



## Real Scoop

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We were spared from at least two (so far) serious tropical storms this summer. So, we count our blessings and pray for those who have suffered so severely and recover so slowly.



**Johnny Appleseed.** Remember him? One of my favorite people in history. Proof that one person, even a little one, can make a difference. And a Big one at that.

Thank God he never had to ask a committee for approval before he planted seeds; or a board of Directors to vote yes on his long-range plans. Dreams have a funny way of languishing and dying unless someone cares and acts. That's why I ask all of you who toiled for so many years to make Jacksonville better to do something nice for someone unexpectedly.

**Someone once told me.... There are ten little words,** each one with just two letters, that can do magic on this planet. Here they are: **"If it is to be, it is up to me."** I am keeping that in mind as we work to get an ordinance introduced and passed by the city council to give city retirees a one-time much needed \$1250.00 check to help ameliorate inflation and the effects and cost from COVID. Be sure to talk, email, send a letter or do whatever you can to urge your District Council members (and the 5 At-large) to help make this happen. I have every confidence that we, together, can make this happen in this 2023-24 budget year. Stay tuned.

**The media is alive with chatter and speculation** about the mental capacity and reliability of people like many of us who are getting on in years including but not limited to presidential candidates. Your automobile insurance carrier jacks your rate higher from age 65 and higher----- even with an excellent driving record. The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles I've learned will send a letter based on an anonymous, vague complaint that you were driving strangely. The letter demands you see two doctors and get proof that you are fit to drive. Then you still must take a driving test and pass, not once, not twice but (wait for this) three times in the same day.

#### **Some fascinating facts to chew on:**

John Glenn, the U.S. Senator, and astronaut, who I had as a guest on my TV show a few years ago, returned to space at age 77. Julia Childs wrote a new cookbook at age 87. Famous architect Frank Lloyd Wright was still working at age 91. Our beloved REA past President Henry Cook was still serving on the General Employees Pension Fund at 90 years old. President Ronald Reagan completes his second term at the age of 77. Who could forget, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down that wall!" Dr. William Mayo was almost 71 when he founded the Mayo Clinic. Not long-ago Captain Kirk of Star Trek (William Shatner) did a one-man show at the Florida Theatre and also blasted into space for real! He was almost 91. And would you believe that at age 78 your REA president was appointed to serve on the board of Community State Bank and when the bank was sold the new owners asked him to serve on the new board.

So, folks don't let the bastards grind you down. Your older years should be celebrated, and the Lord knows your energy, experience and knowledge is needed now more than ever!

## Presidents Message Continued

**Sad News**-----The Honorable Denise Lee passed away recently. She was a city councilwoman for many years and a State Representative in Tallahassee. She was always a friend of Jacksonville and fought tirelessly for those who elected her. A good friend of mine, Denise Lee helped me win the council presidency as well as election as president of the Florida League of Cities. I represented you at her Funeral and visited with her daughter Tammy and her grandchildren. Denise Lee will indeed be missed.

Our former board member and City Councilman, the Honorable Harry Reagan lost his wife Rita Reagan. Rita was a champion for being involved with historic Springfield. She was an early advocate and prime mover, in the restoration of the Norman Studios in old Arlington. This historic motion picture production studio was one of America's first and made many movies, particularly focused on black heroes both male and female. Without the work of Rita and Harry, this jewel of Jacksonville history would not be standing. Please keep the Reagan family in your prayers.

We are getting closer to some activities many REA members have asked for. I have been talking with my new contact and CEO, Stefan. His travel group is Join the Fun tours and Odyssey Travel. They specialize in working with 60+ seniors on day trips, bus trips and cruises. Look for hard details very soon and check out Jointhetours@yahoo.com they will put you on their list to get newsletters 386-235-344.

As your REA General Counsel, I am always pleased to hear from you. Call me at 904-635-2973 or email eric@ericsmithlaw.net.

Hope to see you soon. God Bless you and your family.

