Fall 2026

The Optimist

Indianhead Lehigh Newsletter

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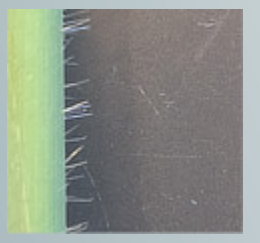
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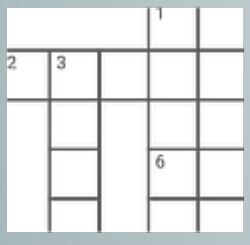
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Review: The Call to a Wilder Wisdom

By Shelly Hatton

Award-winning writer Susan Cerulean has lived in our neighborhood with her husband Jeff Chanton for over 27 years. She has relentlessly advocated for the rights of wild birds, featuring them in most of her writing. Her soon-to-be published book, The Call to a Wilder Wisdom, takes us on a profound journey through her decades of visiting St. Vincent Island National Wildlife Refuge, located off the coast of Apalachicola. There, as a trained biologist, she monitored shorebirds and seabirds, tagged turtle nesting sites, followed the tracks of wolves, and spent countless hours among American oystercatchers, snowy plovers, herons, and other island residents. But she wanted more, a more authentic relationship with this North Florida Island. Her book is about this quest—one that cracks the heart wide open and lets the tides come through.

Her gorgeous sentences wrap around tales of the island's wildlife who are living on a collapsing planet. She writes of her evolution from an employee with a state wildlife agency to a kind of interrelated being, in deep kinship with the wild things on the Island. She has become an island thing herself,



The Call to a Wilder Wisdom, by Susan Cerulean (Apalachee Press, 2026)

deeply attuned to its inhabitants, to the rhythms of tide and sand, waking at dawn by the hoot of her neighbor owl.

She listens attentively to the voices there, as any family member would do for a loved one. She asks the birds, the wolves, and the great pine that survived loggers and turpentine harvesters: what is required of her to stop their extinction? How can she best serve them? She advises us that we must shift away from the human mindset and "learn to understand the language of completely different species." Through her nighttime dreams, her symbols, her attunement, she hears their unequivocal message: Talk about us. Advocate for us. Tell our story. Keep us safe!

Shorebirds and seabirds are declining on every continent; some are already gone. Cerulean writes that we Westerners have swallowed the myth of human exceptionalism —the notion that our species is entitled to exploit the natural world, that we are apart from and above the rest of creation. She says that until people respect the rights of all living beings, we will continue to obliterate the natural world upon which we rely, as much as any other being. The Earth "cannot be protected fully by laws and bureaucracies, no matter how well intended, because our culture assumes that only our species has full rights."

She has crawled belly down in sand and sweat to excavate turtle eggs, count them, rebury them, and then mark off the site for protection. Of a turtle nest drowned by rising sea water, she describes "the smell of rich yolk in the air," and of the nest being "the consistency of creamed butter and eggs." These pooling waters are becoming more frequent, as Earth's climate warms and changes.

Driving along the highway near Apalachicola, she witnessed migrating indigo buntings. She says, "They

Continued on next page

Red Imported Fire Ants: The Invincible Invader Comes to Florida

By Gordon Magill

If, while working your yard, you have stepped into a strange pile of sandy soil and felt a fiery burning on your feet or legs, you may have discovered *Solenopsis Invicta*, aka Red Imported Fire Ant, or RIFA. The ant is a species native to South America, particularly Argentina and Brazil. Invicta means "invincible" or "unconquered."

In 1947 an 18-year-old biology graduate student at the University of Alabama in Birmingham, Edward O. Wilson, did a study of all the ants in Alabama. He found and recorded the first colony of fire ants in the US, in Mobile, Alabama. (In 1900, there were no fire ants known in the US.) The migrant ants had



Red Imported Fire Ants closeup. Photograph by Judy Gallagher, CC.



A Red Imported Fire Ant mound in Indianhead Acres. Photograph by Gordon Magill.

