



FLEET BEAT

VOL. 36 No. 6

THE FLEET LANDING RESIDENTS' NEWSPAPER

July 2026

Celebrating Summer and the Birthday of America

By Guy Bond



LtoR: Julia Pet-Armacost, De An Winton, Pete Sheridan



Julia Pet-Armacost directs Fleet Harmony and the Serendipity Singers.



De An Winton directs the Dulcimer Doers.

As America prepares to celebrate its 250th birthday, Fleet Landing residents got an early start with a spirited musical tribute in Johnson Hall on June 29. The afternoon was filled with patriotic pride, cherished American traditions, and familiar melodies that reminded everyone why this historic milestone is worth celebrating.

The Serendipity Singers (female chorus), Fleet Harmony (male chorus), the Dulcimer Doers, and the Fleet Classics (instrumentalists) joined together for a memorable performance, accompanied by De An Winton and Pete Sheridan on piano. Julia Pet-Armacost and Winton directed the program, bringing together talented resident musicians for a celebration of America's heritage.

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Coleman Center Exhibit: Stella Bratcher Watercolors



Stella and Ray Bratcher

About the Exhibit

By Patricia Payne

The current Art Club quarterly campus display features something special in the Coleman Center mezzanine! The watercolor paintings represent a lifetime of work by resident Stella Bratcher. Although she painted them, she is not selling them for her own benefit. All proceeds from the sales of her paintings will be donated to the Bratcher Scholarship Fund. Stella and her husband Ray endowed the fund to help support Fleet Landing staff, or their children, as they complete a four-year degree. Instructions for acquiring a painting while contributing to the fund are located in the Coleman Center mail room.

Because of health issues, Stella and Ray are no longer active in our community, which means that many of our residents never got to know and appreciate this talented, generous, and delightful couple. Many residents are asking, "Who is Stella Bratcher?" Below is what Stella's brother, Chungchi Cha, has written about her.

Biography of Stella Bratcher

By Chungchi Cha

Stella Bratcher was born in 1945 in Chongqing, China, just as WWII was ending. She is the eldest of five siblings. When Stella was only 4 years old, she moved with her family to Taiwan as Chiang Kai-Shek's Nationalist government, whom Stella's father worked for, was losing control of the mainland to the then-rising communist party. She grew up in Taipei and later

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June Residents' Council Meeting

By Howard Burdick

Residents' Council President Carol Smith convened the June 16 meeting in Johnson Hall. She welcomed new residents and encouraged everyone to attend the June 24 New Resident Mix and Mingle. She once again called attention to the document created by the resident focus group formed to provide input to the Fleet Landing Atlantic Beach campus master plan. The document can be found on Fleet Link under "Residents' Council."

Management Review. Executive Director Matt Thompson's report on a host of capital projects included the Derfer renovation at the punch list stage, roofing projects ahead of schedule, the 1000 Building elevator installation underway and the building refresh to begin in early July, primary work on the Coleman Center leak finished, two additional kitchen repairs not expected to be disruptive to operations, warranty-covered repairs to leaks in the 8000 Building plaza deck, and repairs to the building's garage entry caused by a delivery truck. Nocatee is proceeding ahead of schedule and sold out with a waiting list. A new phone system should be implemented soon. Meetings with the architectural firm about master planning for Fleet Landing Atlantic Beach have begun. Full details of the management report can be found in the council minutes posted around campus and on Fleet Link under "Residents' Council."

Council Reports.

Vice President. Jackie Smith reviewed the ambitious schedule for Fleet Landing's celebration of this country's 250th birthday. She also read somber reflections on what it means to be an American by deceased resident Colonel George McKnight, USAF, a highly decorated former POW.

Treasurer. Lynette Beitz reported on continuing very positive financials through April, noting ten new resident contracts closed and seven pending, with \$4.8 million in entry fees.

Human Resources / Marketing. Skip McAlexander reported that the marketing team would appreciate it if any residents away for the summer would allow their units to be shown to potential residents. Lobster Tales totaled 179, staff turnover was 1.6 percent, and there were eight new hires. Staff Member of the Month was Mara Humphries, Resident Attendant in Leeward Manor.

Wellness / Transportation. Randy McDonald walked us through the many means available to residents for keeping abreast of activities and events. He also congratulated the three Fleet Landing Wii bowling teams that won their conference or division championship in national competition.

Health Services. Joy Miller provided an overview of

the role of federal and state regulatory health services agencies. She also reviewed Fleet Landing's continuum of care as well as the role, expertise, and membership of the recently established Health Services Committee.

Safety & Security / Dining / Housekeeping. Dave Russell announced the new "Let's Talk Safety and Security Tuesdays" that will be held at 10 am in the Coffee Shop. He described the various housekeeping roles, including housekeepers, floor technicians, and porters. New housekeeping equipment—floor scrubbers, upholstery/carpet spot cleaners, and back pack vacs—is coming soon. Special dining events included the next Iron Chef competition (see article on page 16), an Italian Wine Dinner, and a special Father's Day brunch.

Facilities. Jim Dobson described the June "Zone Blitz," mainly for the 8000 Building. This preventive maintenance activity involves visual inspection of ceilings for leaks, cleaning and treatment of HVAC condensate lines, checking dryer vents, and replacement of smoke detector batteries in each unit. He cited the zone and building inspection schedule, named the zone and building representatives, and listed 5800 block issues found during the June 4 inspection.

Communications. Secretary Shann Purinton reviewed ten resident suggestions, eight with management responses and two with responses pending. 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."

The next Residents' Council meeting will be on July 21 in Johnson Hall.

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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.

Final 2026 Fleet's Got Talent

By Victoria Freeman

The June 13 final Fleet's Got Talent (FGT) of 2026, coordinated by Julia Pet-Armacost and Bob Armacost with the support of Sue Myers, was a mixture of music and comedy.

The "Come As You Are Band," headed by Richard Wong and made up of Yim Wong, John Rietveld, Guy and Reva Bond, Estelle Davis, Robert and Victoria Freeman, Rich Gottlick, Linda and Tom Holloman, and Terry Sullivan, opened with "Colour My World." They then rocked into Roy Orbison's "Pretty Woman." The Atlantic Beach Boys, Paul Mocko, Ron Myers, Bob Peterson, and Rietveld—managed by Sue Myers—provided the vocals.

