singles ministry dedicated to bringing singles together. This ministry provides spiritual growth and camaraderie that builds lasting friendships. Visit Our website www.singlesunited.org.

St. Augustine Travel Club

The St. Augustine Travel Club will meet on Wednesday, February 7th, and will present on AUSTRALIA. Exploring the exciting cities of the Land Down Under as well as the rugged beauty of the ancient natural wonders such as Ayers Rock and Great Barrier Reef. The Travel Club is free and no registration is necessary. If you require any further information, please call Peter Dytrych at (904) 797-3736.

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Words Of Wisdom

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The Palencia Press

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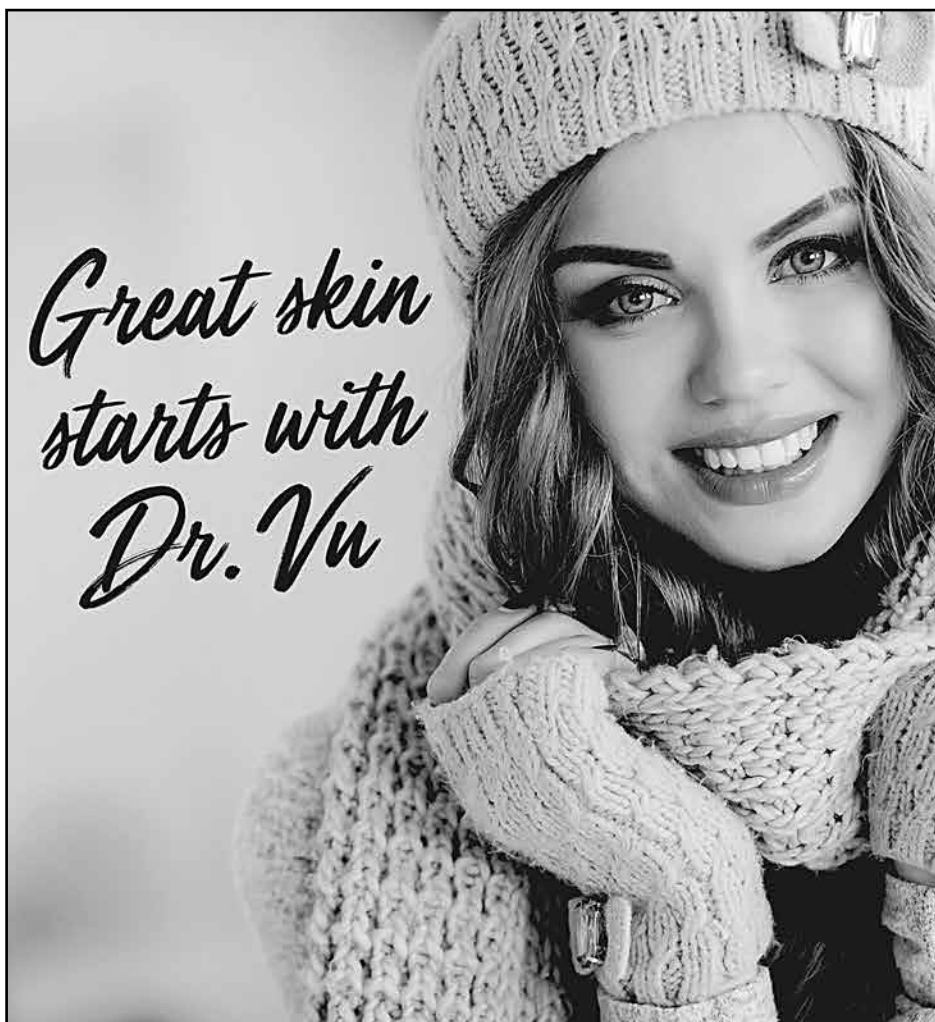
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Celebrating One Year Of Ownership At Your Pie Pizza

On February 13th, Your Pie Pizza, under the new ownership of David Beddard, will mark its one-year anniversary. This milestone has prompted both David, the owner, and Kim Beddard, the operator, to reflect on the achievements of the past year.

"A significant accomplishment was the decision to reopen the previously converted office space into the back dining room," said Kim. "This expansion has not only provided more seating for guests but has also allowed the restaurant to host semi-private events, including birthday parties, graduation celebrations and various social and business networking gatherings."

"Creating a space for our community to gather, enjoy great food and have an enjoyable experience with their family and friends - that's a major goal for us," she added.

The new owners have introduced innovative traditions, such as an after-school party for kids featuring activities like face painting, Fall crafts, and hands-on pizza-making sessions.

"Some of our youngsters definitely have a knack for rolling dough!" observed Marcos Silva, the assistant general manager. "We have naturals here and we are starting them early as future pizza bakers!" Since taking ownership in Febru-



You Pie Pizza donates 10% of Sunday sales to Palencia Elementary "Pirate's Bounty."

ary of last year, the Your Pie at Palencia location has engaged with over 25 local groups to help them raise money.

"At this writing, we've helped raise over \$5,000. That's a lot of 'dough' for a small pizza shop," said Kim.

A key and ongoing partnership is with the Palencia Elementary PTO. Every third Sunday, Your Pie donates 10% of all sales that day to the Pirate's Bounty program.

"We are so thankful for the support and encouragement of the Palencia community," said David.

Chocolate And Beyond - A Sweet Way To Support Volunteers And Teachers

The 31st annual Chocolate and Beyond event, a celebration of chocolate, desserts and other delectable culinary treats, will be held on Saturday, February 24th from 2 to 4 p.m. at The Classic Car Museum of St. Augustine. Guests will sample tasty treats from some of the area's finest restaurants and specialty shops, and tickets will include a tour of the museum. A silent auction and contests will also be part of this fun and exciting afternoon.

This event is hosted by TASK – Teacher's Aid for Student Knowledge. Proceeds from Chocolate and Beyond are utilized to support RSVP of St. Johns County as they recruit, train, and recognize senior volunteers as well as local teachers as they receive special project grants. Tickets can be purchased at <https://taskstjohns.ticketleap.com>. and will also be available at the door.

Palencia Tennis B Team Serves Up An Ace Donates To "Port In The Storm" Shelter

Continued From Page 1

As a result of everyone's overwhelming generosity, the Women's B Team raised more than \$1,000 in cash and gift cards that will be distributed to the young adults at Port In The Storm to brighten their holidays. In addition, much needed clothing and bicycle equipment were also donated.

Thank you to all who took the time to

find it in their hearts to give to this worthy cause. We, at Palencia, are blessed to live in such a civic-minded community. Your gift will make a difference. So many thanks to all who donated.