Ants continued on next page

Continued from previous page

had left Cuba the night before and flown throughout the dark hours." She gives the birds voice, "The flight from Cuba was long and effortful. We had to burn fat, every bit we had stored in our bodies from the oily seeds of tropical plants, burn every bit of it like a flame, to fuel our Gulf crossing until our bodies had no more to give...We had no more energy for song." Devastated, she found dozens of bunting carcasses littering the highway, hit by vehicles. Like so many interrupted life processes, "migration is an earth right," Cerulean explains. She felt "crazy with loss," witnessing their annihilation.

And yet, Cerulean has many sweet tales to share with us as well. On observing a baby alligator (the runt of the litter), she writes, "I'd watched her yawn, the two halves of tiny gator jaw widening to their fullest extension, bound at the joint, then silently clapping shut: a baby reptilian yawn." Cerulean kept watch as the sleepy creature flattened out in the mud for her nap.

Cerulean is a nationally-known author residing in Neneland (when she is not on the island), and we are proud to call her our own. This is her fourth book.

Her book launch event is on October 22 at Midtown Reader, and the neighborhood is invited to come!

> ***RIFA can migrate quickly from one yard to another, even burrowing under a street or sidewalk to get there.***

Ants continued from previous page

arrived aboard a cargo ship from Argentina in the mid-1930s or early 1940s. Dr. E.O. Wilson later became world famous as a leading scientific thinker, writer, and author of the Pulitzer Prize winning The Ants.

By the 1950s, the population of RIFA had exploded. Currently, red imported fire ants have spread to thirteen states, Puerto Rico, and northeastern Mexico. RIFA are found in Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. The current northernmost boundary of fire ant expansion seems to be Tennessee. Freezing temperatures and frozen ground limit fire ant expansion. However, global warming may allow more northerly RIFA expansion in the future.

Fire ant colonies can be established by a single queen or a group of queens. A queen will go through a mating sequence with several or more chosen males. Established as the dominant queen in her colony, a queen can produce up to 1,600 eggs daily, most of which will be worker ants. Worker ants can live for several months, while queens can live for years.

Mature fire ant colony populations grow quickly, ranging from several hundred thousand to 2,000,000 individuals. Most fire ants in a colony are worker ants, varying between one-eighth and one-quarter of an inch long. Two forms of society exist in the red imported fire ant colony: polygynous colonies (nests with multiple queens) and monogynous colonies (nests with one queen). Both forms can expand their colonies at a rapid rate of population growth and territorial range.

About five to ten fatalities from RIFA attacks are recorded annually in the US. Almost all fatalities are due to anaphylaxis, a serious and potentially fatal allergic reaction that is successfully reversed with adrenalin injections. Fire ant venom is a potent mixture of toxic alkaloids and proteins. The venom renders most of the ant's prey or enemies paralyzed or powerless to escape. Fire ants defending their nest will swarm very rapidly out of the nest and use their sharp jaws to attach to the intruder,



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then use the sting on the end of their large abdomen to deliver the venom.

RIFA is a highly adaptable insect. Some scientists consider them a "disturbance specialist" meaning that fire ants take advantage of human disturbances of the environment, invading disturbed habitat and colonizing it. RIFA colonizes near water, but also easily colonizes drier upland areas such as forests, grasslands, farmlands, and along roads and railways. Nearer humans, fire ants populate urban gardens, picnic areas, lawns, playgrounds, schoolyards, parks, golf courses, even greenhouses. A typical RIFA colony nest will have numerous narrow tunnels running a few inches beneath the surface to various entrances and exits. Below these, there will be a complex of horizontal and vertical tunnels diving to as deep as four feet. RIFA can migrate quickly from one yard to another, even burrowing under a street or sidewalk to get there. They can be transported into a yard by a contractor that delivers topsoil for a lawn project, or in plant containers by a landscaper.

Most people who live in Indianhead-Lehigh know all about the ant. So how can a homeowner deal with them? To eliminate a colony, the queen must be killed; in multi-queen colonies, all queens must be killed. Even if the queen is killed, surviving ants may inhabit the mound or make a new mound until they die off.



Red Imported Fire Ant raft crossing a flooded lawn after heavy rain. Photo copyright permission by The Coz Gallagher, CC.



Fire Ants in a Petrie dish. UF_IFAS photo by Tyler Jones.

