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# The First Coast Parent Volume 28 Issue 9

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## Plenty of Free Music in May

May is a great month for music festivals. The weather is warm but not too hot, the energy is joyous with summer break just around the corner, and weekends are available for fun. On the First Coast, there are free festivals nearly every weekend and music to suit any taste. The children will love this uninhibited approach to music where they can shake, rattle, and roll without any worries about formal concert manners. Mom and Dad can enjoy the vibe too. Slip into your sandals, load up the kids, and head out to one of these events. Plan to sip an adult beverage or nosh on some food truck fare while relaxing in a lawn chair and tapping your toes. These music festivals are all fun.

The Romanza Festivale of the Arts happens early in the month. It's presented as a celebration of art and music with daily activities from May 4th through the 13th. There are music and dance performances, concerts, art shows, and dramatic productions happening all over St. Augustine. A great deal of them are free. For fun and high energy, head to the Plaza for some Latin music including a Mariachi band on May 5th at 7 p.m.. Later in the week you can find rhythm and blues performances, folk guitar, chamber music, children's chorus, jazz--really anything that suits your fancy. Go to www.romanzafestivale. plan your

St. Augustine's is also offering free concerts in the Plaza every Thursday starting on May 31st. When school is out, this relaxing evening might be a



niceadventuretobreakuptheroutine.

Dancing in the Street has been pumping out positive, ocean side, musical fun for 32 years. It's packed with people and music is playing all the time. This is a very family friendly area of town and the atmosphere is pretty relaxed, but it's an active festival, no chairs and lounging in a park. Events will kick off on Saturday, May 19th at 11:00am at the Beaches Town Center, located at the ocean end of Atlantic Boulevard. The best time for families is early in the day when the crowds and heat are lowest. They have a great kid's area for keeping the children engaged and the music is upbeat and ongoing. Naturally, there is plenty of opportunity to dance so-- let loose.

To calm it down a notch, bring

the chairs and blanket out to Jacksonville Beach for the **Summer Jazz Concert** on May 20th starting at 5:00. This is the first of two free concerts suited to everyone. There will be food, an ocean breeze, and a relaxed atmosphere that includes three acts: the Skylar Nolan Band, followed by Urban Jazz, with the headliner, Nick Colionne. Everything happens at the Seawalk Pavilion in Jacksonville Beach.

The big daddy of all music festivals in northeast Florida Is the Jacksonville Jazz Festival which takes place over 3 days on Memorial day weekend. Held across 3 stages in downtown Jacksonville, this event is huge and the talent is world class. It's crowded and hot and hardly any shade so plan for an evening visit or pick the Hemming Plaza stage for the comfort of children. Bring chairs since the streets are closed and people set up right on the asphalt. There is plenty of food and beverage to be had but bring kid snacks and beverages since refreshments are mostly geared for adults, though there is water available. This is one of the largest jazz festivals in the country, so pace yourself, pick your performances and plan for lots of walking through the 15 blocks of the festival. The Skyway Express stops in Hemming Plaza so that might make things easier with the children, plus--a monorail is always fun. Most of all, enjoy the music. It's fantastic.





The annual **Get Hooked on Fishing Rodeo** is one of the best fishing events for kids. Not only can your kids get a taste of fishing, but if the fish are slow to bite, there are loads of games, prizes, and food treats, and information booths to enjoy. Held every year in the spring, kids (and parents) get the use of a loaner rod and reel, free bait, instruction, and even a helping hand to load the hook. To top it off, everything is free. This year's event will take place on May 19th from 9AM–1PM at Huguenot Lagoon on Third St. between 16th and 19th Aves. S. in Jacksonville Beach. For more info: (904) 923-5666

