

THE  
*Magnolia*  
NEWS

NEWS OF INTEREST TO THE RESIDENTS OF MAGNOLIA POINT

VOLUME 5 • ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2024



WHAT NEXT?



# FOREWORD



We've been pressed for some time to expand our golf coverage, and we're happy to introduce just that in our 'Playing Through' section, **page 9**. In the coming months, we'll be reporting on the various aspects of

the game, including:

- *Technology*
- *Physical Conditioning*
- *Course Management*
- *The Mind Game*
- *Saving Strokes*
- *Skills Drills*
- *Equipment*

If you've got an idea to contribute, let us know! This month, a look at GPS golf apps.

*"It's 151 yards away."*

*"The hole?"*

*"No, the drink cart!"*



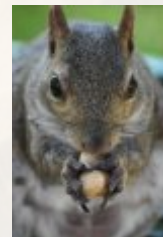
We welcome a new advertiser, JP's Custom Carts, and a contributor to our 'Cart Trends' feature. We kick it off this month with Part 1 of 'Let's Talk Batteries'. **Pages 14-15**.

Bill Smith's labor of love, the restoration of a 1960 TR3A is this month's 'Magnolia Chrome'. It's really been over 40 years in the family, and in the re-making since 2017. To those of us fans of vintage British two-seaters, it's a bloody hoot! **Page 16**.



Bill Blackwell has taken his favorite date on several visits to our newest local eatery, in our first-ever restaurant review in this month's 'Traveling Fork': Turmeric Kitchen. We've tried it too, and it's excellent! **Page 18**.

'Sometimes You Feel Like a Nut': this town was not big enough for the both of us! Not quite in the tradition of the late great Grady Law, or our Nutria-busting Monty Murphy, I try my hand at squirrel-taming on **page 19**.



The Mitchells are all over the map in this month's 'Taking Charge'. And not without a hitch! The trials of learning new skills, and sharing new adventures are found on **pages 20-21**.



Becky Hinson briefs us on her photographic safaris to area wildlife preserves and parks in, wait for it... 'The Parks'. So charge up those batteries, camera bugs, and put on your sneakers! **Pages 24-25**.

Got a new 'Fur & Feathers' brush set for our go-to drawing program, as you see on the front cover, and elsewhere. But not on the back cover!



'Court Shorts' tennis coverage has been discontinued.

## THE MAGNOLIA NEWS

*Editor - Dave Petraglia*

*davepetraglia@gmail.com*

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## THE PHOTOGRAPHER-IN-RESIDENCE

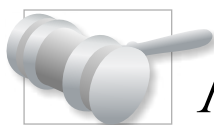
*Becky Hinson*

## THE COPY EDITORS

*Becky Hinson • Susan Mitchell*

*Front, Back Covers: Editor*





Now that we are officially out of the holiday season we can start really moving forward on some HOA items and unfinished business. Our January meeting showed we had good progress on all of our agenda items. The Tower Park sale is moving forward as expected with no delays whatsoever, at the current rate it should be closed in the next few weeks. Also, in an effort to keep attendance up at the monthly board meetings, we voted on moving all meeting time to 6:30PM. Unfortunately, John Lochner, our current treasurer, announced he will be resigning at the members meeting in March. His term has 1 year remaining on it, we have already started taking applications to fill his position, as well as the 2 members at large positions starting a new term in March. I am very excited to see the amount of interest we are receiving from the community and the amount of applicants. We will be holding an open forum to meet the candidates as well as ask them questions later in February. In an effort to allow as much attendance as possible we have decided on hosting the meeting on a Sunday afternoon.

As we are trying to focus on the future, I would like to discuss some timelines and items we have planned over the next few months. We are still sending out a survey. I am behind on getting it together I will admit, however it will be coming very shortly. The main focus of the survey is the Medinah gate. As a board we want the best overall opinion on the ideal way to open it up to non-residents. I am looking at the possibility of sending the survey via mail to each resident as opposed to the usual survey monkey. Aside from the survey the next few months will involve the "Use Agreement" quite a bit, and at every monthly board meeting it will be an agenda item. I stress to anyone with a strong opinion, please come to the meetings and sign up to discuss. I honestly do like hearing everyone's viewpoints on it and it is one of the biggest items in our community right now. As usual, I am always available to talk to any residents, and I appreciate the support!

- MIKE BOUCHER



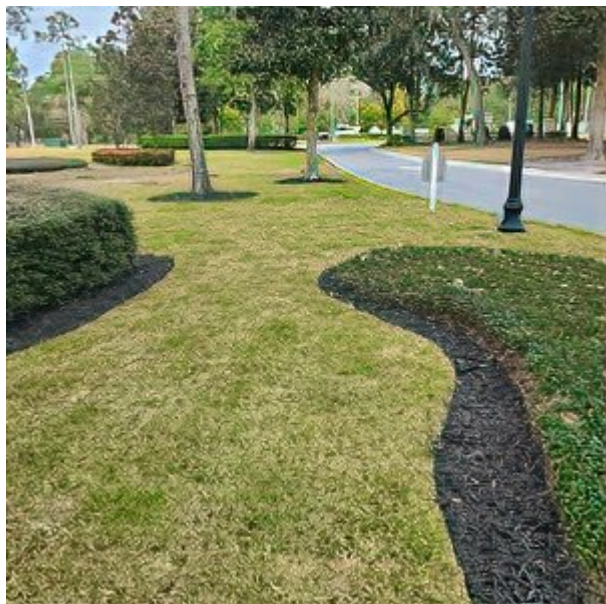
dp





## LANDSCAPE &amp; IRRIGATION

We've been busy planning and prioritizing projects for the FY 2024 budget year as well as systematically moving forward, area by area to improve the beauty of our lovely community!



