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FREE

SEPTEMBER 2026
VOL. 12 ISSUE 9

Exploring *Old Florida*

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ON LAKE JESUP

Spring *to Spring Trail*

+ CONNECT TO WEST VOLUSIA



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FRI 04 - THAT'S WHAT SHE SAID
SAT 05 - UNDERCOVER
SUN 06 - THE NUTHOUSE JAM
THU 10 - DUELING PIANOS
FRI 11 - CHEAP THRILLS
SAT 12 - CHEAP THRILLS
SUN 13 - THE NUTHOUSE JAM
THU 17 - THE JOHNCATS
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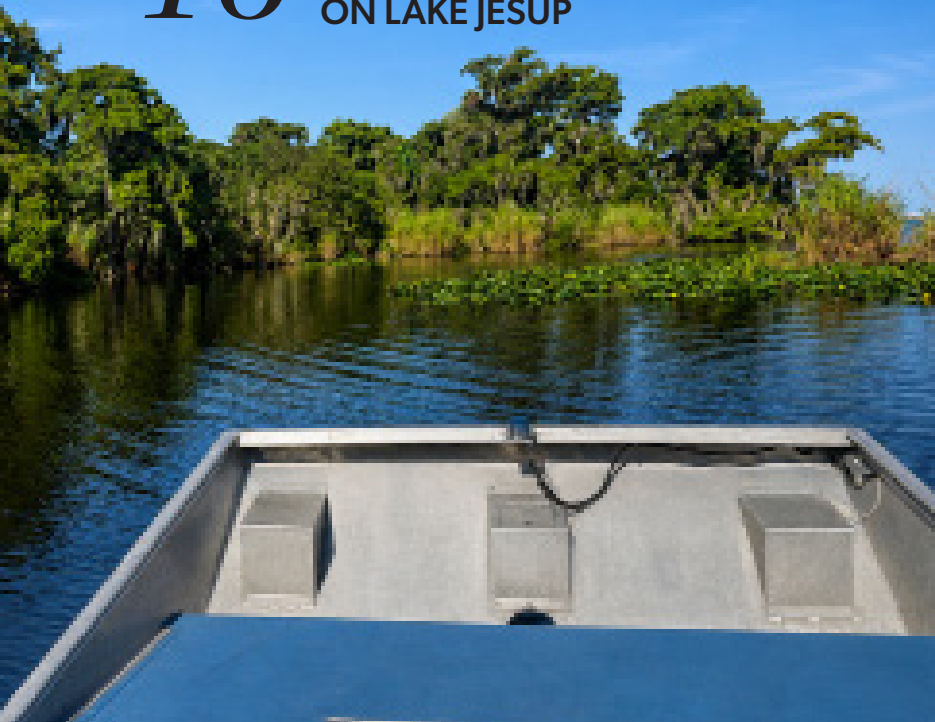
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Real Estate Advisor
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SUN. 06 - PATRICK SAMMY
THU. 10 - JENSEY
FRI. 11 - STRANGE BREW
SAT. 12 - PSYCHO MAGNETS
THU. 17 - EASY STREET
FRI. 18 - THAT'S WHAT SHE SAID
THU. 24 - LOW FAT CITY
FRI. 25 - LEE BUCKNER

OCTOBER LIVE MUSIC

THU. 01 - AARON ESPOSITO
FRI. 02 - BIG RON
THU. 08 - HEATHER DESANCTIS



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Editor's Letter

A Little Change, A Lot to Look Forward To

You may have noticed this issue looks a little different. After 11 years, I still like changing things up every now and then. This month, we grew to 40 pages and I gave the cover a fresh new look. I hope you like it!

Speaking of something new, I am really excited to share an event we have coming up. On **Saturday, Oct. 24**, East Coast Current is hosting **Authors on the River: A Literary Luncheon** at The Grille at Riverview in New Smyrna Beach. This is the first time we've ever done an event like this, and I'm really looking forward to it.

We'll have three featured local authors joining us for an afternoon of good food, great stories and some really interesting conversation. Tickets are \$35 per person and include lunch, a nonalcoholic beverage, tax and tip. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. so everyone has a little time to mingle and network before lunch is served at noon.

Our three featured authors will speak during lunch, each getting plenty of time to share their story, talk about their work and answer questions. I'll be your moderator, which should be fun because anyone who knows me knows I have no problem asking questions.

After lunch, we'll head downstairs to the Reef Bar for a meet and greet. Our featured authors will be there with their books available for purchase and signing, and we'll also have other local vendors set up for you to browse. You can meet the people behind the stories, shop a little and, of course, grab a cocktail while you're there.

As I'm writing this, two of our three featured authors have officially committed.

The first is Shelley Lynch, an incredible wildlife photographer whose work has graced the cover of East Coast Current countless times over the years. She is also just an absolutely wonderful person.

Shelley recently released her new book, *Exhale*, and I'm so excited for her to share more about her journey and have her book available at the event.

Our second featured author is Lee Davis Jr., who recently released *Oath of the Osprey*. He actually mailed me a copy last month, and I'm currently reading it. It has all the makings of a gripping page-turner. There's murder, mystery, crime, complicated relationships and ties to New Smyrna Beach. What more do you need?

That leaves us with one spot still open.

If you're a local author and are interested in being considered, please reach out to me. All of my information is in the sidebar on this page. And if you know a local author you think we should know about, send them my way.

We're only selling 60 tickets for this first luncheon. If you'd like to join us, you can call The Grille at Riverview directly at (386) 428-1865 to secure your seat or stop by their location during normal business hours to purchase your ticket in the lobby. They're located at 101 Flagler Ave., right on the river.

There are so many talented writers, photographers, storytellers and interesting people right here in our community, and I love the idea of creating a place where we can actually sit down together, hear their stories and connect local authors with local readers.

I think we're going to have a pretty great afternoon. I hope to see you there.

XO,

Tiffany Sudakis | Editor in Chief



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East Coast Current, a Volusia County-based magazine, has spent the past decade highlighting the people, businesses, and events that make our community special. Trusted by readers for the latest in community events, valuable information, and resources, ECC is committed to sharing stories that inspire, connect, and uplift. The magazine has remained a steadfast source of positivity and connection, and is celebrating 11 years in business this year. The views and opinions expressed by contributors are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of the publication or its staff.



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Local News

Give the Beach Room to Move: More Sand, More Protection

It's September, and coastal Volusia County is entering the heart of hurricane season, along with the season's king tides, when some of the highest tides of the year push farther onto the beach. Locals and visitors spent the summer enjoying a noticeably wider stretch of beach in south New Smyrna Beach (NSB), but the extra sand isn't there to make room for more beach chairs. Earlier this year, Volusia County completed its South Sand Placement Project to rebuild shoreline damaged by hurricanes, storms, nor'easters and notably Hurricanes Ian and Nicole (2022) and subsequent erosion.

Volusia.org reports the project was funded entirely through a Florida Department of Environmental Protection grant supporting recovery and resilience efforts following Hurricanes Ian and Nicole. The work was conducted in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND).

The effort brought together local, state and private partners as part of a broader initiative to strengthen Volusia County's coastline and improve its long-term resiliency. The work involved contractors, engineers and environmental specialists, along with the City of New Smyrna Beach.

Beginning last year and continuing through May 2026, residents and visitors watched large construction equipment, pipeline materials and temporary beach-access closures move through the south project area, from Sapphire Road south to 5205 S. Atlantic Avenue.

According to Volusia.org, approximately 550,000 cubic yards of beach-quality sand from Rattlesnake Island were mixed with water and pumped through a pipeline along the Intracoastal Waterway, across the barrier island and south along the beach. The sand was then deposited and shaped in areas behind properties whose owners had provided the county with sand-placement easements.

The south project strengthened more than four miles of shoreline. The need for that new sand becomes clearer when looking at how much the beach had changed. A countywide beach survey by Taylor Engineering Inc. found that from 2019 to August 2025, the shoreline in the area targeted for sand placement had moved inland an average of 22 feet. Across the broader south project area in NSB, the average shoreline had moved inland 17 feet.

That wider beach is not expected to stay exactly as it looks today. Beaches naturally change as waves, tides, wind and storms move sand along the

A wider stretch of sand is giving beachgoers more room to enjoy New Smyrna Beach while also helping protect the shoreline.



shoreline and offshore. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers explains that during a storm, some of that sand can move offshore, where it helps waves break farther from shore and lose some of their energy before reaching the beach.

In other words, seeing sand move or a beach change shape after a storm does not necessarily mean the project failed. The beach and dune system is designed to absorb some of that energy, helping reduce the force that reaches the dunes, properties and infrastructure behind it. Dune vegetation planted after the sand placement will also help stabilize the newly constructed berm and support the shoreline over time.

The newly rebuilt shoreline will enter its first hurricane season, when storms will provide an early opportunity to see how the added sand responds to storm conditions. Questions remain about how the county will measure the project's effectiveness after a major storm, how much erosion the shoreline is designed to withstand and when additional sand placement may be needed. County officials plan to provide additional information on the project and its long-term monitoring in mid-September.



MIMI MCKEE | 386-576-7722 | @NSBMimi

Mimi McKee is a Realtor with Ocean Properties & Management Inc. and a member of the NSB Board of Realtors. She relocated from Atlanta, GA in 2005 and is "Loving Living at the Beach."