*Best, Eric*

### Seeing The Big Picture

For He performs *what is* appointed for me,  
And many such *things are* with Him. Job 23:14

Sometimes God permits things, other times He actually plans them. Either way, He's got a definite plan in mind. In the midst of unspeakable heartache, Job said "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me." When you realize that God has "appointed" something for you, it changes how you see. It's like flying, on the ground your view is limited, but 10,000 feet up everything looks different. Now you're seeing what God sees: "the big picture!"

The Bible says that after Job came through his trials he was blessed with twice as much as he had before. (Job 42:10) When you come through does that mean that your checkbook will always balance, or your car never breaks down, or your health never fail? No, sometimes God rewards our faith with things we can't measure in monetary value- like relationships, joy, character, peace you didn't have before, more compassion, and intimacy with Him. What value would you place on those? Here are three things you need to keep in mind at all times:

- (1) God wants you to trust Him in whatever you're going (see Ps 138:8).
- (2) When it's your responsibility, God expects you to fulfill it (see Ecc. 8:10).
- (3) In order to bless you, He will sometimes move in ways that are hard to understand or explain (see Ps. 25:4). **Why? So that when the answer comes there'll be no doubt about who gets the credit.**

Shared from **Daily Devotion**

*Leona Spann, Chaplain*



**Greg Radlinski,**  
Secretary

**From the Secretary's desk....**

Recently I was talking with one of our Board members who had been recruiting new members. He told me that some retirees who are interested in REA membership don't realize they've been members for years.

Here are some clues. We mail The REAL Scoop, the REA quarterly newsletter, to every member. The newsletter isn't sent to non-member retirees. If you're getting The REAL Scoop, you're a member.

As a convenience members can have the Retirement Office deduct the monthly membership dues from their retired pay. If, when you review your retirement account, you see that a nominal amount is deducted from your pay and remitted to the REA—you're a member. There's no REA deduction from the retired pay of non-members.

If you're still not sure whether you're a member, call the REA Office. We'll let you know, and, if you're not yet a member, we'll sign you up. Once you're a member you can arrange for the Retirement Office to send your monthly dues to REA automatically. And, you'll automatically receive The REAL Scoop.

Of course, once you're a member, we want to see you at our social functions. Getting together is one of the benefits of membership. For many, it is *the* most important one, seeing old friends and making new ones. Moreover, REA wouldn't be the REA without *you!* Make the most of your membership *and* send inquiring retirees our way. We'd love to add them to our rolls.

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1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8
9				10				
11				12				
13			14					
15						16	17	18
			19					
20	21	22				23		
24						25		
26						27		

**Across**

1. "My man!"
4. Sorcerer
9. Bard's nightfall
10. Corpulent plus
11. Place to be pampered
12. Unit of light
13. Instants
15. Poor losers
19. Shakespearean term of address
20. Danger
23. Hurricane center
24. Cancel
25. Street material
26. Lots and lots
27. Terminate

**Down**

1. Conquers
2. Copy
3. Broadcasting
4. Problems that may get overblown
5. Drug addict
6. Beauty
7. Apply
8. Clinton, e.g.: Abbr.

14. Element in atomic clocks
16. Mountain ridge
17. Moshe of Israel
18. Pottery fragment: Var.
20. Golf goal
21. Charlotte-to-Raleigh dir.
22. Genetic material

D	N	E	S	M	A	R	E	A	R
R	T	A	R	L	U	N	N	A	V
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The headline is a clue to the answer in the diagonal.