Since our last report, we have installed the sod and mulch on the entrance side of the Magnolia Point

Boulevard entrance and are adding additional sod to an adjacent area. Last month we removed the diseased trees at the front entrance. We are planning on planting five trees in the community to replace those removed this Spring.

We have started cleaning, refreshing and planting the flower beds at the two entrances, the gatehouse and the sign at the 'T' where Muirfield, Colonial and Magnolia Point Boulevard meet. The Committee chose red and white dianthus for the bed in front of the gatehouse because they are shade tolerant, and cold tolerant flowering plants. We are planning on installing snapdragons and either violas or pansies at the Medinah gate beds as the beds are in full sun. These plants are also cold tolerant. Other projects:

- 1) Cleanup of the area on the exit side of Magnolia Point Boulevard at Harbor Road.
- 2) Removal of the 'Jack Frost' ligustrum shrubs in front of the sign at the Magnolia Point Boulevard entrance on Harbor Road and transplanting them along the hedgerows at the Magnolia Point entrance and the community property in front of Exit Realty where some of the existing plants have died.
- 3) We received approval for the release of funds to power wash and stain the wood privacy fence along the entrance side of the cart path on the entrance side of Magnolia Point Boulevard. We are currently discussing this project with the residents on Glen Cottage adjacent to the fence before proceeding.
- 4) Power-washing the fence along the road outside the Medinah gate has been placed on hold due to issues that need to be resolved before the committee can move forward.

Other projects we are starting in February are:

- 1) Redesigning the beds around the Magnolia Point entrance sign
- 2) Trimming or removal of the overgrown and declining shrubs on the Borden Lane median.
- 3) Further discussion of wrapping utility boxes with floral or wildlife designs. Orange Park has begun implementing a utility box wrapping project. Examples can be seen on Orange Ave/Route 17 in Orange Park.

FYI: This is the time of year many folks cut back their crape myrtles. We recommend that if you do, you consider not cutting them back to stubs (aka "Crape or crepe murder"). Crape myrtles do not need to be trimmed back at all unless they are too large for the space where they have been planted. If you choose to

*Continued*

*Photos: C. Francisco*





# COMMITTEE BLAST • II

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REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRS

FEBRUARY 2024

trim or cut them back, please consider not topping them but just shape the canopy and remove branches that are rubbing on other branches, branches that are growing towards the center, seed pods and small twiggy branches. Please see link below:

[How To Prune A Crepe Myrtle Correctly](https://southernliving.com) (southernliving.com)

The hardiness zone for our area was revised to 9B from 9a in 2023 meaning that plants that require a slightly warmer average temperature are now recommended for planting in our area.

[2023 USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map](#)

February Planting tips: This is a good time to plant star magnolia and red maples that grow well in our hardiness zone. Avoid pruning citrus until spring. Pruning stimulates growth and cold temperatures may still injure citrus. Continue planting cool weather vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage, kale and lettuce.



YES!



NO!

We invite our fellow community members to help with finding homes with gardens that the community feels deserve recognition in its Yard-of-the-Quarter Award. The next award will be for the second quarter of 2024-April through June. Please contact Cindy Francisco at [pltluvr44@aol.com](mailto:pltluvr44@aol.com) with your yard suggestions.

Help us move forward on our various renovation and beautification projects! Please contact me at [pltluvr44@aol.com](mailto:pltluvr44@aol.com) or any L & I Committee member listed on the MPCA website under committees.

Other FREE community programs for gardeners- every 4th Monday of the month at 11:30 am, to 12:30 pm, the Clay County UF-IFAS extension provides a Free Horticulture Advice Series for Clay County residents at the extension facility adjacent to the fairgrounds on route 16. The program for February 26 is "How to Control Weeds".

- CINDY FRANCISCO



Jane Myrick, Jean Fox, Suzanne Foster



JoAnn & Chris Johnson

Continued



# COMMITTEE BLAST • III

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 2

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRS

FEBRUARY 2024

## ACCESS CONTROL

At the December HOA Board meeting funding was approved to replace the front visitor gate arm assembly. This gate assembly was very wobbly, had fluid leaking from it, and appeared to be on its last legs. The assembly was replaced on January 5th but the technician had to come back on January 15th to install the LED controller to get the lights working. Everything is now working great and as added benefit the gate arm normally comes down after every vehicle.

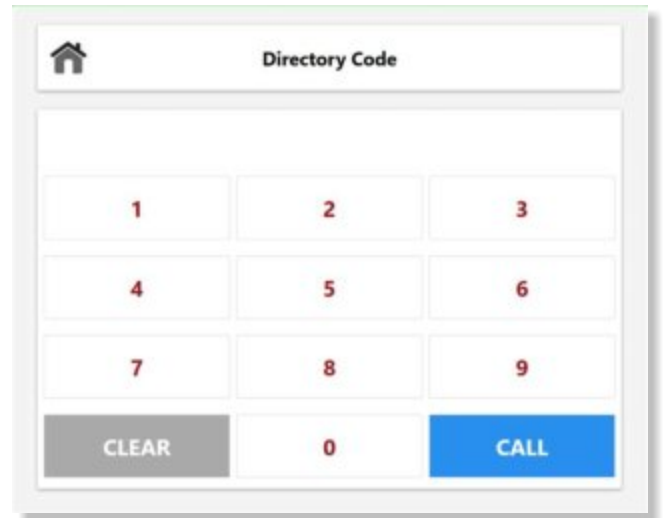
We are looking at the possibility of putting a new street light in the vicinity of 3455 Olympic Drive. This area has a curve that has no lighting which makes it very dangerous. Also there has recently been some criminal activity in this area so the light would help with both of these issues.