Skip McAlexander presented "Casey at the Bat," a tribute to the late resident, John Johnson. John Rogerson received a standing ovation for his singing of "Hot Diggity" and "Portrait of My Love." The beloved team of Bill Spicer and Gitti Hardage performed their excellent Burns and Allen comedy routine.

Carolyn Johnson, in a crayon-colored dress, channeled Doris Day's "Sentimental Journey." Pam and Joe Ruthenberg evoked laughter with tales of their honeymoon road trip. Rietveld's welcome return with "Aubrey" and "Walkin' With My Angel" was followed by Mary Steinke's unique combination of comedy and song, "I Feel Pretty—A Comedy or Is It Real?"

Driver Rob Friedman, in a ten gallon hat and cowboy boots, returned to FGT with another country song. He delighted the audience with Charlie Rich's "Rollin' With the Flow." The idea that some folks don't grow up, while others do, resonated with the audience.

Julie McLaughlin's lovely rendition of "You Don't Have To Say You Love Me," accompanied by Pete Sheridan on the piano, was followed by an audience sing-along of "You've Got a Friend." These two songs sent the Johnson Hall audience home humming and smiling. FGT might well have stood for "Fine Good Time."



"Come As You Are Band"



*Left: Bill Spicer and Gitti Hardage.
Right: Carolyn Johnson.*



Atlantic Beach Boys (LtoR): Bob Peterson, John Rietveld, Ron Myers, Paul Mocko



*Left: Joe and Pam Ruthenberg.
Right: Mary Steinke.*



Left: Skip McAlexander. Right: John Rogerson.



*Left: Rob Friedman. Right: Pete Sheridan.
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Final 2026 Fleet's Got Talent

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LtoR: Bob Armacost, Julia Pet-Armacost, John Rietveld, and Julie McLaughlin lead the audience in the sing-along.

Fleet Hearts News

By Carol Smith



From left: Judy DuBose, Karen Habbell, Carolyn Stoner, Barbetta Steele



Sally Williamson (l) and Sue Tucker



*From left: Nancy Cueroni, Lory Doolittle, Toni Reichow, Millie Rosie
(Photos of note writing project taken by Shann Purinton)*



Mission House volunteers (LtoR): Karen Keegan, Mary Kay Ormsby, Carol Smith, Guy Van Syckle

Two continuing Fleet Hearts projects are highlighted this month.

Following the monthly meeting in Breakers on June 4, ten ladies gathered to write notes on greeting cards for military veterans in hospice care. This meaningful project, sponsored by Blue Star Mothers, was brought to our attention by Nancy Carter.

On June 18, four Fleet Hearts volunteers gathered in the kitchen at Mission House to assemble 175 sack lunches. They were joined by Mission House staff, who also captured photos of our volunteers in action. This ongoing monthly volunteer opportunity allows Fleet Hearts members to extend their service beyond Fleet Landing and into neighboring communities, making a significant difference in the lives of others

The Strange and Brilliant Work of Memphis Wood

By Carole Watson

Though the June 9 Johnson Hall audience was small, the interest was not, as local author and historian Tim Gilmore introduced us to the woman called "the first lady of art in Jacksonville," the late Memphis Wood. She taught art in the Duval County schools for 33 years while creating her own art outside the classroom.



Originally, an oil painter, Wood segued into fabric art in her later years, a move that brought her even more recognition. Her hanging artworks, whether of fabric, glass, or metal, hang in several local churches. She was known for taking common craft materials and fashioning them into Abstract Expressionist art. She
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The Strange and Brilliant Work of Memphis Wood

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stated that art should be “indescribable and immutable.”

After retiring from teaching, Wood lived and worked in the Mandarin area of Jacksonville, where she and local potter, Charlie Brown, formed a strong friendship, together founding the Crown Craftsmen group of artists. Today, the Mandarin Museum has the largest aggregate collection of Memphis Wood’s works, with approximately 70 works on view.

Ulysses Owens Jr. and the Gen Y Florida Quartet

By Chet Davis



Jazz drummer Ulysses Owens Jr. returned to Fleet Landing on June 10 with the musicians of the Gen Y Florida Quartet to present a great afternoon of jazz in Johnson Hall. Owens, a Juilliard professor, has had six Grammy nominations and three wins. The members of the quartet were Joshua Bowlus on keyboard (already well-known to Fleet Landing audiences), saxophonist and Jacksonville native DeAndre Lettsome (a graduate of Jacksonville University and with a master’s degree from the University of North Florida), multi-talented bassist Thomas Milovac (composer/improviser, bandleader, multi-instrumentalist, and visual artist), and Xavier Anderson an amazingly talented trumpeter just about to turn 17.

The concert featured compositions by Charley Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Spike Lee, and others. One number was a jazz version of Sabrina Carpenter’s “Espresso.” Owens recorded this jazz version for his album *Around the World with U* after learning the original had been downloaded 60 million times.

Owens introduced each member of the group, noting their backgrounds and achievements. Owens has a similar group in New York and is trying to establish others across the world as he fosters jazz music among younger musicians.

At the close of the program, Owens thanked Wellness Manager Mary Faria for arranging his appearances, Fleet Landing for providing an excellent venue for performers, and Cynthia and Walter Graham, sponsors of the concert, for their support of his work.

Flag Day/Army Birthday Flag Raising

Photos by Dita Domonkos

June 14 is the date of two significant events in US history: The US Army has its origin in the formation of the Continental Army on that date in 1775, and the Second Continental Congress adopted the US flag on that same date in 1777. Because June 14 fell on a Sunday this year, Fleet Landing’s observance at the Flag Plaza took place on Monday, June 15.



Fleet Landing US Army veterans



In Memoriam

Lew Connell
1930-2026

Hugh Wilson
1931-2026

Brandon Marrotte, Exterior Maintenance Assistant Manager

By Chet Davis

Brandon Marrotte has joined the Fleet Landing staff, assuming day-to-day oversight of all exterior maintenance on the campus.



A native of Leesburg, VA, Marrotte has a degree in audio production from Middle Tennessee State University. After graduation, a job in California beckoned. When COVID-19 hit, he moved back to Virginia. He then joined his brother and moved to Jacksonville, as his parents were living in Nocatee.

Over the next few years in Jacksonville, Marrotte was employed in the landscaping business and then for a creative garden design company. After that job, he worked as an independent landscape designer for several years. This background will be valuable as he takes on management responsibilities.

