



FLEET BEAT

VOL. 36 No. 3

THE FLEET LANDING RESIDENTS' NEWSPAPER

April 2026

FLiCRA Annual Meeting

By Carol Smith



Karen Farrell and Matt Thompson



LtoR: Ann Bell, Ronae Bitter, Harry Sweeney



LtoR: Judy Solano, Carol Smith, Diane Eger

The Fleet Landing chapter of FLiCRA held its Annual Meeting on March 19 in Johnson Hall. Chapter President Karen Farrell welcomed members and guests and opened the meeting by introducing the current FLiCRA Board. Her term on the board was expiring, and she recognized David Miron and Carol Smith, the other two board members with expiring terms, thanking them for their dedicated service.

Farrell then introduced the nominees for the open board positions: Ann Bell, Ronae Bitter, and Harry Sweeney. Members voted unanimously to elect the new board members.

Executive Director Matt Thompson shared highlights
(continued on page 13)

Resident Club Fair

By Carol Smith; photos by Janet Silvester



Where else can one find such a remarkable variety of activities within a single community? Under the direction of Wellness Services Manager Mary Faria, the Wellness and Transportation Department presented the Resident Club Fair in Johnson Hall on March 27. A record-breaking 38 clubs participated, each eager to introduce residents to new opportunities for involvement and connection.

Representatives from athletic groups such as tennis, pickleball, croquet, golf, and ping pong enthusiastically promoted their programs, while the Yacht Club highlighted its wide range of water-based activities.

Music lovers discovered numerous opportunities at a lively display shared by the community's musical organizations. There were welcoming presentations from the Interdenominational Chapel and Mindfulness Matters. Fleet Hearts, the community's social service club, greeted prospective members by placing a red heart on each new recruit's name tag.

If an award had been given for the most imaginative presentation, it surely would have gone to Catherine Dowling, founder of the newly organized CineClub, which offers French films on Sunday afternoons.

It is impossible to name all of the clubs, but they included those for artists, woodworkers, investors, knitters, wine lovers, canasta players, billiards players,
(continued on page 14)

March Residents' Council Meeting

By Howard Burdick

Residents' Council President Julia Pet-Armacost convened the March 17 council meeting. She discussed Fleet Landing's organization chart, which can be found on Fleet Link under "Publications." She also reviewed a TIPS document developed by the council to provide useful information for residents. It is available on Fleet Link under "Residents' Council."

Management Review. Executive Director Matt Thompson reviewed positive progress on projects, including Derfer Pavilion refresh, roofing projects, Plant Operations renovation, Legacy Trail, and bicycle pavilion. Problems include phone issues, Coleman Center chiller and leaks, and the defective underwater treadmill. Construction at Fleet Landing at Nocatee, which is sold out, is progressing well. Management is exploring a Riverside site as a campus for future expansion. Resident opinions will be solicited.

Vice-President. Carol Smith reviewed the schedule and procedures for council elections in April and introduced the candidates: Dale Clifford, Jim Dobson, Randy McDonald, Joy Miller, Nancy Russell, and Jackie Smith. Their photos and bios can be found beginning on page 4 and on posters at various locations throughout campus.

Treasurer. Lynette Beitz reviewed continuing very positive financial status. She also discussed planned giving opportunities through the Fleet Landing Endowment Fund and the Naval Continuing Care Retirement Foundation (our original name, as we were conceived and founded by a team of Navy and Marine Corps officers). Uses for these funds include staff scholarships and campus improvements.

Marketing and Human Resources. Skip McAlexander reported Atlantic Club membership has increased to 708 families. A Zoom meeting was scheduled for them later in March. They also receive a monthly online newsletter from Sales and Marketing. Our campus census is now 854 residents, and all categories are full, or nearly so. Human Resources recently hired 15 new employees, bringing our staff total to 418 and 95 percent. The Staff Member of the Month was Adam Floyd, of Health Services Housekeeping, and the Catch of the Month was Dining Room Supervisor Bethany Buse. Lobster Tales numbered 153.

Wellness and Transportation. Ken Hollinga reviewed a full schedule of activities before the next council meeting. Our 17 (!) teams are participating in the Wii Bowling National Senior League Spring Season.

Health Services, Safety and Security. Judy Solano reported that in keeping with March as National Nutrition Month, the March 18 *WellInspired* Learning Series would feature Dining Services leaders as speakers. Safety and Security has taken note of an increasing number of e-bikes, which now account for the

highest vehicle accident percentage increase nationally. They may not be used on sidewalks, and their speed is limited to no more than 15 mph. She reminded everyone that Fleet Landing was a no smoking or vaping campus. Options for guest and visitor requests include a call (ext 1137) or an email (security@fleetlanding.com) to the Welcome Center, and the Butterfly phone application. The permanent guest authorization list can be updated at the Coleman Center Concierge Desk or on Fleet Link. (Go to "Fleet Landing Forms" and then "Administration and Concierge.")

Dining Services and Housekeeping. Dave Russell reviewed Dining Services information available on Fleet Link. Under the "Dining, Order, Reserve, To-Go" section, there is a new category, "The Atlantic," showing dining events for the current month. He also cited the the new rotation schedule for monthly menu changes in each dining venue. Changes to the Lake View menu include a monthly refresh rather than six-week intervals, a larger, easier to read font, and more daily and weekly specials. Breakfast in Currents will feature five cook-to-order plates, a la carte items, and a continental buffet.

Facilities. Stephen Dick discussed the roles of the maintenance team of Ron Altheim, Danielle Hesbacker, and David Sawyer. He reviewed the options for submitting a maintenance request and the procedures for submitting work requests, noting that submission via Fleet Link is preferred.

Communications. Secretary Shann Purinton reviewed seven suggestions. They are too detailed to report here, but the complete text of the suggestions and responses can be found on Fleet Link. Go to "Residents' Council" and then "Residents' Council Presentations."

FLEET BEAT STAFF

Production

Editor.....	Enith Vardaman
Copy Editor	Fran Patterson
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All the news that fits...

Issues of FLEET BEAT can be found at www.fleetlanding.com. Sign into the resident portal and click on "Menu" and then "Publications." Issues can also be found under "Publications" on Fleet Link.

Meet Our New Staff

By Chet Davis

Wendy Tamarit: Wellness Services Director



Wendy Tamarit, who recently joined Fleet Landing as Director of Wellness, was born in Wilmington, DE. Her degree from the University of North Carolina Wilmington was in communications, with an emphasis on psychology. Tamarit completed an internship through the Walt Disney World College Program, where she learned retail management. After graduating, Tamarit served as the Director of Wellness at a YMCA. Subsequent employment was at John Knox Village of Central Florida in Orange City, a Florida life plan community (another name for a CCRC), where she oversaw all resident services. Tamarit spent the last five years with Westminster Communities, where she oversaw wellness programs at all of their campuses across the state.

Tamarit is engaged and will soon marry. Those circumstances led her to Jacksonville, where she saw that Fleet Landing was hiring a Director of Wellness. Since her arrival, Tamarit has been undergoing an intensive orientation period, spending time with every department on campus.

A certified personal trainer, Tamarit was a triathlon coach and has completed dozens of sprint-distance and Olympic-distance races, as well as the Half Ironman twice. As a competitive swimmer, Tamarit enjoys open water swims and has medaled in swimming events. Her motto is “Just keep swimming.”

Louis Gonzales:

Catering and Special Events Manager



Louis Gonzales recently joined Fleet Landing and is undergoing an intense introduction to our community. His first event was the Irish Tea, where he was seen serving tea.