At their September meeting the Board approved funds for upgrades at the back (Medinah) gate. This work will include adding a kiosk (for eventually opening the gate to non-residents), replacing the cameras, and upgrading the associated electronics. The project is scheduled to start on or about January 29th and be completed by February 2nd. Hopefully there will be little, if any, traffic disruptions during this work. But you may want to adjust your routes accordingly, if you so desire.

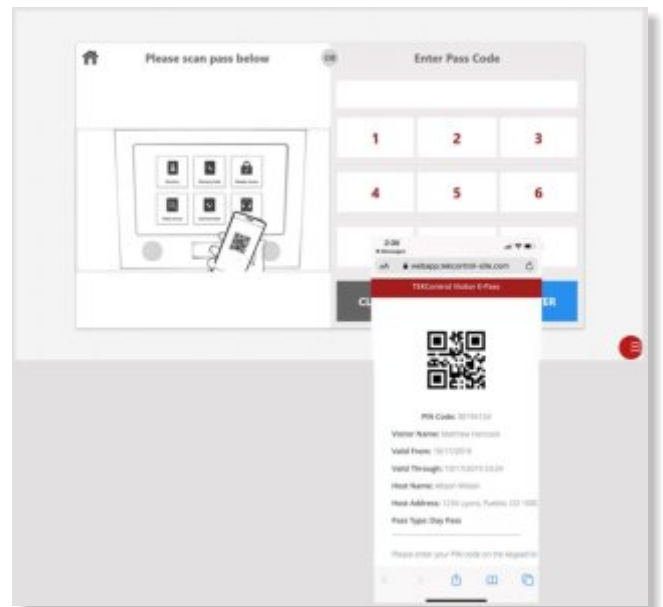


*New Kiosk*

There are several options available while using the Allbox and the following are just a couple examples of screens and the capabilities associated with them:



- The visitor can also use the directory code option to directly call the resident without scrolling or searching the directory.
- This option requires the resident to tell visitor their code for direct dial.
- This option can be displayed without the main directory for enhanced privacy.



- A host can send a visitor an e-pass during the registration process which can be used at the AllBox.
- The QR code/barcode scanner at the bottom can scan an e-pass, printed pass, or driver's license.
- If the visit is valid, the gate will automatically open for the visitor to proceed.

*Continued*

- PAUL WERRING





# COMMITTEE BLAST • IV

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REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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## COVENANTS REVIEW & CONSOLIDATION COMMITTEE

One of the Florida activities that has seen a big increase in the last year is space launches. These launches take years of planning and preparation, a team effort of thousands of manhours by hundreds of members. The spaceflight may last several days or several years, depending on the mission. These endeavours are very similar to what your Association is attempting with the revision of the Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, Easements and Restrictions. This revision is the focus of our Committee, but will heavily involve the Board of Directors, the Association's legal counsel, the Rules Enforcement Committee, the Architectural Review Committee, the Communications Committee and, most importantly, every member of MPCA.

Last month our Committee asked that you become an informed voter. This month we are asking for a deeper involvement in this project because it will take many more manhours to accomplish the amendment of our Governing Documents by the end of the year than can be provided by our existing Board and Committee members. If you can help on a particular committee, go to the Committee Directory page on our Association website, click on the Committee Application link, fill out the form and email per instructions. If you would like to help, but don't know just where you would be most helpful, contact me: **alleneastman32043@gmail.com**, or **904-635-2990**, to discuss further the Association's needs.

As we mention every month, the most efficient way to access Association information or communicate with Association members is via the website: [magpt.com](http://magpt.com). If you currently do not have an account established for complete access, the Committee encourages you to do so.

- ALLEN EASTMAN





# February



EXIT MAGNOLIA POINT REALTY

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## Featured Listings

*For Sale*



3662 Winged Foot Cir  
Magnolia Point  
Brooke Smith

*For Sale*



3687 La Costa Ct  
Magnolia Point  
Pam Ye

*For Sale*



1793 Preston Trail  
Magnolia Point  
Ros Arnold

*Top Producer*

Rosalind Arnold



*Top Producer*

Kelly Rogers



*Top Producer*

Margie Kruse



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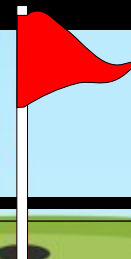


@Exit\_MPR





# PLAYING THROUGH



## PLAYING GOLF WITH YOUR PHONE

Golf apps that use GPS in smartphones can provide golfers with various features, such as distance measurements, course maps, shot tracking, scorekeeping, and more. These apps can be useful tools for all skill levels, but they also have some advantages and disadvantages, as well as differences in use during practice and play.



One of the main advantages of using a GPS golf app is that it can provide accurate and real-time information about the course and your shots. For example, you get the layout of each hole, the distance to the green and hazards, the best club to use, and the optimal shot direction. And, a GPS app can track your performance and statistics, such as fairways hit, greens in regulation, putts, and scores. This can help you set goals for improvement. Most handy is the ability to 'fly over' and preview any hole on any course, or all, the night before you're due at the bag drop!