Marrotte is currently going through an intense orientation process. He has noted the happiness of staff and residents. He is glad to be here and looks forward to assisting all of our residents.

League of Women Voters News

By Frances Jones

The League of Women Voters of Fleet Landing recently invited as our speaker John Caulfield, a United States Foreign Service Officer for nearly four decades. During his career, Caulfield was a specialist in the consular field, giving him experience in immigration law.

Caulfield gave us a detailed history, going back more than 100 years, of how we got to where we are today. Of particular importance was a 1977 law that limited permanent resident employment visas to professionals. That law passed just as the US economy was growing dramatically, and employers relied on more and more undocumented workers to fill non-professional jobs. Today, we have millions of people in the US without legal status. Some of us demand that they be given citizenship. Others of us demand that they be deported.

Caulfield recounted that he, along with several members of his church, Jacksonville's St. John's Cathedral, met to come up with proposals that might deescalate the conflict. They suggested a solution short of full citizenship for undocumented migrants, but one that some day might garner Congress's support. It was that those migrants who have lived productive lives,

are self supporting, and have not committed crimes other than violating their immigration status should be permitted to apply for visas to become lawful permanent residents.

The talk was followed by a question and answer period.

June MOAA Meeting

By Chet Davis



LtoR: Bob Neal, Joe Ruthenberg, Donna and Nick Norfleet, Pat Kluever



USS Stark



USS Stark after being hit by the missiles

The guest speaker at the June 30 Military Officers of America Association (MOAA) meeting was Nick Norfleet. His topic was the website he created (ussstarkmemorial.com), in memory of the USS *Stark*, a frigate of the US Navy that was struck by two Iraqi Exocet missiles on May 17, 1987.

Norfleet, a survivor of the attack, discovered that there was no online resource to memorialize the USS *Stark* and that catastrophic event. In January of this year, he decided to create a website that honors the ship and the 37 crewmen killed in the attack.

Norfleet's website is comprehensive, starting with the keel laying and progressing through the ship's extensive history up through its scrapping. In discussing

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June MOAA Meeting

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the website, Norfleet provided many personal insights and vignettes of life aboard the ship. His description of the damage and heroic efforts to save the ship was moving. Norfleet was obviously emotional at several points in the lecture while talking about many good friends who perished.

The story of the USS *Stark* is of particular local interest. After temporary repairs in Bahrain made the ship seaworthy, it returned to its home port, Naval Station Mayport. A commemorative plaque with the names of the 37 who lost their lives can be found at the naval base, and a memorial service is held there annually.

That Norfleet developed such a massive website in such a short time is impressive and shows dedication to preserving the memory of the USS *Stark*.

Fleet Landing Croquet Club

By Mike Foster



Left: Tom Bramble (l) and Craig Miller standing behind the table painted by Miller.



Right: Nancy Russell (l) and Susan Titus. Russell organized the fabulous food selection with help from Titus.

The Fleet Landing Croquet Club (FLCC) celebrated National Croquet Day on June 5 in Johnson Hall. The annual event is promoted by the United States Croquet Association to introduce and encourage playing the game of croquet. It was hoped that many clubs across the nation would host an open house for old and new players to learn and enjoy the game.

Over 45 members of the FLCC enjoyed an afternoon

of food and drink. Most of the members participated in a croquet obstacle course set up by Miles Nogelo, John Neyhart, and Mike Foster. In the obstacle course competition, Ernie Bio finished in first place, with Bob Peterson in second, Jerry Upson in third, Bob Palfy in fourth, and Mary Ellen Reed in fifth.

Bio presented prizes for "Most Improved" to Terry Voynik and Peterson and "Best Sportsmanship" to Cindy Tomlin and Neyhart. The "Tournament Director" prize went to Nogelo, and the "Special Shout Out" to Nancy Russell for organizing and coordinating an outstanding party.

The FLCC would also like to acknowledge the wonderful and artistic work done by Craig Miller on the table that is kept on the patio next to the croquet courts. The beautifully designed work will be appreciated and admired by everyone for a long time.

On the Lash: A Celtic Celebration

By Chet Davis



Those lucky residents who braved the elements on the afternoon of June 19 were treated to a delightful afternoon of Celtic music by the Midwest-based quartet, On the Lash. In what might be called a whistle-stop, the group deplaned in Jacksonville, provided Fleet Landing with a concert, and then boarded another flight to Ohio for their appearance at a Celtic festival.

All four musicians were classically trained and met at college in Michigan. Each brings unique talents on fiddle, mandolin, flute, and guitar, with all joining in on the vocals. Their music reflects traditional Celtic music with modern interpretations. This includes adding influences of American folk, pop, and world music. They are known for their extraordinary musicianship and vocal harmonies.

It was a toe-tapping afternoon.

Deferred Event Coverage

The events below occurred too close to our publishing deadline to include in this issue. Look for articles about them in the next issue of *FLEET BEAT*.

Jacksonville Sheriff's Office Mounted Patrol Unit Tour
Cummer Museum Guided Tour- "Touring the Landscape"

Neurographic Art

Text and photos by Bo Smith



Puzzled by the title, “Neurographic Art”? I was, and I’d guess most of us who filled the Art Studio in Windward Commons on June 24 were similarly curious. We were led by a local artist, Karen Klefman. Her clear instructions and enthusiasm made for an enjoyable introduction to this art form.

Neurographic art leans more on meditative than aesthetic expression. It takes the chaos of daily life and gradually creates harmony. Here is the process: Start with a blank sheet of white paper and a black pen and make a continuous line of any sort (swoops, zigzags, spirals, whatever). This line should be made randomly,

no preplanning, no erasures, just a scribble. The only rule is that the line is unbroken and must cross itself in several places. Smooth out the places where the lines intersect, and widen the line if you wish. Introduce harmony to your scribble and order to the chaos with additional shapes and colors in whatever way you find pleasing.

The process was fun, produced appealing results, and everyone seemed to enjoy it. Neurographic art has a serious side and is used in some therapies, but it is also an easy way to discover that you are creative in ways

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Neurographic Art

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you may not have known about.

Karen Klefman returns on September 23 and February 24, and I recommend it if you want a creative outlet that doesn't require previous art experience. Surprisingly, you may find this art form easier if you have no formal art training.