R	I	A	F	F	A	E	H	T	M	P	Z	D	
T	H	E	M	I	S	T	R	E	S	S	E	R	BEAUTIFUL
S	U	S	P	E	C	T	S	P	G	L	M	A	BETRAYAL
E	Z	R	O	Y	A	L	Y	I	S	V	A	W	BIG GIRL
V	K	Q	S	R	E	N	N	I	W	R	G	A	BLUE
I	Y	T	H	E	D	U	C	H	E	S	S	E	COUNTRY
L	R	X	L	R	I	G	G	I	B	E	R	H	FAIRYTALE
E	B	E	T	R	A	Y	A	L	G	L	E	T	INVISIBLE
N	B	E	L	E	G	A	C	Y	V	A	B	U	LEGACY
I	Y	U	U	T	Q	R	M	I	Q	T	M	T	MAGIC
N	O	F	J	L	U	N	H	T	K	Y	U	H	NINE LIVES
S	J	A	T	Y	B	B	Y	A	L	R	N	E	PEGASUS
I	E	S	U	S	A	G	E	P	R	I	E	C	PURE JOY
Y	R	T	N	U	O	C	S	H	M	A	H	A	ROYAL
L	U	F	I	T	U	A	E	B	T	F	T	S	SPY
L	P	R	I	N	V	I	S	I	B	L	E	T	SUSPECTS

Answers on pg. 11

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**Trivia Teaser: Having a ball**

1. In which state is Ball State University, David Letterman's alma mater, located? a-California, b-Iowa, c-New Hampshire, d-Indiana.
2. Who played Halle Berry's husband in the movie Monster's Ball? a-Sean Combs, b-Rupert Everett, c-Denzel Washington, d-Blair Underwood.
3. What chef has been the caterer for the annual Governor's Ball dinner at the Academy Awards since 1995? a-Gordon Ramsey, b-Wolfgang Puck, c-Mario Batali, d-Emeril Lagasse.
4. How many balls are used in a game of English billiards? a-3, b-7, c-9, d-15.
5. What astronaut may have set a driving distance record after hitting two golf balls with a makeshift 6 iron on the Moon? a-John Glenn, b-Alan Bean, c-Deke Slayton, d-Alan Shepard.
6. In Greek mythology, who fell in love with Theseus and helped him find his way through the Labyrinth by giving him a ball of twine? a-Persephone, b-Cassandra, c-Ariadne, d-Medusa.
7. What is the heaviest ball allowed in sanctioned league bowling? a-14 pounds, b-16 pounds, c-18 pounds, d-20 pounds.
8. What unusual token treasure does the king receive from France in the first act of Shakespeare's Henry V? a-Ping pong balls, b-Tennis balls, c-Cricket balls, d-Popcorn balls.
9. Who starred opposite Barbara Stanwyck as the naive leader of a group of lexicographers in the movie Ball of Fire? a-James Stewart, b-Edward Arnold, c-Walter Brennan, d-Gary Cooper.
10. What musician released a three-disc set titled Crystal Ball in 1998? a-Moby, b-R. Kelly, c-Prince, d-Michael Jackson.

Answers on pg. 11



- ADOPT-A-SHELTER-DOG MONTH.
- BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH.
- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH.
- GERMAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH.
- NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION MONTH.
- NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS MONTH.
- NATIONAL DENTAL HYGIENE MONTH.
- NATIONAL POLISH-AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH.
- FIRE PREVENTION WEEK.
- Oct 8-14, CONTACT LENS SAFETY WEEK
- Oct 8-14, EMERGENCY NURSES WEEK.
- Oct. 9, COLUMBUS DAY.
- Oct. 10, WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY.
- Oct. 27, U.S. NAVY DAY.
- Oct. 28, HUNTER'S MOON.
- Oct. 31, HALLOWEEN

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**John Keane, 1st Vice President**



**Remembering our friend – E. Denise Lee**

E. Denise Lee, a fiery political advocate who spent decades as a Jacksonville City Council member, died August 29, 2023. Ms. Lee’s roughly quarter-century run as a council member occurred in between tenures as a state legislator, Civil Service Board Member and a mayoral aide in a political career shaped by dogged activism. While attending Florida A&M University, Lee worked on or managed several election campaigns for Northeast Florida Democratic candidates. She also worked on campaigns for Presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton, as well as Florida Gov. Law-

ton Chiles, Jacksonville Mayor Jake Godbold and Florida state Sen. Arnette Girardeau among others. After managing campaigns, Lee was appointed in 1982 to fill the Jacksonville City Council seat left open by the death of Sallye Mathis.



