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PONTE VEDRA



H A P P Y
NEW YEAR!

Recorder

December 26, 2019
Volume 51, No. 8
75 cents

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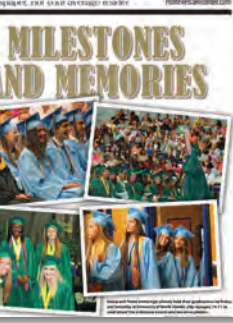
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YEAR IN REVIEW



2019



ALSO FEATURING CONNECTIONS
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New Home

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Send us your news


We welcome submissions of photos, stories, columns and letters to the editor. Let us know what's happening. Email submissions to pvrecorder@opcfla.com or bring them by our office at **1102 A1A N., Unit 108, Ponte Vedra Beach**. Submissions may be published in the paper, on our website or on our social media platforms.

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 Also, check out the **Ponte Vedra Recorder** channel on YouTube.

WHAT'S THIS?



Do you know what this is?

Email answer to pvrecorder@opcfla.com by Monday at 5 p.m.

All correct entries will be entered into a random drawing to win tickets for two adults and two children to the Jacksonville Zoo. In order to allow as many families as possible to win, participants are only eligible to win a ticket prize pack once every four months.

Four readers correctly identified last as the beach umbrellas at the Ponte Vedra Inn and Club. The winner of the random draw was **Julie Parker**. Congratulations, Julie — you may pick up your prize at the Recorder office during normal business hours.



ADOPT A PET

CAT OF THE WEEK

Gem was picked up and brought to the Pet Center as a stray. She is a 6-month-old, spayed, domestic shorthair tabby. She is very shy at first, but then warms right up and cuddles. She is petite, young and playful — waiting for her new furrrever family. Come see Gem at the Pet Center today. #52640



DOG OF THE WEEK



Barney was brought to the Pet Center an owner release. He is a beautiful hound/lab mix with blue/brown eyes, who loves to smile. He would be a great family friend to older kids. He is housetrained, very sweet and good with cats and other dogs. Come see Barney at the Pet Center today. #52944

Any new pet being introduced to a new home will need time to adjust to its new environment. Please reinforce house training and behavioral training, and be mindful of interacting with other pets.

St. Johns County Pet Center

Cat adoptions are \$30 for males and \$40 for females. Dog adoptions are \$45 for males and \$60 for females. Adoption fees include microchipping, neutering/spaying, rabies vaccinations and shots. The Pet Center is located at 130 N. Stratton Road in St. Augustine, off U.S. 1 between County Road 210 and International Golf Parkway. Business hours are Tuesday through Friday 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The center is closed to the public on Sunday. On Monday, the office is open by appointment only to claim a lost pet. **For more information, please call the St. Johns County Pet Center at (904) 209-6190.**

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

L	A	P	E	L	R	U	B	K	I	E	V
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5	2	6	3	7	9	4	1	8			
1	9	4	8	5	2	3	7	6			

Solutions correspond to last week's puzzles.

ZOO Lights

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ZOO
AND GARDENS

2019

YEAR IN REVIEW

The Ponte Vedra Recorder's annual "Year in Review" takes a look back at the people, stories and events that made the biggest impact in 2019 around Ponte Vedra and The Beaches.

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COLLECTION



L'ATRIUM
\$297,000

Great beach home located in the heart of Ponte Vedra Beach! Features 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, 2-car garage, spacious great room with fireplace & cathedral ceilings, kitchen with breakfast area, newer roof, A/C, & water heater, private backyard, & large screened porch. MLS 1028606

Barbara Maple | 904.571.1764
 BarbaraMaple@WatsonRealtyCorp.com



ENCLAVE @ TOWN CENTER | \$324,900

Charming coastal cottage in Nocatee. This like-new David Weekley home features 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, an office/den, gourmet kitchen with Bosch appliances, granite counters, & stone-front island, plantation shutters, tile floors, screened lanai, & paved patio. Walk to shops & restaurants! MLS 1028941

Nancy Herbkersman | 904.271.1933
 NancyH@WatsonRealtyCorp.com



SAWGRASS CC
\$449,400

Nicely remodeled Fisherman's Cove condo in the heart of Sawgrass Country Club. Features \$100,000 worth of upgrades, including floors, appliances, cabinetry, lighting, quartz counters, & fresh paint inside & out. Enjoy expansive water to golf views of the 5th green, just a short walk to the beach! MLS 989883

Murray & Elise Beard | 904.465.2784
 MurrayBeard@WatsonRealtyCorp.com



PALENCIA
\$545,000 - Price Reduced!