Any information provided for this news column is based on personal research and analysis and does not reflect the views or opinions of Ocean Properties & Management Inc.

Insurance *Insights*

Before You Repair: Call a Public Adjuster First

When property damage occurs, your first instinct may be to call a contractor and start making repairs. But whenever possible, it's even better to call a public adjuster before you call a contractor.

Why? Because once repairs begin, important evidence of the damage can be removed, altered, or destroyed. A contractor's job is to make repairs. A public adjuster's job is to document the loss, evaluate the damage, review your insurance policy, and make sure your claim is properly presented and navigate the complexities of the claim process.

The exception is an emergency. If you have a burst pipe, active leak, electrical hazard, or another emergency, protect your property and your family first. Stop the source of the damage and take reasonable steps to prevent further loss. Then, as soon as possible, contact a licensed public adjuster. Our inspections are free.

At Trust Public Adjusting Group, we see it too often: property owners begin repairs without realizing they may be removing valuable evidence. Once damaged flooring, drywall, roofing, or other materials are removed, proving the full extent of the damage can become much more difficult.

Document First. Repair Second.

Take photographs and videos from multiple angles. Document damaged rooms, ceilings, walls, flooring, contents, and exterior areas. Keep receipts for emergency repairs and mitigation. Then contact a public adjuster before major repairs begin.

We work for you - not the insurance company. We help document your loss, interpret your policy, identify covered damage, and pursue the settlement you deserve. We have successfully overturned more than 85 percent of denied claims.

Don't Be Afraid to File a Claim

We often hear, "I'm afraid to file because my rates will go up or my insurance company will cancel me."

Don't let fear stop you from investigating a legitimate loss. Your insurance policy exists to provide for covered losses. You should not be scared to file a claim. Your rates do not automatically increase simply because you file a claim, and cancellation is not an automatic result of filing one.



A well-documented damage scene can make all the difference when it comes to protecting your claim. In a coastal community, knowing what to photograph and when to call a public adjuster matters.

The best way to know what makes sense for your situation is to understand your policy and have the damage properly evaluated.

We offer FREE property inspections and FREE insurance policy reviews. There is no obligation, and we can help you determine whether filing a claim makes sense.

Don't be scared to file a claim. Know your policy. Document your damage. And call a public adjuster before you call a contractor - unless it's an emergency.



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Local Finds

New Port Orange Markets Bring the Community Together

While there are some amazing farmer's markets all around Volusia County that we have previously highlighted here in East Coast Current, I want to zoom in on a very specific corner of Port Orange that is turning into a community market hot spot.

Back in February, local business owner Jabriel Budd launched the Halifax River Market every Sunday, from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., in front of Tiki Docks restaurant (3633 S. Ridgewood Ave). I was there for the opening weekend, which brought a delicious variety of food trucks and a handful of local vendor tables. Through Budd's creative marketing plan of adding a theme to most weekends, the market exploded in popularity over the summer to now host over 100 vendors.

Many of the market themes match the calendar of events, such as the flowers my mother-in-law and I received on Mother's Day weekend. But I think the most creative theme I saw was "Pickle Fest" in July. Local businesses added a pickle twist to their food, drinks and gifts. I saw a pickle lemonade and even some pickle chip earrings!

For the guests that may not be as excited about shopping, a mechanical pickle was brought in for a riding tournament and a separate pickle eating contest ensued. The market is wonderful as-is, but I have to admit that I'm on the edge of my seat looking for the next theme, posted each week on social media as "Halifax River Farmers Market at Tiki Docks."

Just a few steps to the south from this market takes you to Coastline Coffee Bar (3738 Halifax Dr.), which hosts events inside as "Coastline Coffee Events" and on its grounds as "The Riverwalk Social." You can search those names on Facebook to see a varying schedule of events and Saturday markets. A reoccurring event, called "Yappy Hour," connects coffee lovers with adoptable dogs from Sophie's Circle Dog Rescue every 3 Thursday of the month, between 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

And the newest two markets, just next door to the north, inside the Riverside Pavilion event center (3431 S. Ridgewood Ave), are the Port Orange Night Market and the Port Orange Girls Night Out (GNO). Both events are hosted by Touch of Magic Events, under

the creativity and direction of Melinda Perez. Larger cities and even Downtown Deland have successful night markets, so Perez wanted to bring the same excitement to the east side of Volusia County.



the creativity and direction of Melinda Perez. Larger cities and even Downtown Deland have successful night markets, so Perez wanted to bring the same excitement to the east side of Volusia County.

The Night Market will be the 3rd Wednesday of each month, between 5 - 8 p.m., starting in September. GNO will be every 2nd Thursday of the month, between 6 - 9 p.m., starting in October. The full schedule of events can be found at TouchOfMagicEvents.com.

These markets are a great way to connect our local community with small businesses that may not have their own brick and mortar home. They also make for fun places to wander on your own or with a group of friends. I hope you'll make your way to the Riverwalk area of Port Orange to check out one or all of them.

Happy shopping!



CASSIE GONYER | CASSIE@ECTOLDME.COM

Lives in Daytona Beach with her husband, three daughters, two housemates, and a "doug" (dachs-hund- pug mix dog). She loves exploring and promoting the food, shops and events that Daytona has to offer. You can follow her local adventures at [@CassGoAroundDaytona](https://www.instagram.com/CassGoAroundDaytona) on Instagram.

Have a story idea for Cassie? Reach out to her directly at Cassie@ECToldMe.com — she'd love to hear from you!



#ECC Told Me

1

The Little Theatre of NSB Presents a Comedy Thriller and Gothic Musical

The Little Theatre of New Smyrna Beach invites audiences to enjoy two unforgettable productions this season with *Deathtrap*, a clever comedy thriller full of suspense and surprises, followed by *Jekyll & Hyde*, a bold gothic pop-rock musical filled with drama, danger, and haunting emotion.



PERFORMANCE DATES & TIMES:

Deathtrap

Evenings at 7:30 PM
September 3, 4 & 5

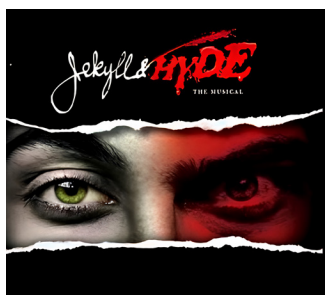
Matinee at 2:00 PM
September 6

Ira Levin's classic comedic thriller follows Sidney Bruhl, a once-successful playwright who has not written a hit in 18 years. When he receives a brilliant script from a former student, Sidney jokes that perhaps he should simply murder the young man and steal the play for himself. But when the student arrives later that evening, the dark twists begin, and no one, not even visiting psychic Helga Ten Dorp, could predict where the night will lead.

Packed with sharp humor, suspenseful turns, and theatrical misdirection, *Deathtrap* keeps audiences guessing as ambition, desperation, and danger collide in wickedly entertaining fashion.

Jekyll & Hyde

Evenings at 7:30 PM – October 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23 & 24
Matinees at 2:00 PM – October 11, 18 & 25



A gothic pop-rock musical based on Robert Louis Stevenson's famous novella, *Jekyll & Hyde* tells the gripping story of Dr. Henry Jekyll, a passionate scientist determined to separate good from evil. When his experiment unleashes Edward Hyde, a violent and murderous alter ego, London is thrown into terror, and Jekyll's life begins to unravel.

With powerful music, gothic atmosphere, and a story of love, obsession, and inner darkness, *Jekyll & Hyde* delivers an exciting musical experience. Don't miss these two thrilling productions at The Little Theatre of New Smyrna Beach.



The Little Theatre of New Smyrna Beach
726 E 3rd Ave, New Smyrna Beach 32169
(386) 423-1246 | NSBplayers.org



2

NEW Monthly Events coming to Port Orange!

Touch of Magic Events is excited to announce two new monthly events in Port Orange at the Riverside Pavilion. The Night Market starts September 16, and Girls Night Out starts October 8.

PORT ORANGE NIGHT MARKET

Join us for a fun community night market held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month from 5 - 8 PM. This market will run from September to May. Support local!



The Night Market will offer specialty foods, baked goods, local vendors, and a rotating lineup of food trucks each month. Free admission and free parking! 2026 market dates are September 16, October 21, November 18, and December 16.

PORT ORANGE GIRLS NIGHT OUT (GNO)

GNO is free to attend and designed to celebrate women of all ages. Hosted on the 2nd Thursday of each month from 6 - 9 PM, this event is for ages 18+ and will run from October to June.



Along with amazing vendors to shop with, every month will offer free pamper activities, a free adult craft, and DJ Candy will be bringing the energy and hosting games to give away prizes. Enjoy delicious mocktails while you shop and play.

Activities through December listed below!

- OCT 8:** Chair Massages & Henna Tattoos, Wine Glass Painting, Pop Diva Trivia
- NOV 12:** Hair Styling & Photo Booth, Cookie Decorating, 2000s Music Bingo
- DEC 10:** Express Manicures & Mini Facials, Make Your Own Christmas Ornament, Christmas Karaoke

For more information or to become a vendor, email:
info@touchofmagicevents.com

And don't forget about our Night Market at Tanger Outlets Daytona! Hosted on Sept 2, Oct 7, and Dec 2 from 5 - 9 PM.