A New Jersey native who grew up in the Jacksonville area, Gonzales has been back on the East Coast for ten years. His time away was spent in California in the hospitality industry, where he rose from dishwasher to restaurant and club manager positions. Gonzales spent several years working in Miami Beach, FL, hotels. When the pandemic closed everything, he decided to return to Jacksonville and family. Gonzales became the general manager for the Café at the Cummer Museum. He also worked briefly as a customer service representative at Publix. His familiarity with our community came from assisting in arranging the Fleet

Landing trips to the Cummer Museum.

Gonzales views Fleet Landing as a happy place, and he is excited to be here.

JSYO String Trio

By Mary Durkin

Photos by Mary Durkin and Ed Hollender



The Jacksonville Symphony created the Youth Orchestras (JSYO) to serve young musicians from Northeast Florida through six structured levels, each depending on number of years of study and proficiency. The string trio that played on March 30 in Johnson Hall for Fleet Landing residents was made up of Noura Ossi, violin, 12 years of study, 11th grade at Bolles School; Anise Jones, violin, 7 years of study, 12th grade at Oak Leaf High School; and her sister, Aila Jones, cello, 6 years of study, 9th grade at Oak Leaf High School.

After a brief introduction to the trio by Dr. Marianne Rice of the Symphony, Ossi described for the audience the selections from Bach and Mozart they would be playing for their first pieces. The sisters then played Tchaikovsky’s “Sleeping Beauty Waltz” as a duet. Each sister also performed a solo, with piano accompaniment. The trio returned to the stage, and Ossi told the audience about the nuances of the five-movement piece by Handel that they would play as a closing number.

The audience gave these performers a standing ovation for their musicianship, confidence, and poise. When attending the Symphony, look for these young women, or other members of the Youth Orchestras, as they entertain you in the lobby area while you are waiting to be seated.

Voter's Guide for the 2026 Residents' Council Election

By Carol Smith

The election of four members of the Residents' Council will officially start Friday, April 24, and end at noon on Wednesday, April 29. The terms of Julia Pet-Armacost, Judy Solano, Stephen Dick, and Ken Hollinga are expiring. Hollinga served as chair of the Nominating Committee. He and the other members of the committee, Judy Poppell, Lory Doolittle, Chet Davis, and Nancy Sander, assembled a slate of six candidates who provided the biographical information below.

The following procedures will be used for the election. A live "Meet the Candidates" presentation will take place in Johnson Hall at 10 am on Wednesday, April 22. On Thursday, April 23, a video of the presentation will be posted on Fleet Link. Assisted living and healthcare residents who are life care residents will view the video on April 23 in the Leeward, North Point, and Derfer activities rooms and vote immediately after the end of the program. Additional time will be given to those unable to attend.

Independent living residents will have their ballots delivered to their social mailboxes on April 24 by current members of the Residents' Council. Residents may vote for up to four candidates. Completed ballots must be signed. Signatures will be cut off before the ballots are counted. Ballot boxes will be available at the concierge desk in the Coleman Center, in Windward Commons near the main entrance, and on the first floor of each apartment building from late afternoon Friday, April 24, until noon on Wednesday, April 29. The ballots will be counted by eight residents who are not candidates or members of the Residents' Council. The results will be announced on Fleet Link after counting is complete, and the candidates have been notified. The candidate with the most votes will serve a three-year term. The next three candidates will serve two-year terms.

Absentee voting is available at the concierge desk in the Coleman Center, April 9 to 23.

The Candidates



LtoR: Dale Clifford, Nancy Russell, Randy McDonald, Joy Miller, Jim Dobson, Jackie Smith

Dale Clifford

Growing up in Knoxville, TN, I loved school, and I loved traveling. My family gave me the confidence to build "home" wherever I am. Fleet Landing is now my home, but homes along the way included many other places in the world.

I moved to Northeast Florida in 1972, when my job search resulted in a position as a founding faculty member at the University of North Florida, which opened its doors to students that fall. Few people get a chance to help build an institution, and I'm lucky to have been one of them.

With a home base as a history professor, I also chaired the history department and the Faculty Association and founded the Honors Program, among other administrative positions. In the Jacksonville community, I served on several boards, including the Women's Giving Association.

Now, at Fleet Landing, I welcome the chance do more. As Staff Scholarship chair, I have come to know and work with Fleet's management and its staff. I admire the Residents' Council's ability to foster communication between and among residents and our

management. If elected, I pledge my best efforts to build on our traditions as we grow and change.

Nancy Russell

I grew up in Winchester, MA; received my B.A. from Middlebury College and M.S.Ed. from Elmira College. I taught GIs while in Germany and later moved into human resources. Work experience included the premier HR professional association for 5+ years and HR manager/director for small consulting firms and community banks.

We moved to South Carolina when my late husband retired from the US Army (colonel). I had been there over 20 years when I moved to Fleet Landing in 2018.

I tried to impact the many communities where I lived through a variety of volunteer positions, many involving leadership responsibilities. I have been active in my denomination at the local, district, and conference levels and just completed three years in the senior lay position at Christ UMC in Neptune Beach. I volunteer at Beaches Museum and am on my DAR

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The Candidates

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chapter's board. On campus, I am an Ambassador, croquet club secretary, and active in fitness and wellness activities, MOAA, and a book club.

I feel the Residents' Council has an important part to play in our life here at Fleet Landing. While it has no authority, it does have a voice, and that voice makes a difference.

Randy McDonald

I was born in Fort Worth, TX, to a military family, and thus lived in many places during childhood, graduating high school in Sanford, FL. I attained a Bachelor of Business Administration at the University of Texas while going through the ROTC program. Commissioned in the US Navy, I earned Naval Flight Officer Wings and flew in aircraft carrier-based tactical jets (reconnaissance and fighter interceptor) for most of my career. Stationed in Key West for six years in the '70s, I met and married Libby. While attending the Naval War College, I attained a Master of Science degree in management at Salve Regina College. I was later placed in charge of the Navy's Unmanned Aircraft program, flying the Pioneer UAV from the Battleship *Wisconsin* during the Gulf War. These opportunities provided management and leadership experience and technical expertise that I used as an advisor in government acquisition programs after the Navy. My love of Fleet Landing, admiration of the many talents and lifelong accomplishments of the residents, and recognition of the dedication and hard work of the staff make me an ideal candidate to foster convivial rapport and communication between residents and staff.

Joy Miller

My name is Joy Miller. I was born and raised overseas, an experience that taught me resilience and gifted me with a love of travel. My husband, Tim, chocolatier extraordinaire, and I settled at Fleet Landing in 2024 with our dogs Belle and Jet. I love puzzles and genealogy, especially researching the legacy of Revolutionary War patriots. I currently volunteer as our MOAA chapter treasurer, and enjoy working on projects to support veterans, military members, and their families.

Professionally, I was blessed with interesting career opportunities. As a veterinarian, I started off in a mostly large animal practice, and later owned a small animal practice. I subsequently earned a degree in epidemiology, and joined the Air Force as a Public Health Officer. I did a stint at CDC as a disease detective, and served as Chief Scientist at the Armed Forces Medical Intelligence Center. What followed was a series of senior executive positions where I managed complex programs related to federal intelligence and security.

As a member of the Residents' Council, I would like to positively interact with management, actively listen

and problem solve with residents, and work together as a team to enhance campus life for all residents.

Jim Dobson

Hello, I am Jim Dobson. My wife, Susan, and I moved into Fleet Landing in May 2023 and we both love living here. We moved from Massachusetts to Jacksonville 16 years ago.