A University of Florida-IFAS Extension article, "Sustainable Fire Ant Control" recommends some fire ant control methods designed to have minimal environmental impact. One is chemical bait, such as granules or dust, which can be used either as a broadcast or individual mound treatment. To protect native ant populations that retard and combat fire ants, selectively treat individual fire ant mounds.The fire ant workers will take the bait granules into the inner tunnels of the colony, feeding some to the queen.A RIFA colony without its queen or queens cannot survive for long, and its worker ants will gradually die.

Several minimally toxic pesticides are recommended, such as:

Hydramethylnon and sulfluramid

Ants continued on next page

> *Late August through October is an ideal time to apply fire ant insecticides.*

Ants continued from previous page

kill ants by preventing them from converting food into energy.

Avermectin is derived from a soil fungus and inhibits nerve function. As a broadcast treatment it works like an insect growth regulator.

Insect growth regulators that reduce egg production and prevent worker ant development include fenoxycarb, methoprene, and pyriproxyfen. These treatments do not kill adult ants, so treated colonies will persist until workers die naturally.

Some organic methods of colony elimination include:

Drenching with a solution containing citrus oil. D-limonene, the natural component found in the oils of citrus peel, is toxic to fire ants.

Some products available have ingredients that are derived from botanical sources, such as rotenone, nicotine sulfate, d-limonene, and pyrethrins.

Spinosad is another toxin that affects the ant's nervous system. Spinosad is considered organic because it comes from a bacterial fermentation process and is then put into bait.

Fire ant mounds can be dug up and removed. Apply baby powder or talcum to shovel handles and the inside of the bucket to keep ants from crawling up and escaping or stinging you.

Late August through October is an ideal time to apply fire ant insecticides. This timeframe allows the bait to reduce fire ant populations over the winter. Many bait products are somewhat slow to take effect. If application is done in late summer or early fall, ant mound numbers will already be suppressed by early spring. Because bait product performance depends on foraging ants to retrieve the bait particles, applying them too early in the spring in cool weather (below 65°F) will be ineffective. Also, early spring application of slower acting products will not produce maximum effects until later in the spring or early summer.

For more information,
feel free to contact author neighbor
Gordon Magill at tallyman01@comcast.net.





Rooted in Indianhead-Lehigh: The Community That Holds Us

by Angel Eason

I was a stay-at-home mom for about two years, and the isolation crept in fast. Indianhead-Lehigh became an antidote to that isolation. I quickly became friends with other Indianhead parents, and we raised our kids together in a loose tribe: frequent playdates, swapped parenting advice, shared meals. We spent entire afternoons at Optimist Park, our kids running wild while we watched and talked.

These parents weren't just people I waved to at the mailbox. They were the people I trusted with my daughter, and I was the person they trusted with their kids. Trust like that is rare, and valuable in a way money can't buy. Having the legal documents in place—the ones that say who can make decisions for you and who steps in for your kids—matters, but it isn't enough on its own if there's no one you trust to actually be there for you.

I worry about this often. If I were injured or unexpectedly unavailable and couldn't get to school pickup, the friend I'd call already knows my daughter—her routines, her fears, her favorite stuffed animal. But without the right paperwork, which could be as simple as adding that friend to the school's pickup list, she might not have the authority to pick my daughter up. Without other, more formal documents, she might not be able to consent to everyday medical care if my daughter needed it.

The Indianhead-Lehigh community shows up every time a tornado or hurricane comes through Tallahassee. Chainsaws come out as soon as it's safe. Neighbors haul debris off the road so everyone else can get out. People check on each other, sharing generators, food, or whatever's on hand, before anyone has to ask. Nobody waits for a sign-up sheet.

A family's emergency plan is similar to hurricane prep. Hurricane season runs June

Rooted continued on next page



Photos of author's daughter at Optimist Park when she was young.



Photographs taken by Angel Eason.