Port Orange Night Market | every 3rd Wednesday

Port Orange Girls Night Out | every 2nd Thursday

Riverside Pavilion | 3431 S Ridgewood Ave | Port Orange

Touch of Magic Events

touchofmagicevents.com

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3

Rising to the Top: Dutch Oven Bread Co. Named Community's Choice for BEST BAKERY in Volusia-Flagler!

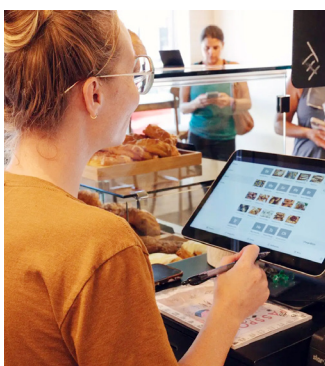
When Dutch Oven Bread Co. opened its doors last October, the goal was simple. To bake sourdough bread and buttery, laminated pastries worth waking up early for! Less than a year later, the community has answered back. This month, the bakery was named winner of the Communities' Choice Award for Volusia-Flagler.



"We're so excited!" says co-owner Candice, who owns the bakery with her husband, Fabio. "We started this because we love spending time in the kitchen and being creative together. To have our community nominate and vote for us means everything."



Behind every loaf and pastry is a team that makes it all happen. The bakers arrive before sunrise, mixing and baking bread and folding butter into dough for croissants and other laminated pastries that take days, not hours, to get right. At the cafe, the front of house crew greets regulars (and their dogs!) by name, remembers their usual order, and turns a quick bread run into the best part of someone's morning.



The combination of a talented and committed team in the back and the warm customer service at the front is what Candice credits for the award. "It's not just about the loaf of bread or croissant," she says. "It's about the people who make it and the people who show up for it."

Less than a year in, Dutch Oven Bread Co. has already become a neighborhood staple. With a

Community's Choice Award on the shelf, Fabio & Candice would like to extend a huge THANK YOU to their team, customers and everyone who has made it possible for their business to succeed.



Dutch Oven Bread Co.

120 Canal St., New Smyrna Beach 32168
(386) 689-9001 | DutchOvenBreads.com
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4

Drink tea, be healthy, do good...

Tucked away in a quiet forest in the Parktowne Industrial Park is a job training and community uplift facility cleverly disguised as a family tea company: Rise Yaupon.

Drink tea, be healthy:

Rise Yaupon makes tea from the leaves of a Florida native plant called Yaupon Holly. Yaupon has been consumed as tea here for over 8,000 years; it is an antioxidant super-food with anti-inflammatory properties, and it's North America's only naturally caffeinated plant species (with caffeine levels about like traditional green tea). Once the center of civilization, Yaupon is now a popular landscaping shrub. Rise's goal is to bring Florida's ancient, historic and sacred tea back to the prominence it deserves.

Do good:

Rise Yaupon employs several crews of second-chance employees who wild-harvest Yaupon leaves in pristine natural forests here in Volusia County. They pay a living wage. The tea processing factory is a job center for seniors looking for community, high-school dropouts, autistic, deaf and other overlooked workers. Ten percent of their direct-to-consumer revenue goes towards feeding homeless kids in Volusia County.

Do more good:

No pesticides, fertilizers or other chemicals are used, and their tea bags are natural fiber (e.g., plastic free). They take nothing from the Florida aquifer, and don't put anything into it. Yaupon is caffeine that doesn't cross an ocean to get here.

A Family Business:

Rise Yaupon was founded by the Steele family and is led by daughter Shelly, who left corporate America to dedicate herself to growing this women and veteran-owned business. Together, the family is committed to creating great-tasting, healthy teas while using their business as a force for good; giving back to the community they proudly call home.

Come visit:

The USDA factory is open to visitors and offers free tours and samples. Tours are led by one of the family co-founders so you get a first hand look at the tea-making process. Additionally, Wildflour Market is the cafe within the building that "spills the tea" while making delicious sandwiches and tea concoctions. Tuesday and Thursday mornings are the best days to meet the production crew, and it is a good idea to call ahead for larger groups as they enter their peak event season.

Rise Yaupon Tea + Wildflour Market

504 Pullman Road | Edgewater, FL 32132
Open Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Facebook: @riseyaupon • @wildflourmarket
Instagram: @riseyaupontea • @wildflourmarket386

Scan for more about our free factory tours!



5

Ormond Beach Unplugged Brings 70+ Acts to 10 Stages at The Casements

More than 70 acoustic acts will perform across 10 indoor and outdoor stages during the inaugural Ormond Beach Unplugged Songwriters Festival on **Saturday, September 26, 2026, from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.** at the historic Casements in Ormond Beach.

Presented by Songwriters Showcases of America (SSA), the rain-or-shine festival is billed as "A Monumental Celebration of Creativity in Music and Art."

The Songwriters Showcases of America Presents:



Music on all 10 stages will be presented unplugged, with performers using primarily acoustic instruments and singing without vocal microphones. Each performance area will offer a relaxed, campfire-style setting that allows audiences to experience the songs and artists up close.

In addition to live music, the family-friendly festival will feature nostalgic carnival games, multiple food trucks, an artist village, beer gardens, a bounce house, a youth art exhibit, and more.

Admission is \$20 in advance or \$25 at the gate. Ages 12 and younger are admitted free. Advance tickets may be purchased online at ssa.cc/tickets.htm or by scanning the QR code at the bottom.

The new festival builds on SSA's previous Ormond Beach Live festival, which began in 2018 and was presented for seven years on multiple stages at Rockefeller Gardens, The Casements and Fortunato Park. This year's event will bring all performances to The Casements for a more intimate experience.

The festival also will mark SSA's 27th anniversary of producing music showcases, festivals and arts events throughout the region and beyond Florida.

Ormond Beach Unplugged Songwriters Festival
Saturday, September 26, 2026 | 10 AM - 10 PM
The Casements, 25 Riverside Dr | Ormond Beach
songwritersshowcases.com



6

Touch of Magic Events presents Halloween Bash & Trunk-or-Treat

The Halloween Bash & Trunk-or-Treat will be hosted on Saturday, October 17 at the Jackie Robinson Ballpark in Daytona Beach from 11 AM - 3 PM. Free admission, free activities, and free parking!

Join us for a family-friendly event filled with creativity and Halloween excitement! A fun and safe trick-or-treating event with local businesses and community resources handing out candy on the trick-or-treat trail and showcasing what they offer. We'll also have a trunk-or-treat. Candy is guaranteed to the first 1,500 trick-or-treaters!



This free event is the perfect way to celebrate Halloween with your friends and family. Get creative with your costumes! Come dressed up as a family and you might win a prize. So, dust off your Halloween attire and join in on the fun.

When the candy runs out, don't forget to enjoy everything the event has to offer! Shop with vendors, play games to win prizes and enjoy FREE face painting, balloon animals, bounce houses, and more fun activities. Dress up as a family and you may win a prize!

BECOME INVOLVED

We're accepting sponsors, vendors, trunks, and volunteers. Become a part of this incredible community event! To learn more about how you can be involved, please email info@touchofmagicevents.com.

And don't forget to see us at Jackie Robinson Ballpark on Saturday, September 19 for the Taco & Empanada Fest! We'll be there from 12 - 6 PM.

Halloween Bash & Trunk-or-Treat | Sat, Oct 17
Jackie Robinson Ballpark | 105 E Orange Ave | Daytona
Touch of Magic Events | touchofmagicevents.com
FB & Insta: @touchofmagiceventsllc



★ ★ ELECT ★ ★

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State Representative
For District 28



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- ✓ Provide Quality Education
- ✓ Healthcare Coverage for EVERY CHILD
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New Smyrna Beach, Florida

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MON-FRI
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- ARC
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- CRN
- Easterseals
- Jet Speed Sports
- Ormond Parks & Recreation
- SPARC of Volusia
- Votran
- & More



SEPT. 19th
10am-1pm

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WWW.WOOF-O-WEEN.COM

Exploring Old Florida

Airboat Rides on Lake Jesup

BOBBY G VISITS BLACK HAMMOCK ADVENTURES



Bobby G

Explores Old FL

A Different Side of Florida: Airboating Through Lake Jesup

It had been more than 40 years since I'd been on an airboat. I was in my early teens the last time, somewhere around the Lone Cabbage area, and for whatever reason, I have been dying to do it again. Finally, the day came. Tiffany and I were going airboating, and I was like a kid again.

I had built this up in my head for so long, and I thought I knew exactly what the day would look like: get on an airboat, go fast, see some gators, take some cool pictures and have something fun to write about. Almost immediately after Captain Tim pushed us away from the dock at Black Hammock on Lake Jesup, I realized this was going to be so much more than I expected. This wasn't just an airboat ride. This was Old Florida, and it's practically in our backyard.

The first place Captain Tim took us was into a canal just off the lake. I really didn't know what to expect, and almost immediately, I was seeing things I hadn't expected to be part of an airboat ride. The canal was lined with huge cypress trees, including massive trees that storms had completely overturned. Their enormous root systems were exposed above the water, giving us a look at something you would normally never get a chance to see.