For 40 years, I was Professor of Cardiovascular Physiology/Medicine at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. There I was the campus faculty representative to the Board of Regents, where I presented faculty and student issues and orchestrated solutions. In Jacksonville, I became a board member of Groundwork Jacksonville serving as treasurer and governance chair. Groundwork is building the Emerald Trail and restoring Jacksonville creeks.

I am in my third year as president of the Woodworker's Club. I enjoy assisting residents with their wood projects through "Help Your Neighbor" program. The past two years I have served as the Follies sound technician, which involves producing quality audio for all the performers. Recently, I have become involved in Beaches Habitat for Humanity building homes a mile from here on Mayport Road. I am helping the Fleet Hearts become a part of this Habitat project.

As a Residents' Council member, I want to work with residents and staff to continue making Fleet Landing the best place to live.

Jackie Smith

Born in Chicago, I was raised in Park Ridge, IL, and Tampa. I graduated from FSU, where I met David. Together for 62 years, we raised two children, welcomed a granddaughter, and lived in 25 homes.

Professionally, I taught junior high in Las Vegas and Alexandria, VA. I earned a master's degree in Journalism and Public Affairs from American University in DC and worked in feature editing at newspapers in Alexandria and Greenwich, CT. I was an administrator in the Education and Labor departments in Washington, at St. Petersburg Junior College, and USF.

For two decades, I ran the local offices serving constituents for two members of Congress. My responsibilities included overseeing the military academy appointments, orchestrating veteran ceremonies, and representing the members at chamber meetings, military functions, business gatherings, and academic platforms, actively engaging in a wide array of issues across nine counties. The diversity and impact of this work made it an incredibly rewarding chapter of my career.

We relocated here in 2022. Despite claiming no talent beyond talking, I have participated in two Follies. I am active on campus in Think Tank, MOAA, and Fleet Hearts, and the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, and Beaches Watch off campus.

Chamber Music Fun

By Enith Vardaman



Thanks to the generosity of residents Cynthia and Walter Graham, sponsors of the Chamber Music Concerts series, The Lawson Ensemble returned to Johnson Hall on March 2. Members of the Ensemble, which is in residence at the University of North Florida (UNF), are Associate Professor of Cello Nick Curry and Jacksonville Symphony musicians Aurica Duca (violin), and Clinton Dewing (viola for this concert).

Curry explained that because the repertoire for string trios is limited, they invite other musicians to join them for their concerts. Their special guest for this program was pianist William Ransom. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Juilliard, he has performed worldwide, he is in charge of four concerts series, and he is a professor of piano at Emory University in Atlanta.

Curry introduced the first of two works on the program, Beethoven's four-movement Piano Trio No. 1 in E-flat major. Both Curry and Ransom spoke about the Beethoven piece, noting that this early work was written before he began to lose his hearing. Ransom provided the background information for the second piece, Mozart's three-movements Piano Quartet No. 2 in E-flat major K 493.

"Fun" is not usually the first word that comes to mind when discussing chamber music, but that was the word Ransom used in talking about both works. And members of audience for this concert would likely agree.

The fast movements of each piece were bright and lively, and the slow movement of each was lovely. Listening to virtuoso performances of these works was indeed fun.

If you want to be sure you do not miss any concerts in this series, send your name and email address to walter7graham@gmail.com.

Chess Club News

By Richard Wong

The Chess Club meets Tuesdays at 1 pm in the Windward Commons lobby.



White mates in two moves. Hint: Be careful of stalemate.

Chess tip: rooks are best when they support each other.

Fleet Hearts News

By Carol Smith

At its March meeting, Fleet Hearts heard about READ USA from Development Director Joe Wolf. Many members are anxious to participate in the Book Fair that will be held at Anchor Academy by his organization on April 14. Fleet Hearts supports a variety of activities at Anchor Academy, and its assistance at the Book Fair will be greatly appreciated.

At the invitation of Rethreaded, which helps survivors of human trafficking, nine ladies were given a behind-the-scenes tour of production activities on March 26. They took along 50 pounds of T-shirts, which brings the total donated by Fleet Landing residents to 237 pounds. Collection of T-shirts is an ongoing effort, and after seeing all the ways that they are used, Fleet Hearts encourages all residents to continue dropping them in the donation box at 5620 Sirius Court anytime.

Welcoming Spring With a Party

By Enith Vardaman

Mother Nature has the last word on whether an event can be held outdoors, but the inclement weather on March 12 that caused the Hula Into Spring Deck Party to be held in Breakers rather than lakeside did not dampen spirits. People arrived wearing bright colors and, in keeping with the Hawaiian theme, were offered a lei upon arrival.

Food offerings included avocado halves and ice cream (both with a choice of toppings), tacos, and soft pretzels.

Attendees had an instructor to help them try their hand at paper flower crafting. One person who took advantage of this option was later spotted wearing the

brightly colored flower in her hair.

“Hula” was in the name of the party for a reason: The entertainment provided by three hula dancers (two women and one man), a musician, and an emcee was the highlight of the event. The dancers performed singly and as a duo and a trio and also managed costume changes. They even coaxed some brave individuals to join them on the dance floor and enticed others for group dancing lessons.

Regrettably, the poor weather prevented the Blessing of the Fleet that was scheduled to be part of the celebration. It is not yet known when/if a new date will be chosen.



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Welcoming Spring With a Party

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Editor's note: Taking pictures at 10am event with lots of people and much activity is not easy, but *FLEET BEAT* photographer Ed Hollender managed it.

BeauSoleil

By Enith Vardaman



When it came to music, March did not go out like a lamb at Fleet Landing. On March 31, BeauSoleil avec Michael Doucet brought vibrant Louisiana Cajun and Creole music to Johnson Hall. The five-member group of instrumentalists and vocalists, founded in 1975, has won two Grammys and has had eleven Grammy nominations. Besides traditional instruments like guitar and fiddle, the audience saw and heard the less familiar Cajun accordion. Its characteristics include a noticeably smaller size, a louder sound, and a different keyboard than the type of accordion that many are familiar with.

Thanks to Michael Doucet, the group's leader (fiddle and vocals) the audience learned of the complex cultural background of the music. For example, most of the songs were sung in 17th century Acadian French. Cajuns trace their ancestry to French settlers who moved to Louisiana after having been deported from the part of Canada then known as Acadia. Lively music and history lessons were a winning combination.

Military Mondays and More

By Chet Davis

The Historic Mayport Chapter of the Military Officers of America Association (MOAA), based here at Fleet Landing, is part of a group that provides dinners-to-go (Chick-fil-A) to active duty military families on one Monday each month. The effort involves MOAA, the Navy League, volunteers from St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, and Naval Station Mayport. Each month, the volunteers provide 300 much-appreciated meals to recipients. The chapter also supports Food Farmacy, a program that supplies food to active duty military families and veterans on one Thursday each month.

Fantasy Farms

By Isobel Spink

Photos by Ann Bell and Isobel Spink



The peacock putting on his full display

Nestled in Ponte Vedra, there's a remarkable animal sanctuary that has operated as a nonprofit for 30 years. Few people know about it, as it is not open to the public, but it's perfect for unique catered events.

With Ramon and Laurie leading the way on March 10, we wandered along the shaded paths, taking in the variety of exotic animals. Ramon has been there over 20 years and told us many unusual stories of the residents. The walk itself was peaceful and offered plenty of opportunities to observe the animals in their habitats, setting the tone for a memorable visit. The decorations across the grounds were both incredible and impressive, sourced from gifts, purchases, and auctions.

