



FLEET BEAT

VOL. 34 No. 4

THE FLEET LANDING RESIDENTS' NEWSPAPER

May 2025

Executive Director's Quarterly Briefing

By Enith Vardaman

The April 22 "Coffee and Conversation With Josh" drew a large crowd to Johnson Hall.

Financial Results

Executive Director Josh Ashby began by displaying a chart of budget, 2025 average, and March 31, 2025, occupancy rates for independent living, assisted living, memory care, and skilled nursing settings. Although the March 31 figures showed assisted living and memory care somewhat below budget, by April 21 all levels of care were above budget.



Revenue above budget, and expenses somewhat below budget, resulted in operating income some \$1.7 million above budget as of March 31. Investment income of

over \$1.3 million accounted for most of that figure.

The lender-required debt service coverage ratio substantially exceeded the requirement (3.27 versus 1.20), as did days cash on hand (371 versus 180).

Ashby concluded his discussion of Fleet Landing's finances with welcome news: In 2025, property insurance rates have declined 27 percent. As a result, the current monthly property insurance surcharge of \$123 per month per unit will be reduced to \$61, effective June 1.

Resident Survey Update

Ashby reported on the resident survey conducted for health services residents and family members from March 4 to March 17, and for independent living residents from March 18 to March 31. The total number of surveys distributed was 979. The 583 responses received translated to a 59.5 percent response rate—significantly higher than the national average response rate of 43.6 percent. This feedback is helpful in areas such as management initiatives and resource allocation decisions as well as in the departmental performance management process. Results of the survey are reported to the Board of Directors and staff.

The net promoter score is derived from responses to the survey question, "How likely would you be to recommend this facility to your family and friends?" A score between 50 and 80 ranks as "Excellent." (Above 80 is "World Class.") Fleet Landing's March 2025 net promoter

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Scholarship Awards Ceremony

By Victoria Freeman



Kathy DeSiena (l) and Dale Clifford

Kathy DeSiena, Charitable Gift Planning Director, gave the opening remarks at the April 2 Fleet Landing Scholarship Awards Ceremony in Johnson Hall. She introduced resident Dale Clifford, Chair of the Scholarship Committee.

Clifford said Fleet Landing would not be what it is without the devotion of the staff, and that the scholarships were one way for residents to show their appreciation. She announced that 54 scholarships were being awarded—a record number. The total amount of the awards was over \$127,000. That was enough to give some funding to everyone, but not quite enough to fully fund every application. She reminded residents that the May 5 Fleet Landing Golf Classic was another opportunity to fund scholarships. She recognized the members of the Scholarship Committee: Jean Cox, Mary Donohue, Katherine Harlan, Frances Jones, Jim Joyner, and John Taylor. Each Fleet Scholar can receive up to \$3,000 for use from May 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026, to cover tuition, books, and materials.

The scholarship recipients who could be present came forward as their name was called, and their name and photograph appeared on the screens. These scholars planned to use the funds to work in areas as diverse as LPN prerequisites at Florida State College at

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April Residents' Council Meeting

By Howard Burdick

Residents' Council President Bob Peterson convened the April 15 council meeting and welcomed new residents.

Management Perspective. Chief Operating Officer Brian Weiss reported on the status of a long list of projects underway or due to commence. These include exterior projects around the Coleman Center, vinyl fencing along Fleet Landing Boulevard, campus signage, underground infrastructure inspections, near completion of the 2000 Building updates, and commencement of the 3000 Building updates. Four competitive bids for house roof replacements have been received. Selection of a contractor is pending for this project, which will begin this summer and continue for two to three years.

Council Reports.

Vice President. Carol Smith reported on the status of Senate and House bills, drafted by the Office of Insurance Regulation (OIR), for the 2025 Florida legislative session. All provisions relating to continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs) have been removed. A new bill, drafted with input from all CCRC stakeholders (OIR, residents, and providers), is expected for the 2026 legislative session. She also reviewed the Resident Council election process.

Treasurer. Lynette Beitz reported continued positive financial performance. As of mid-March six contracts and one upsize had been closed.

Human Resources and Marketing. Ernie Bio congratulated the April Campus Leader, Deborah Gordon, Director of Home Health & Rehab; April Staff Member of the Month, Delilah Miller of Human Resources; and Wade Westbrook of Maintenance, who was "caught making a difference." Promotions were noted for Merlita Tablada, to Lake View Manager; Jay Jernigan, to Manager of Campus Operations; Alec Grissom, to IT Support Technician; Wayne Willard, to Enterprise Specialist; and Bethany Buse, to Lake View Supervisor. Occupancy in all areas remained high.

Wellness and Transportation. Ken Hollinga reviewed a full slate of activities scheduled between this council meeting and the May 20 meeting. He gave a general overview of some 55 resident clubs and groups. He named recent winners of competitive groups: golf, pickleball, 8 ball, croquet, table tennis, and Wii bowling. He also reminded residents of the hours and phone numbers for various transportation services.

Health Services/Safety and Security. Judy Solano encouraged residents to attend the monthly *WELLInspired* Learning Series. She reviewed the services provided by Health Services Liaison Laura Dean. Residents should clean up after their pets immediately. The fire marshal's annual campus inspection in March produced outstanding results in all facilities. The one exception was for some apartment storage lockers. Items must be stored no less than 18 inches below the ceiling. As a rule of thumb, nothing should be stacked above

locker cage walls. Sprinkler testing and independent living fire drills are scheduled for May. Solano reminded residents of the 15 mph campus speed limit and noted safety measures for pedestrians, joggers, and bicyclists. Another reminder: Fleet Landing is a smoke-free campus. Safety and Security Manager Bill Stafford will be conducting monthly discussion meetings.

Dining Services/Housekeeping. Ann Bell reviewed recent dining events. Breakfast at Currents now includes eggs cooked to order. Resident requests for rescheduling their annual cleaning creates problems for Housekeeping staff.

Facilities. Stephen Dick reviewed the inspection schedule through early June. He reported that recycling guidelines could be found on Fleet Link. Go to "Resident Groups" and then "Fleet Recycling Improvement Program."

Communications/Suggestions. Secretary Julia Pet-Armacost reviewed five suggestions. Complete texts of the suggestions and management responses can be found on Fleet Link. Go to "Residents' Council" and then "Residents' Council Presentations."

In Memoriam

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Bill Beitz
1943-2025 | Dick Beltson
1937-2025 |
| Caroline Covin
1934-2025 | Maureen Gall
1948-2025 |
| George Larocque
1928-2025 | Charlotte Self
1928-2025 |
| Elaine Vlachos
1927-2025 | |

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| Maureen Miller | Bo Smith |
| Isobel Spink | Carol Smith |
| Nancy Lundgren | Mary Durkin |
| Patricia Payne | Carole Watson |

Chet Davis (Roving Reporter)
All the news that fits...

Contributions to FLEET BEAT are welcome. Please place copy or any comments you may have in box 1107 at the Coleman Center. Neither letters to the editor nor anonymous submissions are published but we are, of course, mindful of your comments. Issues of FLEET BEAT can be found at fleetlanding.com. Sign into the resident portal and click on "Menu" and then "Publications." Issues can also be found under "Publications" on Fleet Link.

FLiCRA Holds Annual Meeting

By Enith Vardaman



LtoR: Karen Farrell, Robert Freeman, Josh Ashby

Karen Farrell, president of Fleet Landing’s chapter of the Florida Life Care Residents Association (FLiCRA), presided over the chapter’s annual meeting, held in Johnson Hall on April 30. She began by welcoming everyone and thanking them for their support in opposition to the bill, proposed by Florida’s Office of Insurance Regulation (OIR), that could have had detrimental effects on continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs).

Farrell recognized residents Robert Freeman and Dave Ritchie, who traveled to Tallahassee to testify against the bill. Ritchie was not able to attend. Freeman thanked those present for the role they played by turning out at the February 25 Town Hall with the OIR Commissioner. (See *FLEET BEAT*, March 2025, page 1.)