Great home with front porch nestled on peaceful preserve lot. Features over 3,254 SqFt, tile & wood flooring, open great room with built-ins & gas fireplace, & soaring 12-ft. ceilings. The kitchen has stainless steel appliances, 5-burner gas cooktop, granite counters, & a breakfast bar. MLS 1023974

Cammy Ray | 904.806.3489
 CammyRay@WatsonRealtyCorp.com



OLD PONTE VEDRA
\$849,900

Enjoy spectacular ocean views from this fabulous beachfront condo with gracious covered porches & a metal roof! Perched atop rolling dunes on the pristine Ponte Vedra coast, this 2nd floor unit has been remodeled from top to bottom, including all new flooring, finishes, baths, & kitchen. MLS 1008668

Missy Dekay | 904.613.2445



Happy New Year!



JANUARY



ALLISON WILLIAMS



BLANCA ALBOR



JEREMIAH BLOCKER



MARY ANN NASON



MELISSA NELSON

FEBRUARY



RICHARD FELDER



TESS CROSBY



CMDR. SCOTT BEAVER



ADAM CAMPBELL

MARCH



PAUL TESORI



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DEB CHAPIN

APRIL



RICHARD GOLDMAN



SANDI GALLOWAY



JACKIE SMITH



LYNN LAYTON

MAY



TOM GIUSTO



BOB TEBOW



JENNIFER STRATTON



JOHN CELLUCCI



VICKIE CAVEY

JUNE



DR. DON RESIO



LESLIE WEED



TONY IANNARONE



ALLY BURKETT

JULY



BOB CONKLIN



MEGAN WALL



BRANDON LEWIS



ANNE CRAWFORD

AUGUST



TOM VERRI



BRETT SIMON



CARA BURKY



JENNIFER DEW



MARK LOWERY

SEPTEMBER



SUZANNE HUDSON-SMITH



DANIELLE JOHNSON SMITH



ELLEN LEROY-REED



JEFF PAPA

OCTOBER



MIKE PLATT



VICTORIA LONG



CHARLIE CHACOS



DOROTHY FLANNERY



ISABEL MATOS

NOVEMBER



JACQUELYN BATES



HOLLY HAYES



JEFF WHITAKER



JIM MCCARTHY

DECEMBER



ANTHONY EGELN



MICHAELE BRADFORD



DEREK PRINCE

To read more about the people profiled in **ONE OF US** throughout 2019, visit pontevedrarecorder.com and click One of Us.

TPC to begin vertical construction of PGA TOUR global home

By Jon Blauvelt

Originally published Jan. 20

When the golfing world descends upon Ponte Vedra Beach for THE PLAYERS Championship this year, visitors and TV viewers will have a chance to see more than just the greatest field in golf. According to officials at the PGA TOUR, they will also get a first glimpse of vertical construction of the company's new global home.

"We expect that when people come for THE PLAYERS in mid-March, that they will see construction," said Kirsten Sabia, vice president of integrated communications for the PGA TOUR. "I don't know how much people will be able to see. But there will be vertical structures that will be visible."

Since construction of the



Photo provided by the PGA TOUR

The PGA TOUR's global home will be 187,000 square feet and located off Palm Valley Road.

187,000-square-foot facility off Palm Valley Road began in summer 2018, efforts have been dedicated solely to clearing the site, stabilizing the ground and obtaining the necessary approvals and permitting from St. Johns County, Sabia said. Now in 2019, the PGA TOUR is focusing on the exterior build of the facility, and come THE PLAYERS, that will be evident. So evident that Sabia noted the PGA TOUR will be providing broadcast teams of the tournament with talking points about the construction.