Lemurs were our first sighting. Initially there were only a few, but now there is a crowd of these beautiful primates. A mother lemur keeps her baby tucked under her arm for close feeding for the first six months of its life. We saw several enormous African spurred tortoises, which can live over 100 years, in compounds with other animals.

We fed carrots to the goats, peanuts to the parrots, and loved the small alpaca living with several wiry-haired pigs. Then on to the peacocks, with one male displaying his full fan of colors for us. This is how they attract females. When two male peacocks fight, they pull the other's feathers out.

Besides rabbits, chickens, and roosters, there were numerous colorful and exotic parrots and other birds from all parts of the world. A white umbrella cockatoo, who had pulled most of her chest feathers out, said "hello" to us. A black Mandeville toucan probably had the loudest voice, but there was a cacophony of sound as we explored all the beautiful birds.

A large garage showcased exotic cars to go with the exotic animals. Our one-hour walk was delightful, and Fantasy Farms is clearly one of a kind.

FLEET BEAT News

By Enith Vardaman

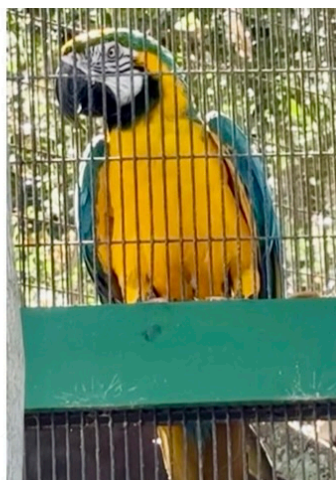
Geri Bramble joined the *FLEET BEAT* staff in June 2025 as a copy editor. Her husband, Tom, is also pitching in as a copy editor, helping to keep this publication as error free as possible.



A wiry-haired pig and an alpaca



An African spurred tortoise and a Mandeville toucan



The white umbrella cockatoo who said "hello" and one of the parrots

Solara Celebration

By Victoria Freeman



Checking in



Solara Care Solutions team



Residents collecting handouts in their blue tote bags



Preparation of the treats

The Solara Launch Celebration on March 11 was a North Point festival. At check-in, attendees received bright blue paper tote bags to collect handouts describing Solara’s services. There were passports to be stamped at six key information areas. Once stamped at all six, the passports were entered into a lottery. There

were also delicious edibles, champagne, and live music.

The overarching theme was that Solara Care Solutions, by bringing Fleet Landing Home Health, Outpatient Therapy, and Private Care together under a new name and structure, would provide streamlined access to services residents already knew and trusted. Executive Director Julia Pratt has written that Solara also plans to provide access to educational materials, learning events, and clinics focused on health, wellness, and chronic disease management. She emphasized that the Solara team was committed to enhancing residents’ independence and confidence—today and in the future.

The Solara Launch Celebration offered attendees the opportunity to get a better understanding of this new version of familiar services.

Information about Solara Care Solutions is available at the website solarajax.com.

Memorial Tree

The information for this article was supplied by Linda Gottlick.

Have you noticed the young oak sapling on your walk around campus?



It’s about 3½ feet tall and sits in a small triangle area with three older oaks. You’ll spot it as you walk past the parking lot for the 1000 and 2000 buildings, just before the mailboxes (walking clockwise).

Linda Gottlick passes this little tree every day, and it always makes her think of her mother, Betsy Potter. She now

calls it Mom’s Memorial Tree.

Betsy Potter lived at Fleet Landing for 25½ years—16 of them with her husband, Tom, and 10 more after his passing. She loved this community deeply and counted her blessings every day, grateful for her friends and the rich, safe life she enjoyed.

This new oak began as a tiny sapling that Linda brought home from Virginia Beach in December 2023. This sapling was extra special because Will, the son of Linda and Rich Gottlick, propagated it from an acorn.

The little tree lived a while on the Gottlick’s balcony. In the fall of 2024, Linda asked Jay Jernigan (now Campus Operations Director) if it might be planted in her mother’s memory.

The grounds team set it in the earth in November 2024, and they’ve cared for it tenderly ever since. The tree has grown 5-6 inches-stretching upward, just as Linda’s mother would have loved!

A Very Special Five-Year Anniversary

Text and photos by Nancy Lundgren



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



On March 28, Fleet Landing marked its fifth consecutive year participating in Hubbard House’s “Stand Up and Stride Walk to End Domestic Violence.” Thirty-nine Fleet Landing residents and fifteen Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) joined more than 1,000 Jacksonville-area walkers for the annual event.

Transportation Services Manager Brandon Levy and driver Terry Holland chauffeured our team downtown to the riverside venue where the action all

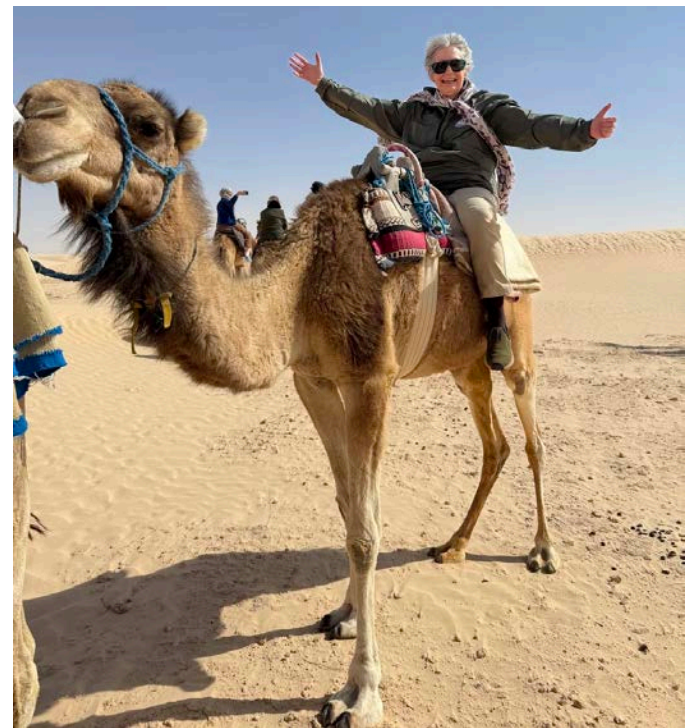
began. Pre-walk festivities included games, Zumba, and refreshments, keeping spirits high. Along the scenic route, enthusiastic cheer squads boosted morale and kept the walkers moving. And for a second time, Jeannie Sullivan detoured briefly for her “double-dutch jump roping” performance, delighting one and all.

Team Fleet Landing/RPCV started in 2022 with ten members and has grown every year since then. Founding member and team lead, David Miron, received a thunderous ovation when Dr. Gail Patin, CEO of Hubbard House, announced that our team earned the 2026 Top Team award after raising \$22,157, bringing Hubbard House total donations to \$122,091 this year.

Ninety-six Fleet Landing/RPCV virtual and in-person supporters contributed to this achievement which represents more than dollars. It signifies lives touched, hope renewed, and a community united in support of survivors.

North Africa Adventure

Pam Hamilton, a resident of the 1000 Building, sent this photo from her trip to North Africa.



In Memoriam

Bill Crossley
1938-2026
Larry Magner
1933-2026
Erwin Schaub
1928-2026

Barbara Geib
1931-2026
Pat Patterson
1929-2026
Bill Weimer
1944-2026

Ken Zearfoss
1930-2026

St. Patrick's Day Parade

Photos by Ed Hollender and Janet Silvester

Temperatures in the forties are not expected here on St. Patrick's Day, but that was indeed what happened. Our two photographers braved the cold to capture shots of the undaunted participants. A Safety and Security-staffed golf cart led the parade, followed by participants who included residents in golf carts, two bicyclists (Catherine and Jay Dowling), our campus roller skater (Driver Marie-Claire Allen), and Randy McDonald at the wheel of his vintage car. Partway through the parade, they were joined by Transportation Services Manager Brandon Levy, who was driving the "big bus" with new staff members aboard. Having stopped to allow the parade to exit a cul-de-sac, Levy then followed the parade for the rest of its route, much to the enjoyment of the new employees. What a nice introduction to life at Fleet Landing.