Farrell recognized outgoing board members Ernie Bio, treasurer; Louise Lones, secretary; Laurie Page, vice president; and Peggy Steck. She also introduced continuing board members Carol Smith, David Miron, Mike Shannon, and Judy Solano as well as non-voting members Pat Kluever and Enith Vardaman (data keeper and advisor respectively).

The nominating committee, made up of Shann Purinton, Bob Armacost, and Mary Donohue, developed a candidate slate of Dian Russell, Diane Eger, and Bruce Osborne, for three-year terms, and Kathy Vanderbeck for a two-year term on the chapter board. They were elected unanimously by a voice vote.

The featured speaker for the meeting was Executive Director Josh Ashby, who addressed CCRC oversight. He suggested that what would be better was not more laws, but enforcing the ones we have already and more severe penalties for breaking them. He noted two recent developments in regard to Tampa Life Plan Village, the now defunct CCRC that had been operating as Unisen (formerly University Village): OIR Commissioner Mike Yaworsky had issued the final report on this CCRC, describing its violation of Florida’s insurance code and its mistreatment of seniors. On the very day of this annual meeting, Ronald Schuck, the Tampa Life Plan Village Board President, had been arrested on charges of Continuing Care Contract Fraud. Ashby noted the need for more

staffing and better monitoring of CCRCs on the part of OIR. He also suggested establishing a rating system for CCRCs that would allow prospective residents to assess risk. It would also require them to assume responsibility for their choice, while not penalizing residents of other CCRCs. This transparency would empower consumers to pressure providers into offering a product that is desirable and financially viable. This could be more effective than creating a larger regulatory framework that could be slow to respond and ineffective. After the failure of the bill in this year’s legislative session, a better approach to new legislation is anticipated for the 2026 legislative session.

In her closing remarks, Farrell said that the chapter’s board was laying the groundwork for participating in the framing of a new bill for the 2026 legislative session. She encouraged residents to sign up for FLiCRA’s “E-Newsletter.” Go to flicra.com. The signup box can be found by scrolling to the bottom of the page. She also announced that this year, FLiCRA’s Annual Conference will be held on October 16 at Vicar’s Landing in Ponte Vedra Beach, giving many Fleet Landing residents the opportunity to attend.

Editor’s note: To see the report on the Tampa Life Plan Village, go to “Florida Office of Insurance Regulation.” Clicking on the “Newsroom Events” link will bring up a memo about the report. Scroll to the bottom of the memo for a link to the report. A search on “Ronald Schuck” will bring up multiple articles about his arrest.

Scotie Cousin at Fleet Landing

Photos by Chet Davis

Atlantic Beach artist Scotie Cousin is known for his whimsical critters. They can be seen at various locations in the area, but Chet Davis has tracked down some right here on our campus.



One Breath, One World

By Nancy Lundgren; photos by Craig Miller



LtoR: Sheri Nicholson, Deirdre Dwyer, Dan Jones



Fleet Landing women performing Kung Fu Fan



Palencia group doing Classical Yang Form

On April 26, Sheri Nicholson, Fleet Landing’s extraordinary personal trainer and tai chi instructor, welcomed people from the North Florida area to the 2025 World Tai Chi Day celebration. The event, held at Foundation Academy in Jacksonville, was sponsored by Nicholson’s non-profit organization, New Age Hippy/Tai Chi for Health and Wellness. She opened the festivities by reading the 2025 proclamation from Jacksonville Mayor Donna Deegan officially proclaiming April 26 as World Tai Chi Day for the city of Jacksonville.

Ron Collum, a Tai Chi Master who leads the tai chi group in Palencia (near St. Augustine), sent the following message to Fleet Landing instructor Deirdre Dwyer on April 28, summarizing the event.

“Saturday was an amazing day—World Tai Chi Day—which occurs annually on the last Saturday in April. Tai chi groups in countries around the world participate in this event Our Palencia tai chi group joined others from the greater Jacksonville area to share in “one world, one breath” and perform our various routines in front of a crowd of around 100 attendees, by my count. High points were a fan tai chi performance [Kung Fu Fan] by a group of [Fleet Landing] women in brightly colored Asian costumes led

by Deirdre Dwyer, and a unique solo tai chi performance by Sifu Dan Jones [Fleet Landing instructor] to the accompaniment of his chosen jazzy background music. The wonderful feeling of positive energy permeated the entire event.

We Have a New Residents’ Council

By Enith Vardaman



LtoR: Julia Pet-Armacost, Carol Smith, Lynette Beitz



Shann Purinton, Ken Hollinga, Stephen Dick



Judy Solano, Dave Russell, Skip McAlexander

Results of the Residents’ Council election were announced on April 30. Having received the largest number of votes, Lynette Beitz will serve a three-year term. Shann Purinton, Skip McAlexander, and Dave Russell will serve two-year terms.

Council responsibilities are as follows: Julia Pet-Armacost, president; Carol Smith, vice president; Beitz, treasurer; Purinton, secretary; Ken Hollinga, Wellness and Transportation; Stephen Dick, Facilities; Judy Solano, Health Services and Safety and Security; Russell, Dining and Housekeeping; McAlexander, Human Resources and Marketing.

Fizz and Fashion

By Carole Watson

Photos by Ann Bell and Janet Silvester



A dozen models twirled their way across the Johnson Hall stage and then strolled among the attendees as Fleet Hearts and Peggy Johnson of Petunia Patch Express presented “Fizz and Fashion” on April 3.

All sixteen tables of eight each were filled as guests enjoyed a champagne luncheon, admirably catered by Fleet Landing’s culinary staff under the direction of Dining Services Manager Rachel Carmack. The table centerpieces of magnolia leaves and spring flowers, coordinating with the white, pink, and lilac linens, were made by a team of volunteers led by Kay Craft and Mary Kay Ormsby.

Over 30 resident volunteers, spearheaded by the Organizing Committee of Judy Poppell, Jackie Smith, Nancy Carter (whose emails were both instructive and funny), and Shann Purinton, labored behind the scenes to make the event a success.

Proceeds from the event will fund the philanthropic projects of Fleet Hearts. These endeavors include support of Anchor Academy, the 150 Christmas trees delivered each year to residents of campus healthcare facilities, the Arc Jacksonville Village (an affordable, independent-living neighborhood for adults with intellectual and developmental differences), and the Salvation Army collections program as well as other worthy causes as the need arises.

The men of Fleet Landing were not left out of this ladies’ luncheon, as 12 brave souls acted as ushers and assisted the models down the steps leading off the stage. Guy Van Syckle strummed songs on his guitar as a lovely accompaniment to the show.

The twelve models, of all shapes and sizes, rapidly changed outfits with the help of “dressers” Vicki Coward, Nancy Stein, and Dana Neal. Despite the hustle and bustle backstage, the models appeared serene as they paraded to Johnson’s descriptions of their outfits.

After the show, Johnson offered the models’ outfits, as well as others in her stock, for sale so successfully that it was after 5 pm before the last customer left. Chatter has it that this was the first such event in recent memory, and that it was a resounding success!



Left: Peggy Johnson. Right: Table ready for guests.



LtoR: Marily Peterson, Julie McLaughlin, Carol Smith



Connie Wheat, Sue Myers, Pam Robbins
(continued on next page)

Fizz and Fashion

(continued from preceding page)



Carole Watson, Dede Leclaire, Kathy DeSiena



The Organizing Committee: Judy Poppell, Jackie Smith, Shann Purinton (not pictured: Nancy Carter)



Wendy Bunch, Ann Brodt, Eileen Theis



The men who helped make the event a success.