According to Sabia, the PGA TOUR is currently working with Baker Concrete

on the concrete pour for the foundation of the building. Once the concrete work is finished by the end of February, the plan is to then start vertical construction. Clark Construction, the company that built the TPC Clubhouse, is the general contractor of the global home project.

Sabia also noted that widening of Palm Valley Road adjacent to the facility's main entrance will take place in summer 2019. The entrance will be located where the St. Johns County Courthouse Annex currently sits on Palm Valley Road. The PGA TOUR purchased the Annex property in summer 2018. The Annex will eventually be transitioning its services to 151 Sawgrass Corners Drive in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Sabia said the road into the entrance will be called PGA TOUR Boulevard. A traffic signal will be installed at the intersection, as well as a left turning lane for drivers coming from the west on Palm Valley Road. In addition, Sabia said there will be modest signage for the entrance, as well as a guard gate. Over the course of 2019, Sabia said the current PGA TOUR Boulevard that winds past Sawgrass Village and Sawgrass Marriott

YEAR IN REVIEW JANUARY 2019

and into Sawgrass Players Club will be renamed TPC Boulevard, pending approval from the county. In addition, Sabia said the PGA TOUR is planning improvements to ATP Boulevard, which she said will be a service entrance for the new headquarters.

From a traffic perspective, Sabia insists these changes and the overall development of the global home shouldn't cause much impact.

"As we consolidate our existing employees, many of whom are residents of Ponte Vedra Beach and the Beaches and travel A1A as their normal drive to work, and operating now under one headquarter location, the result will be net-net," Sabia said. "In theory, it shouldn't impact traffic, much at all, except for normal business growth, because we have made a commitment to the county over the course of the next decade or more for additional jobs."

More specifically, Sabia explained that PGA TOUR staff heading eastbound on Palm Valley Road will never reach A1A, therefore decreasing trips there and on Solana Road, which is currently used by staff members to cut through the Sawgrass Players Club. With that being said, Sabia noted that traffic patterns within the Sawgrass Players Club should also decrease.

As for future traffic, Sabia said it will not exceed traffic volumes previously considered and approved by the state and county. She noted these volumes were included and evaluated in the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization's

JANUARY continues on Page 7

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Nease teacher uses math as tool to communicate with student after tragic accident

By Amber Lake

Originally published Feb. 14

Seventeen-year-old Olivia Love is a bright, bubbly teenager and Nease High School student who has a tight friend group and changes her hair color almost every other week. She is the type of girl who loves the people around her and makes friends with her teachers. She has a warm smile and uses it, often.

On Jan. 2, Olivia Love was riding in a Yamaha two-passenger golf cart with the driver and two other passengers on State Road 16. At some point while driving, she fell from the rear cargo area and struck her head on the asphalt. She suffered potentially life-threatening injuries from that fall. Just like that, a smart, vivacious girl's life took a turn in an entirely different direction.

Currently, Love is learning how to speak again at the Shepherd Center in Atlanta. The clinic specializes in rehabilitation for people with acquired brain injuries and is one of the best in the county. Love is looking at a long, slow recovery. She will need years of therapy to learn how to communi-

YEAR IN REVIEW FEBRUARY 2019

cate and use her right leg. She will have to be taught how to understand language and form words all over again. Her sister, Danielle Love, has been posting regular updates about her condition on Instagram.

One thing that Danielle is sure to mention when speaking about positive outcomes is the wealth of support from the community. One such community member has stepped up to the plate in a way befitting of her position.

MAMA G

Kelli Gebauer is a math teacher at Nease High School.

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January

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recent Ponte Vedra Beach/Palm Valley traffic study in 2017. She said the study determined that improvements to Palm Valley Road in the vicinity of the proposed PGA TOUR headquarters, including at the A1A at Palm Valley Road intersection, are not required based on traffic growth through the study's planning horizon of 2040. As a

result, Sabia said the improvements the PGA TOUR is making are above and beyond what would be necessary.