All around them were cypress knees, those strange knobs rising from the root systems. Captain Tim explained how the cypress and its root system adapt as water levels rise and fall. It was quiet, wild and beautiful. I had come looking for gators, but suddenly I was paying attention to everything.

As we moved out of the canal, Captain Tim started pointing things out. Birds. Fish. Cypress trees. Lily pads. And finally: "Gator." WHERE? You stare at the water. Then suddenly you see two eyes and the top of a head. There he is. And a second later, he's gone.

Lake Jesup is known for its tremendous alligator population, and seeing them in their natural habitat is completely different from looking at one behind a fence. We spotted gators near the lily pads and along the shoreline. At one point, Captain Tim had us watching bubbles moving across the surface because a gator was traveling underwater. You suddenly realize how much is happening around you that you'd completely miss without someone who knows what to look for.



Captain Tim showed us there's so much more to Lake Jesup than just spotting gators. Having someone who knows the lake, the wildlife and the history completely changes the experience.

And then there were the birds. We learned about the many species that call this area home at different times of the year, including roseate spoonbills and bald eagles. Captain Tim explained how dramatically the lake changes with the seasons. Spring brings more visible gators, nesting birds and an entirely different experience. His favorite thing about giving these tours? You see something different every time. I believe it.

Eventually, we crossed the open water, skimmed over lily pads and started traveling through marsh and vegetation in water only inches deep. If you grew up around boats, this goes against everything you were ever taught. See grass? Avoid it. Captain Tim? Straight through it. I loved every second.

At some point during all of this, I looked at Tiffany. "We HAVE to bring the kids here." We hadn't even finished our first trip, and we were already planning the second. Getting to experience the whole thing with Tiffany made it that much better. We laughed, took pictures, searched the shoreline for gators and just kept discovering something new.

People travel hundreds or thousands of miles to Florida looking for an experience exactly like this. We drove about an hour.

Black Hammock currently operates six boats, ranging from smaller boats that hold about six passengers to their largest, which can accommodate up to 20. But when you get back to the dock, the day doesn't have to end.

There's a restaurant, bar, wildlife area and event space. They host birthday parties, weddings, retirement celebrations, corporate outings and field trips. One of the event spaces can accommodate roughly 100 people.

Friday nights feature live music. Saturdays bring DJs. They also have comedy nights and other events, and the sunsets alone are worth sticking around for.

There are even Airbnbs adjacent to the property associated with the owners if you want to turn the experience into an overnight adventure.

We even got to hold a baby alligator. Yes. I held a gator. Remember that.

Then it was time for lunch. Let's recap my day. Saw gators. Tracked gator bubbles. Held a baby gator. Then I ordered blackened gator tacos. Listen, little buddy. It wasn't personal. Man's gotta eat.

And while we were sitting there, who did we run into? Our buddy Joe from New Smyrna Beach, who is now the restaurant's general manager. Of course we do. Small world.

If you live in New Smyrna Beach, Daytona Beach, Ormond Beach or anywhere along the coast, this is worth the drive. If you're in DeLand, Deltona, Orange City or West Volusia, it's practically around the corner.

If friends or family are visiting Florida and asking the question we've all heard a hundred times, "What should we do?" I have a new answer.

I went into this expecting an airboat ride and a few alligators. Instead, Tiffany and I found a beautiful, wild piece of Florida that had been sitting close to home the entire time. I waited more than 40 years to get back on an airboat. I definitely won't be waiting another 40 to do it again.

Bobby G, Out.



SCOTTY SUDAKIS
AKA BOBBY G

Freelance writer and frontman in 5 Time Shag. If you have something you would like to see Bobby G cover in a future article please email the editor directly at: Tiffany@ECCtoldme.com

Photos by Tiffany Sudakis

Black Hammock Adventures

2316 Black Hammock Fish Camp Rd
Oviedo, FL | on Lake Jesup
(407) 365-1244
theblackhammock.com



RECURRING MONTHLY EVENTS

- **Art Walk** @ Granada, Ormond
Sep 5 / Oct 3
- **Sip and Stroll** @ Canal St, NSB
Sep 5 / Oct 3
- **Art Stroll** @ Canal St, NSB
Sep 5 / Oct 3
- **Downtown Nights** @ Beach St
Sep 4 / Oct 2
- **Art Walk** @ Beach St, Daytona
Sep 4 / Oct 2
- **Cars on Canal** @ Canal St, NSB
Sep 12 / Oct 10
- **DeLand Cruise-In** @ Indiana Ave.
Sep 19 / Oct 17
- **Wine Walk** @ Flagler Ave, NSB
Sep 26 / Oct 24

12-13 SEP 12 - 13 SAT - SUN

Ocean Center, Daytona Beach

Daytona Beach Home Show

Browse a variety of exhibitors to help jump start your home improvement projects. FREE admission!



23 WED SEP 23 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Parktown Industrial Park, Edgewater
504 Pullman Rd

Make Your Own Tea Blend Class

Get creative at the Rise Yaupon factory and discover the art of blending your own tea! You'll craft a unique 2-3 oz blend, sampling and tweaking your creation along the way until you find the perfect combination. **\$35 per person**, including your custom tea blend to take home. Call 386-222-2795 to reserve your spot.



3 SAT OCT 3 5 - 8 PM

Whistle Stop Park, Edgewater

EDGEfest Pet-a-Palooza

Bring your furry friend, or meet adoptable animals! Enjoy food, music, vendors, pet contests, lure course and pup kissing booth. Accepting donations of food and supplies for the Edgewater Animals Shelter.



1-30 Boo: 10 AM-3 PM; OCT 3-31
Beware: select nights
SEP/OCT 6-10 PM

Brevard Zoo, Melbourne

Boo the Zoo & Beware the Night!

This year, Brevard Zoo is offering you two ways to Halloween at the Zoo! Join us for our beloved daytime trick-or-treating experience, Boo at the Zoo (inc. w/ regular admission). Then, when the sun goes down, you won't want to miss Beware the Night! See the Zoo transform into a spooky playground filled with eerie lights, mysterious sounds and hauntingly fun surprises. *separately ticketed events - BrevardZoo.org



18-20 SEP 18 - 20 FRI-SUN @ 10 AM-7 PM

Ocean Center, Daytona Beach

Daytona Boat Show

Life is better with a boat - find your next adventure at the Daytona Boat Show! \$5/adult, kids 12 and under are free. DaytonaBoatShow.com



25-27 SEP 25 - 27 FRI - SUN

Ocean Center, Daytona Beach

Jurassic Quest Dinosaur Show

Walk with a larger-than-life dinosaur herd, play with adorable baby dinos, excavate fossils, or even train a raptor! Get tickets at JurassicQuest.com before they go extinct!



10 SAT OCT 10 1 - 4 PM

The Casements, Ormond Beach

Ormond Beach Beer Fest

There will be beer and beverages as well as food and other vendors for purchase. The beer tasting will include different beers from over 35 different breweries and will cost \$40 in advance at OrmondBeachBeerFestival.com and \$45 the day of the event. This is a family friendly event with no admission charge. All proceeds will help the Rotary Club of Ormond Beach.



3-7 SEP 3 - 7 Find schedule online

Flagler Avenue, NSB

First Responder Music Festival

Flagler Avenue is paying tribute through music to First Responders who are always there for us! The First Responders Music Festival will feature over 20+ FREE SHOWS at venues on Flagler Avenue throughout Labor Day Weekend. FlaglerAve.com for schedule.



19 SAT SEP 19 8 - 11 AM

Throughout Volusia County

International Coastal Cleanup

Register NOW to make a difference and keep our waterways clean @ 20 sites. Find locations at Volusia.org/Cleanups



26 SAT SEP 26 10 AM - 10 PM

The Casements, Ormond Beach

Unplugged Songwriters Festival

More than 70 acoustic acts will perform across 10 intimate stages during the family-friendly festival. Music will be presented unplugged, with performers using primarily acoustic instruments and singing without vocal microphones. Each performance area will offer a relaxed, campfire-style setting that allows audiences to experience the songs and artists up close. \$20 tickets at SSA.cc; \$25 at the gate. Kids 12 and under are free!



10 FRI OCT 10 4 - 8:30 PM

Sunrise Park, Holly Hill

Holly Hill's 125th Birthday Block Party

Join us as we celebrate 125 years of Holly Hill with an unforgettable evening of community, music, and family fun! The celebration will feature a live concert starring The Fabulous B Naturals, with an energetic mix of pop, rock, Motown, dance and crowd-pleasing favorites from across the decades. The evening will conclude with a spectacular Drone Show Finale, illuminating the night sky in a one-of-a-kind tribute to Holly Hill's 125th Birthday!



4 FRI SEP 4 / OCT 2 8:30 PM

The Casements, Ormond Beach

Movies on the Halifax

A free, family-friendly outdoor movie series hosted by The Casements at Rockefeller Gardens. Guests are invited to bring lawn chairs, blankets, and snacks to enjoy movies under the stars right along the Halifax River! Sep. movie - How to Train Your Dragon; Oct. movie - E.T. (7 PM)



19 SAT SEP 19 8:30 AM - 1 PM

Menard May Park, Edgewater

EDGEfest Kids Fishing Derby

This will be a free catch and release fishing derby sponsored by Southern States Fishin' & Huntin' Magazine. There will also be instruction on knot tying, fish identification and cast net throwing. Registration is on-site on the day of the event. Breakfast snacks and lunch will be provided. Bring your own gear, or free rods and reels supplied while supplies last.