FLiCRA Annual Meeting

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of his previous work with FLiCRA and emphasized the organization's vital role in representing residents of continuing care retirement communities throughout Florida. He also reviewed Fleet Landing's organizational structure, outlining the various departments and the important services they provide to residents.

Chapter Vice President Judy Solano explained FLiCRA's statewide structure, noting that the organization consists of 58 local chapters. Fleet Landing continues to maintain one of the largest memberships in Florida, with more than 616 members—representing slightly over 75 percent of residents.

Legislative Liaison Carol Smith presented an overview of legislative activity during the past two years, including Fleet Landing's participation in reform proposals developed by the Florida Office of Insurance Regulation. She highlighted two bills passed during the most recent legislative session that impact assisted living facilities.

Diane Eger spoke about the effectiveness of FLiCRA's state office and described the October 16, 2025, statewide annual conference hosted by Vicar's Landing. She encouraged additional residents to join FLiCRA to ensure that residents' voices remain strong and influential at the state level.

Farrell concluded the meeting by thanking the Fleet Landing residents who serve as our chapter's neighborhood representatives and inviting members to remain for a happy hour reception and refreshments.

The FLiCRA board gathered after the meeting and chose new officers and responsibilities: Solano (President), Sweeney (Vice President), Kathy Vanderbeck (Secretary), Mike Shannon (Treasurer), Bruce Osborne (Membership), Bell (Assistant Membership), Bitter (Legislative Liaison), Dian Russell (Events and Vicar's Landing Liaison).

March WELLInspired Learning Series

By Carol Smith



LtoR: Dee Waiters, Chris Gotschall, Elvis Burrows

Residents gathered on March 18 in Johnson Hall for "Navigating Nutrition," an informative session led by a team of culinary decision makers. Executive Chef Chris Gotschall, Senior Director of Food and Beverage Elvis Burrows, and Health Services Executive Chef Dee Waiters described how meals are planned, prepared, and personalized—while also answering

thoughtful questions from the audience.

The team outlined the journey each menu takes before reaching the table. It begins with a venue chef who drafts the menu. That draft is reviewed by the Executive Chef alongside the Senior Director of Food and Beverage. Once finalized, the menu is sent to Communications Manager Megan Clemensen for posting. Each dining venue follows its own rotating schedule, ensuring both variety and consistency.

Fleet Landing partners with trusted vendors, including Sysco and Cheney Brothers, while also prioritizing locally sourced seafood and produce whenever possible. Across all venues, the focus remains on fresh, made-from-scratch offerings—right down to the homemade cookies served at Currents.

Customization plays a key role in resident satisfaction. Guests are encouraged to communicate openly with their servers, ask questions, and be specific about preferences. The nutrition team emphasized that informed choices empowered individuals on their personal wellness journeys.

Menus also feature helpful icons to guide diners. Labels such as *WellInspired*, Vegetarian, Gluten Free, and No Salt Added Available appear at the bottom of each menu, along with clear explanations to support informed dining decisions.

Blair Crimmins and the Hookers

By Victoria Freeman



On March 4, Blair Crimmins and the Hookers completely mesmerized a Johnson Hall audience from their opening song. Crimmins provided vocals and played the banjo and guitar. The Hookers joined in on bass, drums, trombone, trumpet, saxophone, and clarinet. The group blended ragtime, Dixieland, and swing with a modern edge.

It was easy to see how Crimmins has earned critical acclaim and a devoted following for his musical uniqueness. He and his group have toured across the US and Italy and shared stages with acts like the Preservation Hall Jazz Band and Old Crow Medicine Show. They provided an unforgettable afternoon. As resident Karen Hollinga said, "It was high energy from the first note to the last note an hour and a half later. They kept the audience involved and dancing in their seats the entire time."

Resident Club Fair

(continued from page 1)

and birdwatchers. Some, such as the Florida Life Care Residents Association (FLiCRA), the League of Women Voters (LWV), and the Military Officers of America Association (MOAA) have a state and/or national reach.

The impressive diversity of clubs and activities reflects the rich variety of interests and backgrounds of Fleet Landing residents. The energy that filled Johnson Hall during the two-hour fair perfectly captured the vitality and engagement that is found in the Fleet Landing community throughout the year.



CineClub



Ping Pong



Fleet Hearts



Mindfulness Matters



This locomotive was a popular part of the Woodworkers' display.



League of Women Voters



Art Club

Irish Tea

By Enith Vardaman; photos by Janet Silvester

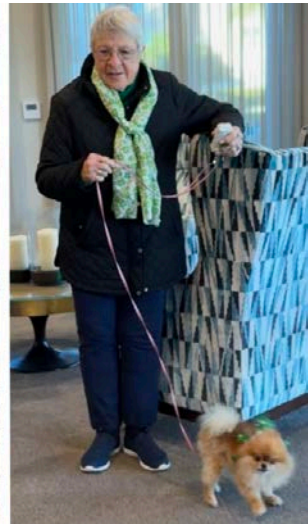
Fleet Landing got an early start on its observance of St. Patrick's Day on March 6 with the annual Irish Tea. At this always popular event, attendees had a choice of three teas (Irish Breakfast, Constant Comment, and Wild Berry Zinger), graciously served by staff from Administration, Dining Services, Sales and Marketing, and Wellness and Transportation. Sandwiches (chicken salad, salmon, and cucumber) awaited them at the tables, and at each place setting, there were three treats: a shortbread cookie, a tart, and a scone. Clotted cream and tiny jars of jelly rounded out the offerings. Area resident Sue Tice provided lovely Irish music on the Celtic harp and fiddle. And, of course, green was the color of the day.



St. Patrick's Day Dog Parade

Photos by Ann Bell

This year, St. Patrick's Day brought unseasonably cold temperatures. That did not stop six dog owners from turning out for the first time the day was observed at Fleet Landing with a dog parade. Most of the dogs were sporting the traditional green, while one also celebrated its humans' Scottish heritage.



Fleet Landing Croquet Club: March 2026

By Mike Foster



Singles champions (LtoR): Mike Foster, Scotty Willis, Miles Nogelo, and Ernie Bio



Mixer participants

What a finish to the annual Fleet Landing Croquet Singles Tournament held on March 1 on the LaHatte Croquet Court. Following several rounds of hotly contested round-robin play among 16 competitors, the field was narrowed to the final matches. Club President Ernie Bio captured the championship with a well played 7-4 victory over Scotty Willis in an exciting final. In the consolation round Mike Foster outlasted Miles Nogelo in another closely fought contest, winning 7-5 after a series of excellent shots from both players.

It was a terrific month of croquet, marked by competitive play, good sportsmanship, and plenty of exciting moments for players and spectators alike. Thanks and *(continued on next page)*

Fleet Landing Croquet Club: March 2026

(continued from preceding page)

congratulations to all who participated and helped make the tournament a success.

The monthly mixer was held on March 14 on a warm and beautiful afternoon. It turned out to be a terrific event, with over 20 players participating. With the timer set for 10-minute rounds, alternating teams of two versus two played fun challenging rounds.