Important: these are *not* laser rangefinders. The app, while brilliantly mapping and presenting a photorealistic view of a hole from outer space(!), requires you to map your approach shot 'onscreen'. If you see a white flag on the green, for instance, you have to drag the hole-location icon to where your best guess as to where it is. *However*, as you can see in the graphic above, you can get a realtime analysis of the hole with hazards you might not be able to see on the approach, with distances and club suggestions.



An app can the game more fun and interactive with games, leaderboards, challenges, and social media integration. You can compare your round with your buddies over at Fleming Island or up in Augusta, in realtime, if you want. A GPS golf app can also work offline, though some will have a more limited feature-set, which means you can use it even in remote courses or areas with no internet or cell phone service.

Disadvantages? One is that it can affect the golfer's concentration and etiquette on the course. It can be

tempting to check your phone too often, which can disrupt your focus, rhythm, and pace of play. And to see the app tracking you in satellite 'bird's eye' view as you walk up the fairway, well, that's just a little too tempting. *Resist!* This 'phubbing' ('phone snubbing'...yes, it's a word) can be disrespectful and annoying to others, but you already know this. *Don't* use your phone during someone else's shot, allow it to blare a 'Bad to the Bone' ringtone, or be browsing the specials at Turmeric Kitchen.

Also, golf apps rely on the quality and functionality of the smartphone, which varies depending on model, brand, software, battery usage, and settings. With the newer phones, this is less of an issue. Until recently, a dedicated GPS watch had the edge over the smartphone in terms of



accuracy. No so much now. The watch, however, by its position on the player's wrist, can be more consistently accurate as opposed to the phone that might be on a cart's shelf, or in a player's pocket or bag. Still, not a deal-breaker.

Using a smartphone GPS golf app is different during practice vs. play. For this reason, if you're new to the concept, consider using an app only during practice rounds at first, and sparingly if at all, during play.

-Editor

Next Month: Rangefinders







BECKY HINSON





# MPWC

## UPDATE

- SANDY WALDRUP

Welcome new member **Laura Emery**, who resides on Colonial Drive. Laura was first introduced to the Women's Club as a guest of **Cindy Triay's** at the holiday luncheon in December. We are glad she has joined us. If you know of a new or existing resident who would like to become a Women's Club member, she can join at a reduced fee of \$15.00 (covers directory and binder) for the period January 1 through April 30. Our membership form is located on our website at [www.mpwc.org](http://www.mpwc.org), or email Membership Director **Marguerite Martin** at [memsells@att.net](mailto:memsells@att.net). To join, you must be a Magnolia Point resident or property owner or be a member of the country club.



*Donna Habing*

### Executive Officer Nominations Have Begun

**Donna Habing**, Vice President, is leading up the nominating committee for executive officer positions for the upcoming year 2024-25. Donna will become president, leaving the Vice President position open. Nominations are also being taken for the Corresponding Secretary and the Recording Secretary positions. The proposed slate of officers will be presented at the members' meeting in March, to be voted on at the April meeting.

### Dinner Theater Outing

Cindy Triay, Activities Director, has organized a social outing to the Spotlight Center, a new dinner theater located in Fleming Island. Members and their guests will attend the February 23 showing of "Breaking Up is Hard to Do", featuring music by Neil Sedaka. Look for member reviews next month.



*Kristen Waldorf*

### Project REACH Continues With a New Name

Thank you to **Pam Young, Linda Thill, Diane Lochner, Bobbe Marion** and **Linda Werring** for packing food on Thursday, January 11, for Project REACH. This is the second month that the Women's Club provided food for 20 families from Charles E. Bennett Elementary (CEB) who are being helped through Project REACH. The food was delivered that afternoon to **Kristen Waldorf**, CEB's Social Worker, who in turn distributed the food to the families. The Women's Club will continue this monthly assistance throughout the school year.

And there is a new name for the project going forward – Maggie's Beekeepers. Name ideas for the project were solicited from the Women's Club members and the top 3 were sent out for a final vote, with Maggie's Beekeepers winning in a landslide. Thanks to all who submitted their creative variations on CEB's mascot, the Bees.





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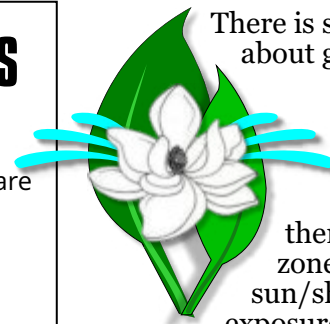


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There is so much to learn about gardening!

When making planting suggestions or recommendations there is the hardiness zone, the amount of sun/shade, type of exposure (morning or afternoon), soil pH (if the pH is not in the correct zone, it doesn't matter how much fertilizer you put on it, it won't grow well, if at all), type of soil (clay, loam or sand), drainage (some plants tolerate "wet feet"; most landscape plants do not), location of plants in relation to hardscape (house foundation, utilities, driveways), the amount of available space for the



## LANDSCAPE IRRIGATION Tips

Things we can improve upon are reminding folks about "right plant, right place", when to plant and fertilize, when and how to prune, planting for pollinators and wildlife and what plants are invasive.

Personally, I would like to see folks use a wider range of plant material and more natives. Plant breeders are perfecting cultivars (now even natives such as dwarf Simpson's stopper) of plants based on size, reblooming ability, temperature extreme tolerance, growth rate, herbicide tolerance, pest resistance, etc.