Nesting Turtle

Photo by Carol Bowser



Carl Tungli-Giese reports that this turtle was digging its nest near the 2000 Building. There is a turtle nest resident team in place to try to ensure a successful hatching.

New Resident Mix and Mingle

By Carolyn Stoner

Fleet Landing welcomed its newest residents with a combined National Pralines Day (June 24, the day of the event) and National Cream Tea Day (June 26) celebration held in their honor. Fittingly, the treats were beautifully decorated praline brownies prepared by Pastry Chef Belle Camacho and assorted tea bags, hot water, and clotted cream.

Members of the Fleet Landing leadership team participated in the program. Seated on stage, they were given one minute each to introduce themselves and describe their role within the organization. A fun quiz challenged residents to guess to which one of them the interesting facts about their background applied. Example: "I was a student athletic trainer with Florida football for two years with Steve Spurrier."

Wellness Director Wendy Tamarit introduced new residents, who were offered reserved front-row seating. The 18 newcomers have come to Fleet Landing from a wide range of locations, arriving from as far away as Colorado and as close as Jacksonville Beach.

To encourage conversation and connection after the formal part of the event, attendees received a list of questions designed to help spark introductions and meaningful interactions with the new arrivals. Examples: "Find someone who has had (or currently has) a dog or a cat." "Find someone who plays an instrument."

Kudos to Tamarit and Wellness Manager Mary Faria for creating a thoughtful and engaging program that not only welcomed new residents but also encouraged fellowship throughout the Fleet Landing community.



Left: Wendy Tamarit.

Right: New residents seated in the front row.



Senior Fraud

By Eileen Avitable



LtoR: John Glover, Michael Fissel, Victor Gualillo

HANG UP THE PHONE! We have permission from the Atlantic Beach Police Department (ABPD) to ignore our inculcated civility. This mandate was hammered home during the "Protecting Our Seniors: Fraud, Scams and Crime Prevention" seminar presented
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Senior Fraud

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by Officer John Glover and Detective Michael Fissel on June 17 in Johnson Hall.

How serious is our financial and emotional vulnerability? In 2025 alone, the 60+ population lost over 7.7 billion dollars, mostly in financial investments. The average loss was \$38,000 but over 12,000 seniors lost more than \$100,000. These figures encompassed only the losses reported to authorities and represent only the tip of the iceberg. Underreporting is significant, as those scammed are often fearful and too embarrassed by their victimization.

If you have ever been scammed, you are in good company. You were taken in by ruthless, amoral, full-time professionals (consummate actors) who have thoroughly studied your online business and financial transactions, your family and personal relationships, and any situational vulnerabilities, such as a loss of partner gleaned from newspaper obituaries. Seniors are a particularly lucrative demographic as they possess retirement savings and often are not that tech savvy. In addition, these criminals have found this age demographic prone to loneliness, attracted to shopping deals, easily intimidated by perceived government communications, slow to discern data breaches, and drawn to get-rich-quick schemes such as lotteries and sweepstakes.

Fissel was particularly distressed by romantic scams. Scammers woo their mark, sometimes up to a year, building trust with an emphasis on secrecy. Then a crisis is manufactured, and an urgent request for financial help is communicated. It becomes nearly impossible to convince victims, even after large sums of money have been depleted from their savings, that the object of their devotion has been a fake.

Another worry is the capability of AI to authentically reproduce a loved one's voice. A telephone call seemingly from a family member in crisis generates immediate fear and an urgent need to quickly respond without checking the veracity of the problem. The frantic request stresses secrecy and sending immediate monetary relief.

The speakers warned against other scams. Government impersonation scams are threats, supposedly from a government agency such as the IRS, to pay immediately or risk arrest or prosecution. The means of payment can be as odd as gift cards. Tech support scams involve fake pop-ups claiming that your computer has a virus. The purpose is to gain remote access to the device and the possibility of draining bank accounts. Investment scams offer high rewards with little risk and the need to respond right away.

The above examples illustrate red flags that are part of most scams: pressure to act quickly, the need for secrecy, emotional manipulation, an unusual payment form, and spoofed (recognizable) phone numbers.

Email offers that look too good to be true are often just that. Seniors must know that government agencies do not issue threats via email or text, no matter how legitimate the presentation appears, and certainly, they do not accept gift cards for payment.

Tools to neutralize fraud and scams were offered. First, hang up the phone. If a financial institution reaches out, locate the published phone number to validate the call, email, or text, not the one offered. Slow down. Do not allow yourself to be pressured into any action or decision. Tell someone. Get another set of eyes to assess the situation. Never give out passwords, codes, personal information or computer access to someone you do not know. Regularly monitor credit reports and financial statements. Keep software updated and use unique and strong passwords. Most importantly, if you have been a fraud or scam victim, or recognize a fraud or scam in progress, report it. ABPD Chief of Police Victor Gualillo emphasized the importance of undercutting the secrecy by which these professional thieves thrive. He offered the services of the ABPD (904-247-5859) to help you assess your concerns. It might be too late to retrieve your losses, but an investigation could alert or prevent your friends and neighbors from having the same fate.

Sailboat Races

Resident Shirley Olsen took this picture of a sailboat race in progress on June 21. The two sailboats, with Dick Keith and Ivy Suter in one and Randy McDonald and Mike Bankester in the other, raced three times. The results: two wins for the Keith/Suter team and one win for the McDonald/Bankester team.



Randy McDonald and Mike Bankester are in the sailboat closer to the front of the photo. Dick Keith and Ivy Suter are in the other sailboat.

Silver Springs Excursion

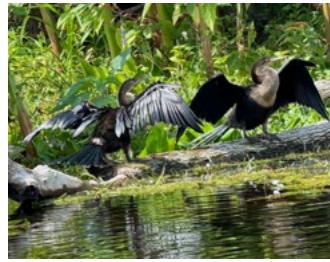
By Chet Davis

Photos by Ann Bell, Mary Faria, and Glenn Perry

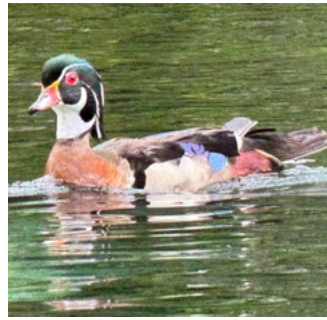
Fleet Landing excursions are now sometimes far from the Atlantic Beach campus. The June 15 outing included a two-and-a-half-hour bus trip to Silver Springs in Central Florida. Once the group arrived, kayaking was the order of the day. Those using tandem kayaks were launched first, followed by the singles. Paddling down a peaceful waterway and then on the Silver River itself, kayakers were treated to the sight of a variety of birds and a few alligators. At this time of year, there are few, if any, manatees, and none were sighted.