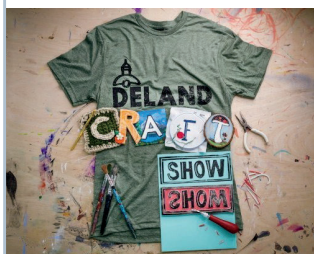


26-27 SEP 26 - 27 SAT-SUN @ 10AM-4PM

Woodland Blvd., DeLand

DeLand Craft Show

Artists and crafters from all over the state display and sell their handmade items plus live entertainment and demos.



10 FRI OCT 10 5 - 8 PM

Mill Lake Park, Orange City

National Night Out

National Night Out is a wonderful opportunity to meet your local law enforcement and see emergency response vehicles on display. There's something for the whole family and all activities are free! Bring the kids to play in the kid zone or get their face painted while parents dance the night away as the live DJ plays today's hits. You can also enjoy free hot dogs, shaved ice and lots of vendors.



5-26 SEP 5 - 26 
EVERY SAT @ 7:15 PM
Daytona Beach Bandshell
Star Spangled Summer

A weekly concert of the best tribute bands followed by a fireworks show over the water.

- Sep 5 - Led Zeppelin and AC/DC tributes
- Sep 12 - Michael Jackson tribute
- Sep 19 - Pink Floyd tribute
- Sep 26 - Van Halen tribute



19 SAT SEP 19
12 - 6 PM
Jackie Robinson Ballpark, Daytona
Taco & Empanada Fest

The best of both worlds come together! Enjoy savory tacos and empanadas from a variety of gourmet food vendors. Enjoy a free kid zone, live deejay, and shop with local merchants & vendors. **FREE** admission! To become a vendor, please email info@TouchOfMagicEvents.com.



1 THU OCT 1
6 - 8 PM
Marine Discovery Center, NSB
Lecture Series: Sea Turtle Nesting Season

Volusia County Environmental Management, NSB Turtle Trackers, & Canaveral National Seashore come together for the 2026 Sea Turtle Nesting Season panel discussion! All lectures will be held monthly on the 1st Thursday in our Learning Lab. **FREE** to attend, register online at MarineDiscoveryCenter.org.




SCAN ME

17 SAT OCT 17 
11 AM - 3 PM
Jackie Robinson Ballpark, Daytona
Halloween Bash & Trunk-or-Treat

Enjoy a family-friendly event filled with fun, creativity, and Halloween excitement! Trick-or-treat with local vendors & trunks and enjoy free activities. Come dressed up as a family and you might win a prize! **FREE** admission and **FREE** parking. To become a vendor, please email info@TouchOfMagicEvents.com.



12 SAT SEP 12
1 - 5 PM
Flagler Ave, NSB
Sangria Social

Sangria tasting passports are \$25 with a keepsake glass, map, and listing of each host locations' sangrias. Taste all offered sangrias from each host location. Flagler Avenue will NOT be closed for this event which takes place inside host locations.



21-2 SEP 21 - OCT 2 
Events @ CityOfNSB.com
NSB Leisure Services, 201 Myrtle Ave.
NSB Senior Games

Community seniors can participate in an Olympic-style competition in different games such as pickleball, corn hole, golf, basketball, and more. Packets are available for pick up at the Babe James Community Center. \$25 registration fee includes shirt and opening/closing ceremonies.



1-31 OCT 1 - 31 
Every Day 
Flagler Avenue, NSB
The Great Flagler Ave Pumpkin Hunt

Get your **FREE** Pumpkin Hunt map and start your search for hidden pumpkins along Flagler Avenue! Once you find a pumpkin visit the host business inside and get your hunt stamp. When you have collected all the stamps, get an entry to win a free weekend stay at Seahorse Inn! Details at FlaglerAve.com.



Scan for more
EVENTS



SEEVOLUSIA.com

SPOOKY OOKY ESTUARY

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16 | 5:30-8PM
 520 BARRACUDA BOULEVARD | NEW SMYRNA BEACH



Join Marine Discovery Center for a fun and creepy evening including . . .

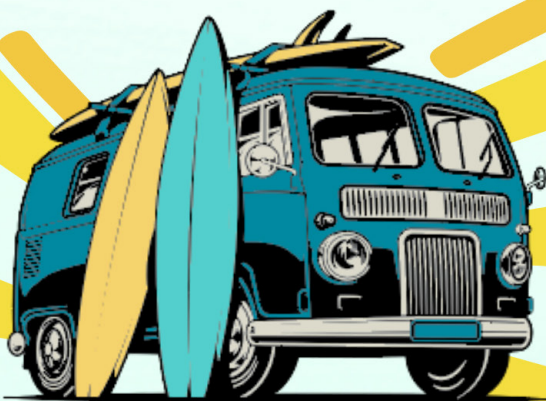
- Spooky Trails
- Trick-or-Treating
- Haunted Hayride
- Crafts & Games
- Local Organizations & Vendors

Admission is FREE!
No registration is required.



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DECEMBER 9TH

9PM-1AM
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NEW SMYRNA BEACH, FL

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MORE INFO AT
BROTHERSWITHIN.COM & TREEHOUSETHEBAND.COM

THE A+TEAM

TICKETS AT eventbrite

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OCTOBER 17 2026

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SEPTEMBER:

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- 3 CLICK YACHT
- 4 ARE FRIENDS ELECTRIC
- 5 ARE FRIENDS ELECTRIC
- 8 HEAVY POCKET
- 9 FUNKY BREWSTER
- 10 HI LO THEORY
- 11 CRASH ROCKET
- 12 TRAE PIERCE
- 15 HEAVY POCKET
- 16 ESH AND SCHIEF
- 17 YACHT ROCK
- 18 STEREO FM
- 19 SUPERVILLAINS
- 22 HEAVY POCKET
- 23 FUNKY BREWSTER
- 24 TRL SWITCH DUO
- 25 TO BE ANNOUNCED
- 26 THE CLICK
- 29 HEAVY POCKET
- 30 ESH AND SCHIEF

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Music Starts at 8:30pm,
NO COVER* / 21+
 *Unless Otherwise Noted



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Get Stoned

The Bedazzle Era Is Back |

Nothing is safe from gemstones right now. Clothes, nails, phone cases, makeup, birthday cakes. People are even bedazzling their cats.

We have officially entered the bedazzle era again, and I'm fully embracing it.

Kylie Jenner definitely gave the trend a push with her very pink, very jeweled birthday party. Even the cakes were covered in gems. But I'm not giving Kylie all the credit. Rhinestones and Y2K fashion have already been making their way back.

THE TREND: More is more. Colorful gems, rhinestones, crystals and anything that sparkles.

THE DIY: I found this denim set at Goodwill, bought a bunch of gemstones on Amazon and started gluing. That's it.

TRY IT: Grab an old T-shirt, tank, denim skirt or pair of shorts you don't wear anymore and bedazzle it. There really are no rules with this one.

THE THROWBACK: It's very late '90s, early 2000s, when we were putting rhinestones on basically everything. Apparently, we weren't done.

I'm fully embracing the gemstone craze. At this point, you might as well call me Gem.

Actually, my middle name is Precious, so this all makes sense.

GET THE LOOK

Denim Set: Goodwill

Gemstones: Amazon

CREATIVE DIRECTION / PHOTOGRAPHY / STYLING / MODEL

Danielle Napolitano | @daniellenapolitano



DANIELLE NAPOLITANO | @daniellenapolitano

A Miami Beach-based hairstylist, fashion stylist, and product developer at ALFA MFG. Known for her creativity and trend expertise, she brings a unique blend of artistry and innovation to the fashion and beauty industry. Contact: Danielle@Alfamfg.com

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Worth Knowing

How to Keep Up With Space Coast Launches

Living in Volusia County gives residents a front-row seat to Florida's Space Coast, where rockets launched from Kennedy Space Center and Cape Canaveral are often visible from our own backyards.

Launch schedules, however, can change quickly because of weather, technical testing and safety requirements. With NASA's Artemis program preparing for future crewed lunar landings and SpaceX developing Starship launch operations in Florida, keeping up with the schedule means more opportunities to watch history unfold, and fewer moments wondering what just shook the windows (and embarrassing yourself in Facebook groups).



START LOCAL: SPACE COAST LAUNCHES

For launches close to home, the Space Coast Launches app keeps Kennedy Space Center and Cape Canaveral Space Force Station schedules in one place. Users can receive launch notifications, view live feeds, find viewing locations and use an AR compass that points toward the correct launch pad. Mission listings include upcoming launches from NASA, SpaceX, ULA and others, making it easy to check the latest details without searching multiple sources.

MORE WAYS TO TRACK LIFTOFF

Space Launch Now and Space Launch Schedule apps offer similar tracking for launches worldwide, with countdowns, mission details, notifications and live video options. For anyone who prefers a website, RocketLaunch.org maintains an updated launch schedule that can be checked without downloading an app. These tools are especially useful when schedules shift, but users should remember that launch times remain fluid and may change repeatedly as teams work toward a safe liftoff.