For example, when sodding the Magnolia Point Boulevard area, we specified Pro Vista St Augustine-it's a premium grass that is more shade tolerant, disease resistant, grows slower, produces a tighter, denser mat, has better herbicide damage resistance and better drought tolerance.



Parting comment- most folks don't realize that when you cut a plant, you are stimulating the production of growth hormones. Shaving the roots ("tickling") or cutting and splaying the root ball when planting stimulates growth as does pruning/ shearing and trimming the above ground portion, producing a "flush".

- CINDY FRANCISCO







*“Monty’s memo?  
What memo?”*

dp





### LET'S TALK BATTERIES - PART 1



Whether you have a gas or battery-operated cart, all have batteries in them.

**Lead Acid** are the most common batteries in golf carts. two electrodes submerged in an electrolyte of sulfuric acid. They are maintained by adding distilled distilled water to their 'cells'. Life expectancy is 3-4 years, but some can last longer with proper maintenance. They come in voltages of 6-volt, 8 volt and 12 volts depending on your cart and what it has.

**AGM Acid Batteries** are similar to Lead Acid but differ in that it is a sealed unit and has a thin glass mat that absorbs the electrolyte. This type of battery is designed for vehicles with heavy use and vibration being a major factor. They tend to last up to 7 years compared to traditional Lead Acid batteries.

**Lithium-Ion Batteries** are the next generation compared to traditional lead-based batteries and can be charged and discharged thousands of times. They come as a single unit in most cases and offer hundreds of pounds less weight to your cart.

**Traditional Lead acid vs AGM Lead Acid:** Lead Acid cost is lower and yield a life expectancy of charge cycles or times on a full charge of about 300 charges. An AGM battery will have a higher cost per battery but they average a 500-600 charge cycle life, sometimes even higher, with less maintenance with no watering. But if price is a concern and maintenance isn't an issue then traditional Lead Acid batteries are the way to go.

The average cost of Lead Acid batteries installed is \$995-1095; AGMs are \$1500-2000.

#### **Lead Acid batteries vs Lithium-Ion:**

Cost is a major factor in the initial set up so don't spit your drink out yet. As we mentioned earlier you can replace traditional Lead Acid batteries for about \$1000 depending on where and who does them. Lithium Ion set ups for your cart are more costly but effective in the long run and a lot of factors determine what's best for you and your overall use.

Lead Acids \$995-1095; Lithium Ions \$2995-4000.

In the end it is my expert opinion that if money isn't an option and you'll be enjoying your cart seven days a week then upgrade your cart to Lithium Ion. You'll get a longer drive time and the cart will keep a more constant power longer vs the Lead Acid batteries. When Lead Acid batteries get to about 50%, they tend to be sluggish and have a surging effect. Not to mention your speed will decrease. With Lithium Ion, there is no drop in power until you get down to about 3% of total charge. Again, If you're the average golf cart owner and a normal user, then Lead Acid is the way to go. The cost is less, and maintenance isn't that bad. But think of this: each Lead Acid battery weighs in at about 80 lbs. each, at almost 500 total lbs. of weight to your cart. A Lithium Ion set is about 90 lbs in total. That 400 more pounds difference is a lot of weight, not to mention a reduction in driving time. And, life expectancy is 10 years plus and can have over 3000-5000 charging cycles vs. 3-5 years on average for Lead Acid.



- With John Poluga  
for The Magnolia News

Continued







### ***DO NOT let your batteries get to this sorry state!***

*With Lead Acid batteries, make sure all your terminals are corrosion free and add only distilled water once every three months as needed. Charge your batteries entirely after every use. You'll get a longer lifespan by doing this and this will ensure full charging capacity. Average charge times are about 8-12 hours and the charger or OBC (onboard computer) on the cart will shut the charger off at 100% charge. An occasional odd smell in your garage from the batteries from charging and nothing to be alarmed about. Consult a professional for more questions.*

Next Month: Battery Management Systems



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# MAGNOLIA *chrome*

## 1960 TRIUMPH TR3A - PART 1

100 m.p.h. plus!



For the sporting motorist the Triumph T.R.3 offers all the joy and exhilaration of first-up-to-date motoring. A lightning acceleration, with the latest Disc Brakes for super safety, and an unbeatable 100 m.p.h. speed all go to make the T.R.3 stand way out ahead in its class. At the same time its roomy luggage box, its economical 32 m.p.g. petrol consumption and its electric and mechanical reliability in traffic make it an excellent town car—for shopping, for week-end golfing or for the odd run-about job. Undoubtedly with the T.R.3 you get the best of both worlds! Over-drive, Hard Top and economical seat for extra accommodations are available as optional extras. **IN THE CITY TRAFFIC—so docile, no fuss!**

**Triumph T.R.3**

**What year and make is your car, and what attracted you to it?**

It's a 1960 TR3a. Back in the 1960's, 70's and 80's I

drove Triumph Spitfires and

kept a TR6 for nearly 20 years. Concurrently, I drove a 1968 BJ8 Austin Healey 3000 for 28 years.

**Can you tell us about the history and original use of your car?**

The car entered our family in 1980, in an assortment of boxes and baskets. It was restored, and owned by my father-in-law for about 20 years, then forgotten again, slowly rotting again outside, covered with a tarpaulin. Eventually, my brother-in-law stored it in his garage in East Greenwich, Rhode Island. In 2017, I hired a carrier that



year and had it brought to my home in Magnolia Point to determine its condition and eligibility for a possible restoration project. The floors, sills, and body parts were rusted beyond salvage, the motor was seized, and the interior had become a mouse condominium. But for whatever reason, I decided to try to make it right.