The kayak adventure was followed by lunch and then a ride on a glass-bottomed boat. That ride provided a clear view of the springs that feed the Silver River and of the artifacts left behind by movies shot in the forties and fifties.

All that remained was the long bus trip home, but the Silver River was well worth the travel time.



Anhingas



Wood duck and limpkin



Turtle and alligator



Launching the kayaks



Aboard the glass-bottomed boat



Kayaking underway



There was time for a bit of fun.

Celebrating Summer and the Birthday of America

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Dulcimer Doers joined by the singers



Fleet Classics

Sue Myers and Bob Armacost supplied slides, sound, and administrative support.

The concert opened with George Harrison's uplifting "Here Comes the Sun," setting an optimistic tone before transitioning into summertime favorites, "In the Good Old Summertime," "June Is Busting Out All Over," and "Sunshine on My Shoulders." The program then turned to songs that have become part of America's musical fabric: "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," performed with the Fleet Classics, along with "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" and "Red River Valley."

Patriotic spirit soared as the choirs performed the medleys "America, Of Thee I Sing" and "Stars and Stripes/You're a Grand Old Flag," celebrating the ideals and freedoms that have united Americans for two and a half centuries.

The Dulcimer Doers, joined by Ivy Suter on fiddle and Bob Armacost on acoustic guitar, invited the audience to sing along with beloved American favorites "L'il Liza Jane," "Yankee Doodle Boy," and "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." Voices throughout Johnson Hall blended together in a joyful reminder that music has always been a powerful way to celebrate our nation's story.

Fleet Harmony and the Serendipity Singers returned with stirring performances of "Of Thee I Sing America" and Lee Greenwood's timeless anthem, "God Bless the USA." The latter brought the audience to its feet. The Fleet Classics followed with a rousing rendition of "Stars and Stripes Forever," highlighted by Pet-Armacost's dazzling piccolo solo—a fitting tribute to one of America's most beloved patriotic marches.

The afternoon concluded as performers and audience members joined together to sing "God Bless America," creating a moving finale that perfectly captured the pride and gratitude that will define our nation's 250th

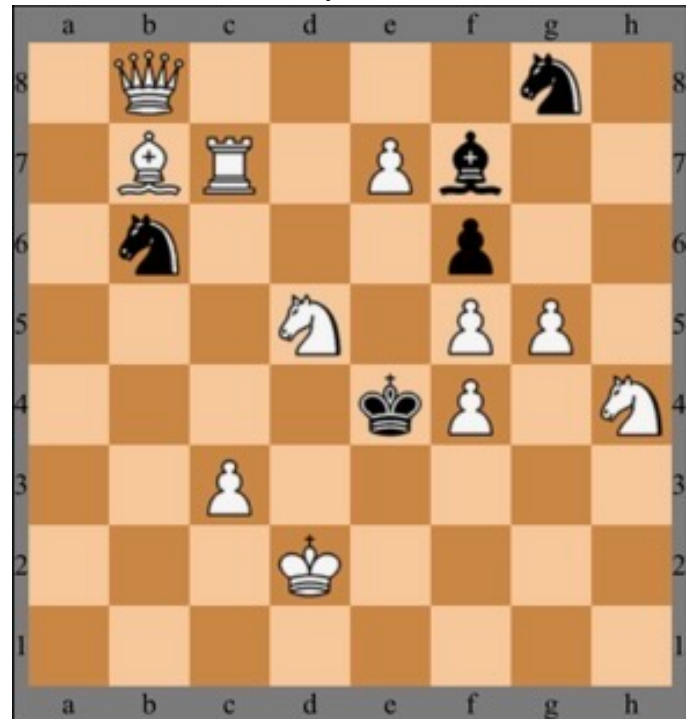
birthday celebration.

The excitement continues! Mark your calendars for July 9, when the FleetLanders take the stage, and July 25 for another fun-filled edition of Fleet's Got Karaoke. As America celebrates 250 years of freedom, Fleet Landing is proud to celebrate the music, fellowship, and patriotic spirit that continue to bring our community together.

Chess Club News

By Richard Wong

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



White mates in two. Hint: Take small steps.

Chess tip: Knight belongs in the center

Strawberry Moon



Resident Judy Kouri captured this striking view of the June 29 full Strawberry Moon.

Coleman Center Exhibit: Stella Bratcher Watercolors

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Stella Bratcher with her mother, Tsen Fan-Shiu

attended National Taiwan University, where she earned a B.S. degree in biochemistry. She was awarded a scholarship for post-graduate study at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, where she continued her education and met her fellow graduate student and future husband, Ray Bratcher. She earned her Ph.D. in biochemistry in 1971. Stella and Ray then moved to Chicago for their postdoctoral work, and were married that same year.

In 1973, Stella and Ray accepted professorship appointments at Upstate Medical University and Syracuse University respectively, and moved to Syracuse, NY. They made Syracuse their home for nearly 30 years. Besides academic work, Stella and Ray also became interested in restoring grand old Victorian homes and devoted their time to the redevelopment of inner-city neighborhoods. They retired in the early 2000's and moved to Florida, where they first lived on the Northbank of the St. Johns River in Jacksonville. In 2017, they made the decision to join the community at Fleet Landing.

Stella is a true student of the arts. She studied Chinese brush painting at an early age and was a relatively accomplished painter by the time she was 13 or 14 years old. One of Stella's early paintings was inscribed by the one-time premier of the Chinese Republic, Hsu Shih-Ying. The inscription translates as follows: "I just learned Chung-Yi, the painter of this work, is only 14. Coincidentally I am 86 therefore our combined age is 100. Something truly worth celebrating."

Stella later turned to watercolor painting as her main passion in art, evident from the majority of her work painted during her time at Fleet Landing. She signed most of her watercolors by her Chinese name-Chung-Yi.