April MOAA Meeting

By Chet Davis



LtoR: Joe Ruthenberg, Gayle Cargill, Mary Kluever, Jim Cargill, Pat Kluever

Pat Kluever, president of the Historic Mayport Chapter of the Military Officers of America Association (MOAA), began the April 29 meeting with a review of the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC)

program's steps to develop responsible citizenship and a goal-oriented future for local high school students. He paid tribute to the prominent role resident Joe Ruthenberg plays in this program. Kluever also discussed various programs to help feed many of the junior military families in the Mayport area. He noted that two grants from the MOAA national organization as well as funds received in lieu of flowers as requested in the obituary for resident Ann Butler's late husband, John, will be used for this purpose.

The meeting focused on the St. Augustine Military Trail Ride, a joint venture of the Historic Mayport and Ancient City MOAA chapters. The featured speaker was Jim Cargill of the Ancient City MOAA chapter. Cargill and his wife, Gayle, head the Trail Ride program. The Trail Ride begins at Fort Mosé, a refuge for escaped British slaves, who became freemen when they pledged allegiance to the Spanish governor. It takes JTOTC cadets to various historic sites of military significance in St. Augustine and then returns to Fort Mosé, where the cadets have an opportunity to experience Meals-Ready-to-Eat (MREs).

Fleet Landing Passover Seder

By Judy Poppell



Harriet Berson (l) and Judy Poppell



Some of the participants in the retelling of the Exodus story:

Left: Bobbie Fost. Right: Nancy Stein and Rona Brenner.



Views of guests at the Seder

On Tuesday, April 15, approximately 45 residents gathered with their Fleet Landing friends and neighbors for the annual Passover Seder. This year's Seder was celebrated in The Atlantic, which provided ample room for the event. The Fleet Landing Seder was begun 13 years ago by residents Stan and Elaine Tenenbaum, of blessed memory. The tradition has continued, and this year's Seder was led jointly by Judy Poppell and Harriet Berson.

Our Fleet Landing home is an appropriate location for the Passover observance, and The Atlantic provided just the right touch for the traditional observance. The week-long holiday is celebrated with traditional holiday foods, including matzah (slabs of crisp, unleavened bread) and other symbols of the Passover holiday.

One of the most celebrated holidays in the Jewish world, Passover or Pesach commemorates the biblical Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. The Seder includes the annual retelling of the Exodus story and the role of Moses in leading the Israelites from slavery to freedom. It is a participatory event in which those present take an active part in the reading of the story and singing traditional holiday songs. The Seder is also a time to reflect on those less fortunate, and all who are hungry, including the stranger, are welcomed to share in the Seder meal.

Our chefs did an amazing job of preparing a sumptuous Passover dinner complete with all the traditional holiday foods. The servers did an outstanding job of seeing that all were served expeditiously and efficiently. We now have a venue that enables us to include all who wish to attend. A great time was had by all!

World Affairs Council Special Engagement

By Chet Davis



Guy Swan (l) and Rick Snyder

The World Affairs Council (WAC) of Jacksonville held a special engagement for Spinnaker Society members on April 8. Also in the Johnson Hall audience were Sponsors, Ambassador's Circle, and Benefactor members of WAC. Executive Director Josh Ashby and WAC Board Chair Amy Berg gave welcoming remarks.

(continued on next page)

World Affairs Council Special Engagement

(continued from preceding page)

The featured speakers, Lieutenant General Guy Swan, USA (Ret.), and Vice Admiral Rick Snyder, USN (Ret.), spoke on the topic “Global Hot Spots and Blind Spots.”

At a national and strategic level, change is underway in a divided world. The latest strategic guidance focuses on the threat of China, the changing relationship with NATO, and homeland defense.

In the past, homeland defense was assumed, but in today’s world, that is no longer the case. Our vulnerabilities are heightened by obsolete systems guarding our northern borders. China is developing new amphibious capabilities and missile systems, and it is building naval vessels in higher numbers than can be achieved in the US.

The war in Ukraine is teaching the US the value of technology in warfare, and it is a laboratory for future wars. It has demonstrated the value of good logistics support.

Blind spots include China’s influence in Europe, its control of port facilities around the world, the threat from over Canada, and our relationship with NATO.

The presentation raised a lot of questions about the role and capabilities of the US in meeting future threats.

The Henhouse Prowlers

By Isobel Spink



The name of the band was enough to lure a large audience to Johnson Hall on April 25 to hear these four formidable musicians. To quote Wellness Services Manager Mary Faria, “They are bluegrass ambassadors, bending the traditional form into a keenly developed sound all their own.” The first thing I noticed was all four had very long hair, and all wore suits—very unusual for a bluegrass group.

The Prowlers began 25 years ago and have toured in 29 countries, working with the US Foreign Service to promote the fact that music is a tool to unite people. The band, made up of Jake Howard (mandolin) Jon Goldfine (bass), Chris Dollar (guitar), and Ben Wright (banjo), played several original compositions, including Goldfine’s excellent boogie-woogie “Heading for a Heartache,” which reminded me of Lead Belly’s “Midnight Special.” Wright shared “Live the Avenues,” a

heartfelt tune written for his father and for all vets. The musicians moved around the stage while playing, joining one another for solos, all four strumming with lightning speed.

The pieces that I think really impressed us the most were Johnny Cash’s “Folsom Prison” sung in Czech, and another one, “Don’t Fear Loss,” sung in the language of Uganda, which had aired on TV. Their original spiritual, inspired by Saudi Arabia, brought down the house. Performed a cappella, their voices were as good as their music, with impressive range and beautiful harmony. The spiritual’s message was, “Don’t judge your neighbor unless you’re looking in the mirror.”

Their final piece was about how to keep traveling the world, which they have certainly done. The Henhouse Prowlers have released a new album with lots of their own material and are making a documentary. We trust Faria will bring them back again.

Historic Mayport Tour

By Chet Davis

On April 2, twenty residents embarked on a bus tour of Historic Mayport. The group was met at the Gulliford Community Center by Alyce Decker, former chair of the Mayport Waterfront Partnership, and Claudia Estes, a local historian. The group was briefed on the continuing efforts to preserve a working waterfront, which would lead to a revitalized commercial fishery, while preserving Mayport’s history and cultural heritage. Support of marine education and research and eco-tourism opportunities are additional goals.

Estes recounted how she had grown up in the area and had many opportunities to enjoy life at the beach. Historic homes and new construction were highlighted. Several businesses have recently opened their doors. The tour included a visit to the Safe Harbor Seafood market, setting everyone up for lunch at Singleton’s.

There is a lot to learn about Mayport’s history as well as the efforts underway to revitalize the community, commercial fishing, and tourism.

Feathered Visitors

Photo by Dick Sturtevant



This trio paid a visit to Karen and Dick Sturtevant’s front yard on April 26.

Chips and Putts

By Isobel Spink

Following a beautiful day of challenging golfing at Blue Sky Golf Club on April 10, a gathering of players, spouses, and friends enjoyed a delicious dinner in the newly opened Atlantic. Rick Rochelle led off the evening with a corny joke, and Bob Neal had a quiz about the history of the Masters Tournament, handing out dollar bills for the correct answers.

Tournament first place went to Team 2, with Nancy Sander (Captain), Alan Halperin, Bob Hunter, and Ray Rigney. They scored six birdies and had a 67. Sander's team also took home the Birdie trophy, which she awarded to Hunter, as well as the Sandbagger prize, which stayed with the captain.

In second place, with 69 and four birdies, was the team of Captain Isobel Spink, Jim Wayrynen, Rochelle, and Miles Nogelo. Captain Paul Mocko's Team 6, with Tom Dahlgren, Tom Holloman, and Elton Gogolin, took third place with 69 and three birdies.

The men's long drive went to Halperin, and Maura



Maura Kelly

Kelly took the ladies' long drive, with a drive barely on the fairway. She then proceeded to land her next shot on the green two feet from the pin and made the putt for a rare Fleet Landing eagle for her team. Wayrynen took the men's closest to the pin, and Sander took the prize for ladies' closest to the pin.

Sander said she knew she had a dream team from the beginning, and her teammate, Hunter, said they couldn't have done it without him! Mocko said he captained dream team 2, and Isobel Spink said she had a great team except for their stupid captain who hadn't read the rules before play.