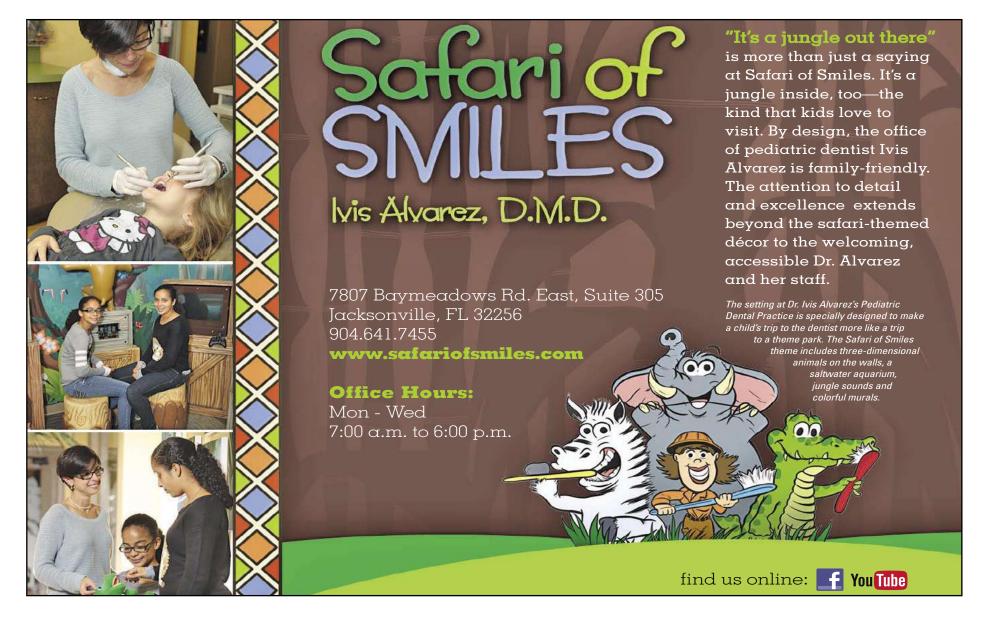


#### Flitter, Flutter, Fly Youth Gardening Camp

For any child who stops to smell the flowers or watch the butterflies, there's a free class designed just for them. The Garden Club of Jacksonville is offering a one day workshop on monarch butterflies, their life cycle, and the importance of milkweed as their host plant. Any child in grades 1-6 can sign up by May 7th for the free event. They will plant a native milkweed in a newspaper pot, create a nectar station using a sponge, view parts of the butterfly under a microscope and make a Mother's Day card. Camp is limited to the first 20 children who sign up so act quickly. The event will be held on May 12th from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm. To participate, call the Garden Club at 904-355-4224 or email info@gardenclubofjacksonville.org



If your child has an interest in comics, no matter the age, May 5th is the day to test the idea. On that day, anyone can walk in and get a free comic book at dozens of comic book shops in northeast Florida. All different types of comic books are provided by the best publishers in the business and offered for free as a way to encourage interest in comic books. Each store has it's own way to celebrate the event. House of Comics and Games on Beach Blvd. is offering extra fun with local artists in the store doing sketches, food trucks, and door prizes throughout the day. To find out which shops are participating, visit www.freecomicbookday.com and type in your zip code.



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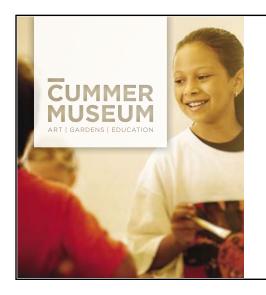






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The New Hork Times



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Our camp is geared towards keeping kids active all summer long playing sports & swimming. Weekly field trips are taken to fun places like the Jacksonville Zoo, bowling & the beach.

Campers range in age from 5-14
Camp runs 9 weeks: June 4-August 3
Camp times are 7:30am - 6:00pm
Cost varies from \$120/week
for UNF students to \$200/week
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We offer an Alumni rate and a 10% discount for active military.

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# What's Happening



Join Daniel Tiger and Katerina Kittycat, with their friends Arthur, Jet Propulsion, Curious George and the Man in the Yellow Hat, and the Cat in the Hat to celebrate WJCT's annual Be My Neighbor Day.

This festival is all about showing children how to be a great neighbor. They can decorate placemats to share with residents in assisted living facilities, make a pledge to do something good for a neighbor, meet a community helper and learn how to help too, along with our neighborly activities. There will be food trucks, tours of EverBank Field (between 11:30 and 1:30), and other fun activities for families. While the event is free, RSVP is required by **May 1st before 5PM**. (wjct.org/events/bemyneighborday). The fun happens on Saturday, May 5th from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm at the WJCT Studios downtown.





Bring the kids out to see the Waterless Carnival or take a River Tour with the St. Johns Riverkeeper. How about being part of the White Shark Science Skype Session with Captain Chris Fischer? All of these activities and more are part of the annual Aqua Fest at the Museum of Science and History. It's designed to help everyone learn more about the water that surrounds us. Admission to the museum and festival is free so bring the family out on May 5th, from 10 am until 4 pm. For more information, call 396-MOSH or visit themosh.org

#### Visit Wild Amelia Nature Festival



One of the best nature festivals around happens this month on Amelia Island. The Wild Amelia Festival highlights northeast Florida's animals and natural beauty. This festival is very hands on and particularly kid-friendly. One of the most popular activities is touch tank with salt marsh critters. Kids also love to visit the Kids Niche (open from 10a.m.-2p.m.), an area specifically designed to provide nature crafts and nature-based activities for children.

Children are encouraged to join the Nature Passport Program which allows them to learn answers to questions about the featured Critter of the Year, and then get stamped on their passport. There are also loads of unique eco-tours for the family in the \$16-\$22 range that offer a fantastic way to experience the beauty on north Florida. The Wild Amelia Nature Festival is free and will be held on May 18-20th. For additional information, visit www.wildamelia.com.



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