The Fleet Landing Doubles Tournament committee was busy pairing players for the upcoming Fleet Landing Olympics to be held April 17-24. With 24 people signing up for the tournament, the committee assembled the teams by using a formula of the various skill levels and finishes in the recent singles tournament so that they are as balanced and fair as possible.

Night croquet will be starting soon, so there are multiple opportunities to be involved with the sport of croquet. Come join us.

Vietnam Veterans Day Flag Raising

Photos by Dita Domonkos

A large number of residents gathered on the Flag Plaza on the lovely spring day of March 30 to observe Vietnam Veterans Day. The Kazoo Band, under the direction of resident Carol Smith, provided the music for the occasion. The Vietnam Veterans flag was raised along with the US and Florida flags.



French Film Festival

By Catherine Dowling

The French Film Festival will wrap up for now on Sunday, April 12, at 2 pm in the Windward Commons second floor classroom with François Truffaut's 1976 easygoing *L'Argent de poche* (*Small Change*). It will be the last in a series of seven films screened beginning in January 2026. Each film, a classic, was selected for its cinematography, historical import, and linguistic sensibility. *L'Argent de poche*, a semi-autobiographical story filled with fresh-faced children, will send us out with a smile.

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French Film Festival

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The films are shown in French with English subtitles. Displays showcase the featured film and its stars. The introductory bilingual presentation includes cultural notes, useful grammar, and, of course, important themes and stories about each film, its cast, and crew.

Following each movie, there is a brief discussion of aspects of interest.

Join us on Sunday, April 12, at 2 pm to be enriched and inspired!

St. Johns Botanical Garden Tour

By Mary Durkin

Photos by Mary Durkin and Ann Bell



Left: Madagascar Bismarck palm.

Upper right: Ice Age fan palm.

Lower right: South American wax palm.



Picnic lunch

On March 19, twenty-five Fleet Landers took the long but pleasant drive to the St. Johns Botanical Garden and Nature Preserve in Hastings. The Garden is situated on 16 acres with a natural live oak forest that creates a unique environment for endangered palm trees and other plants by providing shade in the summer and protection from cold and wind in the winter. However, as our guide, founder, and resident biologist, Dr. John Rossi, explained, this past winter, temperatures hit lows of 21 degrees. The cold and wind dealt a blow to many of the 400+ palms and thousands of plants in the Garden. But not to worry because Rossi says they all, or at least most, will return to health.

Rossi explained that his purpose for the Garden is to do research and preserve species diversity. To that end, he incorporates palms and plants from multiple areas of the world, such as South America, Southeast Asia, Australia, and Mexico, to name a few. As we walked the garden trails, Rossi showed us such plants as the African oil palm; the New Zealand palm; the Himalayan windmill palm, which survives the cold very well; the Nubian Desert palm; and a new palm to Florida, the Sonora Desert palm. Another cold weather survivor was a Madagascar Bismarck palm called Lizzy, which loomed large over the trails. Rossi was very proud to show us Sabal miamiensis (Miami palmetto), a critically endangered species.

The Garden relies on private funding through donations, memberships, and admissions. Rossi lives on the property and recently added over 5 acres to the nature preserve part of the facility. It is an area of 2.5 miles of trails kept in its natural state and rife with birds, reptiles, and amphibians.

After our tour of the palm gardens, we had a picnic lunch supplied by Fleet Landing’s Dining Services and enjoyed the restful ride home.

Victor Wainwright and Friends

By Victoria Freeman



Victor Wainwright’s concert in Johnson Hall on March 20 was a combination of foot stomping festival and family reunion. The boogie-woogie and blues singer, songwriter, and pianist frequently referred to himself as Cousin Victor. It fits. He reminded the full house audience that this was his sixth visit to Fleet Landing.

Wainwright performed with a four-man band playing harmonica, sax, guitar, and drums. They electrified the *(continued on next page)*

Victor Wainwright and Friends

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audience from the opening song, which featured a lengthy harmonica solo, to an original, audience-participation song about Wainwright's grandmother. Everything the band played was a tribute to American blues and the famous folks who pioneered that genre. During the concert, Wainwright, in storyteller mode, dropped the name of famous blues men: Pinetop Perkins, Ray Charles, Huey "Piano" Smith, and Muddy Waters.

It was easy to see why the Grammy-nominated Wainwright has won numerous awards, including one for his *Piana from Savannah* as the most played contemporary blues album of the year in 2018, and six Blues Music Awards (presented by the Blues Foundation, which was established to foster blues heritage).

Marshville Grass Band

By Mary Durkin



Fleet Landing residents always like a good bluegrass band, and they were looking forward to hearing Marshville Grass on March 13, as it was making its first visit to Fleet Landing. The three-member band got right into playing with "Nine Pound Hammer," a post-Civil War song Merle Travis recorded and popularized in the bluegrass style in 1946.

When finished with that rousing number, the banjo-playing leader, Doug McKelway, introduced the other players, Michael Godwin on guitar, and Rex Putnam on bass. He told of his background as a Fox News anchorman for many years, now retired in Fernandina and playing bluegrass gigs around local clubs. He explained that the empty microphone on stage was meant for their fill-in mandolin player, who was stuck in a major traffic problem.

The threesome went on playing song after song, with McKelway and Godwin following up many with humorous stories about the bluegrass musicians whose tunes they were playing, such as Bill Monroe's "Kentucky Waltz," Earl Scruggs's "Ground Speed," and John Hartford's "Aereo-Plain." Putnam sang a solo called "Kuckoo," and it was fun to watch him playing the bass slap-style and smiling, having a good old time at the back of the stage. In the middle of the eighth song—seventy minutes into their gig—the side door opened, and in walked the mandolin player, to the cheers of the audience and probably the relief of the band members, who nevertheless didn't miss a beat on the song they were playing, "Swing Manure."

Mandolin player Sam Zolla got right into a Charlie Daniels song, "Lonesome Fiddle Blues," then followed with Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs's "Why Don't You Tell Me So." A short band discussion ensued, and Zolla wrapped up with more Flatt and Scruggs: "Down the Road" and "I'll Stay Around."

After an hour and 25 minutes in total, the audience showed its appreciation for these outstanding musicians who displayed just how good they are by producing great music with and without the one brand new to the group.

Juggling Chi is Fun

Text and photo by Nancy Lundgren



Rhett Farber, Chi Juggler Master, welcomed 14 Fleet Landing residents to an afternoon of juggling in Studio A on March 31. Juggling Chi is a playful, mindful movement practice that blends simple juggling patterns with energy flow to awaken the body and focus the mind. Farber described this practice as whole brain synchronization.

He started the group juggling in easy steps. First we used one ball to throw up to eye level in an arc to and then catch with the other hand, focusing on the arc as part of a figure eight. Next we tried the "throw and catch" with a partner which gave new meaning to "brain synchronization." Farber demonstrated the next levels in learning how to juggle, emphasizing the need for focus. The last exercise gave us an opportunity to actually juggle two balls on our own. Final words: practice, practice, practice—and have fun.

Farber teaches Juggling Chi at Adele Grage on the second and fourth Tuesdays from 5:30 pm-6:30 pm. The classes are free and open to everyone.

Celebrating St. Patrick's Day in Song

By Victoria Freeman



LtoR: Julia Pet-Armacost, Karen Sturtevant, Pete Sheridan



Julia Pet-Armacost directing the two choruses



De An Winton directing the two choruses and the Dulcimer Doers

The March 16 Irish Tunes Concert and Sing-along was an enchanting blend of comedy and harmony. Much of the humor came courtesy of Director Julia Pet-Armacost's oversized green leprechaun hat, which repeatedly slipped over her eyes as she led the various groups of musicians.