BE A VIRTUAL GUEST WITH NASA

To follow NASA missions more closely, register for the agency's Virtual Guest Program at NASA.gov under the News & Events tab. Virtual guests receive mission resources, schedule updates and opportunities related to selected launches by email. After liftoff, participants receive a commemorative digital stamp for a downloadable virtual passport. Registration for the guest list also provides invitations to future NASA missions and milestone events, helping users follow preparations well before launch day.



ARTEMIS III: WHAT'S THE LATEST?

NASA's Artemis plans changed in 2026. Artemis III, targeted for 2027, is now a crewed demonstration in low Earth orbit that will test Orion's rendezvous and docking with commercial lunar landers. The next planned crewed lunar landing is Artemis IV, targeted for early 2028. That makes Artemis III an important step toward safely returning astronauts to the Moon, even though the mission itself is not currently planned to land there.



Florida *or Bust*

Digging Up a Hidden Gem at Stetson University

Having visited quite a few science museums over the years, I'll be the first to admit that they can be incredibly loud and overstimulating on busy weekends, especially those geared toward kids. They are fun, educational, and usually packed with hands-on activities, but sometimes it's nice to slow the pace and actually have time to absorb what you're learning. That is exactly what Avery and I found at the Gillespie Museum at Stetson University in Deland.

Tucked away on Stetson's picturesque campus, this little museum is a literal hidden gem, housing one of the oldest and largest geologic collections in the Southeast. More than 15,000 minerals, rocks, and fossils make up the collection, with nearly 1,000 on display at a time through permanent and rotating exhibits.

What makes the Gillespie especially unique is that the museum itself is an ongoing "school project." Stetson faculty and undergraduate students contribute as museum staff, develop class projects and exhibits, participate in outreach programs, and use the grounds for place-based research. Founded in 1958, it has served as a center for earth and environmental science education for both the university and the surrounding community for nearly seven decades.

Inside, dazzling gems and minerals fill display cases alongside fossils and exhibits exploring Florida geology, ecosystems, volcanism, the rock cycle, and more. Stored specimens are regularly brought out through changing exhibits, so there is always a new reason to come back. Many exhibits also blur the line between art and science, making this much more than a room full of pretty rocks.

Avery especially loved the man-made cave tucked into one corner, where explorers can learn about cave-dwellers, minerals, and rocks that glow under ultraviolet light. From there, we moved on to a DIY microscope station with prepared slides featuring everything from minerals to once-living specimens like insects.

Then we found the gem mining station.

Each guest is allowed to choose three specimens to take home, which sounds simple until you hand that responsibility to an eight-year-old determined to make exactly the right



With thousands of rocks, minerals, and fossils in its collection, the Gillespie proves you do not need a huge museum for a big discovery.

selections. We spent well over an hour digging while Avery carefully inspected stone after stone, comparing each one to the identification charts on the wall before deciding whether it was worthy of her gem bag.



A small geology and science library offers another quiet corner to explore. We spent time reading about how different rocks form before wandering through cases filled with glittering minerals we had never seen or even heard of. Fossils are scattered throughout as well, including one exhibit containing a prehistoric nest of dinosaur eggs.

The collection itself began with Thomas Byrd and Nellie Gillespie, who became fascinated with minerals after seeing a collection while traveling in the Pacific Northwest. Over the following decades, their hobby grew into an extensive collection with the help of respected mineralogists. In 1958, they

donated a significant portion of it to Stetson University and continued supporting the museum and adding specimens for years afterward.

The Gillespie is completely free to visit, with donations accepted to support educational programming. Regular hours are Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with one Science Saturday each month offering additional family-friendly activities. Monthly Science Cafés bring scientists and the community together for relaxed conversations about environmental and scientific topics.

Because the museum follows Stetson's academic calendar, it closes during university holidays and summer break, making the start of the school year the perfect time to rediscover it. This fall also brings seasonal exhibits, including the newest exhibit of Spooky Stones opening on October 2, featuring some of the mineral world's strangest and most mysterious specimens.

For a quick drive, free admission, and an afternoon spent learning and exploring without the usual museum chaos, the Gillespie hidden gem is absolutely worth digging up.

GILLESPIE MUSEUM AT STETSON UNIVERSITY

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The Walters Family

The Walters Family loves adventure and exploring Florida together. Kelsey Walters, CFO and co-owner of East Coast Current, is a professional photojournalist specializing in travel and documentary photography. Her husband, Scott, originally from Connecticut, has lived in Florida since age 11. Their 8-year-old daughter, Avery, enjoys joining their monthly adventures and playing with the family's dogs, Kodi, Bluey, and BamBam.

Photos by Kelsey Walters





Home Guidance



Homeownership Starts with the Right Information

For many people, homeownership can feel complicated. Questions about the local market, buying a home, available resources, and where to begin can quickly become overwhelming. This fall, the New Smyrna Beach Board of REALTORS® is bringing those conversations together in one place.

The Southeast Volusia Homeownership Expo & Forum will be held Saturday, October 10, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at The Gray Room located at 320 Canal Street in New Smyrna Beach and is free to attend.

Designed for the public, the event will provide an opportunity for residents to learn more about homeownership, better understand today's real estate market, and connect directly with local experts who can answer questions and provide guidance.

Whether you are considering buying your first home, planning for a future move, or simply want to become a more informed homeowner, the Expo is intended to make reliable information and local resources easier to access.

Homeownership is about more than a transaction. It plays an important role in families, neighborhoods, and the strength of our local communities. REALTORS® work throughout Southeast Volusia every day, not only helping people buy and sell homes, but also connecting residents with resources and information that can help them make informed decisions.

Mark your calendar for October 10 and join us for an afternoon focused on navigating the market, meeting the experts, and finding your way home.

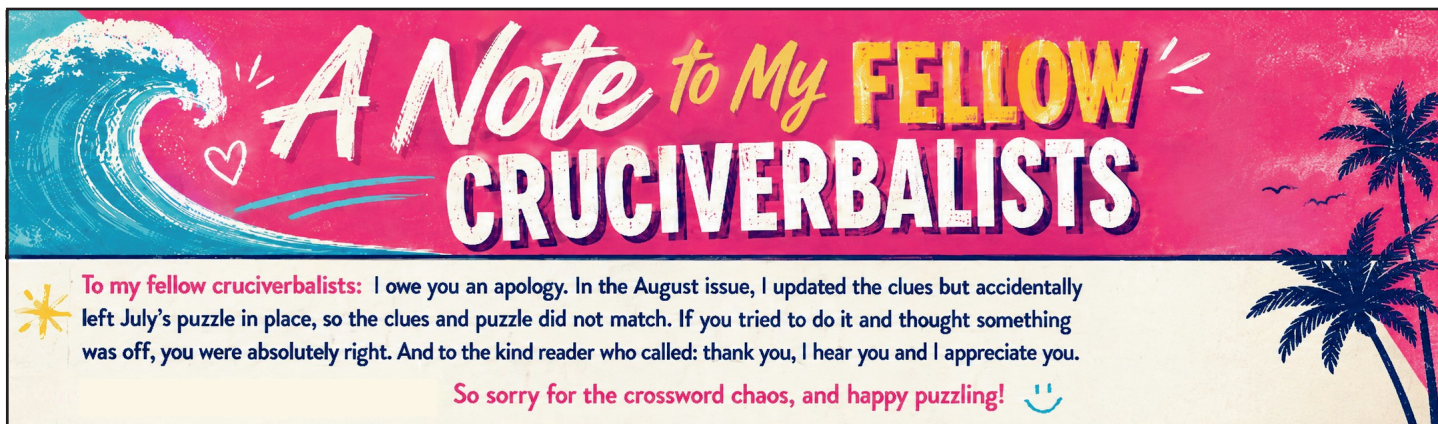


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 **To my fellow cruciverbalists:** I owe you an apology. In the August issue, I updated the clues but accidentally left July's puzzle in place, so the clues and puzzle did not match. If you tried to do it and thought something was off, you were absolutely right. And to the kind reader who called: thank you, I hear you and I appreciate you.