Stella is a believer in lifelong learning of all subjects. A telling example of that was when she and Ray built a new house on a 40-acre plot of land in Lafayette NY, and she decided to learn how to do the electrical wiring and, in fact, succeeded in wiring the 3,000 square foot house herself!

Stella credits her mother Tsen Fan-Shiu for instilling that spirit of learning in her. The Bratcher Scholarship Stella and Ray endowed to support the education of Fleet Landing staff members (as well as their families) was developed in memory of Stella's mother and her belief in the importance of education.

Reeds Out Loud!

By Enith Vardaman



Jacksonville has a vibrant jazz scene as shown by the fact that Fleet Landing residents were treated to two outstanding jazz concerts in a single week. The Reeds Out Loud! concert on June 12 was preceded on June 10 by a concert featuring Ulysses Owens Jr & Gen Y Florida. (See article on page 5.)

There is a reason for the Reeds Out Loud! name. Saxophones are reed instruments, and the group is mainly focused on music that features two saxophones. Alto saxophonist Pablo Duque, is joined by tenor saxophonist Tyler Snell. Both are graduates of the University of North Florida Jazz Studies Program. Other members of the quintet are Dan Tenbusch on piano, Beckett Miles on drums (he is about to enter his final year at Juilliard), and Thomas Milovac on bass (he also performed in the June 10 concert). All of these musicians have already had extensive performance experience.

An example of the group's focus on saxophone duos was their performance of a new arrangement of "On the Trail," a piece well-known to jazz enthusiasts from the original version recorded by saxophonists Walter Smith III and Joshua Redman. Interestingly, the work is a jazz rendition of the third movement of Ferde Grofé's *Grand Canyon Suite*.

The band dedicated the second half of the concert to prominent jazz saxophonist and composer Sonny Rollins, who had died on May 25 at the age of 95. They performed his composition "St. Thomas" as well as tunes well-known to jazz aficionados from Rollins's recordings.

For Fleet Landing residents, this concert was an opportunity to hear young musicians who are continuing and enriching jazz traditions.

Tubing on the Ichetucknee River

By Chet Davis

Photos by Ann Bell, Sandy Bousquet, and Mary Faria

On June 22, intrepid Fleet Landing residents had a second opportunity during the month for a water adventure while exploring another beautiful place in Florida (See article on page 11) for the Silver Springs outing.) Ichetucknee Springs State Park offers an unparalleled opportunity to enjoy a peaceful tubing trip through a cypress forest.

After a long bus ride, the group was ready to get on/in the water and enjoy a peaceful floating trip. While there was not as much wildlife as on the Silver Springs outing, it was more than made up for by the tranquility of the slow progress down the Ichetucknee River. At the end, the participants picked up their tubes for transport back to the starting point by trolley. There, most opted for another journey down the river.

The outing was a rewarding experience, offering the chance to enjoy another of Florida's state parks.



LtoR: American white ibis; juvenile American white ibis, great egret



Getting ready



Scenes along the river



Tubing underway



End of the journey

Ocala Horse Farms Guided Tour

By Mary Durkin

Photos by Mary Durkin and Ann Bell



*Left; Pleasant Acres Stud Farm stallion.
Right; Ribbons in Hennessey Arabians Office*



What makes an out-of-the-way place like Ocala the Horse Capital of the World? According to Karen Grimes, horse trainer, realtor, and tour guide extraordinaire, it's soil and weather: the limestone-rich soil with calcium that builds bone density, and a mild year-round climate. The result is 800 horse farms supplying a \$2 billion equestrian industry that produces more champion thoroughbreds than anywhere else in the country.

Twenty-six Fleet Landers met Grimes on June 11 at the World Equestrian Center (WEC), a large facility with 12 arenas and a 4,000-seat stadium that hosts competitions 50 weeks of the year. It includes indoor and outdoor arenas, stabling facilities, and dining and shopping options for riders and spectators. During our visit, a jumping competition was going on in the large center ring with riders from around the world.

From the WEC, Grimes led us to the Ocala Breeders Sales Co., where potential buyers come to review the 2-year-old horses in training. Grimes says "Ocala is like kindergarten for horses." The potential

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Ocala Horse Farms Guided Tour

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buyers, trainers, and veterinarians sit in a grandstand watching the horses perform a short, fast workout called a “breeze” to gauge the horse’s speed and fitness. After the buyers and vets inspect the horses, an auction is held, with the recent March auction delivering seven horses reaching the \$1 million threshold, and in April, the highlight was Zedan, a son of Flightline, selling for \$10.5 million.

Our next visit was to the Hennessey Arabians, a 93-acre ranch started in 2007 by Carol and Frank Hennessey because of their affection for the breed. Arabians are an ancient breed that can be dated back thousands of years. Per Grimes, “Every horse is a descendant of three Arabians.” A doublecheck on Wikipedia does state that Arabian bloodlines can be found in almost every modern breed of riding horse. Arabians have a distinctive head shape with a forehead bulge between the eyes and a high tail carriage. They do not race but dominate in endurance riding because of their stamina. The Hennessey office space was a sight to behold, with every possible inch covered in colorful ribbons and plaques from competitions.

Next stop was the Pleasant Acres Stallions Farm, a 400-acre breeding facility housing stallions, mares, yearlings, and foals. The Pleasant team match stallions and mares to foal over 80 babies a year. During breeding season from Valentine’s Day through June, stallions can service three mares per day. The weaning barn had a number of mares with their foals, one as young as two weeks, for us to view and exclaim over. In the outside paddocks, there were a dozen more mares with older foals for picture taking and feeding treats to.

We said good-bye to Grimes and returned to the WEC where everyone selected one of the many options for lunch—from salad and pizza at the Italian Kitchen to service at Stirrups in the luxurious Equestrian Hotel. Following lunch, we watched the continuing Jumping Competition going on in the central ring or visited some of the hotel shops, until it was time to board the bus for the long trip home.

Chips & Putts

By Bob Neal

Twelve members of the Fleet Landing golf group battled oppressive summer heat and humidity while facing difficult playing conditions at Hidden Hills Golf Club in this month’s tournament on June 11. The course presented unique challenges, with sparse grass on both greens and fairways making consistent play especially demanding.

When competition concluded, Team 3—led by Tom Dahlgren and including Bob Peterson, Tom Gonwa, and Phil McCullough (Atlantic Club)—finished atop the leaderboard with an even-par 72. The team recorded

three birdies during the round, but saw their score impacted by bogeys on the final two holes.