Next month we'll play at Jacksonville Beach Golf Club.

Bridge News

By CeCe Lichtenstein

In duplicate bridge, master points (MPs) are what participants hope will be awarded at the end of a game. These MPs are what determine the rank of the person. Each quarter, folks who scored 70 percent or higher are reported to the unit where they play. Florida is in unit 9, which includes the entire state plus the Virgin Islands, with a total number of members in excess of 11,000. It is difficult to obtain 70 percent or better, so having done so is to be complimented. Three Fleet Landing residents have achieved this: Rona Brenner, Kay Craft, and Nancy Stein. Keep in mind that while they do play here at Fleet Landing, they may have scored this well at other clubs in the area.

JSYO Brass Quintet

By Chet Davis



On April 28, the Jacksonville Symphony Youth Orchestra (JSYO) Brass Quintet provided an enjoyable evening of music in Johnson Hall. The JSYO, which is made up of two full orchestras and four levels of string ensembles, serves over 230 young musicians in Northeast Florida. The members of the Brass Quintet perform with the JSYO Philharmonic, the highest level of talent from among the JSYO groups.



Nathaniel Efthimiou

Nathaniel Efthimiou, JSYO Music Director, conducted the performance, which opened with the National Anthem. The program included dances by a sixteenth-century Flemish composer, an arrangement for brass of a Bach organ concerto that had been adapted from a Vivaldi work, and a Bizet *Carmen Suite*.

The sustained applause at the end of the concert showed the audience's appreciation for a remarkable performance by these talented young musicians.

Library Notes

By Enith Vardaman

The Library Committee thanks recent donors: Edward Brink, Lorie Holmes, Ann Linn, Dottie Mann, Suzanne McKnight, and Carla Philcox.

Commander Fred Berley, USN (Ret.), is currently Deputy Department Head, Military Affairs and Veterans Department, City of Jacksonville. Many Fleet Landing residents know him from his appearances at Military Officers of America Association (MOAA)-sponsored events. He has generously donated *Conduct Under Fire: Four American Doctors and Their Fight for Life As Prisoners of the Japanese 1941-1945* by John A. Glusman in book and abridged audio book formats. Berley's father was one of the four doctors referenced in the title. The book is currently on the New Acquisitions: Non-fiction shelves under Military, WWII. After several weeks, it will be moved to the permanent Military, WWII, classification in the library's collection. The audio book version can be found in the Audio CD section under the letter C.

A Walk That Changes Lives

By Nancy Lundgren; photos by Ann Bell and Brandon Levy

Since 2022, Fleet Landing residents and Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCV) have participated in Hubbard House’s annual “Stand Up and Stride” walk to support survivors of domestic violence. On March 29 at 7:10 am, Transportation Services Manager Brandon Levy and Driver Terri Holland, bus drivers extraordinary, chauffeured our team downtown to the official riverside venue where all the action began. David Miron, founding father of the Fleet Landing/RPCV team, was there to share the good news that our team came in second in fundraising to help Hubbard House continue its life-saving and life-changing work.

One hundred supporters contributed to the Fleet Landing team’s success: 53 resident walkers, 23 “virtual” walkers, and 24 people affiliated with Fleet Landing residents. Loretta Prescott, Director of Development at Hubbard House, acknowledged the two

top team contributors: Bank of America (\$19,093), and Fleet Landing/RPCV (\$17,046) for a total of \$36,139 from these two teams. Overall, contributions from all teams and individuals to Hubbard House this year came to a record-setting \$113,000.

More than 1,700 walkers from all over the city participated, and the enthusiasm was contagious. Pre-walk activities included a Zumba session where many Fleet Landing residents set the pace as they danced with the crowd for 20 minutes before the 3-mile walk! The route over the Main Street Bridge, around Friendship Fountain, back under the bridge, and along the river rivaled any bus sightseeing tour.

Thanks to everyone for making a difference for many survivors and their children. Next year’s “Stand Up and Stride” walk is on Saturday, March 8. Sign up on Calendar Central.



The reason for the walk



David Miron (fourth from right) on stage with the top fundraisers



Left: Zumba before the walk. Right: The finish.



Some of the Fleet Landing participants

Executive Director’s Quarterly Briefing

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score was 76.2. Ashby broke down the score by level of living: 75.6 for independent living, 83.1 for assisted living, and 68.9 for skilled nursing. Fleet Landing’s scores compared favorably with Walgreens (“Improvement Needed” at -7) and with Blue Bell Ice Cream and Delta (“Favorable” at 50 and 52 respectively).

Ashby cited a few of the written comments from the survey. Opportunities for improvement included choosing furniture more comfortable for old people, the need for clarification about what can be chosen at Meridian and Breakers on the traditional meal plan, the difficulty in getting restaurant reservations at the desired time, and meal quality and consistency. Ashby reported that Perry Brown was no longer at Fleet Landing. Residents will hear more in the coming weeks about the effort to take the food and beverage function to a higher level of resident satisfaction. Comments on successes centered around praise for all aspects of life at Fleet Landing. This included a compliment from a person whose mother lives in Leeward Manor.

Campus Projects

Coleman Center exterior renovations are nearing completion. The campus signage project has generated an extensive punch list. Underground infrastructure inspections were to begin soon. The 2000 and 3000 building renovations will be finished this year, and the plans for next year’s 1000 and 4000 building renovations are underway. Residential roof replacements on the original campus will begin this summer. A brightening up of the Derfer Healthcare Pavilion with new finishes, fixtures, and furniture is scheduled to begin in the fall. The master planning process for Fleet Landing’s future has begun. It will include the replacement of some of the original buildings. Derfer is likely to be the first such building, but that outcome is still at least five years away.

Miscellaneous

Plumbing repairs to the Lake View exhibition kitchen will be done after hours. Ashby reminded residents of two popular annual events: the April 26 Dancing in the Streets Block Party and the May 5 Golf Classic. Construction of the bike pavilion at the 3000 Building has begun. The third-party organization investigating last September’s network intrusion is nearing completion of its audit. Notification via US Mail of those affected is likely within the next 30 days. The organization will also notify the appropriate regulatory bodies.

Ashby updated residents on the proposed Office of Insurance Regulation (OIR) bill amending Chapter 651 of the Florida Statutes, the law governing continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs). He thanked residents for participating in the February 25 Town Hall attended by Mike Yaworsky, OIR Commissioner. (See the March issue of *FLEET BEAT*, page 1.) Yaworsky visited five CCRCs, but only Fleet Landing held a Town

Hall. The bill has failed, having had no hearing in Florida’s House of Representatives and a single hearing in the Senate. The impressive and credible testimony of residents Robert Freeman and Dave Ritchie at that hearing drew on their professional expertise. (Mention of their role elicited a round of applause.) Provisions in a new version of the bill, expected to be proposed for the 2026 Florida legislative session beginning in January, will be monitored.



Residents always look forward to a photo of the Ashby children: Josh Ashby with Vivian (l), age 5, and the twins Connor and Cosette, age 9.

Keith Hawk, Interior Maintenance Assistant Manager

By Chet Davis; photo by Rachel Leslie

Keith Hawk was recently promoted to the position of Interior Maintenance Assistant Manager. As he was already a member of the maintenance staff, Keith was very familiar with Fleet Landing and its residents.



The Pittsburgh, PA, native started driving south when he decided cold weather was not for him. He arrived in Jacksonville 20 years ago. After working for Sunbelt Rentals, he established a handyman business, which he ran for 15 years. After a brief sojourn in Tennessee, where he managed apartment buildings, Hawk returned to Jacksonville. He subsequently came to Fleet Landing as the supervisor for our health care buildings.

Hawk’s large family includes his wife, who is a registered nurse, and eleven children, three of whom are adopted, and six are foster children.

Hawk expressed his heartfelt feelings for Fleet Landing, its residents, and the staff. He considers this position a dream job, where he can pursue his passion for working with and for older people.