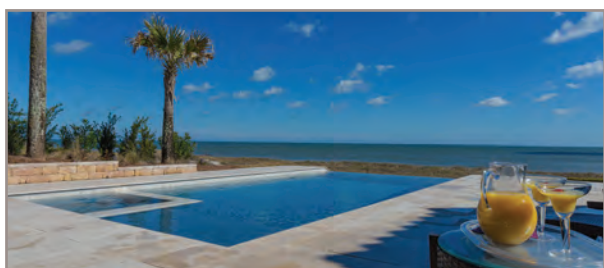
Moving forward, Sabia said the PGA TOUR plans to focus on interior construction of the global home in 2020. The company is scheduled to receive its certificate of occupancy in the fourth quarter of 2020. The PGA TOUR then plans to move its 800 employees currently spread out in 17 locations in Ponte Vedra to the new building in the first quarter of 2021.

Thank you for sharing your lives with us over the years. We cherish the memories we have made with you. May the peace and joy of the season stay with you all year long.

Carol Burns, Clare Berry and Lauren Spiller Daraskevich

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Oceanfront Masterpiece

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5 bedrooms, 6 full / 2 half baths \$8,900,000



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Design Ocean Dream Oasis

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Thursday, Dec. 26	Friday, Dec. 27	Saturday, Dec. 28	Sunday, Dec. 29
<p>Canine Field Days It's an off-leash outdoor adventure at Congaree and Penn's back field and oak hammocks. Humans, can enjoy a pop-up bar while canines indulge in the field. Register online and check in at the quonset hut taproom, where attendees will receive a map to the back field and oak hammocks, where guests will take a 10 to 15 minute (on-leash) walk to the back field. One attendees arrive to the back field, pups are free to run free. Field day starts at 3 p.m. For more information, visit www.congareeandpenn.com. Congaree and Penn is located at 11830 Old Kings Road in Jacksonville.</p> <p>Gingerbread Extravaganza Experience over fifty handmade gingerbread creations at the Gingerbread Extravaganza from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Dec. 26, at Old St. Andrews. Attendees can test their skills in a scavenger hunt, vote for the Peoples' Choice Awards, sip apple cider, explore the gift shop and enjoy tours of the Historic Merrill House. Adult cost is \$10, ages 4 to 18 cost \$5 and children under 3 years of age are free. Proceeds from all this fun and creativity benefit the educational programs and archives of the Jacksonville Historical Society. Old St. Andrews is located at 317 A. Philip Randolph Blvd. in Jacksonville.</p> <p>Torah & Tea Join with fellow Jewish women for camaraderie and refreshments as they meet for "Torah & Tea," Thursday mornings at 9 a.m. This weekly study group finds relevant messages from issues discussed in the Weekly Torah portion. Reservations can be made by emailing Leah Kurinsky at lkurinsky@gmail.com or by calling (904) 543-9301. Torah and Tea meets at Chabad at the Beaches, located at 521 A1A N. in Ponte Vedra.</p>	<p>An Evening with Scott Sharrard The Blue Jay Listening Room will host an evening with Scott Sharrard, skilled guitarist former bandleader for the late Gregg Allman. Doors open at 7 p.m., Dec. 27, and the show starts at 8 p.m. Ages 18 and up are permitted and seating is first come, first served. For more information, call the Blue Jay Listening Room at (904) 318-3020. Blue Jay Listening Room is located at 2457 S. Third St. in Jacksonville Beach.</p> <p>Ponte Vedra Professional Networking Group meeting The Ponte Vedra Professional Networking Group schedules weekly meetings inside Fidelity Bank, where members network with each other and guests. Each member/guest will introduce themselves and one member will present about the businesses he/she represents. The next meeting is Dec. 27 at 8:45 a.m. Fidelity Bank is located at 110 A1A N. in Ponte Vedra Beach.</p> <p>ZOOlights 2019 At the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens, the holidays are a time for magic under the ZOOlights. Presented by Community First Credit Union of Florida, ZOOlights, hosted now until Dec. 29, will transform the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens into a luminous winter wonderland, filled with moving sculptures, forests of lighted trees and animal silhouettes. Guests can enjoy nightly visits from Santa until Christmas Eve, local artists, kids activities, an illuminated Zoo Express, marshmallow roasts, cookie decorating, a carousel and 4-D theater and more. Tickets start at \$8 for members and \$10 for nonmembers. For more information, visit www.zoolights.jacksonvillezoo.org. The Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens is located at 370 Zoo Pkwy. in Jacksonville.