Lee, 71, represented her community on the Jacksonville City Council for 24 years, represented former council District 11 from 1983 to 1987, then District 8 from then through 1999 and from 2007 to 2015, according to her City Council biography. Council Member Lee is most recently remembered for lengthy speaking in 2013 as Jacksonville’s City Council met deep into the night to hash out decisions about details of the city’s budget for the following year. She also served in the Florida House of Representatives District 15 in the Florida House from 1998 to 2000, and on the Civil Service Board.

Mayor Donna Deegan said Lee “embodied what it means to be a public servant. She was a relentless fighter for what was best for the city. The positive legacy of her work can be felt throughout all of Jacksonville.” City Council President Ron Salem said he often visited with Lee and found her counsel “invaluable” as they talked about the issues of her day and her “fearless leadership.” “Her tenacity as a fighter for District 8 was beyond measure,” Salem wrote. “She had an unmatched auditory ability to get her district’s needs met, and those of us watching her were in awe of all she was able to accomplish.”

City Councilman Matt Carlucci, who worked with Lee over the years, said they would often laugh at old times. He called her death “heartbreaking.” “She was a great servant to Jacksonville and to her constituents and will be remembered and missed.” Carlucci said “Denise was a force of nature. She was very direct and forthright in what she believed. She could make you mad and make you laugh all at the same time.” Lakesha Burton, retired assistant police chief and Deegan’s new director of community initiatives called Lee a dedicated public servant. “She meant what she said and said what she meant,” Burton wrote. “Her legacy will have an infinite positive ripple effect in the lives of so many for years to come. Thank you for your service, example and love.”

Audrey Gibson, a Democratic former state lawmaker, said Lee’s death stunned her. Lee went to her church, St. Paul AME, and their families have known each other for years. “Whether one agreed with her or not, Denise was unpretentious.” Gibson wrote. “If you missed it, she had a sense of humor, understood the history of the community she cared deeply about, and commanded due respect.” Longtime City Hall aide Mike Tolbert wrote that his heart is heavy at the news of Lee’s death; he called her a “warrior for good, someone unafraid of a fight, always accepting of a challenge.”

Always, a fierce fighter council member Denise Lee once engaged in a lengthy debate at a council meeting for an appropriation in her district for a boat ramp. The funding source was the salt water fishing license fee with no salt water creeks in her district.

May she rest in Peace.



## Darryl Patterson, 2nd Vice President

### Cooking safety starts with you: Preventing kitchen fires

Each year, households in the United States face the devastating consequences of kitchen fires, but with common-sense kitchen practices most of the risk can be eliminated.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), there were approximately 355,400 home fires reported annually in the United States over the last five years. Among these fires, about 31 percent were attributed to cooking mishaps. The primary cause? Unattended cooking. A momentary distraction or leaving cooking equipment unsupervised can lead to devastating fires in a matter of minutes. Grease fires, caused by overheating oil or fats, can escalate rapidly and pose an immediate

danger if not handled correctly.

Preventing kitchen fires mainly requires awareness.

\* Never leave cooking unattended, especially when using stovetops, ovens or fryers. If you need to leave the kitchen, turn off the heat.

\* Clear clutter like kitchen towels, paper towels and curtains away from open flames or heating elements.

\* Be cautious when cooking with oil. Use a thermometer to monitor oil temperature, and never overheat it.

If a grease fire starts, do not use water; smother it with a lid or fire blanket.

\* Set timers when baking, roasting, or simmering, so you're alerted when food is ready.

\* Educate kids about the hazards of the kitchen and establish a safe distance while cooking.

\* Keep pets out of the kitchen. If you have a gas range, install locks for the knobs so that a jumping dog can't inadvertently turn on a burner;

\* Maintain functional smoke alarms in the kitchen and throughout the home.