Scholarship Awards Ceremony

(continued from page 1)



Michele Holley with special scholarship winners :
Top left: Roseline Fossoh. Top right: Rachel Leslie.
Bottom left: Dezarae Nelson. Bottom right: Arthem Arellano.

Jacksonville and management training at Harvard University.

Human Resources Senior Director Michele Holley, presented four unique scholarships. The Henry A. & Jewel June Baker Scholarship to support careers in nursing or nursing technologies was presented to Roseline Fossoh. Rachel Leslie was awarded the Preble Scholarship for the second year. The scholarship is named in memory of residents Lidia and Robert Preble. Dezarae Nelson received the Fleet Landing Scholarship. Arthem Arellano, son of Juvy Arellano of Dining Services, received the Bratcher Scholarship, endowed by Stella and Ray Bratcher in honor and memory of Stella’s mother Tseng, Fan-Hsiu.

After the ceremony ended, attendees enjoyed a reception with refreshments that included a cake inscribed “Congrats Scholars.”

Jaxport Facts and Figures

By Chet Davis

On April 1, a Johnson Hall audience had the opportunity to hear about the status of our nearby port facilities and projects completed or underway at those facilities. Resident Jackie Smith introduced the speaker, Jacksonville Port Authority (Jaxport) Chief Operating Officer James Bennett.



Bennett has a long history with Jaxport, including his time with the Florida Department of

Transportation, then with a consulting firm, and now with Jaxport itself. An engineer, Bennett is involved with day-to-day operations and future planning. Jaxport has three marine terminals, Talleyrand, Blount Island, and Dames Point, as well as two intermodal rail terminals and one passenger cruise terminal.

Jaxport is the landlord that supports the tenants, but does not own any of the ongoing operations of the various terminals. The port provides 30,000 jobs locally and impacts 250,000 jobs throughout the state. The port brings in over \$44 billion a year.

The number one cargo is vehicles. Over 697,000 vehicles are processed on Jaxport property each year. It is a major breakbulk (cargo transported as separate pieces rather than in containers) port, and that business is building as Savannah, GA, decreases breakbulk operations.

Jaxport is the furthest west of any East Coast port, and it is within one day’s drive of over 70 million residents, giving it an advantage over other ports. With the raising of the electrical lines across the St. Johns River, the largest container ships will gain access to the port. The port also supports Carnival Cruise Line’s sailing at full capacity twice a week. Norwegian Cruise Line will start service in November 2025.

Many will recall the opposition to the channel dredging required for large ship access to the port. As part of the agreement to dredge, sensors have been placed along the river to monitor salinity, turbidity, fish life, and habitat. To date, no detrimental effects have been noted. This monitoring will continue for five years or more. The project was completed under budget and ahead of schedule. A problem arose when the Army Corps of Engineers had to return excess funds. They did not know how to do it!

Bennett’s lecture was filled with interesting facts and figures that proved to the audience the impact of the port and associated businesses.

Foggy Beach Walk

Photo by Mary Faria



Fog rolled in, creating a different, but beautiful, scene for the April 4 Beach Walk. The fog obscured the ocean, but if you look carefully, you can see the sun rising.

Alligators and More

Photos by Janet Silvester

The April 30 visit to the St. Augustine Alligator Farm Zoological Park featured activities ranging from viewing the alligators (from a safe distance) and visiting the rookery to zip lining and overcoming aerial obstacles for the adventurous.



Lawson Ensemble Tenth Anniversary Concert

By Chet Davis



The Lawson Ensemble, Chamber Music Ensemble-in-Residence at the University of North Florida (UNF), paid another visit to Johnson Hall on April 17. The Ensemble, which is celebrating its tenth anniversary, is made up of Jacksonville Symphony members Aurica Duca (violin), Clinton Dewing (viola), and Dr. Nick Curry, UNF Professor of Cello and Assistant Director of the School of Music. For this concert, they were joined by Jacksonville Symphony violinist Igor Khukhua.

Curry reminisced about the history of the group, noting that early on, their concerts were marathons. Becoming parents led to a scaling back of the duration of concerts.

The program featured trios and quartets by Bach, Vivaldi, Schumann, Mozart, and Beethoven, chosen as Ensemble and audience favorites from the last ten years. Curry prefaced each work with information about the composer and the music. An interesting example: The Ensemble played “Summer” and “Winter,” two of the concertos that make up Vivaldi’s *The Four Seasons*. Curry said the piece was “program music,” i.e., the composer was painting a picture, while “absolute music” does not have this purpose. Curry read the sonnets written by Vivaldi to describe what was being portrayed in each of the three movements of the two concertos.

This was a superb concert featuring virtuoso performances by the musicians. A debt of gratitude is owed to residents Cynthia and Walter Graham for sponsoring the series of chamber music concerts that bring such fine musicians to Fleet Landing. Next up in the series is a return visit on June 10 at 4 pm by the San Marco Chamber Music Society and guest artists.

St. Marys and Cumberland Island Overnight Trip in Pictures

Photos by Mary Faria

With Marie-Claire Allen as bus driver and Wellness Services Manager Mary Faria as leader, a group of Fleet Landing residents spent April 9-10 exploring Georgia's St. Marys and Cumberland Island. The outing began with a walking tour of the St Marys Historic District. The next day featured a ferry ride to Cumberland Island and a van tour of major sites there.

St. Marys



Left: First Presbyterian Church of St. Marys, built in 1808.

Right: Fleet Landing tour group on the steps of the church.

Cumberland Island



Left: First African Baptist Church, built in 1893. It was the site of the September 1996 wedding of John F. Kennedy Jr. and Carolyn Bessette.

Right: Fleet Landing tour group on the steps of the church.



Orange Hall, an antebellum mansion built circa 1830



Sandiford-Goodbread House (names of early owners). Usually dated 1870, it is now a bed and breakfast.



Ruins of Dungeness, the former home of the widow and children of Andrew Carnegie's brother, Thomas. Construction was completed in the late 1880's. The mansion was destroyed by a fire, believed to be arson, in 1959.

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St. Marys and Cumberland Island Overnight Trip in Pictures

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There were frequent sightings of the famous Cumberland Island horses.

Mandarin Museum Frog Painting Workshop

By Mary Durkin

Photos by Mary Durkin, Mary Faria, and Brittany Cohill

On a beautiful, sunny Thursday, April 24, a Fleet Landing group of 14 traveled by bus to the Mandarin Museum on the shore of the St. Johns River. As we got off the bus, we saw tables set up in the front yard of the Museum under the shade of many live oaks and magnolias. We were greeted by Museum Director Brittany Cohill, who gave us the background of Mandarin frog painting: Don Bowden was a lifelong resident of Mandarin who wanted to bring a smile to passersby with colorful painted frogs. When popularity grew, Bowden offered the frogs to the Museum as a fundraising project. That is what brought our group to this pastoral setting for a morning of creativity.

We first had to choose between a frog or a turtle to paint. Made of cement, each was heavy, with the frog weighing 15 pounds and the turtle 12 pounds. Kay Hartley of the Museum was there to offer advice on colors and technique. Once a piece was selected, everyone gave total concentration to their choice, and time flew by in the tranquil setting. The results were a dazzling display of imagination and artistry.

Our lunch selection turned into almost as much fun as the frog painting. Cohill recommended the Blue Bamboo Canton Bistro, which had recently moved to San Jose Boulevard from its longtime location on Southside Boulevard. While waiting for our orders, the chef treated the table to coconut shrimp and egg roll appetizers. The in-store chocolatier of Windy Hill Chocolate treated everyone to samples of her wares—one shaped as a turtle. Serendipity, or what? As a result, she sold many bags of chocolate that day.

Everyone got on the bus for home after a wonderful morning in a lovely setting, and with a new favorite pet, as we got to keep our work. A nod must be given to Driver Rob Friedman for all his help in carrying the heavy pieces on and off the bus for everyone.