For more information or to volunteer/donate, please contact Sarah Delcid at sarah.delcid@stfrancisshelter.org or visit www.stfrancisshelter.org.

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By Travis A. Smyczynski, CFP®
Ausdal Financial Partners, Inc.

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A key factor to understand when working with a CFP® professional is how they deliver their services and how they are compensated for their work.

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role in determining what is the most efficient route of compensation. Any CFP® professional should be able to fully explain their fees and the reasoning behind how they are paid. At the end of the day, your goal as the client, should be to find a planner who is committed to putting you and your needs at the center of their financial planning engagement. But it is also key to remember, we cannot care about your financial situation more than you do. Planning is a process!

Neither the information presented, nor any opinion expressed, constitutes a solicitation for the purchase or sale of any security. Contact Travis A. Smyczynski, CFP®, at 904-395-4665. Offices are located at 701 Market Street, Unit 111, St. Augustine, FL 32095 (in Palencia). Please visit the website at www.SmyczynskiFinancial.com. Securities and advisory services offered through Ausdal Financial Partners, Inc. Member FINRA/SIPC. 5187 Utica Ridge Rd., Davenport, IA 52807. 563-326-2064.



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For The Love Of Golf

By Faye Peludat, President
and Maria Nilsson, Vice President
Women's Golf Association Of Palencia

The women's golf association is dedicated to promoting friendship, sportsmanship and mutual respect while sharing the love of golf and having fun. The committee works hard to organize a calendar of tournaments and encourage active participation of its members in playing golf. Much appreciation is given in support of this association.

February begins our two-woman Matchplay competition, best ball of team using round robin type format. The Sadie Hawkins scheduled for February 24th with an exciting format awaits your participation to play with the guy that's not your husband. Ladies behave!

As March approaches we have many competitions out there. Night Golf with the MGA, Spring Scramble, Divot Invitational with the grounds crew of Palencia Golf Club and the Lady Schooner our annual member/member



THIRD PLACE: Maggie Butler, Staci Luttrupp, Santa, Kennedi Luttrupp and Rosetta Smith.

won by Staci Luttrupp, Rosetta Smith, Maggie Butler and Kennedi Luttrupp. Then came Santa from the South Pole on his surfboard and shorts and gave everyone a lottery ticket. Thank you, Jerry Peludat for being a jolly Santa.

Nothing goes unnoticed by the ladies of WGA, we showed a small gesture of appreciation during this holiday season to Matt Carroll PGA and staff, by organizing a holiday luncheon for them. Thank you for making our golfing experience throughout the year so special.

The WGA members have made a generous collection of \$4200 and presented it to Kaitie Goodwin during the holiday lunch, to show their kindness and gratitude. Her fiancée Pery has been struggling medically for many years and awaiting a kidney transplant. We need to raise awareness and cast a wide net. People who want to help can rise to the occasion. Let's wish for Pery to find a donor and overcome this challenge in both their lives.



FIRST PLACE Holiday Scramble: Maleah Miller, Deborah Dufresne, Santa, Chris McCoy and Maria Cavanaugh.

competition. Lots of fun ahead.

December's Holiday Scramble was well participated, a few extras were added to the fun filled day, a step-aside scramble followed

Every year we have a fun-filled WGA Palencia version of Solheim Cup. A competition between the red team against the blue team in two days of Matchplay. The first day results were very close, Red 11.5 points and Blue 9.5 points. On the second day the red team stepped up a notch and won the Solheim cup with 24.5 pts – 17.5 pts. Congratulations to the Red team players: Monique Perna, Deidre Wray, Maria Nilsson, Faye Peludat, Barb Jacobi, Linda Carucci, Stephanie Kinsey, Robin Crossfield, Pat Rose, Deborah Dufresne, Kathleen Kriete, Maggie Butler and Sue Kansteiner.



SECOND PLACE: Liz Pound, Laura Mayo, Pat Kazakis, Santa and Diane Robinson.

by a delicious lunch and kicker cash that was awarded to first place winning team of Chris McCoy, Deborah Dufresne, Maria Cavanaugh and Maleah Miller. Second Place was won by Diane Robinson, Laura Mayo, Liz Pound and Pat Kazakis. Third Place was

“One of the most fascinating things about golf is how it reflects the cycle of life. No matter what you shoot, the next day you must go back to the first tee and begin all over again and make yourself into something.” Peter Jacobsen, PGA.

Continued On Page 7

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Palencia Womens Golf Association

Continued From Page 6



The RED TEAM captained by Barb Jacobi, won the Palencia Solheim Cup. To quote a tiger named Tony, "They'rre Gr-r-eat!"

The BLUE TEAM captained by Tricia Luciano, were worthy opponents with skill and determination that challenged the Red Team. "The most important shot in golf is the next one," said Ben Hogan.



Diane Robinson's Hole-in-One on the 5th hole.

Make A Difference In Your Community!

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of St. Johns County provides meaningful opportunities for people 55 years of age and better to assist children and adults in their educational pursuits. RSVP volunteers serve in schools within the St. Johns County School District (kindergarten - 12th grade), the Head Start program, and select child care centers, providing reading, tutoring, mentoring and other assistance. RSVP volunteers are available to assist not-for-profit and social service agencies with special projects. Call R.S.V.P at (904) 547-3945.



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Navigating The Prescription Drug Landscape

Carol Bogart, Palencia Resident
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You can get prescription drug coverage in two ways:

- Through a separate stand-alone Part D plan, which works with Original Medicare and Medicare Supplement Insurance plans.

- A Medicare Advantage plan with prescription drug coverage, for an “all-in-one” package that can be a great way to help keep your prescription costs in check.

Three simple tips to help you get the most out of your coverage

1. Consider home delivery.

Check to see if your plan has mail-order pharmacy benefits — if it does, this can be a great way to save money and a trip to the pharmacy. Through ordering a three-month refill on medications, you may get a discount on your prescriptions and the added convenience of having your drugs come to you.

2. Consider generics or preferred formulary alternatives

Prescription drugs are typically sorted into several tiers on the health plan’s list of covered drugs, known as a formulary, with generic or lower-tier drugs typically costing less than drugs on higher tiers. You also have the power to ask your prescribing provider whether more affordable alternatives

are available, such as a generic or a drug on a lower tier of your plan’s formulary. Also ask your pharmacy to price expensive meds through other means such as goodrx.com or other discount plan they have access to. Another option is to look at online sources such as healthwarehouse.com.