\* Keep a fire extinguisher within reach and learn how to use it properly. The NFPA recommends at least one on every level of the home.



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## LETTERS TO EDITOR

August 21, 2023

The Honorable Mayor Donna Deegan:

My name is John Kuhn and I am a current retiree in the GEPP. I appreciate that when you were asked by the Retired Employees Association (REA) during your mayoral campaign about allowing a Covid-19 one-time \$1250 appropriation to retirees that you supported that outcome.

I started work in the city's Department of Public Utilities and then JEA after the two entities were merged. My 32 1/2 year tenure began in 1979 when there was neither Medicare nor FICA deductions taken out which has significantly increased out of pocket costs to maintain private medical insurance for my wife and me.

I realize that during Covid-19 active employees were given payouts for two years totaling \$5000 from Federal Covid-19 grants to the city that were to help offset inflation and economic costs. As retirees did not receive the offset at that time, I would like to request your support for allowing a one-time \$1250 appropriation to retirees.

Thank you for considering this issue.

John Kuhn

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### Dear Editor, Where Is The Money?

A big thank you to your volunteer REA board members on your lobbying efforts for a \$1,250 one-time inflation bonus from federal monies allocated from the COVID-19 (American Rescue Act of 2021) cost amelioration funds to be used at the City of Jacksonville's discretion.

I was dismayed to hear from Greg Radlinski, Secretary for the REA, in your July-Sept 2023 newsletter issue that your lobbying efforts for this one-time \$1,250 has not met with much success with the City Council.

**This is the kicker:** Each current city employee received \$2,500 for two consecutive years, totaling \$5,000. These included employees making \$100,000 or more.

I don't understand the problem with providing federal grant money to city retirees. A lot of us retirees are living paycheck-to-paycheck with the average real inflation combined cost for gas, food and medical supplies and services skyrocketing to about 15%-20%.

I would be happy to speak to the City Council at the next meeting where the REA provides the necessary facts and data to support our one-time request for COVID-19 federal grant monies.

As a retiree since 2016, and a former shop steward for AFSCME Council 19, I can relate to fighting the good fight for a worthy cause. I strongly urge other REA retirees to contact REA board members to formulate a strategic plan to make this well-deserved benefit for all retirees and not just to current city employees. One has to ponder: Where is the fairness in that logic?

--

**Janet Duvall**  
Author, *Basset Hound Bookends*





**Get your groove on with line dancing**

Line dancing just looks like so much fun, but it can be baffling on your first try. But there are some secrets to the art and when you understand them, line dancing is much less daunting.

First, a line dance lasts from three to five minutes and you can drop out at any time. Among all the popular line dances, the Electric Slide is the shortest, lasting from two to three minutes and makes a good beginning dance to learn. It is the dance that often opens a line dance party, especially as a warm up. The steps are fairly easy and the dancers face different directions four times.

If you are new to line dancing, here are some tips:

- \* The dance starts when the singing starts. Everything before that is the intro.
- \* Moves usually change after four counts. When you get to four, you'll change direction or make a new move.
- \* You can make any move plain or fancy, low movement or high. Instead of doing actual stomps, for example,

do a tap.

\* Notice how many times the dancers turn to face a different direction. These are called walls. A line dance can have one wall or up to four. But the dance will usually end up facing the same way it started.

Here are some other popular line dances:

- \* Cha-cha slide. You get to make a little cha-cha move. There are some hops, but you can substitute tip toes.
- \* Boot scootin' boogie. More difficult in that it has a series of hops, including one in which dancers cross their legs. It also has a quick half-beat step.

Cupid shuffle. A modern song with easy steps and kicks, although experienced line dancers usually improvise their steps. Stick with the basics at the beginning.

Cotton-Eyed Joe. If you love that old-fashioned fiddle, this ones for you. It has some turns and toe taps. Dancers usually face one way.