</p> <p>Chanukah Shabbat dinner Celebrate Chanukah with an Israeli-themed Shabbat dinner at 6:30 p.m., Dec. 27, at Chabad at the Beaches. Invite a friend and enjoy a wide-variety of Israeli cuisine in honor of Chanukah. To RSVP or for more information, call Chabad at the Beaches at (904) 543-9301 or visit www.chabadbeaches.com, Chabad at the Beaches is located at 521 A1A N. in Ponte Vedra Beach.</p>	<p>Oysters and mimosas Before closing for the New Year, Coastal Wine Market invites all to visit, Dec. 28, for oysters and mimosas from noon to close, or until the food runs out! For questions or more information, call CWM at (904) 395-3520. Coastal Wine Market is located at 641 Crosswater Pkwy., Suite B, in Ponte Vedra.</p> <p>Farmers Market at the St. Augustine Amphitheatre Shop fresh foods, artisan goods and local art as shoppers enjoy local music and flavorful eats, Saturdays, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., at the St. Augustine Amphitheatre. Pets are not allowed in the market. For more information, visit www.facebook.com/staugampmarket. The St. Augustine Amphitheatre is located at 1340C A1A S. in St. Augustine.</p> <p>GTM Reserve monthly beach clean-up Every fourth Saturday, the GTM Research Reserve invites the public to join us in a beach clean-up. Assist the reserve staff in removing marine debris and microplastics off the beach to make it a safer habitat. Participants will meet a ranger at 9:30 a.m. sharp, in the GTM Visitor Center. GTM Reserve will provide the gloves, grabbers and buckets. Enjoy a scenic walk, for a great cause. This event is open to the public and no registration is required. For questions or more information, call GTM Reserve at (904) 823-4500. The GTM Research Reserve Visitor Center is located at 505 Guana River Road in Ponte Vedra Beach.</p> <p>SunSquabi at 1904 Music Hall Jam with SunSquabi during their New Year's Eve tour on their way to Brainquility music festival! SunSquabi is a group where jam bands and electronic dance music intersect, with rhythm-driven funk to create a "hydro-funk experience" will perform from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m., Dec. 28, at 1904 Music Hall. For tickets and more information, www.1904musicall.com. 1904 Music Hall is located at 19 N. Ocean St. in Jacksonville.</p>	<p>Jacksonville Jaguars vs. Indianapolis Colts at TIAA Bank Field It's the Jacksonville Jaguars' final game of the season at 4:25 p.m., Dec. 29, at TIAA Bank Field in downtown Jacksonville. Cheer from the stands and see if the power of Minshew Mania can give Jacksonville a final win for the 2019 season. For tickets or more information, visit www.Jaguars.com. TIAA Bank Field is located at 1 TIAA Bank Field Drive in Jacksonville.</p> <p>Venardos Circus Created by former Ringling Bros. Ringmaster Kevin Venardos, this animal-free circus features a cast of aerialists, acrobats, comedians, jugglers, contortionists and daredevils hailing from around the world. The show will take place in its classic and custom circus tent at the corner of St. Augustine Amphitheater and will have two shows for Dec. 29, at 12:30 p.m. and 4 p.m. For tickets and more information, visit www.tickettailor.com/events/staugustinefl. The St. Augustine Amphitheater is located at 1340C A1A S. in St. Augustine.</p> <p>Sundays at Surfer the Bar Join Big Fish Power Yoga on Sundays for a free "music & flow" class at Surfer the Bar. The class is held upstairs and runs from 10 to 11 a.m. Bring friends and family and enjoy brunch and mimosas after class. Register under classes at www.bigfishpoweryoga.com. Surfer the Bar is located at 200 First St. in Jacksonville Beach.</p> <p>Hemming Park's 'Totally Lit Hanukkah Party' Join Hemming Park from 3 to 7 p.m., Dec. 29, along with Gili's Kitchen Catering and Bakery and the Jacksonville Jewish Center for the annual celebration of Hanukkah and its related traditions. Attendees can enjoy live music performed by the band, Koltrain, storytelling, arts and crafts, dreidel games and Kosher food and wine from Gili's Kitchen. Stick around and watch the traditional the Menorah lighting at 6:15 p.m. This event is free and open to the public. For more information or to participate, email events@hemmingpark.org. Hemming Plaza is located at 135 W. Monroe St. in Jacksonville.</p>