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When the body gets working appropriately, the force of gravity can flow through. Then, spontaneously, the body heals itself. - Dr. Ida Rolf

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Rooted continued from previous page

through November, and the households that do best aren't the ones scrambling once the storm is already named. Whether you're preparing for a child, a parent, or yourself, naming someone you trust who can step in to make medical or financial decisions is similar to the hurricane supply run you make ahead of time. And your support team—the neighbors, friends, and family who show up—are the ones who do the work once the need arrives. Without both, you're left improvising in the middle of a crisis instead of already knowing what to do. The following free forms cover the basics, though they're generic and worth reviewing with an attorney for anything specific to your situation:

Five Wishes - **fivewishes.org**

The Florida Bar's free consumer information with link to forms for living wills, power of attorney, and guardianship- **https://www.floridabar.org/public/consumer/consumer003/**

Indianhead has always been a place where people show up for one another and sort out the logistics together. A little preparation makes that instinct go even further. Take stock of your support team, including your neighbors, family, and friends. Share what matters to you, and give them the information or authority they need to act on it.

Our community is already one of our greatest resources. Preparing ahead is one way we help that community hold us when the need arises.

Consolation

By Linda Marie Cossa

Inspired by Andrew Rudin's Sonata for Violoncello & Piano, as performed by Samuel Magill.

with all this grief
I am asking you what to do

I asked a drum what to do
he said "touch me touch me until spirit flows free"

I asked a fiddle what to do
he said "kick your heels, stomp your feet, make it reel"

I asked a violin what to do
she said "sound near ear heart listening"

I asked a guitar what to do
she said "gut instincts touch heart strings"

I asked a harp what to do
and that precious child said
"hold me, sing me a lullaby tune"

I wonder what a cello would say or do?
I do believe
it would speak some kind of innate infinity

some indigenous love
in the heart of humanity



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Photo courtesy of Donna West Wells

Hummers
By Gordon Magill

Feathered meteor
flashing emerald fire
dives toward the firespike
instantly pausing to hover
at each coral-floral tube
sipping nectar drops eagerly
hunger fueled by furious wingbeats

Challenging Sulphur butterflies
driving away browsing bumblebees
brooking no competitors
in the garden of sweets
should another of his kind intrude
an aerial battle ensues
sending the loser fleeing

The winner might rest
a few seconds on a stem
but again unlooses a long thin tongue
to sip more sugar from new flowers
then sated for an hour
powers skyward
to vanish in my tall bamboo.

When autumn's chill
fades the garden's blossoms
drooping them one by one
and my tiny emerald friend
follows the southern zephyrs
across the great blue Gulf
I will look in vain for his dancing flame.

My Neighbors' Pines
By Gordon Magil

My neighbors cut down their pines
But who am I to care
Yet when I look upward
There is no structure in the air.

Gone are the spreading crowns
The twisted sculpted branches
Acrobatic squirrels are homeless
The hawks, the owls perchless.

Well, we did the same
Brought down a brace of pines
Threatening our storm ward side
Unfair of me to point and blame

Driven by fear of nature
We battle in vain attempt
To conquer and subdue
That we imagine we are subject to.





Itchgrass stem

Itchgrass – or How to Get Rid of an Undesirable Neighbor

by Marney Richards

A new noxious weed is popping up around Indianhead-Lehigh. It has probably been around a while, but it has taken hold in the last year. Maybe you've encountered it.

Itchgrass *(Rottboellia cochinchinensis)* is a clumping grass with stems covered with stiff hairs that can irritate the skin. It is a non-native, annual grass, reaching up to 10 feet in height that has invaded disturbed and agricultural areas in the Southeast US.

It certainly has invaded our neighborhood. Last year a positive identification of the plant came from a botanist at Florida Natural Areas Inventory. Since then a group of neighbors and I have been working on keeping it under control in our corner.



Itchgrass about 5 feet in height

When small, about 1-2 feet tall, itchgrass is very easy to pull out by hand. In fact, hand pulling is recommended as the most effective way to control this invader, so we scan the right of way and pull any small plants every week or two. We pile them, let them dry, then bag in a heavy black plastic bag. A full bag goes in the black trash can for weekly pickup. Using plastic bags doesn't seem ideal, but putting the plants out with yard debris produces a new crop of itchgrass around the area.

When the grass gets bigger, it's still possible to remove by digging it out. For this chore, gloves, long pants, and long sleeves are strongly recommended because the plant's stiff hairs can cause skin irritation.

If you think you have itchgrass around your property and would like some confirmation or advice on tackling this invasive, please contact Marney Richards at marneyrichards370@gmail.com. Together, we can keep this plant from spreading in our neighborhood.