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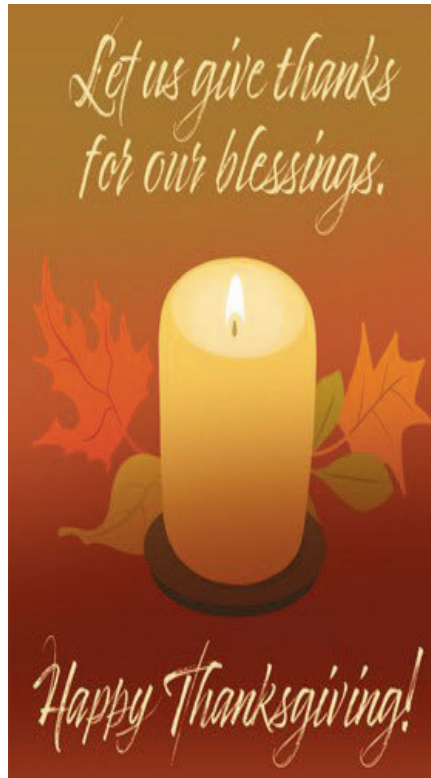
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 Reaves, James R.  
 Simms, Gordon L.  
 Spaulding, Kenneth N.  
 Thibodeau, Carolyn S.  
 Watkins, Marva Y.



#### WE REMEMBER IN SORROW MEMBERS WHO HAVE PASSED AWAY

July - September 2023

Bauder, Martha C.  
 Brown, Ola E.  
 Corn, Lucy S.  
 Davis, Nancy  
 Dailey, John A.  
 Gaines Jr., Henry N  
 Hugo, Theodore A.  
 Koonce, Carolyn E.  
 McFadden, Willie J.  
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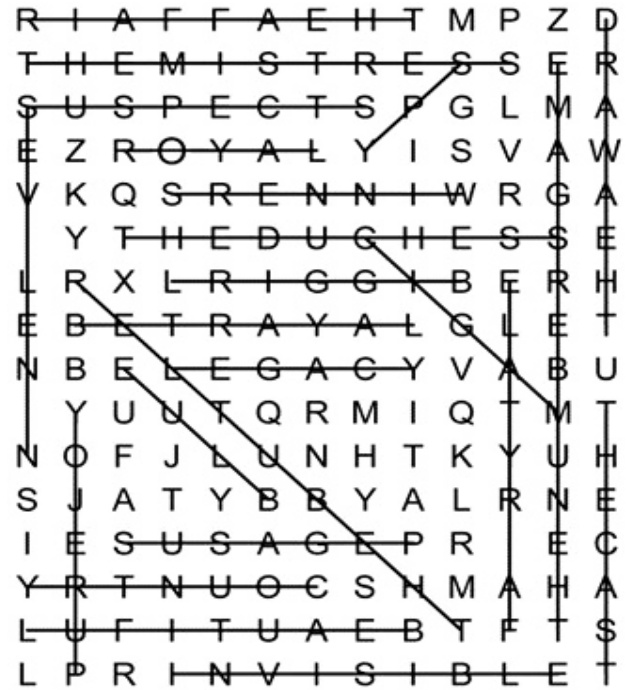


**Answers to 'Having a Ball'**

1-d, Indiana, 2-a, Sean Combs, 3-b, Wolfgang Puck, 4-a, 3, 5-d, Alan Shepard, 6-c, Ariadne, 7-b, 16 pounds, 8-b, Tennis balls, 9-d, Gary Cooper, 10-c, Prince

**TRIVIA ANSWERS**

- 1-b, "Mary Had a Little Lamb"
- 2-d, "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer"
- 3-c, United Kingdom
- 4-c, Delaware
- 5-d, Jack Lemmon
- 6-a, Gus Grissom
- 7-b, Secretary of State
- 8-a, Diphtheria
- 9-c, Wrigley's Chewing Gum
- 10-c, John Lennon



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### IMPORTANT!

Check the REA website often for up to date news about our next meeting, when it will take place and where it will be. Also, call the office for information at 904-353-2400.

Office hours are 9am-2pm Tuesday—Thursday.

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