The program featured The Serendipity Singers (women's chorus), Fleet Harmony (men's chorus), pianists Karen Sturtevant and Pete Sheridan, the Dulcimer Doers, and De An Winton, who took over as director when Pet-Armacost performed with the Dulcimer Doers. With song lyrics provided, the ever-enthusiastic audience joined in at times, turning the event into a shared celebration.

Behind the scenes, Sue Myers and Bob Armacost ensured everything ran smoothly, managing slides, sound, and logistics. From the rousing opener, "What Shall We Do With a Drunken Sailor," to the cheerful finale, "I'm Looking Over a Four Leaf Clover," the program left no doubt that for this hour everyone was Irish.

Easy Listening With Guy Van Syckle

By Nancy Lundgren



On March 25, Guy Van Syckle welcomed residents to Johnson Hall with a beautiful rendition of "Angel Eyes" by John Hiatt and Fred Koller. He thanked everyone for coming and for their donations to the Beaches Emergency Assistance Ministry (BEAM) food pantry. Then it was time for his game-show moment. This year's "guess-how-many" challenge asked us to count the stripes on his shirt. (Last year it was guitars.)

Van Syckle's set featured familiar country and folk favorites from the '70s and '80s that celebrate love, friendship, family, and memories. His laid-back delivery and storytelling added depth to songs like "Do You Believe in Magic," "Oh Beautiful," "I Will Remember You," and "Humble and Kind," which brought smiles all around. We also laughed and sang along to his beloved children's tunes: "The Marvelous Toy" and "If I Had a Boat."

It's always impressive to watch Van Syckle switch effortlessly between two guitars, banjo, harmonica, and piano. We're fortunate to have such a talented, warm-hearted, and generous musician at Fleet Landing. Thank you, Guy.

Behind the Recipe

By Carole Watson



Staff had brought in a refrigerator, two hot plate burners, a large stock pot, and a frying pan, along with numerous containers of chopped vegetables and filet beef. All but the refrigerator were set up on two long tables on the stage of Johnson Hall on March 9. There was even a camera (which refused to work) to project the activity on the large screens. All that was missing were the suspended mirrors of TV cooking shows!

Main Street Executive Chef Dustin Wigglesworth was not daunted as he explained that Georges Auguste



Escoffier, who espoused that every cooking procedure had a term and a process, was considered the father of modern French cooking. Wigglesworth proceeded to prepare a classic French beef stew, starting with a light dusting of flour and a mixture of smoked paprika, white pepper, onion, and garlic powders on the beef cubes, which he then seared in the stockpot. He removed the beef

and added the classic mirepoix: a mixture of double the portion of chopped onion to one each of carrots and celery. This he lightly sautéed until “sweated” to form the fond, the rich mixture of spices and moisture that coat the bottom of the pan. Next he returned the beef to the mixture; added beef broth and various seasonings, e.g., red wine, Worcestershire sauce, hot pepper; and brought the mixture to a boil to thicken the sauce. Then, he turned down the heat to let the stew simmer until the meat was tender. Only at the last minute before serving did he add the fresh herbs.

As the stew simmered, Wigglesworth took flour, baking powder, Kosher salt, olive oil, and ice water; mixed them together to form a dough; lightly dusted it with flour and rolled it out. He cut the dough into roughly equal squares and lightly fried it in olive oil in the waiting skillet, resulting in a delicious naan-like flatbread.

All present were then treated to tastes of the stew and flatbread, as numerous yummies were heard in the hall!

“Behind the Recipe” is a new series featuring live demonstrations by Fleet Landing chefs. Be on the lookout for announcements of future events in the series.

Chips & Putts

By Bob Neal and Isobel Spink

Perfect spring weather on March 12 set the stage for Fleet Landing’s monthly golf tournament at Windy Harbor, where blue skies, warm sunshine, and light winds created ideal conditions for a competitive and enjoyable day on the course. Six teams teed off with hopes of claiming the tournament’s bragging rights.

When the final putts dropped, Team 3 emerged as the clear winner. Captained by Tom Holloman and joined by Tom Gonwa, Rick Hammer (Atlantic Club) and Marcia Plumley (Atlantic Club), the team posted an impressive score of 68, finishing four strokes under par. Their round was highlighted by five birdies, giving them a solid edge over the field.

Close behind in second place was Team 2, captained by Price Schwenck with teammates Bob Peterson and Alan Halperin. The trio turned in an excellent round of 69, three strokes under par, and recorded four birdies along the way to keep the pressure on the leaders.

Third place went to Team 4, led by Captain Rick Rochelle with Bob Hunter, Jim Henry, and John Rietveld. The team finished with an even-par 72 that included three birdies.

Two teams tied for fourth place with rounds of 73. Captain Bob Neal’s Team 1, featuring John Egan (Atlantic Club) and Jim Wayrynen, matched the score of Team 6, captained by Tom Dahlgren with Phil McCullough (Atlantic Club) and Paul Donohue.

Team 5, captained by Dave Smith with Paul Mocko, Ray Rigney, and Keith Riechmann, also enjoyed the beautiful spring conditions while taking in the scenery and wildlife around the course.

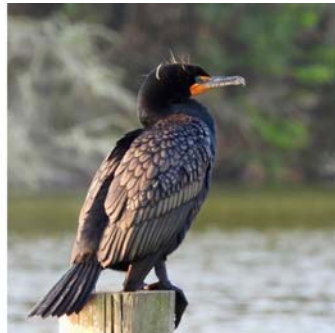
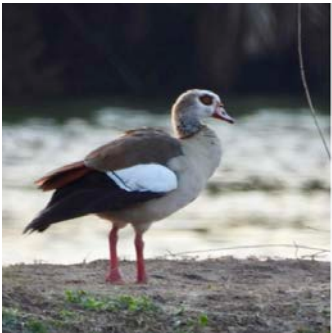
Individual honors added to the day’s highlights. Wayrynen captured the Men’s Long Drive, while Hammer won Closest to the Pin for men with a shot just 10 feet 9 inches from the hole. The Ladies’ Long Drive will carry over to the next tournament after no qualifying drive landed in the fairway.

The results were later presented during the monthly golf dinner in the form of another clever song recounting the day’s action. Additional awards included the Birdie Trophy, presented to Hammer for leading his team with five birdies, and the Sandbagger of the Month Trophy, awarded to Gonwa for his efforts in helping lead his team’s winning round.

The Ladies’ Closest to the Pin also produced a humorous moment when the listed winner appeared as “Bo Derick [*sic*] 10,” a playful nod to a famous name from another era, with the ladies prize money carrying forward to next month.

Fleet Landing Birdwatching Group Scores a Big Win

By Nancy Lundgren; photos by Janet Silvester



Left: Egyptian goose. Right: Double-crested cormorant.



Left: Yellow-throated warbler. Right: Pileated Woodpecker.



Left: Great egret. Right: Black-crowned night heron.

The March 21 birdwatching outing at Hanna Park turned spectacular. Fleet Landing birdwatchers recorded a group-high 45 bird species seen or heard.

Big surprise—the Egyptian goose stole the show. Native to Africa, it is identified by its buff plumage, pink legs, dark eye patches, and a black belly spot. Five of them, probably a family group, gave the watchers a new

“life” bird. A rare purple martin also made a graceful cameo as it migrated high above the park.

The mix of winter “regulars” and early migrants kept the birdwatchers busy—heads up, binoculars in hand. Ken Hollinga, Mike Marchetti, and Frances Edwards, our group leaders, kept us informed and looking in the right direction. Janet Silvester, photographer extraordinaire, captured photos of folks and feathered friends. Thanks to all of you for another morning to remember.