**How long have you owned it?**

Since April of 2017, when the restoration began.



**Can you tell us about the restoration process?**

The car is now in the final stages of completion. Body, chassis, and engine work have been completed and the reassembly process looks pretty good. My intent is to keep the Triumph as original as possible so there are no significant alterations to the restoration.

- Photos: B. Smith



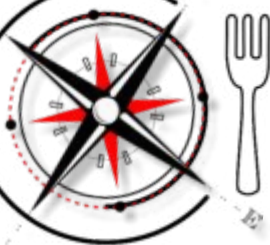




BECKY HINSON







# THE Traveling Fork

BECKY WILSON



This month we will review the newest restaurant in our Green Cove Springs neighborhood, The Turmeric Kitchen. It was opened just before Christmas and we have eaten there, twice for dinner, and once for lunch.

As with the opening of any new enterprise, there were apparently some problems initially, although our meals there were without issues. I have eaten at quite a few Indian Restaurants because I like the real authentic Indian cuisine. The Tumeric Kitchen doesn't compare well to the larger Indian restaurants in this genre because its menus are smaller with fewer illustrations but this smaller scale does not detract from its quality food and service.

The larger restaurants offer an unusually large menu with pictures and descriptions. I am simply delighted to have this restaurant close by because it adds to the variety of foods available locally.

Diving deep into the realm of Indian food, one can see the long list of spices at work in Indian food. The term, Masala, describes a blend of spices commonly used in Indian food—red and green chili peppers, fenugreek, cardamon, cloves, curries (another blend of spices common to Indian kitchens), turmeric, cumin seeds and on and on

with all the other spices found in any good cook's kitchen.

Some common Indian foods are spicy which suits me fine. However, lots of folks don't care for real spicy food. Never fear—the foods I have tested in this restaurant don't reach the inflammatory level. Additionally, with some of the menu items noted for "heat", you will be asked how "hot" you want it. My wife, Marcia, doesn't like it seasoned to my taste. She has been very pleased with the seasoning level of the Biryani and has twice ordered that.

Don't take my word for it—try it out. Tandoori chicken—if mildly seasoned—is an interesting menu item baked in a tandoori oven. If you need a suggestion, make it your first try at The Turmeric Kitchen.



- BILL BLACKWELL



- BILL BLACKWELL





# SOMETIMES YOU FEEL LIKE A NUT

Yeah, cute as heck. Lively, bushy tail, regular guests in kids' nursery rhymes and cartoon shows. Not so welcome in your attic. This particular little beggar was scouting a way into our attic, having made a highway of our lanai screen, and was all day long running back and forth, carrying leaves to feather its planned hideaway. Now however, it lives a comfortable life in another Sunshine State zip code, thanks to my first 'live' trapping adventure.



Up north, and long before reaching an age of reflection and increasing sympathy for all, well, nearly all, things living, we dispatched 'varmint' summarily and with little effort or fanfare.

*From attic plan...*



This episode took a week's patience, and a popular and proven 'live' trap, the one with the name that suggests I now 'have a heart'. Unboxing, it looked the part; sturdy, with a simple but effective method of springing its entrance door shut on an unsuspecting critter. Beyond that, the real art is understanding how to bait the thing.

Towards the rear of the trap is a 'trip-plate', a hinged and very tippy metal plate on the floor of the cage. For the first few days (squirrels are only actively feeding in the mornings and late afternoons), all I succeeded in doing was feed it lavishly on a diet of fine salted-in-shell roasted peanuts. Almost always it made off with the goods, tripping the trap on its way out. Setting and tripping the trap *myself*, it was inconceivable how the little bugger could do this!

Obviously, life at Magnolia Point has sharpened the thieving skills of these critters to a very fine degree. Unfortunately, I carried over old habits from baiting mouse traps, and noticed I was leaving one or two nuts on the trip-plate. My theory was that it needed to see a nut or two in order to invite itself in. Placing one or two behind the trap didn't seem too appealing. So, I decided to heed the manufacturer's directions and put them on the floor beyond the plate, so the critter had to step on it. More fool me! Then, bingo! I came out the next morning to find the little brat chattering away in its new jail cell!

Other baiting tips: leave a trail of peanuts leading into the trap on either side. Alternate days or baitings for this. Another trick: with a tempting bunch of peanuts inside, close the door and leave it 'unarmed' like that, overnight. Leave one loose nut on top of the trap. Have it contemplate the booty inside, out of reach. That will make it want to get *back* into that cage! Oh, and forget smearing peanut butter on the plate, that just makes a mess and attracts ants. Same with fruit. Again, it's a trip plate, not a bait catch as on a mouse trap.

I can't tell you how to dispose of the squirrel, but suggest you acquaint yourself well with FWC guidelines, which are easily found online. Suffice to say

the last time I saw mine, it was scampering off into a lovely, pristine woodland, and never looked back. Message me here for guidance on that, if you'd like, [davepetraglia@gmail.com](mailto:davepetraglia@gmail.com).



*...to working a tan*

- Editor







Electric Road Warriors Susan & Jenn hit the highway.