Mallets and Wickets

By John Rogerson; photos by Ann Bell

The National Croquet Celebration will be held on Saturday, June 7, starting at 4 pm in Johnson Hall and on the courts. It will be a fun afternoon of games, contests, and food. More information to follow.

The Consolation and Championship matches of the Fleet Landing Golf Croquet Singles Tournament took place on March 30—too late for inclusion in the last issue of *FLEET BEAT*. Below is a pictorial recap of the whole tournament.



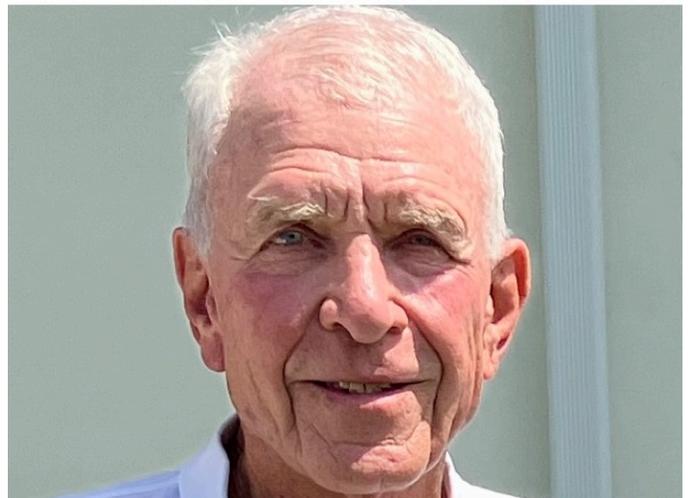
Tournament competitors



Championship round players, LtoR: Ernie Bio, Scotty Willis, Mary Steinke, Miles Nogelo, Jerry Upson, John Neyhart, John Rogerson, and Eunice Rogerson



Semifinalists: Scotty Willis, Mary Steinke, Miles Nogelo, Jerry Upson



Top left: Finalists Miles Nogelo and Jerry Upson, who was new to croquet this year.

Top right: Upson and Nogelo in competition.

Bottom: Nogelo, Fleet Landing Golf Croquet Singles Tournament Champion.

Extraterrestrial Life?

By Bo Smith

Eddie Whisler, Director of the Bryan-Gooding Planetarium at Jacksonville’s Museum of Science and History (MOSH), spoke in Johnson Hall on April 23. His talk, entitled “Are You Out There?”, addressed the question of other habitable worlds and the possibility of intelligent life beyond our planet. Whisler is a passionate and engaging speaker, and he quickly draws one into the mysteries of space. He presents the Universe in a way that always leaves me with the feeling that I might



eventually be able to grasp at least a little bit of what’s happening in the night sky.

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Extraterrestrial Life?

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Scientists assume that if extraterrestrial life, perhaps intelligent life, exists, it will be in the “habitable zone,” a place with liquid water, a stable atmosphere, and certain key elements—primarily carbon and nitrogen. Habitable zones make up a tiny percent of the Universe, but the Universe is so vast that a tiny percent still leaves trillions of opportunities. There are tantalizing hints of life in our solar system and our galaxy, but no proof yet. We know habitable zones are plentiful, and many who study this issue believe that life beyond Earth is inevitable.

The supposed inevitability of extraterrestrial life led to the second half of Whisler’s presentation. He introduced the “Fermi paradox” which asks: “If there is such a high probability of extraterrestrial life, why haven’t we seen any evidence of it?” We stare out into the unimaginable vastness of the night sky, and maybe all that’s out there is wilderness. Perhaps we are alone.

Whisler always delivers fascinating and challenging insights into the Universe. He will speak at Johnson Hall next on August 7. His topic will be “Deep Time.” Fleet Landing also has trips planned to the MOSH Planetarium on May 21 and July 16. (Sign up at Calendar Central.)

JU School of Aviation Flight Experience

By Mary Durkin

On April 16, a group of 16 Fleet Landers went on a new excursion to learn about the Jacksonville University School of Aviation and to hopefully experience a full-vision flight simulator. Matt Tuohy, the Director of Aviation, gave us background on the School, which offers two different business degrees: Aviation Management and Aviation Management and Flight Operations. The 320 students currently enrolled will go on to be professional pilots, air traffic controllers, and aviation executives. Tuohy then led us to the flight simulator room, where he said “the fun is watching others crash it.”

Dave Marble was our guide in this relatively small room, with a full mock-up flight deck and 120-degree wrap-around screen. Marble is a former Delta pilot of 26 years with over 25,000 flight hours. Dita Domonkos was the first volunteer to sit in the simulator. After Marble “started the engines,” he explained some of the numerous dials and screens to be checked. Then, finally, he had Domonkos pull the wheel slowly back to take off, gain altitude, change course—all while continually checking the dials and instruments. The rest of the group were tightly gathered around the simulator, some feeling the effects of motion, as it seemed like the floor was moving.

There was only time for two more, so Buffy Wells and Karen Hollinga took seats in the simulator. With Marble’s guidance, they took off and circled around, eventually coming in for a landing. But something hap-

pened: Lights flashed, and a siren blared as the plane ran off the runway, crashing into simulated trees along the way. As Tuohy predicted, we all got a laugh out of someone else crashing.

Unfortunately, our time was up. So if Fleet Landing takes another trip to experience the flight simulator, be sure you are the first to volunteer.



Buffy Wells (l) and Karen Hollinga (unfortunately, no photo of Dita Domonkos because she was the photographer for the excursion)

April WELLInspired Learning Series

By Victoria Freeman



Corina Santos (l) and Margaret Carr



Physical therapy exercise for Parkinson's Disease



Rock Steady Boxing demonstration

The April 16 WELLInspired Learning Series presentation on Parkinson's Disease (PD) was an activity-based session.

Doctor of Physical Therapy Corina Santos, who has been at Fleet Landing for 11 years, defined PD. It is a progressive neuromuscular disease that destroys the neurotransmitter dopamine. The loss of dopamine often leads to disruption of movements, voice, emotion, and memory. These combined effects lead to a higher risk of falls.

There are two types of symptoms. Motor symptoms include resting tremors, rigidity, decreased balance, decreased large movements, and flat affect, aka, "masked face." Non-motor symptoms include pain/tingling, decreased body awareness, anxiety, apathy, slower thinking, decreased attention, dementia, bowel/bladder problems, and depression.

There are several visible signs of PD, including: one-sided leaning, uneven steps, shuffling, freezing, tremors, very small handwriting and gravelly voice.

The exact cause of PD is unknown, but it is generally believed to be a combination of genetic and environmental factors. Dopamine is used by the basal ganglia in the brain as a chemical messenger that tells the body to enact motor function. Without dopamine, the basal ganglia are not able to send signals to the muscles.

For a clinical diagnosis the patient must present with two out of three early motor symptoms. The onset of the symptoms must be unexplained. They may improve with dopamine replacement. Other conditions must be ruled out.

Common medical treatment might include medicines, surgery, or physical therapy. A large body of evidence supports therapy/activity in addressing symptoms and slowing the progression of the disease. Physical therapy could include stretching, gait and balance training, and specialized programs. Occupational therapy and speech therapy interventions are also available. A full team approach is beneficial.

Santos had the Johnson Hall audience participate in an exercise from one of the specialized programs: stretching arms sideways, forward, and above one's head; spreading fingers; touching the floor; and counting loudly. She had total audience participation.

Fitness Services Manager Margaret Carr spoke about Rock Steady Boxing, a program founded in 2006 to improve the quality of life for individuals with PD. It uses non-contact boxing-inspired workouts, and focuses on reversing or delaying symptoms. It is supported by scientific research on exercise and neuroprotection. After Carr read several testimonials and success stories from participants, members of Carr's current class gave an impressive demonstration of Rock Steady Boxing for the audience.

Editor's note: The slides from this presentation are available on Fleet Link. Go to "Fleet Landing Presentations" and then "WELLInspired Learning Series."