Close behind was Team 2, captained by John Rietveld, with teammates John Egan (Atlantic Club), Robert Ezell, and Price Schwenck. They posted a 1-over-par 73, highlighted by three birdies on the back nine that kept them firmly in contention until the finish.

Team 1, consisting of Jim Wayrynen, Bob Hunter, Judy DuBose, and Bob Neal, turned in a solid performance with a 2-over-par 74.

In individual competitions, DuBose and Gonwa earned long drive honors. Closest-to-the-pin proved challenging for the women, as none reached the green, while Price Schwenck claimed the men’s honor with an accurate approach. Peterson received the Birdie Trophy for sinking some extremely long putts. Dahlgren was given the Sandbagger Trophy for consistently making key shots to help his team.

Despite course conditions that left much to be desired, the group maintained a positive outlook and is looking forward to our July nine-hole tournament at Windy Harbor

Iron Chef Competition

By Carolyn Stoner



Chef Adriana



Chef Dale



*LtoR: Chris Gotschall, Chet Davis, Elvis Burrows
(continued on next page)*

Iron Chef Competition

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Left: Jason McLaughlin.

Right: Secret ingredients and finished dishes, with Chef Dale's on the left.



Tasting samples for the audience

On June 18, Johnson Hall sizzled with creativity and competition as Chef Adriana Farrell of Currents and Chef Dale Neidlinger of Special Events went head-to-head in the Fourth Iron Chef Competition. Each chef had one hour to transform the secret ingredient—peanut butter and jelly—into a standout dish. The result was an imaginative, flavor-forward battle that delighted diners and left judges deliberating until the final vote.

Mainstreet Dining Manager Jason McLaughlin served as emcee for the event, providing commentary and encouraging questions from the audience.

Chef Adriana presented a sophisticated pork schnitzel dredged in peanut powder, finished with a savory peanut-mushroom sauce and served on a bed of wild rice. A side of red cabbage braised in a lingonberry, grape, and pepper jelly added brightness and balance to the plate. Chef Dale offered a playful, globally inspired take on satay: marinated chicken flavors reimagined as a fried dumpling filled with curried notes and paired with a fried rice-style peanut sauce and a Thai jam accompaniment. Both chefs incorporated inventive elements, including fruit leather (dehydrated jam) and peanut butter whiskey, that showcased technique and imagination.

Judging was tight. Scores were awarded on presentation, taste, and use of the main ingredient (with 150 points possible). After sampling each plate, judges Elvis Burrows, Senior Director of Food & Beverage; Chris Gotschall, Executive Chef; and Fleet

Landing resident Chet Davis awarded the title to Chef Dale by a single vote—the closest contest yet.

Once the chefs had completed preparation of their dishes, Dining Services staff distributed tasting samples for the popular vote—and with a clear warning to those with peanut allergies to abstain. That vote went to Chef Adriana, reflecting the crowd's enthusiasm for her bold flavors and elegant plating.

The event underscored how much presentation matters: attractive plating and thoughtful color contrast not only draw diners in but can heighten perceived freshness.

3000 Building Wedding Photo Project

By Maureen Hermann; photos by Bob Howard



Full table of photos



Left side of table



Right side of table

Each month over the past year, I have enjoyed decorating the second floor foyer table in the 3000 Building. For the month of June, I requested that people find their wedding photos. (Yes, I'm sure they had *(continued on next page)*

3000 Building Wedding Photo Project

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to go to their storage containers). Couples have celebrated 40, 50, and over 60 years of marriage. Some showed that love can go around for the second time. These “vintage” pictures capture the beauty, traditions, and cherished memories from the years gone by.

Everyone who trusted me with these precious photos had a story to tell. One related that they had to rearrange the celebration to have it take place earlier because the groom was notified of being deployed in two weeks. Another couple got married on Thursday evening because the groom was starting a new job and had no vacation time—three-day honeymoon, then on with their new life together. One had a small wedding because of a lack of funds. One couple had to empty their home of furnishings to make room for 60 guests. The threat of inclement weather meant the celebration was brought inside rather than taking place under blue skies.

All those pictures represent a glimpse of new beginnings. They also demonstrate a trend of fashion, customs, and heartfelt moments that marked the start of many lifelong journeys together.

We hope this display brings back fond memories and celebrates the timeless joy of marriage and family.

I want to thank everyone who participated in this project. I loved putting it together. I also want to thank Jim and Karen LeBlanc for assisting me with the project.

Strikes & Spares

Text and photos by Jim LeBlanc

Fleet Easy Rollers: Elite 1 Division National Champions



*LtoR: Jim Joyner, Bob Hunter, Robert Ezell (Captain); Kay Craft, Carol Smith, Joyce Ezell
(not pictured: subs Carolyn Johnson and Walter Kraslawsky)*

When the two Wii bowling teams entered the final match with identical averages of 194.9, the competition was incredibly close. After the Fleet's Easy Rollers took the first game and the Washington D.C. Dupont Swipers

won the second, the match was tied at two points each. Ultimately, the win was decided by total pins. Thanks to Jim Joyner's impressive performance as a sub, which included two perfect 300 games, the Easy Rollers finished five pins ahead to secure the win.

Congratulations again to the entire team!

Fleet Alley Kats: Master 1 Division National Champions



LtoR: Carl Tungli-Giese; Geri Bramble; Nancy Van Kirk, Carol Bowser (Captain), Tom Bramble

In a very close Wii bowling match against GCT1 from Lilburn, GA, the Fleet Alley Kats took the first game, helped by an impressive 258 game from Carl Tungli-Giese. Although GCT1 won the second game by six pins to tie the match at 2 points each, the Fleet Alley Kats secured the overall win on total pins, 1,489 to 1,380.

Congratulations to the entire team on your finals victory (and your team shirts look awesome too)!

Fleet Notables From the National Senior League Spring Season: 300 games: Jim Joyner 11, Jim LeBlanc 3, Karen LeBlanc 1; Oops 299 games: Jim LeBlanc 2; Top 5 averages: Jim Joyner 264.6, Jim LeBlanc 258.6, Kathy Vanderbeck 241.3, Walter Kraslawsky 239.2, Dede LeClaire 234.5

Next Up: Fleet Summer League Tournament: 12 Fleet teams competing for Wii bowling bragging rights.