3. Check to see if your plan offers other savings opportunities

It’s never a bad idea to simply call your health plan, or your insurance agent, to see if there are other ways to save that might not be on your radar. For example, if you like visiting the



pharmacy rather than using a mail-order service, you should check to see if your plan has a preferred pharmacy network, which means you can get your drugs at a lower copay when you visit a preferred pharmacy.

The prescription drug

landscape can seem complex. But there is help available. Call the number on the back of your member ID card and ask about your plan’s coverage. Within the member portal that enables members to compare drug prices, manage refills and have orders delivered to their home or picked up at a convenient pharmacy.

Feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions or need help transitioning to a new plan.

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Dr. Salvatore Meleca, DPM Opens Meleca Foot And Ankle In Palencia

Salvatore Meleca, DPM a highly respected foot and ankle surgeon with extensive training and experience in minimally invasive foot and ankle surgery, has opened an office at 432 Paseo Reyes Drive in Palencia.

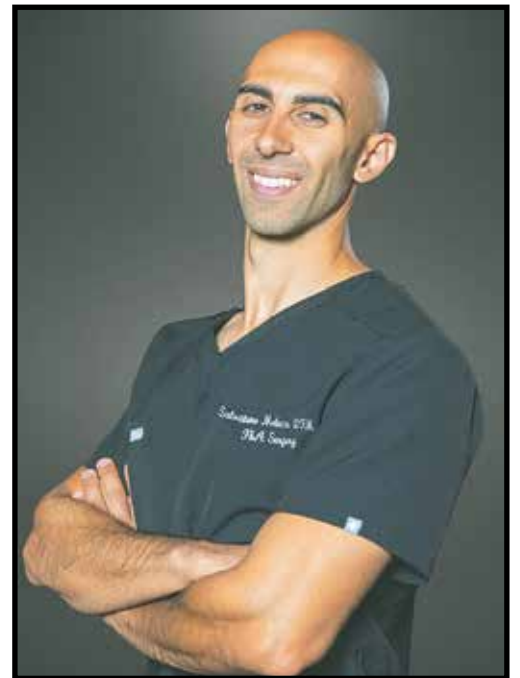
Dr. Meleca completed his residency at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami Beach, where he was mentored by Dr. Ettore Vulcano, a world-renowned orthopedic foot and ankle surgeon.

Acclaimed for his comprehensive approach to various lower extremity ailments, Dr. Meleca has established himself as a leader in the field. His expertise extends to treating a wide array of conditions, including bunions, hammertoes, tendinitis, arthritis, sports injuries like ankle sprains and fractures as well as general ankle pain.

Dr. Meleca's journey to becoming a prominent figure in foot and ankle surgery involved extensive training and a noteworthy residency program at the Mount Sinai Medical Center of Miami Beach.

Positioned in the Palencia area, his clinic ensures accessibility for individuals in need of dedicated foot and ankle care. Dr. Meleca's commitment extends beyond mere medical proficiency; he genuinely looks forward to addressing the diverse needs of individuals seeking relief from various foot and ankle conditions.

His ability to provide solutions for a wide range of foot and ankle ailments positions him as a versatile and reliable practitioner in the field. For those who have encountered the limitations of conservative treatments, Dr. Meleca's proficiency in minimally invasive surgical techniques offers a ray of hope.



Dr. Salvatore Meleca, DPM

This advanced approach not only addresses the symptoms but also focuses on minimizing the impact on patients' daily lives, promoting quicker recovery times. The emphasis on minimally invasive procedures aligns with the evolving landscape of medical practices, showcasing Dr. Meleca's commitment to staying at the forefront of innovative and patient-friendly treatments.

Patients seeking additional information may call Dr. Meleca's office at (904) 460-1120 or visit www.melecafootandankle.com.

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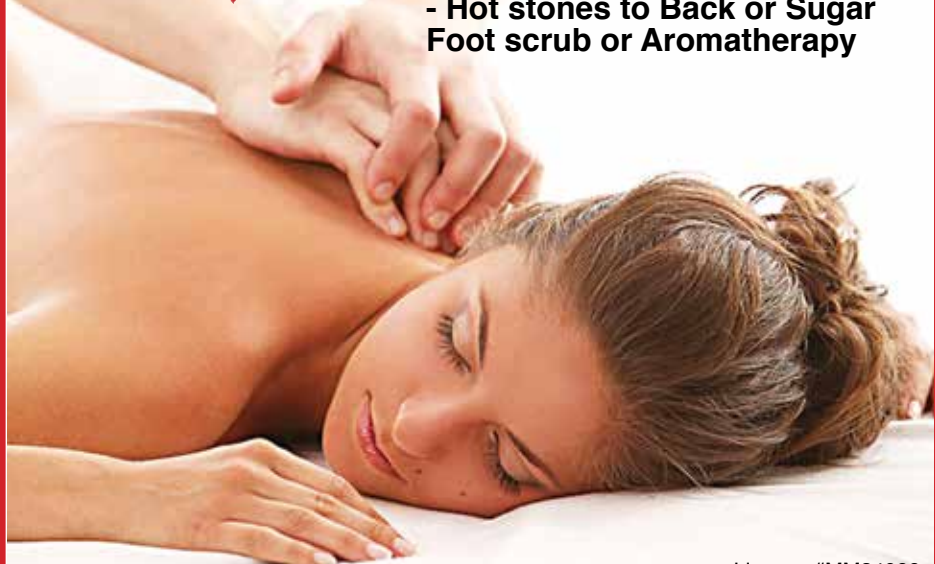
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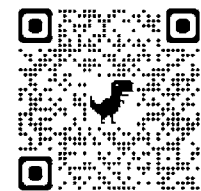
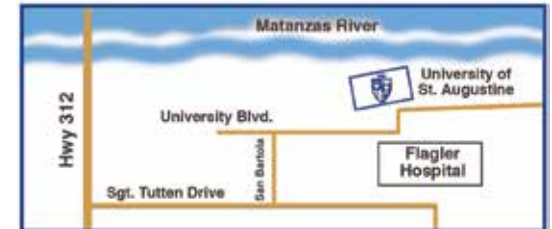


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Accumulating Dysfunction

By Rob Stanborough
PT, DPT, MHSc, MTC, CMTPT, FAAOMPT
First Coast Rehabilitation
(904) 829-3411

I wrote this column a few years ago but I find myself referring to it more and more when I teach. It was written following a conversation with an older friend of mine. I asked him how he was doing and he said, "well, but I've got the normal aches and pains that come with age." I asked him, when was pain required with aging?

Each of us has experienced injury during our life time; some more significant than others. We typically brush ourselves off and press-on never thinking of the long-term consequences. We were young, healthy and motivated or we were busy and didn't have time to get things checked out.