Another invasive grass in the neighborhood is Cogon grass. This plant is another serious invader, but that is another story...

Supporting N3 and Our Neighbors

by Robin Collins, with Karen K. & Nancy G.

In late July, I watched the CBS Sunday Morning TV segment titled "Love thy Neighbor: Helping Aging Seniors in the Heartland". It opened with the comment, "Aging at home isn't easy for anyone." The segment then went on to describe the needs of seniors in rural America, and how an organization was formed in North Dakota linking up neighbors to support one another.

I immediately thought, "Gee. That's what Neighbor to Neighbor in the Nenes (N3) has been doing for years!" N3 is the only non-profit organization in Leon County providing free support services for neighborhood seniors (age 65 and older) by volunteers. According to the USDA, the number of counties where at least 20% of residents are over the age of 65 has nearly tripled since 2010. That's my generation—the Baby Boomers.

Two types of supporters are vital to an organization like N3: those who offer financial support and those who volunteer. Both are important and help the seniors aging at home in Indianhead Acres-Lehigh.

As for financial support, N3 has been fortunate to receive grant money and contributions in both small amounts and larger sums. Smaller donations help pay for ongoing monthly expenses like the phone bill and website fee. Larger grants and donations are used to fund an administrative coordinator position, thereby reducing the time commitment of our board of directors.

Our volunteers work at many different tasks, some as small as changing a light bulb, hanging a curtain, or pulling some weeds. Others have time to help with transportation, friendly visiting, yard work, and tech support. For example, one incredible volunteer regularly mows yards for five different neighbors. Volunteers may give a little or a lot – whatever works for them. Our hard-working volunteers have, in total, already given almost 200 hours to help their neighbors in 2026.

Are you interested in seeing where you might fit in as a volunteer? To get started, simply reach out to N3 by phone (call or text) at **850-901-7818**, or email **president@aginginneneland.org**. A member of our volunteer coordination team will meet with you to gauge your interest(s), desires, and availability. The final step before being added to the N3 team is a low-level background check (no need to go anywhere for photos or fingerprints).

N3 wants you to know that support for our seniors is here in our neighborhood. Our organization is one reason our neighborhood is unique and the best place to live! Don't feel like you have nothing to give if you can't volunteer personal time or donate money. Simply reminding your neighbors over 65 that they can seek help for everyday things can be your contribution. Our volunteers and clients are very important; we truly appreciate those in our community who give their time and make the effort to keep this organization alive and humming. Thank YOU!

N3 seeking additional Tech Volunteers

Here's a great volunteer-from-home opportunity! We are seeking "techies" to work behind the scenes and help our organization expand the use of current technological capabilities. Contact N3 (see info above) to express your interest. Our tech team will work with the new volunteers.

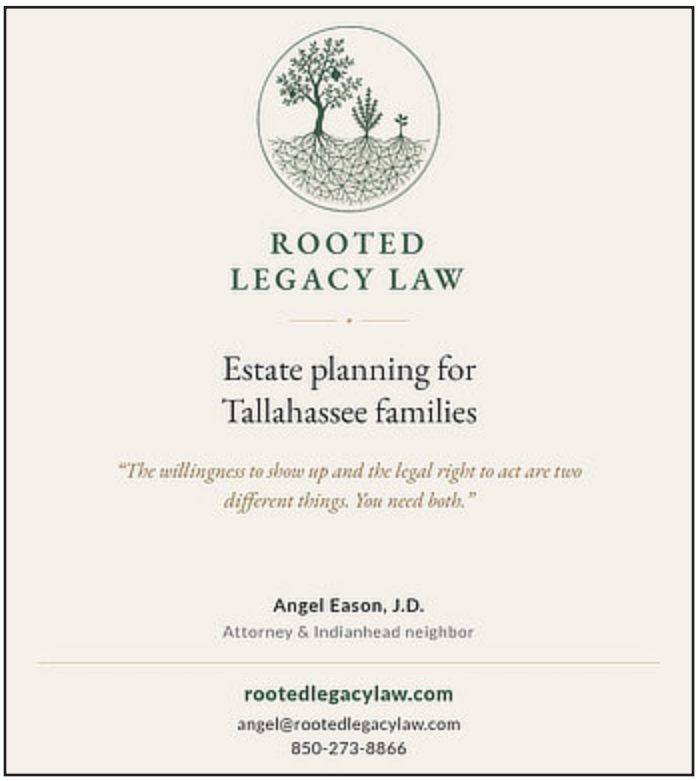
Strawberries and Sunflowers

by Katie Clark

Strawberries glow like rubies in the sun,
Sweet little treasures, one by one.
Among the fields where warm winds blow,
Sunflowers stretch in rows of gold below.