# Taking Charge

**Hitching!** How do you reduce your hitching time from 2.5 hours to less than 5 minutes? Camp next to a New



were back in the area at Atlantic Beach, a beautiful setting with lots of big, old trees and close to the ocean. Remember when we had the tornado warnings? It's a whole new experience when living in a tin can! The sheriff drove through the campground with a bullhorn at about 11:30 AM telling everyone to evacuate by 1:00 PM or sign a waiver relieving the city of any liability. Yikes! It takes us about two hours to prepare the trailer for moving – taking everything off the counters and table, moving things so they would slide around, etc.

Shockingly, we did this in record time and were driving out of the campground right at 1pm. The police directed us to the beach parking where there are fewer and smaller trees. Thankfully, the storm was not as bad as predicted, and around 6:00 PM we were told we could return to a partially flooded and dark campground. *Uh, no thanks!* We decided to stay put, do our first boondocking (more on that next time), and wait for

York trucker. We met him in December, and he gave us a few simple tips that greatly improved our process. What they didn't help with was what we experienced today, a "U-shaped" site where we were able to get the rig level, but the truck was coming down a hill to hitch back up, making the stinger enter the hitch at a severe angle. This we didn't know how to fix. And we did it twice today—which took five hours all together. So much for that rock bottom average hitching time.

**Prepare for the unexpected:** In early January, we



drier sites and daylight. Good call, Mitchell women!

**Clerbrook Golf and RV Resort:** Located just west of Orlando on US 27, Clerbrook is a Thousand Trails RV park that also has a well-maintained golf course. It has pretty fairways and shallow, white sand traps, but there is water, water everywhere.

**Hanna Park:** It's a Jacksonville-owned park with lots of space available in the winter—mainly because it's not easily found like our Florida state parks. Until the holiday weekends, that is. Over MLK, it went from

*Continued*





# Taking Charge

nearly empty to packed and buzzing like a hive. It made us feel like we must be in “the place.” The beach is a block from the campground, and it has the best mountain biking in the state. As a bonus, we had old



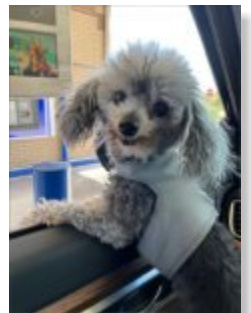
friends from Miami join us in their RV for the weekend, so we gave them a tour of Amelia Island and Fernandina. We even took the ferry and scored some delicious seafood.

*Photos: The Mitchells*

**CreekFire Resort:** This is a new resort outside Savannah, near Pooler, with tons of amenities for both adults and children – pools, lazy river, games, pickleball, and on the lake a restaurant, paddle boards, and kayak rentals. We fell in love with the level, concrete, pull-through site. (And yes, this is where we get cocky thinking we have this hitching thing DOWN.) This was a great location to visit Savannah and Charleston. After a quick stop at another Thousand Trails park in SC, we are in Devils Fork State Park outside of Greenville, SC for the month of February. ***This is our view for the next month:***



One quick note for those who know us, our saddest day was when Lola, our 17-year-old teacup poodle, passed over the rainbow bridge. She was a spry and loyal companion, and we miss her dearly. Our cat, Ori, is giving us both lots of love and cuddles.







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Thanks - John

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## MAGNOLIA POINT BRIDGE NEW PLAYERS WELCOME!

All games are friendly and we welcome new players. Sign up with a partner or as a single. One prize is paid out for each table, i.e., if there are four tables, the top four scores win money.

**Duplicate and Social Bridge** play on alternate Thursdays in the clubhouse dining room from 3 to 6pm. The fees are \$2.00 for Social and \$3.00 for Duplicate to cover the cost of prize money and supplies.

### CONTACT

Social: Rannel Westberry [REW5538@comcast.net](mailto:REW5538@comcast.net)

Duplicate: Jon Bastress [JonBastress@gmail.com](mailto:JonBastress@gmail.com)

### Social Bridge, Thu, Dec 28

1. Phyllis Boyd & Sondra Costa
2. Marty Essex & Cindy Jennings
3. Jim Cardozo & Rannel Westberry
4. Mary Kendall & Sharon Murphy

### Social Bridge, Thu, Jan 04

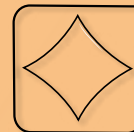
1. Connie & Michael Byers
2. Phyllis Boyd & Sharon Sprott
3. David Miller & Jerry Ritchie
4. Marty Essex & Cindy Jennings
5. Mary Kendall & Sharon Murphy
6. Kim Belcher & Evie Ezzell

### Duplicate Bridge, Thu, Jan 11

1. Marty Essex & Cindy Jennings
2. Sharon Sprott & Ed Szymanski
3. Connie & Mike Byers
4. Joe & Evie Ezzell

### Social Bridge, Thursday Jan 18

1. Connie & Mike Byers
2. Jon Bastress & Joe Thill
3. Roy Gulick & Brad Lucas
4. Marty Essex & Cindy Jennings
5. Mary Kendall & Sharon Murphy
6. David Miller & Jerry Ritchie





# THE P • A • R • K • S

*Featuring the fine stalking and camera skills of our own Becky Hinson on her visits to local wildlife preserves and parks*

If you enjoy being outdoors Clay County is a great place to live. Magnolia Point is just minutes from multiple outdoor adventures. Whether you enjoy a leisurely walk through the park, a bike ride, a run, or even a kayak trip, there's a place for you within a short driving distance.