This works for a time but after a while we do what I call, accumulating dysfunction. If you think about it, how many times have you blamed an ache/pain or inability to do something on a previous injury? "My knee hurts because I have an old football injury." "My body has not been the same since I gave birth to my kids," "I was fine until that guy rear-ended me 4 years ago." Perhaps there are legitimate, residual consequences from a previous injury and our function will never be the same, but usually what happens is we compensate over and over. A little weakness. A little shift in the way we move, an extra pillow, or something to help us get through.

The word function is a term resurfacing in healthcare. Perhaps the refocus is due to our more active baby-boomers, or changes in healthcare and insurance policies. Regardless of the reason, it's important because function requires movement and proper movement keeps us healthy. Our bodies consist of an osseus (bony) frame, controlled by a myofascial system, which receives its orders from the nervous system. Injury to any one of these systems will result in dysfunction (impaired or abnormal function) great or small. Fortunately, due to "self-preservation" our bodies compensate in varying degrees – resulting in imbalances.

To use the analogy of cars, you don't lose the use of parking your car

in your garage overnight. You accumulate "stuff" day after day, year after year and the next thing you know there is no room for your car because you have slowly accumulated things that hinder its use. Further, most of us provide more regular maintenance to our cars by changing worn tires or other parts to keep them running than we do our own bodies. We don't wait for the air conditioner to breakdown before scheduling service. We schedule regular annual service in an effort to keep it running without interruption. We even get vaccinations and medical check-ups annually for the purpose of prevention – to keep our organs healthy. Why not give your musculoskeletal system an annual check-up? What was your shoulder or hip range of motion last year? What was your strength? Have you lost some? What are your baseline measurements?

We've all heard the phrase, "prevention is the best medicine." I prefer the phrase, "prevention is the best intervention." Prevention can intervene (or get in between) you and dysfunction. Whatever movement you have today – don't lose it. Maintain your strength, muscle length, joint motion and function with prevention. Get current baseline measurements and compare annually just like you would your weight, cholesterol, blood sugar or INR. When you schedule your annual medical exam, schedule an annual functional exam with your physical therapist. Keep moving. Minimize compensation. Stay healthy and be functional.

Rob Stanborough is a physical therapist serving St. Augustine for nearly 20 years and has presented both nationally and internationally. He 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 as a Senior Instructor for Myopain Seminars (www.myopainseminars.com). He is a co-owner of First Coast Rehabilitation (www.firstcoastrehab.com), and co-author of *Myofascial Manipulation: Theory & Application, 3rd ed* by Proed Inc. Read previous columns posted on www.firstcoastrehab.com.

Marshall Creek CDD Fishing Reminder



Fishing or otherwise trespassing in the limited common area in Marshall Creek CDD is not permitted (this is the area between the rear of a home and the lake). Walking, swimming, or boating in the lakes is not permitted. The St. Johns County Sheriff's department will now issue citations and may issue arrest warrants for violation of this trespass ordinance. Fishing is only permitted in the Marshall Creek CDD common areas and the county park pond off Palencia Village Drive. Thank you for helping us help the privacy of our neighbors.



February Is National Children's Dental Health Month

By Dr. Marisol Bolivar, DMD
Pediatric Dentist - The Tooth Cottage

National Children's Dental Health Month is celebrated every February and teaching dental hygiene is more important than ever!

Cavities, also known as caries or tooth decay, are the most common chronic disease of childhood, yet cavities are preventable. Children who have poor oral health often miss more school and receive lower grades than children who don't.

Untreated cavities can cause pain, infections, and can lead to problems eating, speaking, and learning. More than 1 in 5 children aged 2 to 5 years has at least one cavity in their baby teeth. Cavities are preventable. You can protect and maintain your child's teeth by following these wise simple steps:

- Protect tiny teeth by caring for your mouth when you're pregnant. Your child's future oral health starts with you.
- Ensure to wipe your baby's gums after each meal.

- Avoid putting babies to bed with a bottle.

- Remember to brush your child's teeth twice daily with toothpaste. For children younger than 2 years, consult with your dentist or doctor about when to start using fluoride toothpaste.

- Limit drinks and food with added sugars for children. Encourage your child to eat more fruits and vegetables and have fewer fruit drinks, cookies, and candies. This gives your child the best possible start to good oral health.

- Schedule your child's first dental visit by their first birthday or after their first tooth appears. Their tiny teeth matter!

Remember, "Brush, Floss, Smile!" Because Smiles are more important than ever!

Dr. Marisol Bolivar, DMD is in practice at The Tooth Cottage, 250 Paseo Reyes Drive in Palencia. Call (904) 429-3387.



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Understanding Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD): Symptoms and Treatment Options

By Anna Moyer, Board Certified Pharmacist
Bluebird Pharmacy
904-600-4099

Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) is a chronic condition that affects millions of people worldwide, with a significant impact on their daily lives. Recent statistics reveal that an estimated 2.39 million Americans grapple with this chronic condition. It encompasses two main disorders: Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. This blog will delve into the symptoms of IBD, explore various drug therapies, and shed light on treatment options to help individuals manage and cope with this challenging condition.

I. Symptoms of Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD):

Living with IBD can be challenging due to its unpredictable nature and diverse range of symptoms. Common symptoms include:

Abdominal Pain and Cramping: Persistent discomfort and cramps are common, often occurring after meals or during periods of increased inflammation.

Diarrhea: Frequent, urgent bowel movements with loose stools are characteristic of IBD, impacting the quality of life for individuals.

Weight Loss: Chronic inflammation can lead to a reduced appetite and nutrient absorption, resulting in unintended weight loss.

Fatigue: The body's constant battle against inflammation can lead to fatigue, making everyday activities challenging for those with IBD.

Blood in Stools: Rectal bleeding and the presence of blood in stools are signs of inflammation within the digestive tract.

II. Drug Therapies for Inflammatory Bowel Disease:

Anti-Inflammatory Medications: Corticosteroids, such as prednisone, can help reduce inflammation during flare-ups.

Immunomodulators: Drugs like azathioprine and methotrexate suppress the immune system, helping to manage inflammation over the long term.

Biologics: Monoclonal antibodies like infliximab, adalimumab, and many more target specific proteins in the immune system to control inflammation.

Aminosalicylates: These medications, like mesalamine, help reduce inflammation and are often used for milder forms of IBD.

Antibiotics: In cases of infection or abscess, antibiotics may be prescribed to manage symptoms and prevent complications.

III. Treatment Options and Lifestyle Management:

Nutritional Therapy: Some individuals may benefit from dietary changes, including specific diets designed to reduce inflammation and manage symptoms.