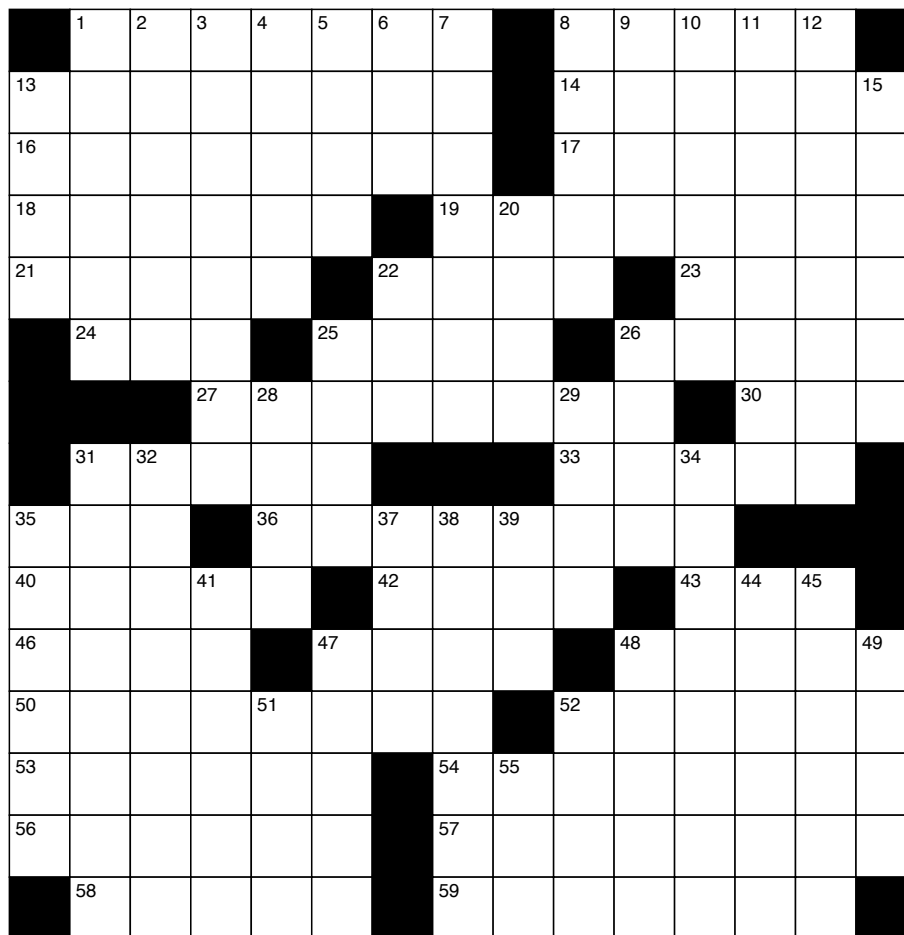
So sorry for the crossword chaos, and happy puzzling! 😊

Across

1. Hunter and Ward
8. Mary or John J.
13. Big name in 40s and 50s golf
14. "Little White Chapel" customer, often
16. Vent, as a tirade
17. Part of Johannesburg
18. Metes out
19. Intended for a select few
21. Chasers, at times
22. Cut closely
23. Carefree outing
24. Soft & ____ (antiperspirant brand)
25. Calendar abbr.
26. Lauder of scents and such
27. Won by a narrow margin
30. Always, in verse
31. Puppy, e.g.
33. Orchestra group
35. Nonetheless, for short
36. Cafe order
40. Lover boy
42. Actress Kudrow
43. Laugh sound
46. Cookie topper
47. Bra parts
48. Directed
50. Repetitive South Pacific capital
52. Made big cuts
53. Address giver
54. Strongest, as cheddar
56. Remove condensation
57. Causes great anguish
58. Factions
59. Protects, as in a museum

Down

1. Staggered
2. Buck topper
3. Water purifier
4. Owl calls
5. Freudian concerns
6. ____ Cruces
7. Looked at with scorn
8. Greek storyteller
9. Mail opening
10. Locker room supply
11. Functioned
12. Many Floridians
13. Tell all
15. Nursery chair
20. Not too great
22. Billiard stick
25. Cooking amts.
26. French 101 verb
28. Alternate for butter
29. Bear overhead
31. Apathetic question
32. Giants game at the Meadowlands, say
34. Dog-sized creature thought to be the horse's earliest ancestor
35. Cameraman's stand
37. Tobacco quantity
38. Fencing maneuver
39. Twisting turn
41. Racy
44. Bit of current
45. Big name in peanut butter cups
47. Grocery sights
48. It's connected to the left ventricle
49. Banned pesticides
51. Drop in the mail
52. Prix de ____ de Triomphe (annual Paris horse race)
55. Sweets



Find the answers to this crossword puzzle in next month's issue.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

West Volusia

Pedaling Through Paradise: Central Florida's Spring to Spring Trail

Florida may be famous for its coastline, but pedaling through the moss-draped corridors of West Volusia County reveals a quieter side of the Sunshine State. Stretching just over 27 miles, the Spring to Spring Trail connects some of Central Florida's most captivating natural and historic destinations. A vital segment of the St. Johns River to Sea Loop and part of the larger Coast to Coast and Heart of Florida trails, the route is almost entirely paved and separated from traffic, save for one remaining gap.

You can begin at either end, but starting at DeLeon Springs State Park comes with an undeniable perk: pancakes! The legendary Old Sugar Mill Pancake House invites diners to cook breakfast on tabletop griddles inside a replica 1830s sugar mill. Afterward, take a refreshing dip in the 72°F spring or rent a kayak beneath the moss-draped oaks.

From DeLeon Springs, a scenic six-mile stretch winds south toward DeLand, skirting Lake Woodruff National Wildlife Refuge, where cyclists may spot swallow-tailed kites and other wildlife, before passing the rustic Highland Park Fish Camp.

After a brief gap, the trail resumes at Lake Beresford, where a surprisingly hilly stretch winds toward Blue Spring State Park, famous as a winter refuge for hundreds of West Indian manatees.

Continuing toward DeBary, the landscape shifts before the trail reaches the shores of Lake Monroe. Here, Gemini Springs Park offers 210 acres surrounding its twin freshwater springs, making it an ideal picnic stop. Nearby, historic DeBary Hall, a preserved 19th-century hunting lodge, serves as both a trailhead and a glimpse into the area's past.

Pedaling east into Deltona and the community of Enterprise takes riders deeper into local history. Once home to the grand Brock House hotel, which welcomed presidents and Gilded Age travelers, the area's history is preserved today at the Enterprise Museum.

The journey culminates at Green Springs Park, where vivid emerald waters provide a peaceful finish to a trail showcasing West Volusia's natural beauty, wildlife, and history.

Ready to hit the trails? For more information, visit the West Volusia Visitor Center at 116 W. New York Avenue in DeLand. (386) 734-0162 | VisitWestVolusia.com



Spring-to-Spring Trail



Blue Spring State Park



DeLeon Springs State Park

Crumby Kitchen

Bang Bang Crispy Shrimp Tacos & Mango Slaw

Crispy Bang Bang Shrimp gets all wrapped up in your favorite tortillas with a sweet and tangy coconut mango slaw for a flavor explosion that's ready to devour in less than an hour.

Total Time: 40 Minutes | Servings: 8 Tacos

INSTRUCTIONS

COCONUT MANGO SLAW

1. Blend coconut milk, mango puree, lime juice and salt. Add cilantro and pulse until chopped.
2. Combine cabbage, carrots, bell pepper, mango, coconut and green onion. Toss with the coconut-mango dressing, season if desired and chill for at least 30 minutes.

BANG BANG SHRIMP

1. Whisk mayonnaise and chili sauces together. Set aside.
2. Heat oil in a skillet to 375°F.
3. Soak shrimp in buttermilk for 2–3 minutes, drain, then toss with cornstarch until coated.
4. Fry shrimp in batches for 2–3 minutes per side. Drain briefly on paper towels, then toss with the sauce.
5. Serve immediately in flour or corn tortillas with coconut mango slaw. Garnish with cilantro, lime wedges and extra sweet chili sauce if desired.

NUTRITION

Calories: 358kcal | Carbohydrates: 37g | Protein: 15g | Fat: 17g | Saturated Fat: 11g | Cholesterol: 146mg | Sodium: 762mg | Potassium: 384mg | Fiber: 4g | Sugar: 14g | Vitamin A: 3880IU | Vitamin C: 50.8mg | Calcium: 145mg | Iron: 2.6mg



INGREDIENTS

COCONUT MANGO SLAW

- 1/2 cup coconut milk well stirred
- 1/2 cup mango puree
- 3 tablespoons lime juice
- Pinch kosher salt
- 1/4 cup cilantro leaves packed
- 2 cups red cabbage thinly sliced
- 1 cup carrots shredded
- 1 red bell pepper thinly sliced
- 1 mango thinly sliced into strips
- 1/2 cup coconut chips or flakes
- 1/4 cup green onion chopped

BANG BANG SHRIMP

- 1/2 cup light mayonnaise
- 1/3 cup Thai sweet chili sauce
- 2-3 teaspoons garlic chili sauce or sriracha
- 1 pound large shrimp peeled and deveined
- 1/2 cup buttermilk
- 1/2 cup cornstarch
- 2 cups vegetable oil for frying
- 6-8 8-inch flour or corn tortillas
- Fresh cilantro, lime wedges and Thai sweet chili sauce for serving



ERICA & ABE ACEVEDO

Millennial foodies Erica and Abe are the creative duo behind The Crumby Kitchen. Known for their easy, unique, and delicious recipe ideas, they love sharing their culinary adventures with fellow food enthusiasts. Find more recipes and inspiration at thecrumbykitchen.com.

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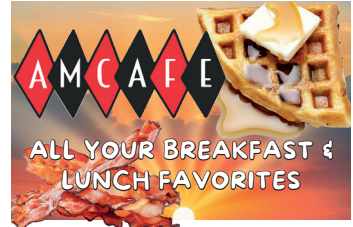
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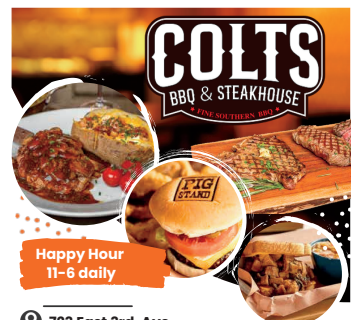
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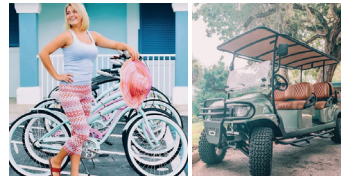
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The Boat Coach

Choosing the Right Anchor and Rode for Your Boat

I recently noticed my 25-year-old Danforth/fluke-style anchor was coming apart. We use our boat more often than most owners, so it wasn't surprising that we needed to replace it with "like and kind." But for those who are starting from scratch, choosing the right anchor is not just about weight. A reliable anchoring system depends on matching the anchor, rode, chain, connectors, boat size, windage, bottom conditions, and expected weather. The anchor provides the bite, while the rode keeps the pull angle low and absorbs shock loads.