Red berries sparkle with morning dew,
While golden petals dance in blue.
The strawberries sweeten summer days,
Sunflowers shine in bright golden rays.

A basket filled with summer's delight,
Under the sun so warm and bright.
Red and gold in nature's embrace,
Beauty and sweetness share the same place.



Lock It—for the Rest of Us

by Edward Reid

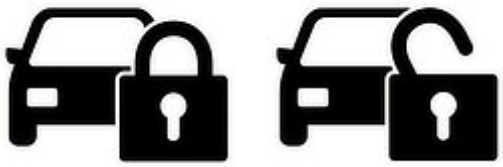
Details have been altered to protect the sanity of those who have already been sufficiently embarrassed.

You can read umpty zillion reasons why you should lock your car although one isn't often cited—to protect your neighbors.

Almost all auto crimes in Indianhead-Lehigh are committed by people simply walking through, checking cars to find unlocked doors. What happens then? First, they steal the contents (auto burglary). If they find the car key, then maybe they drive the car away (auto theft).

The latter has happened to people in our neighborhood. Keys left near a car, or a key-in-pocket fob left in the glove compartment. In the cases I know about, the cars were recovered, but only after being used as community cars by drug dealers, with the interiors left in bad condition. Yet oddly, we've also seen reports of car keys stolen but not the vehicle.

Mostly the miscreants ransack the interior, maybe grabbing small amounts of cash





and carrying a few items a couple hundred yards before deciding they aren't worth carrying.

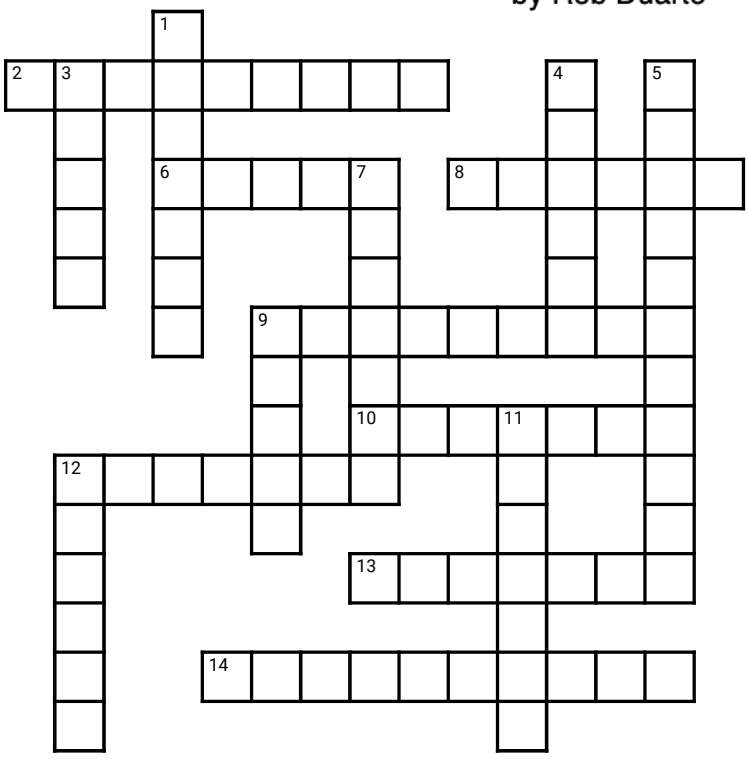
Then comes the psychological theft. When your vehicle has been ransacked, you have been invaded. For many, this is the worst part of the theft.

So who will the thieves hit when they come back? Because as long as they wander the neighborhood and find cars and trucks unlocked, they will spread the word: there are unlocked cars and trucks in Indianhead-Lehigh. We have the power to discourage them. The fewer vehicles they find unlocked, the less often they will try.