Inaugural TAPS Ceremony

By Carol Smith



The inaugural TAPS ceremony recognizing Fleet Landing veterans who had passed away since December 1, 2024, was held on Sunday, March 30. The commemoration will be held quarterly as a timely recognition of warriors who have been our neighbors and friends.

Because of possible thunderstorms, the ceremony took place in Breakers instead of at the Flag Plaza. Chaplain Colonel Beryl Hubbard, USAF (Ret.), opened
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Inaugural TAPS Ceremony

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with a prayer. Commander Pat Kluever, USN (Ret.), Officer-of-the-Deck, read the names of the following as Boatswain Lieutenant Colonel Bruce Osborne, USA (Ret.), sounded the bell when each name was read: Captain David Bailey, USN (Ret.); Captain John Butler, (USMC); Sergeant Bob Dinda, (USA); Colonel Bob Gall, USA (Ret.); Commander Nick Malie, USCG (Ret.); Colonel Bob Mills, USA (Ret.); Colonel Wendy Shawler, USAF (Ret.); Returned POW, Captain Dick Stratton, USN (Ret.).

The sounding of TAPS concluded the ceremony, along with a toast to the departed who had served their country in the military.

Birdwatching at Hanna Park

By Victoria Freeman; photos by Janet Silvester



The birdwatchers and the orchard oriole, the Bird of the Day

A clear, windless Saturday, April 19, turned out to be a perfect birdwatching day for Fleet Landing’s annual Spring Birding Event. Eighteen birdwatchers gathered at nearby Hanna Park for a two-hour amble that netted 38 species of birds, either “seen or heard.” The “seen or heard” designation is the official way a bird can be counted according to Ken Hollinga, who said, “If the individual has seen the species or can recognize its sound, the American Birding Association allows an individual to tally that bird.”

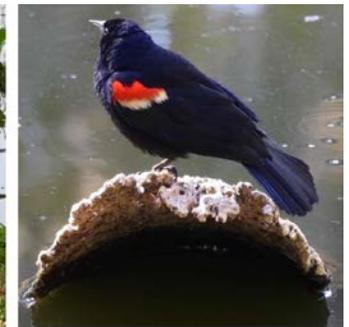
According to Frances Edwards, a veteran birder, a mature male orchard oriole, spotted early on in the amble, was dubbed Bird of the Day because it was a relatively rare sighting. Veteran birder Paul Mocko’s list included sightings of several varieties of gulls, herons, and woodpeckers as well as many, many more species.

A true adventure moment happened when a very large alligator appeared across the twisting trail the birdwatchers were following. All 18 of them turned around quickly and retraced their steps to a non-gator part of the park.

As if to end the Hanna Park adventure on a high note, birder extraordinaire, Mike Marchetti, pointed out three swallow-tail kites who appeared in the sky above the meadow that marked the end of the amble. These large, graceful birds dove and soared while feeding on airborne insects. As one birder said, “Wow,

the Blue Angels with feathers.”

Edwards said that the first two years she and her husband, Jon, lived at Fleet Landing, she compiled a list of 85 species she had seen “on or very near” our community. Her conclusion: “Fleet is the perfect place to become a birder.”



Marineland River-to-Sea Preserve Trail Walk

Text and photos by Mary Durkin



Left: Palmetto palms with and without "boots."
Right: Spanish bayonets.



250-year-old live oak covered with resurrection ferns

On March 31, eighteen Fleet Landers boarded the bus for the long drive to the River-to-Sea Preserve. The 90-acre Preserve is located in the tiny town of Marineland some 18 miles south of St. Augustine. It is part of a protected stretch of land, consisting of wetlands and estuaries, stretching from the Matanzas River on the west side of A1A to the Atlantic Ocean on the east side. Our guide, Ron Ceryak, has been a volunteer for 15 years and was a geologist by profession. He told us how the vegetation is constantly changing due to weather, hurricanes, and animals, such as squirrels and birds, dropping seeds.

On our trail walk, Ceryak pointed out a variety of

vegetation and how it changes. The palmetto palms self-clean their "boots," shedding this spike-like outer bark to leave a clean bark. Along the path, the ground was covered with a red-flowered sage plant that Ceryak says is new to the area and is now seen throughout the walk. A scary-looking plant is the Spanish bayonet, with very sharp spikes on the ends of its leaves. Many of the large oaks are covered with resurrection ferns, which are air plants that do not damage the trees, but live off the air. We saw a 250-year-old live oak, the oldest in the Preserve, covered with ferns, and a hickory tree with an orchid growing on the end of a branch.

The walk was a great way to learn more about Florida's natural habitat from a very learned and experienced guide. We all enjoyed the walk in the Preserve. We lunched at The Oasis and had an uneventful ride back, thanks to Rob Friedman's good driving.

Welcome Aboard

5819 JoAnn and Art McMahon (June '24)

JoAnn and Art, who came to Fleet Landing from Queen's Harbour in Jacksonville, moved into a wonderful house on the 5800 Court. Having met while in college, they will have been married 58 years in June. The McMahons have a house in Boothbay, ME, where they spend several months during the summer.



Art attended North Carolina State in Raleigh, where he played college football. Following graduation, he played for five years in the NFL as a defensive back for the New England Patriots. While playing for the Patriots, Art attended law school, and after passing the Massachusetts Bar Exam, decided to work in the private sector with responsibilities in human resources, labor, and employment law.

JoAnn attended Mount Mercy College in Pennsylvania, and after joining the Navy, became a neonatal nurse in Norfolk, VA. She left the Navy when she and Art were expecting their first child. Later she was a medical surgical nurse at several hospitals. She then worked in school health in Lexington, MA, where she was honored as Massachusetts School Nurse of the Year.

The McMahons enjoy walking, tennis, yoga, dancing, croquet, and the gym. They have three sons and five grandchildren. The sons are in Florida, North Carolina, and Massachusetts. JoAnn and Art learned about Fleet Landing from friends at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, where they have been parishioners for many years. The McMahons are very happy to be here. We're glad they're here, too.

—Isobel Spink

Florida Art and Our Sense of Place

By Bo Smith



Dr. Scott Brown, Professor of Art History and Hicks Honor College Interim Dean at the University of North Florida, and one of Fleet Landing's favorite art historians, spoke at Johnson Hall on April 18. His talk was entitled "Greetings from Florida! Art Histories of the Sunshine State."



Brown focused on art as a statement of Florida's sense of place. Our art and architecture tell the world who we are. New England, New York City, and Texas have a well-established image. Florida's is more nuanced. Our sense of place spans the 500 years since European settlement, the influence of Spanish, French, and British colonization, life as an

American state and briefly a Confederate state, a land rush, tourism, and explosive population growth. Who we are is also complicated by the fact that we are populated by people from elsewhere—people from New York, New Jersey, Illinois, Canada, Cuba, and many,

many other places.

Many of Europe's first images of the New World came from engravings made from paintings done in the mid-1500's by an artist traveling with the French expedition that established Fort Caroline (a few miles from here). Pictures of tall, handsome Indians and large alligators fed Europe's great curiosity about the New World. Many depictions of Florida during the next three centuries came in the form of maps. These evolved from largely imaginary to essentially accurate. Brown pointed out that in addition to attempts at description of land and water, maps contain political and aspirational messages. They make new stories. Since the late 1800's images of Florida have presented the state as a tourist destination. We were understood as an American paradise: the land of flowers, beautiful beaches, palm trees, orange groves and more recently, the Magic Kingdom. And, yes, alligators.

An art exhibition organized in 1924 by the Jacksonville Women's Club entitled "The Armory South" tried to establish Jacksonville as a center of modern art. This was a statement that we in the South are as up to date as those folks from the North. The exhibition was inspired by the Armory Show, a landmark art show in New York City a decade earlier. Both shows introduced modernism to a reluctant and skeptical American population. A retrospective entitled "The Armory South" is currently at the Jacksonville Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) until November 23, 2025. Fleet Landing plans a visit to the exhibition on August 13. (You can sign up in Calendar Central.)