1. Start with your typical bottom conditions

If you will be anchoring mainly in sand and mud, Danforth/fluke anchors offer strong holding for their weight, but they can struggle in rock, heavy grass, or shifting bottoms. These anchors can be galvanized metal (fairly cheap), or aluminum (more expensive) but light weight and less likely to corrode over time.

In mixed bottoms a plow anchor is a good all-around choice because they set and reset well as the boat swings. A scoop, or some of the new-generation anchors are also good all-purpose anchors.

If you need to anchor in rock or coral consider a Bruce/claw-style anchors and heavier chain leaders may work better, though retrieval and chafe protection become more important.

For permanent moorings in soft mud or sand, mushroom anchors are suitable; but not for normal temporary anchoring because they settle into the bottom over time to be effective, making them harder to retrieve as well.

2. Match the anchor to the boat

Use the anchor manufacturer's sizing chart as the primary guide but consider more than boat length. A heavier boat, a high-windage cabin, a tall rig, strong currents, or exposed anchorages may justify moving up one size. For cruising or overnight anchoring, many boaters choose a primary anchor one size larger than the minimum recommendation.

3. Choose the rode

The rode is the tackle that attaches the anchor to the boat. Whether it is made up of all-line (rope), all-chain or both line and chain is something to consider.



A properly matched anchor, chain and rode work together to create a secure hold. Choosing the right setup for your boat and typical conditions can make all the difference when it's time to drop anchor.

An all-line rode is light, fairly inexpensive, easy to handle, and acceptable for small boats in calm, protected water. However, all-line rode offers the least abrasion resistance.

A line-and-chain rode is often the best default for most recreational boats. Chain near the anchor resists bottom chafe and helps keep the pull more horizontal and more secure, while nylon line provides stretch and shock absorption.

All-chain rodes are strong and abrasion-resistant, especially for cruising yachts, deeper anchoring, rocky bottoms, or coral. It is heavy, needs proper locker space, and usually requires a windlass.

4. Size the chain and line as a system

For a rope-and-chain setup, a common starting point is a chain leader of about half a boat length to a full boat length. Use marine-grade galvanized or stainless chain, properly rated shackles, and nylon anchor line. If the boat has a windlass, the rope diameter, chain size, chain grade, and professional splice must match the windlass gypsy exactly. Identify the make and model of the windlass and the manufacturer can specify the exact rode system or go online and create a search.

5. Use enough scope

Scope is the ratio of rode deployed to the total vertical distance from the bow chock to the seabed, including water depth, tide rise, and bow height above the water. As a practical rule, use about 3:1 in calm temporary stops, 5:1 for normal anchoring, 7:1 for overnight or stronger conditions, and more when weather or holding ground is poor.

6. Shallow water anchors and trolling motors

Gaining popularity are hydraulic shallow water anchors and GPS-controlled trolling motors. The shallow water anchors are generally mounted on the transom (single or dual) vertically and unfold at the touch of a button and extend downward until sinking into the bottom. Most are effective in up to eight feet of depth. They are popular for shallow-water fishing because they are quiet, unlike a traditional anchor that splashes.

GPS-controlled trolling motors are unlike traditional trolling motors that you steer. These can hold a boat in place without using the bottom. They are expensive but gaining popularity even on large offshore boats. It keeps the boat directly over the fish or structure holding the fish despite wind and currents.

Bottom line (all puns intended)...

For most recreational boaters, a modern plow, scoop, or new-generation anchor paired with a properly sized rope-and-chain rode is the safest and most versatile starting point. Fine-tune the setup based on where you anchor, how long you stay, your boat's windage, and the conditions you are willing to ride out.



CAPTAIN MARK KELLUM
THE BOAT COACH
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Born with the water gene, Captain Mark found his passions early: swimming, surfing and sailing. A naval electronics engineer and U.S. Coast Guard Master Mariner, he's spent 30 years helping others improve their boating experiences in NSB.

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Backwater *Fishing* Report

Best Days to Fish:
September 2-3, 8-13, 17-20, 25-28

As our summer heat continues to pulse at high temperatures the fishing bite remains just as hot. Both inshore and offshore fishing has had amazing action!

Josh Thomas from Titusville scored a toad redfish in mid-August using a gold spoon and @KennyIeye has been slaying the snook on the shorelines of Bethune Beach using a variety of artificial lures.

Shea and Heather Lopez, along with Casey Collins, joined up with Matt Douglas of the west coast of Florida to score a full day of tight lines catching snapper, grouper and many other species.

As the fall season approaches soon, the bite will continue to stay hot. Look for bait pods on the beach and find shaded zones in the mangroves.

Cast Em... Hook Em... And Catch Em!



PATRICK "TUPAT" EICHSTAEDT | @THEREALTUPAT

A seasoned fishing guide with an unparalleled knowledge of the area's backwaters. Beyond the boat, he's a talented photographer, capturing the natural beauty of Florida's coast. Patrick is also the creator of Tupat's Hawaiian Poke Sauce, a culinary favorite featured on menus throughout the United States.



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Ponce Inlet September Tide Chart



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Ponce De Leon Inlet South, FL - Sep 2026

Date		High				Low				☀		☾
		AM	ft	PM	ft	AM	ft	PM	ft	Rise	Set	
1	Tue			12:01	3.6	5:25	0.3	6:15	0.6	7:01	7:45	☾
2	Wed	12:13	3.0	12:53	3.6	6:14	0.3	7:18	0.7	7:02	7:44	☾
3	Thu	1:04	2.9	1:51	3.7	7:11	0.3	8:21	0.8	7:02	7:43	☾
4	Fri	2:03	2.8	2:56	3.7	8:10	0.3	9:24	0.8	7:03	7:42	☾
5	Sat	3:11	2.8	4:08	3.8	9:12	0.3	10:28	0.8	7:03	7:40	☾
6	Sun	4:25	2.9	5:14	3.8	10:17	0.2	11:30	0.7	7:04	7:39	☾
7	Mon	5:31	3.0	6:12	3.9	11:22	0.2			7:04	7:38	☾
8	Tue	6:29	3.2	7:04	4.0	12:27	0.6	12:24	0.1	7:05	7:37	☾
9	Wed	7:23	3.4	7:54	4.0	1:19	0.5	1:22	0.1	7:05	7:36	☾
10	Thu	8:16	3.6	8:42	3.9	2:06	0.3	2:17	0.1	7:06	7:35	☾
11	Fri	9:06	3.8	9:27	3.7	2:49	0.3	3:07	0.2	7:06	7:33	☾
12	Sat	9:53	3.9	10:10	3.6	3:28	0.3	3:55	0.4	7:07	7:32	☾
13	Sun	10:37	3.9	10:50	3.4	4:06	0.3	4:41	0.5	7:07	7:31	☾
14	Mon	11:20	3.8	11:31	3.2	4:44	0.4	5:29	0.7	7:08	7:30	☾
15	Tue			12:04	3.7	5:24	0.6	6:21	0.9	7:08	7:28	☾
16	Wed	12:13	3.0	12:49	3.6	6:09	0.7	7:16	1.1	7:09	7:27	☾
17	Thu	12:58	2.9	1:38	3.5	7:00	0.8	8:09	1.2	7:09	7:26	☾
18	Fri	1:47	2.8	2:31	3.4	7:52	0.9	9:01	1.2	7:10	7:25	☾
19	Sat	2:42	2.7	3:31	3.4	8:45	0.9	9:54	1.2	7:10	7:24	☾
20	Sun	3:46	2.8	4:32	3.4	9:39	1.0	10:47	1.2	7:11	7:22	☾
21	Mon	4:48	2.8	5:25	3.5	10:35	0.9	11:37	1.1	7:11	7:21	☾
22	Tue	5:42	3.0	6:11	3.6	11:29	0.9			7:12	7:20	☾
23	Wed	6:29	3.2	6:54	3.7	12:22	1.0	12:20	0.8	7:12	7:19	☾
24	Thu	7:14	3.4	7:36	3.7	1:03	0.8	1:09	0.7	7:13	7:17	☾
25	Fri	7:58	3.6	8:17	3.7	1:42	0.7	1:56	0.7	7:13	7:16	☾
26	Sat	8:41	3.8	8:59	3.7	2:18	0.6	2:42	0.6	7:14	7:15	☾
27	Sun	9:24	3.9	9:41	3.6	2:55	0.5	3:27	0.6	7:14	7:14	☾
28	Mon	10:07	4.1	10:24	3.5	3:32	0.4	4:14	0.6	7:15	7:13	☾
29	Tue	10:53	4.2	11:10	3.4	4:12	0.4	5:05	0.7	7:15	7:11	☾
30	Wed	11:42	4.2			4:58	0.5	6:03	0.8	7:16	7:10	☾



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