Shift the balance in your neighbors' favor by locking your car or truck! Every time! OK, yes, inside a locked garage counts as locked. Does anyone here actually use their garage for a car instead of for extra storage?

NENE MEANINGS

by Rob Duarte

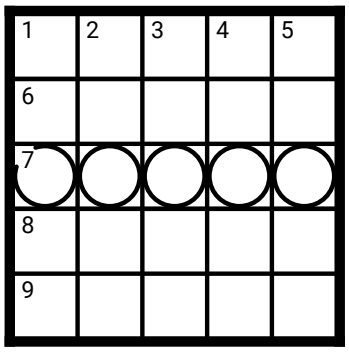


Across
2. Seventh
6. Owl
8. Sixth
9. Bridle
10. Cedar
12. North-South
13. Third
14. Fifth

Down
1. Second
3. Fourth
4. Dogwood
5. Eighth
7. East
9. Pine
11. Tobacco
12. Spring

NENE MINI

by Rob Duarte



Across
1. Vegan chocolate alternative
6. Island vacation destination
7. Our streets
8. Star-shaped spice
9. Spiked or tied

Down
1. Erie _____
2. Where Dolphins or Jaguars play
3. Like a old mysterious alphabet
4. Having a lot to lose?
5. Stationed

For additional clues to solve Nene Meanings, see **https://ihlna.org/nene-history/**
For extra credit, fill in the names without consulting that page. ;-)

For answers to both puzzles, see back cover.

Indianhead Acres-Lehigh's Neighborhood Zen Group

by David Jordan

Cypress Tree Zen Group, founded in Indianhead Acres in 1986, still meditates together over 40 years later at the Friends Meeting House, located at 2001 South Magnolia. They currently get together on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m., and welcome anyone who would like to join.

History

Begun by David Jordan in his home at 2011 E. Indianhead Drive, with his wife Linda Montague and friends, the group slowly grew to include several Indianhead-Lehigh residents. John Pekins, who died a year and half ago, brought his warm, engaging presence and a couple of friends to the group. Current neighborhood residents may remember John as the man who would walk and carry his dog, Richie, from his home on West Indianhead to Koucky Park every day.

John and David held morning Zen practice at David's house each morning on East Indianhead, with John walking over in the dark from his West Indianhead home. There were three David Jordans in Indianhead at that time. One morning, a local yoga teacher looking for the group walked into the home of the wrong David Jordan, who also lived on East Indianhead, before finding the right house.

The group was affiliated with the Kwan Um Zen School and brought Zen Master Seung Sahn, called Dae Soen Sa Nim, to Tallahassee to give a talk in 1986. The talk was so successful that he returned again the next year and was interviewed by Mary Ann Lindley for the Tallahassee Democrat. Ellen Gwynn, another Indianhead resident and a previous student of Dae Soen Sa Nim, joined the group at that time, as well as Anne Rudloe, a well-known local environmental activist and writer. Anne was eventually given inka (permission to teach). She led the group after Jordan left in 1996 until she died of cancer in 2012.

The Zen group has experienced several transitions since beginning in 1986. Kathleen Carr took over leadership of the group after Anne's death, and is currently president of the group. Later Bill Bodiford, another longtime Indianhead resident (as were his parents), joined the group and still leads practice as the head dharma teacher. The group had their retreats at his house on Atapha Nene for many years.

When David and Linda had their first child, Kelsey, in 1988, the group moved to the Unitarian Church on North Meridian. The group met online during the Covid pandemic and then moved to the Friends Meeting House in 2021. Jordan left to live in Maine in 1996 and returned in 2021. When he returned, he was looking forward to rejoining the group. "I have powerful memories of Anne, John, Ellen, Bill and I sitting together in Bill's house on those long retreats. When you are sitting like

that with people over time, you are not sitting alone but sitting together."

Participation

For those who are interested in joining a meditation practice, the group meets on Tuesdays and begins with chanting at 7:00 p.m., Zen meditation at 7:15, walking (outside in good weather) at 7:40, a second period of meditation at 7:50, and meditative tea at 8:00. A dharma talk, or group conversation, follows. Meditation instruction is available if needed. For those interested in meditative movement, there is an ongoing class Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m. featuring qigong and Zen wind exercises.