The next Hanna Park birdwatching trip is scheduled for Saturday, April 19.

Yale University Baker’s Dozen

By Isobel Spink

Photos by Ed Hollender and Janet Silvester



Known “as one of the nation’s oldest and finest a cappella groups,” The Baker’s Dozen from Yale University was celebrated with great enthusiasm in a return visit to Fleet Landing. Johnson Hall was packed on March 14. Extra chairs were brought in, forming a new front row (putting me in the second row).

Founded in 1947, this group of talented undergraduates blew us away with their songs and comedy. The singing seniors at Yale belong to The Whiffenpoofs, who tour all year, take no classes, and graduate the following year. Members of The Baker’s Dozen tour two weeks every year and have entertained at places such as the White House, United Nations, and CIA Headquarters. They also sang on television with Martha Stewart. Practicing for six hours every week, they become close friends in the process.

Each member introduced himself and where he was from, which was mostly from the US, with one from South Korea and one from Jamaica.

About eight of these handsome and accomplished students did a solo, proving the quality of the individual singers. “Loch Lomond” was a favorite with

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Yale University Baker's Dozen

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the audience. The group's finger snapping, wonderful harmony, and dancing, along with some great comedy, including a fall off the stage, got a repeated enthusiastic response from the audience.

Wellness Services Manager Mary Faria was besieged with requests to have The Baker's Dozen as often as possible. Perhaps we can get the Whiffenpoofs too.

Fleet Classics

By Guy Bond



Johnson Hall was filled with familiar melodies on March 23 as the *Fleet Classics*, led by Julia Pet-Armacost, presented a program celebrating some of classical music's most beloved works—along with a clear message: it's never too late to play again.

The ensemble brought together a group of talented musicians, with Pet-Armacost on flute and piccolo, joined by Bunky Johnson (clarinet), Charles Winton (French horn), De An Winton (alto saxophone), Karen Sturtevant (piano), Eunice Rogerson (tenor saxophone), Guy Bond (electric bass guitar), and Bob Armacost (12-string guitar). Their performance balanced precision with a relaxed, inviting spirit that made the afternoon fun.

The program itself was a tour through some of the "greatest hits" of classical music, each piece carrying its own story. The gentle, flowing lines of Pachelbel's Canon in D opened the door to a world of elegance—music that has endured for centuries as a symbol of harmony and grace. Selections by Mozart, including "Eine kleine Nachtmusik," "Là ci darem la mano" ("Put Your Hand in Mine"), and Symphony No. 40 in G minor, reminded listeners of Mozart's remarkable abilities.

The bold, expressive style of Beethoven was heard in Symphony No. 3, a work that is expansive, dramatic, and deeply personal. In contrast, Johann Strauss II brought a sense of Viennese charm with "Tales from the Vienna Woods," music that practically invites the listener to dance.

From the world of ballet, Tchaikovsky's Overture to Act II of *Swan Lake* added a layer of romance and drama, while Ponchielli's "Dance of the Hours" brought a playful, almost theatrical energy—familiar to many from its appearance in popular culture (Hello Muddah,

hello Faddah, Here I am at Camp ...). The lively rhythms of Slavonic Dance No. 1 by Dvořák highlighted folk-inspired themes that feel both rustic and joyful.

A touch of Americana came through with Sousa's "The Liberty Bell," a march known for its bright, unmistakable energy. Operatic selections by Puccini, including "O mio bambino caro" (featuring the beautiful voice of Pet-Armacost) and music from *Madama Butterfly*, showcased Puccini's gift for writing melodies that go straight to the heart. The program concluded with the spirited "Colonel Bogey March" by Kenneth Alford, sending the audience out whistling that familiar tune.

Adding to the experience, Pet-Armacost introduced each selection with engaging insights—offering glimpses into the lives of the composers and the enduring appeal of their music. These moments of storytelling helped transform the concert from a simple performance into a shared musical journey.

March MOAA Meeting

By Chet Davis



LtoR: Bob Neal, Mike Trumbull, Joy Miller. Bob Peterson, Randy McDonald, Pat Kluever, Joe Ruthenberg

The guest speaker at the March 30 meeting of the Historic Mayport Chapter of the Military Officers of America Association (MOAA) was Captain Mike (Bull) Trumbull. He has returned to Naval Station Mayport as Commanding Officer after first arriving there as a "boot sailor" (low rank) 31 years ago.

In his remarks, Trumbull stated that the operational tempo is high, with three ships having departed early for their deployments. However, this creates an opportunity to upgrade the pier while the ships are deployed. He noted that Navy leadership was prioritizing support for military families. The base can support 37 ships, but only 22 are homeported, allowing for growth and acceptance of new frigates. An increase in the number of air and surface unmanned vehicles is expected.

During the question and answer portion of his talk, Trumbull discussed the future of the Anchor Academy (a Duval County Public Schools elementary school) located adjacent to the base, relocation of the

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March MOAA Meeting

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lighthouse currently on the base, sea level rise, and the Exchange gas station, which sells gas at the wholesale price, giving sailors a break.

After the session, Trumbull remained and answered questions for another 20 minutes to conclude a very informative update.

Fleet Landing Wildlife

Sometimes living at Fleet Landing feels a bit like living in a wildlife refuge. Our photographers were particular busy with taking pictures in a month when it seemed that we had an exceptional number of wildlife sightings.



Joy Miller captured shots of a raccoon and a pelican in the 5300 Block.



More shots of the same (?) pelican: Janice Flock reports that this pelican has settled down right off her porch. Eileen Avitable took a photo of the pelican in profile.



Kathy Vanderbeck took this photo of one of our fairly regular visitors, a great egret socializing with a somewhat less common visitor, a wood stork. She also got this shot of Canada geese enjoying Beacon Pond.



Bob Hunter saw this little blue heron in Sherman Creek, Nancy Russell noticed that the turtles really enjoy having the fountains turned off, and Lynette Beitz observed ducks taking a dip in the Coleman Center pool.

Summer Tour

By Carol Smith

Nineteen eager residents boarded the bus on the morning of March 18 for a visit to the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens, where they enjoyed a “Highlights Tour” led by resident Lory Doolittle. Rather than focusing on a temporary exhibit, the tour offered a thoughtful exploration of the museum’s permanent collection.

Before entering the building, Doolittle invited the group to pause and observe the outdoor sculpture by Takashi Soga. At first glance, it seemed still, but with careful attention, its subtle movement became apparent—an essential element of the work. Many realized they had passed this piece before without truly seeing it. Thanks to Doolittle’s guidance, it will surely be appreciated more fully in the future.

After sharing a brief history of Ninah Cummer’s legacy to the community, Doolittle led the group into the Tudor Room. It recreates the living room of Ninah and Arthur Cummer’s home, incorporating original furnishings and artwork. Although the house itself was demolished after Ninah’s death, its character and elegance live on within the museum built on the site.

From there, the tour continued through eight galleries showcasing art from around the world, and arranged in roughly chronological order. In the gallery featuring the renowned Meissen porcelain collection, residents lingered, moving from case to case to admire the delicate beauty of Europe’s first porcelain.

As the tour progressed into the 19th century, familiar European works gave way to the emergence of a distinctly American artistic style. Expansive landscape paintings captured the nation’s natural grandeur, highlighting the diversity and scale of its scenery.

The outing concluded with lunch in the museum’s café, where Fleet Landing residents expressed their appreciation to Doolittle for an engaging and informative tour. Her vivid anecdotes and insights brought the artwork to life, making the experience both enriching and memorable.