Downed Tree

By Enith Vardaman

Fleet Landing is equipped to handle emergencies large and small.

Shortly after 8 pm on June 23, residents were informed via the Emergency Communications System that the Selva Gate was temporarily closed. The reason: That day's storm had felled a tree across the road outside the Selva gate.

FLEET BEAT photographer Ann Bell, who always has her camera at the ready, captured photos of the tree and of Safety and Security on the job.

Campus Operations Manager Byron Pennington's photos show the next phase. He reported on an excellent example of the Fleet Landing/vendor partnership: A crew was on site at 9 pm and had the tree cut up and put aside in 22 minutes. A truck arrived first thing on the

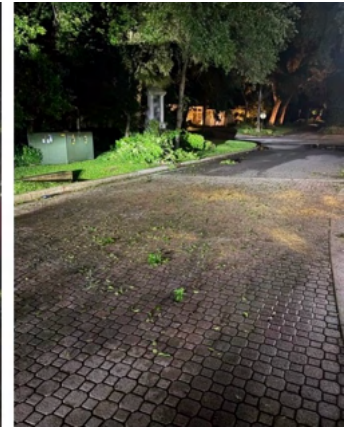
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Downed Tree

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the morning of June 24 to clean up the debris.

About 12 hours after the initial notification of the fallen tree, residents were informed that the Selva Gate was again open.



Beaches Museum

By Eileen Avitable

Many of us have driven past the large yellow



building and structures at the northeast corner of A1A (Third Street) and Beach Boulevard with some curiosity or maybe a brief notice, but were never aware that this was the Beaches Museum, a “happening” place. Thanks to a talk by Chris Hoffman, Executive Director of the Beaches Museum, in Johnson Hall on June 25, residents learned much about this impressive local resource. The parklike grounds harbor historic build-

ings, a 1911 steam engine, a museum with permanent and temporary exhibits, and several heritage gardens. Seasonal and special events such as Train Day, Springing the Blooms, Boardwalk and Turtle talks, and pop-up exhibits occur throughout the year.

In 1978, Jean Hayden McCormick spearheaded the formation of the Beaches Area Historical Society with several interested residents. This was a response to local government urbanization efforts that seemed to ignore the rich history of Florida First Coast beach communities: Mayport, Atlantic Beach, Neptune Beach, Ponte Vedra Beach, and Palm Valley (now part of Nocatee).

For over 5,000 years, the Timucua people inhabited this general area. The museum includes exhibits of this time period. However, the “modern” historical narrative begins in 1884. Small settlements, one called Ruby Beach, which had the first general store and post office, were transformed with a major boardwalk and amusement beach. Henry Flagler was instrumental in bringing beach goers and tourists to what became Pablo Beach (now Jacksonville Beach) via the Jacksonville and Atlantic Railway, and offering accommodation in one of

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Beaches Museum

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his many historic Florida hotels. The growth of the area's prominence as a beach playground, the automobile era of driving on the sand, the boardwalks and piers, and the immense destruction of Dora in 1964, the only hurricane to strike the Beaches, are all documented in the museum's extensive collection of photographs, posters, exhibits, cultural artifacts, and social narratives. Special exhibits describe the construction of Naval Station Mayport and the once vibrant, but now gone, Black community of Manhattan Beach (now part of Kathryn Abbey Hanna Park).

Over the years, the History Park took shape on adjacent land as part of the Museum. The historic buildings now housed there are the 1903 Pablo Beach post office, the Mayport East Coast Railway Depot, the East Coast Railway Foreman's House, the Oesterreicher-McCormick Cabin, and the Beaches Museum Chapel.

Attendees at Hoffman's talk gained an appreciation for how the Beaches Museum is fulfilling its mission to preserve and share knowledge of our area's history.

1000 Building Elevator Replacement



This worker obligingly allowed 1000 Building resident Patricia Payne to take his picture as work on replacing the building's elevators got underway.

Preparing for the Celebration

Photos by Ann Bell, Fran Sheridan, Guy Bond, and John Hedge

Fleet Landing commemorated this country's 250th birthday enthusiastically. The next issue of *FLEET BEAT* will provide coverage of the events on July 4. In this issue we offer a sample of the decorations as residents prepared to celebrate.



Joyce Webster in the 8000 Building first floor lobby



First floor lobby of the 1000 Building



1000 Building bus stop



Rigel Court bus stop

Farmer's Market

Photos by Ed Hollender

On June 5, Johnson Hall was transformed into this quarter's busy Farmer's Market. Judging by the lines at the checkout table, the offerings from Fleet Landing Dining Services (bread, cheese, fruits, vegetables, and much more) were tempting. Outside vendors were doing a brisk business with wares ranging from honey, granola, and jams to flowers, candles, and jewelry.



Dinner at 30 North

One of *FLEET BEAT* photographer Ann Bell's specialties is food photography. Below are her photos of recent menu offerings at 30 North.



Left: Soup du jour. Right: Ahi tuna.



Left: Beets. Right: Lobster "doughnuts."



Left: Coconut shrimp. Right: Grouper special.



Wagyu steak

Forest Bathing=A Restorative Experience

By Nancy Lundgren; photos by Craig Miller



Forest bathing (shinrin-yoku) began in the 1980's in Japan as an antidote to urban stress, and its calming, health-giving effects are increasingly valued today.

Resident Maureen Miller, a certified tai chi/qigong instructor and Association of Nature and Forest Therapy Guide with 30+ years' experience, led Fleet residents on a gentle, sensory-rich walk through the Guana River Marsh Aquatic Preserve just north of St. Augustine. On the shaded Sensory Trail, she provided small, reflective prompts that turned ordinary sights and sounds into moments of discovery: the way light braided through the pines, a distant birdcall that pulled attention inward, the texture of bark under a mindful hand. The pace was quietly deliberate, encouraging participants to notice rather than narrate.

After this June 8 walk the group gathered for warm sage tea, trading impressions and small revelations from the trail. The afternoon finished with a relaxed lunch at Aunt Kate's on the Tolomato River—a fitting bookend of good food, water views, and easy conversation.

Result: residents returned to Fleet Landing nourished, soothed, and holding fresh, nature-filled memories—exactly what a successful forest bathing outing should deliver.