Surgery: In severe cases or when complications arise, surgical intervention may be necessary, involving the removal of affected portions of the digestive tract.

Lifestyle Modifications: Stress management, regular exercise, and adequate sleep play crucial roles in managing IBD symptoms.

Patient Support and Education: Support groups and educational resources help individuals with IBD better understand their condition and cope with the emotional and physical challenges it presents.

Inflammatory Bowel Disease is a complex condition that requires a comprehensive approach to management. By understanding the symptoms, exploring various drug therapies, personal medical history, individuals with IBD can work towards achieving a better quality of life. It's important for those affected by IBD to collaborate closely with healthcare professionals to develop personalized treatment plans tailored to their unique needs and circumstances.

In the journey of managing Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD), choosing the right pharmacy partner is paramount. Bluebird Pharmacy and Vital Care of Jacksonville stand as trusted allies dedicated to meeting all your medication needs for IBD. Our commitment to personalized care, innovative solutions, and a patient-centric approach ensures that you receive the support and expertise necessary for effective IBD management.

By visiting our websites, www.bluebirdpharmacy.com and www.vitalcarejax.com, you'll discover a wealth of information about our comprehensive services, specialized care for IBD, and the commitment we have to your well-being. From tailored medication plans to a team of dedicated healthcare professionals, we are here to guide you every step of the way.

Your health is our priority, and we invite you to explore the resources available on our websites to learn more about how Bluebird Pharmacy and Vital Care of Jacksonville can make a positive difference in your IBD journey. Take control of your health with confidence, knowing that you have a reliable and supportive partner by your side.



Ask A Certified Master Gardener A Beautiful And Carefree Landscape Option: Think Olives!

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

Most of the world's olives grow in southern European countries such as Spain and Italy. In the United States, California has more than 30,000 acres dedicated to the commodity. But Florida may be the next agricultural region for commercial olive production, a solution for citrus farmers who have lost all of their orange crops as a direct result of climate change and citrus greening.

Commercial opportunity began when Dr. Lorenzo Rossi, a plant root biologist from Italy, came to the University of Florida and began working with UF scientists, the Indian River Research and Education Center, and the Olive Council, a nonprofit organization established in 2011 to support the then small group of Florida olive growers.

Dr. Rossi began the process of evaluating the now widely available citrus infrastructure to ascertain whether it would

be suitable for large scale commercial olive production – a potential valuable cash crop. Nineteen olive varieties were started, including Arbequina and Koroneiki, good olives for olive oil production. The next several years will yield critical UF/IFAS data to determine which regions and cultivars will yield the best results and provide informed decisions for Florida commercial farmers who have lost all of their citrus trees.

Olives (*Olea europaea*) also have great potential as a landscape ornamental and may also provide opportunities for home fruit production. A number of olive cultivars are available locally.

Olive is a deciduous evergreen tree in the Olive family (Oleaceae). Leaves are opposite and elliptical with a narrow apex that is sharply pointed. Leaf color is very lovely and generally described as gray green, sometimes appearing almost white to silver. As with many evergreen species, the two- to three-year-old leaves usually fall at the same time new leaf growth appears in the spring.

Olives grow well on almost any well-drained soil up to a pH of 8.5 and are tolerant of mild saline conditions. Sand-dominated soils are best and require no amendments. Excessive nitrogen fertilization, in fact, can cause too much shoot growth at the expense of fruit production. Too much water from irrigation or rain will also make trees susceptible to root-rot disease and damage production by causing flowers to drop before they form fruits. Olive trees can survive extended dry periods.

Olive trees are generally pest- and disease-free which make them environmentally friendly – no need for pesticides.

The fruit of the olive tree is known as a drupe, a fleshy fruit with a stony seed in the center. Olive fruits generally are green and become blackish-purple when fully ripe, although some cultivars remain green when ripe or turn a shade of copper-brown.

Olive tree flowers typically open in

April or May in Florida but have been reported as early as February.

When visiting your favorite garden center, there are a number of olive cultivars that you will see. Most of the olive trees sold in our area, while beautiful, are not suitable for the dinner table. Two cultivars that will produce eating olives when ripe are Manzanilla and Mission. A Manzanilla tree will produce larger olives than a Mission olive tree that produces a medium size olive. Mission is somewhat more cold hardy than Manzanillo and appears to be a favorite of many home gardeners. Olive trees are self-pollinating, but, as with other fruit bearing trees, planting more than one tree close together may increase fruit set.

Like citrus trees, don't be surprised or worry if your tree seems to take every other year off. Olives are described as alternate year-bearing

species and typically have a year of heavy fruit production followed by a year of lighter production. You can take advantage of the lower producing years by pruning non-flowering branches during the flowering season. When heavier fruiting does take place, thin the crop of olives to two to three

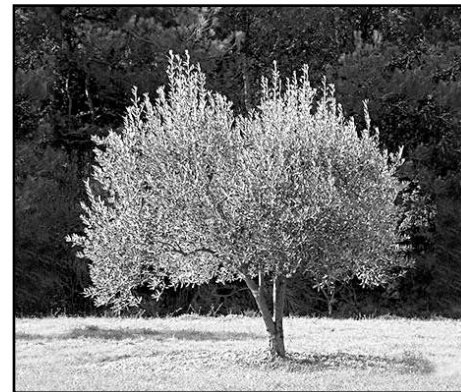
fruits per foot of twig. This will increase fruit size. Thinning should be done soon after fruit set.

If you would like a fun trip to an olive grove in Florida, one possibility is the Brooksville Olive Grove on the western coast of Florida. If you Google it, you will locate the exact address. The owners, a Florida couple, visited Tuscany several years ago and fell in love with olive trees. When they returned to Florida, they bought a strip of land, planted numerous olive trees, and now have a thriving olive oil business at the site.

The best time to buy and plant an olive tree is either just ahead of dormant season or in the early spring. There are a number of orchards, particularly in south Georgia that sell the two European olive tree varieties I mentioned earlier. One orchard is called the Willis Orchard, and another is the nursery at TyTy, both located on the website. I just planted a Manzanilla olive tree in a sunny, sandy site in my landscape, and will let you know how it is coming along in the spring.

Again, and as always, don't be reluctant to try something new. All olive trees generally come with specific instructions and as long as you follow them, you will likely have great success. And, you will have a beautiful slice of the Mediterranean in your landscape!

Do you have gardening 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).



Water Problems? Ask Polly!



Polly Swindull

My irrigation pump is on the outside of my house. What should I do to protect it when we have periods of freezing temperatures?