Brown did not dwell on our present sense of place. It is nearly impossible to look at one's own society and define it at the moment. It is clear that we are much more than a tourist destination, and that we are very important in the American consciousness. We equal California, the Old West, and New York City in the world's sense of what America is, and that is obvious in our images: Cinderella's Castle, Cape Canaveral, and Mar-a-Lago. It is a place we want to be, but as a population from somewhere else we are always ready to redefine ourselves. Our art, architecture, and images will, in time, show who we are.

League of Women Voters News

By Bernadette Miron

The United States Supreme Court was the focus during the April 26 meeting of the League Of Women Voters (LWV) at Fleet Landing. Issues such as transparency, accountability, independence, ethics, binding universal standards, and court rulings were discussed.

The Supreme Court issues rulings in two ways: written opinions (merit docket) and orders (shadow docket). The difference between shadow docket and merit docket were explained.

The shadow docket is intended to address applications
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League of Women Voters News

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for emergency relief. The cases are handled on an expedited basis with limited briefing, and there is no oral argument, resulting frequently in unsigned orders with little or no explanation.

In contrast, the merit docket hears cases, with briefings and arguments before the justices, that last over a period of months and result in written opinions.

It is highly concerning that, today, the Supreme Court’s merit cases represent only about 1 percent of the Court’s total output, while 99 percent are issued through the “emergency relief” shadow docket.

The national LWV is seeking consensus on many of these issues relating to the Supreme Court. The LWV regional consensus meeting was held in March. The Fleet Landing unit was represented by Elena Rigg, Bobbie Fost, Sandy Martin, and Bernadette Miron.

The next Fleet Landing LWV meeting will be at 12 pm on May 24 in the second floor classroom of Windward Commons. All are welcome.

It Was All About Ambience

By Nancy Lundgren



Celebrating his third Johnson Hall concert on April 23, resident Guy Van Syckle set the scene by inviting the audience into his living room (with a few more chairs). After demonstrating his talent on the piano while his guests arrived, he strummed his guitar, sang, and conversed with them as he reprised some of the Van Syckle favorites for their listening pleasure.

“If I Had a Boat” and “The Marvelous Toy” once again brought chuckles from the guests as they sang along. “Mr. Bojangles” told the story of one man’s perseverance in hard times. “Stand By Me,” with its memorable chorus, spoke of finding courage. “Margarita-

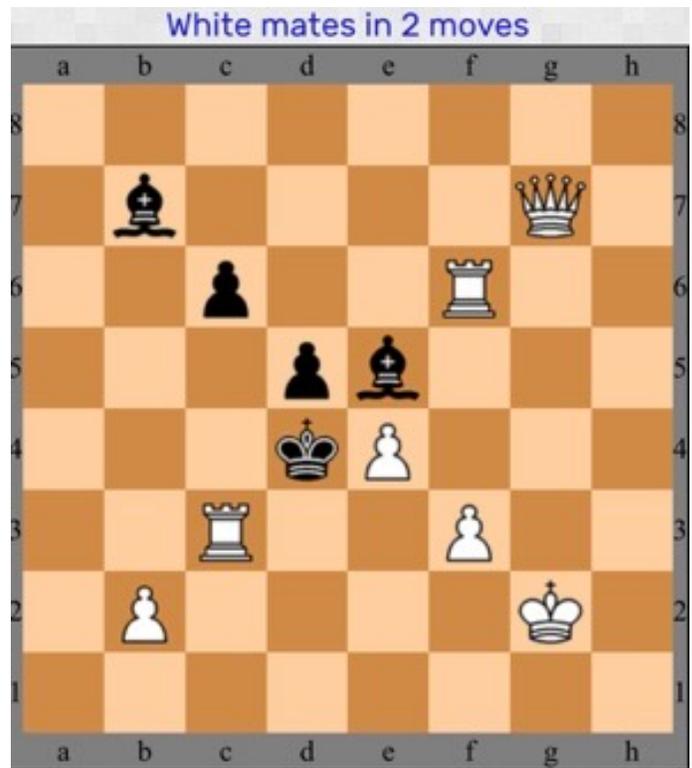
ville” gave a nod to Jimmy Buffett’s ode to Key West. And, of course, there were songs about love, including “Crazy Beautiful,” “Teach Your Children Well,” and “You Were Meant For Me.”

Van Syckle’s laidback style and heartfelt warmth beautifully transformed Johnson Hall into a home. He was even wearing socks with pictures of his grandsons. When the ambience is comfortable, the moment is unforgettable. Thank you, Guy, for hosting this party in your Fleet Landing home.

Chess Club News

By Richard Wong

The Chess Club meets Tuesdays at 1 pm in the Windward Commons lobby. Contact Richard Wong if you would some like lessons.



Proceed one step at a time when solving these types of problems.

Avoiding Dementia Through Optimal Brain Health

By Isobel Spink

In his Johnson Hall talk on April 11, local physician Dr. William Nields offered helpful suggestions for avoiding dementia. Resident Pam Robbins introduced him.

Nields noted that Alzheimer’s was the most common form of dementia, but there are many other kinds, including vascular, Lewy body, and frontotemporal. Some people have more than one type.

Some of Nields’s suggestions:

Recommended foods include avocados, blueberries, *(continued on next page)*

Avoiding Dementia Through Optimal Brain Health

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greens, nuts, seeds, and salmon as well as fermented foods such as yogurt. Avoid processed foods, sugar, red meat, and fried food.

Exercise should include strength training and aerobic exercise. Getting one's heart rate up fifteen minutes a day for five days a week was suggested. An interesting piece of information: Niels said that ballroom dancers had the lowest rate of cognitive decline.

Stress reduction is important because stress has a negative effect on on the hippocampus, the part of the brain that forms, stores, and processes our memories.

Get seven to eight hours of sleep every night. Sleep increases growth hormones and cleans out the debris in our brains.

Stimulate your brain to strengthen your neural pathways. This can ameliorate damage to the hippocampus. Use cognitive therapy exercises and therapeutic activities like puzzles, video games, painting, knitting, and gardening.

Attendees were given a handout with this information and more. If you would like a copy, please see Robbins.

Vietnam Veterans Day Flag Raising

Photos by Dita Domonkos

The March 29 ceremony at the Flag Plaza in observance of Vietnam Veterans Day was especially moving because it marked 50 years since the end of the Vietnam War.



Dancing in the Streets

By Carol Smith

Photos by Ed Hollender and Janet Silvester



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Dancing in the Streets

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April 26 produced an afternoon of perfect weather for residents to enjoy the annual Dancing in the Streets Block Party at the Mainstreet Dining Plaza. The Margaritaville theme was evident in the decorations and was enhanced by the Jimmy Buffet-inspired tunes of the Sean McCarthy Band. It is not known whether there were any Parrot Heads (nickname for Buffett fans) at the party, but there were live parrots. The tiki bars with margaritas served by several staff members were popular, as was the Veterans United Craft Brewery tent.

Food trucks served a tempting array of dining options, along with Fleet Landing’s own Anchor truck, which featured Greek cuisine. Many folks had trouble deciding among crab rolls offered at the Jazzy Crab, tacos and burritos at El Agave Azul, sausage pomodoro at Kaleidoscope, or the BF’nD (Burgers Fries and Dogs) Food Truck. Sweet treats were available at First Coast Crepes & Coffee and at Hyppo with yummy ice cream.

The lively music tempted many to dance in the street until it was time for the band to retire for the evening. As always, everyone expressed their appreciation for the remarkable efforts by Fleet Landing staff, who had produced another wonderful event.

Easter Decorations

FLEET BEAT photographer Ann Bell spotted a number of colorful Easter decorations around campus.



Barred Owl Family

Photos by Mary Faria and Janet Silvester

Wellness Services Manager Mary Faria learned that the adult barred owls always returned to a tree in a yard outside the Selva Gate to have a new family. However, when the homeowners were renovating their house last year, the owls did not come. They were thrilled to see them come back this year. Below are photos of the two owls born this spring and a photo of one of the proud parents.