Spring Park, located behind City Hall in Green Cove Springs (for those of you new to the neighborhood) is one of my favorite places to visit. The spring surges from below the surface at a rate of 1,346 gallons a minute and is a constant temperature of 77 degrees. Sulfur water flows out of the spring into a community swimming pool, through a man-made waterfall, into the Spring Run which empties into the St. Johns River approximately 200 feet away.

There's something to do at Spring Park for every age. You can sit in a swing and enjoy the river view. There's a playground for the little ones, with wheelchair accessible equipment included. Find a bench under the beautiful oak trees, dripping with Spanish moss, and feed the birds and squirrels. Rent a pavilion, have a picnic, launch your kayak or fish from the public pier. Dogs are welcome as long as they are leashed and no more than one dog per person.

Spring Park hosts City activities throughout the year. The scenery provides a great place for photos, whether you prefer a professional sitting or just a snapshot. You're just a block or two away from a great cup of coffee, ice cream cone, Italian meal, country cooking or a burger.

Don't forget Food Truck Fridays on the first Friday of the month which runs from March through November. Last, but not least, make sure you visit the 3rd Saturday Market in the Park and help support our local small businesses. Check out [greencovesprings.com](http://greencovesprings.com) for a complete list of all Spring Park events.

The Black Creek Park and Trail is another favorite located at 7890 Highway 17 by Black Creek. Their hours are 7am until 7pm. It's one of Clay County's most popular trails and is located just 2.7 miles from Magnolia Point. The path is 8 miles long and great for cyclists, walking your dog or going for a hike. The trail includes restrooms, bike and nature trails and a covered pavilion. It's a great place to find wildlife or just to get those steps in! There's no cost to use this park. A trail map can be found at [claycountygov.com](http://claycountygov.com).

If camping is your thing, check out Camp Chowenwaw, Also located off Highway 17 (1517 Ball Road) by Black Creek, a mere 2 miles away. Park hours are 8 am to sunset. The Camp was created in 1932 and is an important part of Clay County history. It provided a place for many young women to master their skills and talents as Girl Scouts.



*Continued*







At Chowenwaw you can camp, hike, fish, paddleboard, picnic, swim or play volleyball. They periodically host nature hikes and history walks. Dogs are allowed during the day but must be leashed and cleaned up after.

By far, my favorite park , Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park, dedicated on April 15,1939, is a little more of a drive. Located at 6239 State Road 21 in Keystone Heights, it's about a 34 minute drive. It's open from 8am until sundown 365 days a year. Admission for a car with two to eight people is \$5 for a day pass.

This area became one of Florida's first state parks in 1935 and was donated by J. Mike Roess (pronounced 'Race'). Twenty five craftsmen from the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and hundreds of CCC youths planted trees, cleared areas for campsites, built roads

and constructed buildings still in use today.

Gold Head offers camping, cabin rentals, picnic pavilions, a recreation building and canoe rentals. Pricing can be found at the website [floridastateparks.org](http://floridastateparks.org). If you like to photograph wildlife, Gold Head is a great place to start. There are trails and a ravine with a boardwalk. The scenery is beautiful and if you visit early in the day or late in the afternoon you have an excellent chance of photographing deer.

Now, put on those walking shoes and get some fresh air!

- BECKY HINSON

*Photos by Becky*



THE P • A • R • K • S





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# THE 9 HOLE LEAGUE

- SANDY WALDRUP

Well, January weather has not cooperated with golf in NE Florida. Cold temperatures at night are to be expected this time of year, but it hasn't warmed up during the day. Our golf schedule has taken quite a hit. Golf was cancelled on January 4 and January 18 due to wet, cold weather.

## January 11 – Stableford

It was a good to be back on the course after the holiday break and last week's cancellation. It was a typical January day – started off cool but by the time the teams made it to the 3rd hole, we all started taking off some of the clothing layers. There were 8 golfers, making up 2 teams. There were no chip-ins.

**1st Place - Dianne Dearth, Sharon Sprott, Bede Johnson, Donna Hirsch**

## January 25 – Flags

So, as they say, wait a day or week and Florida weather is great. It was so nice to be back on the course today enjoying the sun and 80-degree temps. We switched up the schedule to play Flags, a team game where the team's score is the best low net; the color of each hole's flag determines how many low net scores are used for each team member. There were no chip-ins and the pot rolls over another week.

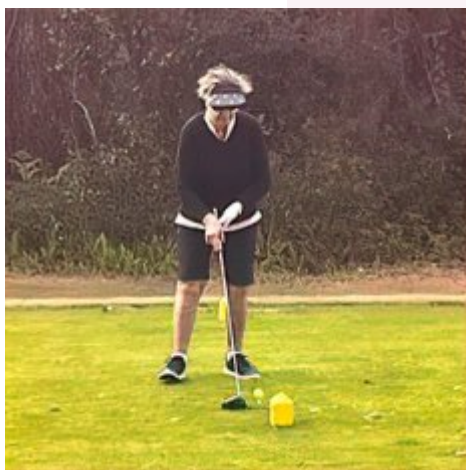
**1st Place – Sandy Waldrup, Janine O'Connor, Judy Sessions, Dianne Dearth**

## Membership

Come join us! We welcome all female players with a handicap; although you can begin play without one, establishing your handicap while playing. The season is at the half-way point and one can now join at a reduced rate. Please contact **Cheryle Newman**, Vice-President Membership, with any questions ([fnewman@bellsouth.net](mailto:fnewman@bellsouth.net)).



Janine O'Connor



Shirley Orvosh



Val Flemming







dp