It generally takes several hours of hard freeze to damage a pump. (Six plus hours of temps in the twenties). If this type of weather is predicted, you can avoid damage by going out to your pump and turning a hose bib on and adjust water flow so the water stream is the size of a pencil. This will keep the water from freezing in your pump and lines, which will not allow any damage to occur to your system. Be aware that the pump will turn on and off every few minutes. This will not cause any damage to the pump, and only cost pennies on your electric bill compared to replacing a broken pump housing.

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Tackling The Weighty Issue Of Pet Obesity

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

As we embark on a new year with resolutions abounding, I would like to address an issue that is increasingly prevalent but often overlooked – pet obesity.

In my years as a veterinarian, I've witnessed the profound impact that a healthy lifestyle can have on the overall well-being of our beloved pets. It is with this in mind that I bring attention to the issue of obesity, a concern that, unfortunately, is on the rise among our four-legged friends.

Obesity in pets is not merely an aesthetic concern; it is a serious health issue that can lead to a myriad of complications. From joint problems to diabetes, the consequences of carrying excess weight are numerous. As responsible pet owners, it is crucial for us to address this issue head-on and take proactive steps to ensure the longevity of our pets.

So, why is pet obesity becoming increasingly prevalent? The factors are diverse and often mirror the challenges we face in our own lives. Sedentary lifestyles, improper nutrition, and the occasional treat (or two) all contribute to the growing waistlines of our furry friends.



As caring pet parents, there are steps we can take to combat this issue. First and foremost, regular veterinary check-ups are essential. During these visits, we can assess your pet's weight and body condition, tailoring a plan to address any concerns. Additionally, a well-balanced diet and regular exercise are cornerstones of a healthy lifestyle for our pets, just as they are for us. Just like in humans, there are medical options for managing obesity as well which may be discussed with your veterinarian.

To make the journey towards a healthier, happier pet more enjoyable, consider incorporating physical activities that align with your pet's interests. Whether it's a daily walk, engaging in interactive play, or introducing new and exciting toys, finding ways to keep your pet active can be both fulfilling and beneficial.

Together, we can ensure that our pets live their lives to the fullest, free from the burdens of excess weight. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your pet's health or weight management, please do not hesitate to reach out. We are here to support you every step of the way.

Newcomers of North St. Johns February Luncheon And Book Drive at Stonewood Restaurant

By Michele Oliver

Newcomers of North Saint Johns (NNSJ) invites members and their guests to join the fun at our February luncheon on Tuesday, February 20th beginning at 11:00 a.m. at Stonewood Restaurant, 3832 Baymeadows Road, Unit 3; Jacksonville, Florida. The event features a delicious lunch and entertainment by talented pianist Matt Hall. NNSJ members are also encouraged to bring a children's book as part of a collection drive to benefit the St. Johns County Public Library System Hasting Branch.

Doors open at 10:30 a.m. Cost for the luncheon and program is \$35 for members and \$40 for guests and non-members. All reservations must be received by Feb. 9th.

For further information about the luncheon and membership, please go to the

NNSJ website at <https://newcomersof-northstjohns.org>. As always, raffles for gift baskets and a fun 50/50 drawing spice up our NNSJ luncheons.

Luncheon entrée choices include: Cedar Plank Salmon; Center-Cut Pork Chop; Blackened Chicken Bowtie Pasta; or a Vegetarian Pasta dish. Dessert is a choice of Crème Brulee or Key Lime Pie.

NNSJ offers a variety of activities for St. Johns County residents to get acquainted and have fun including smaller lunch groups, wine socials, book club, golf, Mah Jongg, holiday parties, a day trip this March to include a fun boat ride from Amelia Island to view Cumberland Island with lunch and shopping opportunities in Fernandina Beach.

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There's No Place Like Home

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

I was gonna be left alone. The bad dream came true. The bagman and lady were packing their bags. I heard them talking excitedly about sailing on the big water, far away, with 3,600 of their closet friends!

And, they would be gone on my most terrifying night, the night of the thunder boomers and crazies. It was awful. They'd never come back.

Then, to my worst imaginings, they put me in the car with my bed, my food, my medicine and my favorite tennis ball and took me to a strange place with little walkers and bag-people I didn't know.

I heard them give many lessons of my care to these nice people. And, as it turned out, they were all wonderful keepers. I had a nice visit while my bag-gers were on their trip.

My keepers knew how much my bag-lady worried about me. They followed her instructions every day. But, I missed my "place."

And, after almost losing hope, they came through the door to thank the temporary tenders and drove me back to my Palencia home. Now the New Year begins.

I hope all of you are happy and ap-

preciate how lucky we all are to have our own special place.



The Shoulder Turn In Golf

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

Power and consistency are two very important qualities of a good shoulder turn in golf.

These are two of the most critical needs for a golfer. The shoulders are one of the large muscles used in golf and the large muscles in golf are consistency. So, how do you use your shoulders to get the maximum potential?

Two moves:

1. You want to turn your back toward the target
2. Keep your left arm as straight as possible.

Keep your backswing nice and slow, allowing you to build maximum right-side loading. Don't let your arms do all the work; allow your hips and shoulders to turn as a unit, which will develop more power and reduce injuries.

Keep it simple: Turn your back toward the target and then, at your follow-through, your chest toward the target. Keep it in rhythm - it is a golf swing, not parts!

If you would like help to improve your consistency and develop power, contact me at www.laura@laurabaughgolf.com



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How To Raise Anti-Racist Kids

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

As parents, we all want to raise good humans. Part of raising good human beings is navigating difficult subjects, such as racism and violence against black people in America. Talking about racism may make many of us uncomfortable, but we can't solve a problem if we can't talk about it. Racism thrives in silence. Our children need to hear from us what we know to be right—and what we know to be wrong. Nationwide protests for racial justice are a powerful reminder that parents of all backgrounds need to be pro-active in raising children to understand racism and discrimination, and in helping our kids to be a force for positive change in the world.

Here are some steps that parents can take to help children fight racist practices and stand up for every person's right to be treated fairly.

1. Educate yourself about how to advocate effectively for others, as well as how to talk about race and racism with children.

2. Talk about fairness.

Even preschoolers are old enough to understand the concept of fairness. Racism is a system of unfairness, in which BIPOC (Black and Indigenous People of Color) are treated worse than white people. That is wrong and we all need to work hard to fix it.

If your kids have seen reports of police brutality in the news, talk about how upsetting it is to see people treated unfairly, and how mistreatment of Black people is part of a bigger picture. Explain that there is a multiracial coalition of people working together to put an end to racism and make the world safer for all of us.