Bi-weekly Exercise Classes for Seniors (50+)

The Brain Body Balance class is an exercise class for people ages 50+ sponsored by the Tallahassee Senior Center. An evidence-based class, it is scientifically designed to safely and effectively keep seniors active and functioning as they age. Lucky for us, this class is offered in our own neighborhood. Some participants have been attending the class for over 20 years.

If you are over 60, you know that one of the first questions asked when visiting a health provider is "Have you fallen in the past six months?" Balance is paramount to maintaining good health, but it doesn't exist in a vacuum. A body with strong muscles and bones, flexible joints, and a sharp brain work together to keep us upright. This, in fact, is what the class is all about.

The exercises support muscle and bone strength as well as flexibility in the joints, even suppleness in the soft tissue. Participants practice targeted balance movements as well. Together, the routine helps reduce fall risk. And the class is fun; there's always time for side conversation and for making new friends, cracking jokes.

The instructors teaching these classes are trained; some have extensive certifications that include yoga, personal training, group fitness, and pilates.

One instructor points out, "If you don't move your muscles, atrophy can set in within one week." For that reason, it's helpful to stick with it. Everyone in the class is encouraged to go at their own pace—no embarrassment, no shame. "After you start doing it, you gain confidence and can keep up with routine," she explains.

Consider trying it, even if you are out of shape. Little by little, your body will strengthen as will your confidence in your physicality. A structured class with friends all moving toward the same goal can really boost regular attendance, which results in greater fitness.

Brain Body Balance class

Optimist Park Clubhouse
Tuesdays and Thursdays
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Upcoming Events

Halloween Party
24 OCTOBER Saturday
4:30-7:00 p.m.

Final Fridays
30 OCTOBER
7:00 p.m.
Costumes encouraged, the weirder the better!
David's house
2124 Atchena Nene

IHLNA General Meeting
8 NOVEMBER Sunday
4:30-7:00 p.m.
Join fellow neighbors to hear a presentation from County, City, and Blueprint representatives about Phase 3 of the Magnolia Project.

Saturday (2027)
27 MARCH
5K and Fun Run
8:00 a.m.
Nene Fest
4:00-9:00 p.m.

All events held at Optimist Park unless otherwise indicated.

Resilient Nene Committee Update

We held our Resilience Refresher on July 23rd, and several Indianhead-Lehigh neighbors learned from the experts how to best prepare for a hurricane. The city's Prep program also brought hurricane buckets filled with supplies for participants. If you weren't able to attend, you can still find useful resources shared on our website: https://ihlna.org/hurricane-season-prep/. At the Resilience Refresher, we learned that **Red Cross has a program to install smoke alarms for FREE**. If you are interested, please contact Ana Orosco (ana.orosco@gmail.com). Once we have a list of everyone interested, they will add our neighborhood to their schedule.

Based on the survey results from last year, we learned that



Useful resources:
https://ihlna.org/hurricane-season-prep/

Smoke Alarms:
Ana Orosco at ana.orosco@gmail.com

we care most about improvements to infrastructure and shared community resources. The plan is for the Resilient Nene Committee to work on exactly that!

Call for Volunteers

Meetings are once every 2 months. We will:

- Continue mapping community resources
- Study options for block captains/strengthening connection between neighbors
- Plan next year's Resilience Refresher

Email Ana to join! We also welcome comments, suggestions, or single-task contributions!

Answers to Puzzles from page 13:

NENE MEANINGS

ACROSS 2. KOLOPAKIN, 6. OHBAH, 8. APAKIN, 9. CHOCKSAKA, 10. ATCHENA, 12. WAHALAW, 13. TOOCHIN, 14. CHOWKEEBIN.
DOWN: 1. HOKOLIN, 3. OSTIN, 4. ATAPHA, 5. CHINNAPAKIN, 7. HASOSAW, 9. CHULI, 11. HEECHEE, 12. WEKEWA.

NENE MINI

D	E	C	A	L
E	S	I	N	A
S	E	N	E	N
A	B	U	R	A
B	O	R	A	C