3. Encourage children to ask questions.

All children have questions about race, skin color, and other differences. However, if parents are uncomfortable talking about race, children learn not to bring it up. When people say that their kids are "color blind," what they really mean is that their kids have been trained not to talk about difference.

4. When it comes to younger kids, play, storytelling and modeling the behaviors that we want them to emulate are the best ways to teach any subject—and that especially includes celebrating difference and rejecting racism.

5. As kids grow, hearing stories that reveal a wide range of perspectives and seeing their parents and caregivers "walk the talk" continue to be the best teaching tools. As parents, we should also engage our elementary-school-aged children in regular conversations about racial discrimination.

6. Teenagers tend to be acutely aware of injustice in their schools, their social circles, and their world. At this age, they want parents to offer guidance on how to be active allies for causes they believe in, and they need resources to help them navigate the challenge of racism as independent critical thinkers.

7. Form friendships and relationships with diverse populations and encourage your children to do the same.

8. Build a library.

Read books together about racism and protest. Choose stories with Black and Indigenous People of Color as heroes and heroines. Further your own knowledge by reading books on antiracism and race recommended by BIPOC booksellers and publishers.

9. Keep the conversation going.

The legacy of slavery is very much a part of life in the U.S. today. It is important to realize that all of us have internalized the rules of a society that is separate and unequal by race. Interrupting the cycle of racism requires vigilance in our daily lives—we need to be on the lookout for ways that we perpetuate the bias embedded in American culture.

At every age, our children are looking to us to help guide them—both by giving them the learning tools that they need to thrive and by showing them through our own example what is right. Standing up to injustice is part of being a good citizen and human being. All children deserve to grow up in a world where they are safe and protected.

Michael Brown is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Certified Gottman Therapist, Couples Workshop Leader, and Clinical Trainer in private practice in Bartram Park. Michael is currently offering couples, family, and individual therapy in office and via 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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Random Acts Of Kindness

By Rev. Michael Legaspi, Associate Pastor
The Village Church
4229 Pacetti Rd., World Golf Village

Did you know that February contains a recognition of "Random Acts of Kindness Day?" Yes, it is February 17th. It is a wonder that, just like Valentines Day, we have to be reminded to love one another or be kind.

Have you ever been on the receiving end of a random act of kindness? If you have, didn't that moment just brighten your whole day, or maybe even your whole week? It could have been as simple as the person in the car in front of

you paying for you coffee in the drive through line. But that one simple act made all the difference for you. I notice when someone lets me into an opening of a traffic line, I tend to pass the favor along to someone else.

This is just one prime example of the kind of impact a random act of kindness can have on someone. So, if we can know and understand the effect kindness can have on people, why are we not more intentional to show kindness towards everyone we come in contact with? Some will say "It's just a different time than before or you never know how people will react."

At its core, kindness is really just reaching out to other people unconditionally with God's love; doing all that

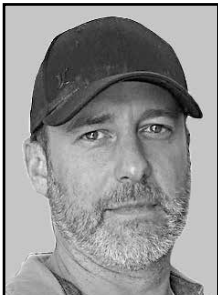
we can to help them experience God the positive way we do. So many people in this world are hostile not only to what we believe, but also to the One we believe in. But if we reach out to these people, with the help of the Holy Spirit, our kindness may be the one thing that they have never experienced before.

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Ephesians 4:32)

Kindness is something we give, even to people who don't deserve it. We weren't deserving of kindness either, but God showed us kindness anyway when He sent His Son to live among us and die for us. So let's treat

the people around us unconditionally as well and make a point to carry out more random acts of kindness not only on one designated day but as many days as we can.

John Wesley the founder of the American Methodist Church said: "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."



Mark Ellis

There is blue smoke coming out of the tailpipe on my son's car. What does this mean?

Sounds like your son's car has worn seals and gaskets in the engine. Blue exhaust smoke usually means oil is leaking past engine seals and into the cylinders. Another cause could be a dirty PCV valve. Bring your son's car in and we'll run some diagnostics and find the cause.

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Life Is Never Too Busy For The PTO

By Sara Seifert, Palencia Resident
Palencia Elementary PTO

Back in 2020 when my oldest son was in Kindergarten at Palencia Elementary School, two of my close friends tried to recruit me to the school's PTO. "The meetings are in Palencia Park because of Covid, just come with us," one of my friends gently asked. The meeting was in the morning and cut into my gym time, so I politely declined. This happened sporadically over the next

raised a lot of money and had a lot of fun doing so. For the following two years, I co-chaired the Pirate 5K race with Lindy Lollar (who is now the Vice President) and I have now taken on the role of Public Relations chair writing articles for the *Palencia Press* and other publications. I work in publishing, so this was a natural fit and I can write the articles at my leisure which works for me.



All spruced up, Palencia residents attend the PTO Silent Auction Gala in 2023.

several months and each time I either "forgot" about it, was busy with work or just didn't want to make the effort. In my mind it was a hard no because I felt I didn't have enough time because I work full-time, didn't know anything about PTO and to be honest, was a little intimidated. Perhaps I had seen "Bad Moms" too many times and thought that was how it was going to be!

Eventually, I relented and found myself at my first meeting at the start of the 2021-2022 school year. My son was now in first grade, we were allowed back in the school cafeteria, and I realized that if I had time to work out daily, I surely could find an hour of my time to go. I also wanted to support a friend who had taken on a larger role and knew that seeing me there would mean something to her.

I enjoyed listening to the business side of the PTO where the metrics were shared from fundraisers and the allocations were transparently shared to the attendees. I was blown away at the total amounts raised by these women from the Boosterthon, golf tournament, etc. Captain Goodrich was there and spoke at length about the current Covid guidelines and how the students were doing, etc. I left the school that morning feeling informed and motivated to help in whatever capacity my free time allowed. That year, my first foray into the PTO was on the Silent Auction committee where we

While my full-time job affords the flexibility to go to a meeting, I think it's important for moms (and dads, grandparents, caretakers) to know that you don't have to go to the meetings to be involved. You can volunteer to be on a committee and see which events are of interest to you. I admit that it can be intimidating, especially if you are new to the school community, but it's also a great way to meet new friends, familiarize yourself with your child's school and make an impact. Life is very busy for each one of us but what would happen if we were all too busy to join a committee, chair an event or give up a lot of one's free time to be the PTO president? Well, there would be a lot of school improvements that never happened and teachers and staff who would feel less love throughout the year.

My purpose of writing this is not to shame those who haven't volunteered! Rather, I want people to know that having a job or being a busy stay-at-home parent does not have to preclude you from helping out if you would like to or have always been curious about participating but didn't think you could work it into your busy life. When I drop my son at school and drive by the new playground, I feel a sense of accomplishment just knowing I had a very small part in making that happen. I would love for everyone to feel that.

Palencia Elementary students fundraise outside of Publix Grocery for Pirate's Bounty, which helps families in need.



Phase I of the outdoor play area at Palencia Elementary School.

Palencia Elementary School Principal Catherine Goodrich gets doused with water as part of incentives for the Boosterthon fundraiser.



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Reasons To Buy Life Insurance - Part 2 of 2

Life insurance is often thought of as a way to protect loved ones by providing for final expenses and estate taxes but you can think beyond that.

Many people don't think about buying life insurance until they have children. But far too many people — having a child or not — put off the purchase entirely. Many consumers overestimate the cost of having and paying for life insurance.

Who do you want to protect?

Life insurance is often thought of as a way to protect loved ones by providing for final expenses, estate taxes, etc. But let's think beyond that. Who else depends on you and your income?

Do you have young children at home? Life insurance can help provide the money for day care now and an education for the future. If your kids are older, your insurance can help cover tuition payments.

Are you responsible for your parents? If you're contributing to the care of an elderly relative, you should consider how healthcare bills will be paid if you or your partner passes away suddenly. Be sure to discuss your parents' financial situation with them.

Do you have kids in college? Running short on financial assets when your teen gets accepted to college? You may be able to take out a loan against your permanent life policy. Grandparents can also name grandkids as life insurance product beneficiaries. In addition to making cash gifts toward college tuition while they're alive, grandparents' insurance proceeds may help fulfill their dreams of sending the next generation to college.

Do you have long term care plans for yourself? You may be able to add an option to your life insurance that lets you put some of your policy's death benefit to work in advance. You can use the fund to pay for your

own nursing home, in-home or other type of long-term care expenses.

What do you want to protect?

Do you have a mortgage? If you have a mortgage, adequate life insurance can help your family stay in the home and maintain their standard of living.

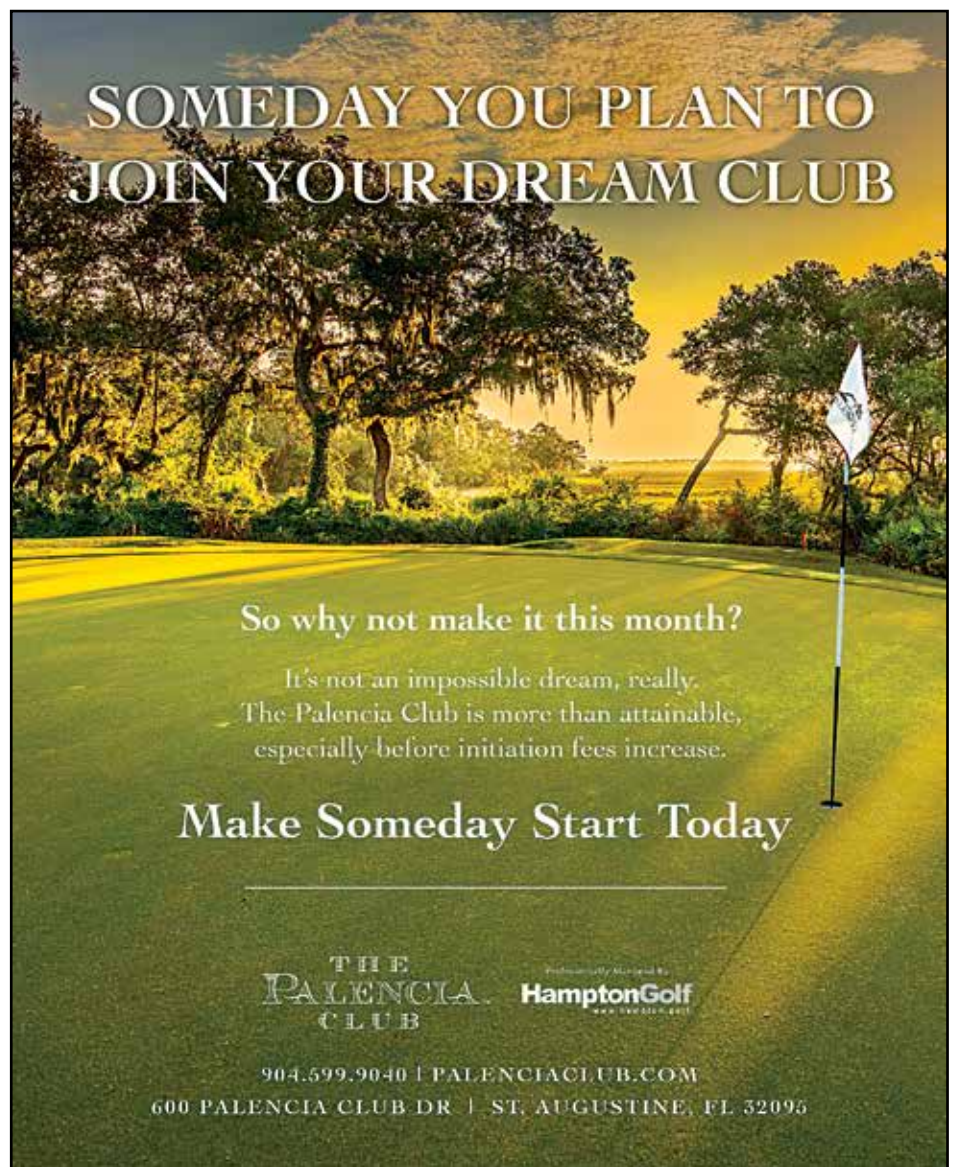
Even if you don't have a mortgage, there are probably other assets that you want to protect. Life insurance can help your family keep up with car payments or protect your spouse from having to dip into retirement funds earlier than anticipated.

Are you a business owner? Life insurance can help the company you built continue after you're gone. You may want to boost protection for your business. Business owners can name their business partners — or the company itself — as their life insurance beneficiaries. The policy's cash death benefit could help your business partner buy your share of the company or help keep your business going strong while your heirs decide next steps.

Do you want to leave something behind?

Perhaps you would like your legacy to help the next generation live more comfortably. There are a variety of ways that life insurance can help you do that. Life insurance can continue your contributions to your favorite charity, because some policies allow you to name an organization as your beneficiary. You can also use life insurance to help protect relatives who depend on you or those with special needs by naming them a beneficiary. You can determine how to divide your assets by specifically designating them to your heirs.

If you have questions about Life Insurance, contact your Palencia neighbor, and State Farm Agent, Craig Dewhurst, at 904-940-9740.



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