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PV2-LV45852

Monday, Dec. 30	Tuesday, Dec. 31	Wednesday, Jan. 1	Thursday, Jan. 2
<p>Downtown Dazzle display The Jacksonville Children's Chorus is hosting its fourth annual downtown holiday celebration at 5:30 p.m. by illuminating its downtown office with festive lights, synchronized to recorded songs of the season performed by JCC. Downtown Dazzle continues through New Year's Eve, with presentations each night, from 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. For more information, call JCC at (904) 353-1636. JCC is located at 225 E. Duval St. in Jacksonville.</p> <p>'Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker' at the IMAX Theater The IMAX Theater at World Golf Hall of Fame will have its final showings of "Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker," with showtimes at 12:30, 3:45, 7 and 10:15 p.m., Dec. 30. The surviving Resistance faces the First Order once more as Rey, Finn and Poe Dameron's journey continues. With the power and knowledge of generations behind them, the final battle commences. For more showtimes and information, visit www.worldgolfimax.com. The IMAX Theater is located at 1 World Golf Pl. in St. Augustine.</p> <p>Monday trivia at Mellow Mushroom Join Mellow Mushroom every Monday night at 7 p.m. for trivia with Trivia Nation. This event is free to play and there are prizes for the winners. Mellow Mushroom is located at 1018-2 Third St. N. in Jacksonville Beach.</p> <p>Run Club at Southern Swells Join Jax Beach Runners Monday nights at Southern Swells Brewing Co. for an evening run at 7 p.m. It is a 4.2-mile route, but runners can run as much or as little as they'd like. After the run, hang out and enjoy \$1 Southern Swells beers for all who ran. For more information about Jax Beach Runners and their events, visit their meetup page at www.meetup.com/Jax-Beach-Runners/. Southern Swells Brewing Co. is located at 1312 Beach Blvd. in Jacksonville Beach.</p>	<p>New Year's Eve: The Jazz Age Party like it's 1919 as Courtney Lewis and the Jacksonville Symphony revel in the 100th anniversary of Prohibition, the Roarin' Twenties and more, followed by a party, featuring the sounds of the Chris Thomas Band and capped by fireworks with an optimal viewing location by the river. The show starts at 9 p.m., Dec. 31. For tickets or more information, call (904) 354-5547 or visit www.JaxSymphony.org. The Jacksonville Symphony will perform at the Times Union Center for Performing Arts, located at 300 Water St. in Jacksonville.</p> <p>New Year's Eve at Colonial Oak Park Musical group, Baba Caiman, is ready to ring in the New Year in Saint Augustine at Colonial Oak Music Park, from 7 p.m. to 1:30 a.m., this New Year's Eve. This is a free event for the community, with two fully-stocked bars available, along with champagne, a dance floor and four big screens to watch the ball drop. For more information, call (904) 342-2857. Colonial Oak Music Park is located at 33 Saint George St. in St. Augustine.</p> <p>WinterFEST at Adventure Landing Winterfest at Adventure Landing is still in full swing this New Year's Eve. Visit from 2 to 10 p.m. and see how Adventure Landing transformed Shipwreck Island into a cozy Alpine experience, complete with ice skating, Blizzard Bluff Village, Crystal Creek Lodge and the Mistletoe Marketplace. Visitors can also wind through the snowy village and enjoy window displays and lights galore. For more information, call Adventure Landing at (904) 246-4386 or visit www.jacksonville-beach.adventurelanding.com/winterfest. Adventure Landing is located at 1944 Beach Blvd. in Jacksonville Beach.</p> <p>New Year's Eve party at Fionn MacCool's Ring in the new year with Fionn MacCool's Irish Pub and Restaurant at its NYE party at 8 p.m., Dec. 31. Guests can enjoy a cocktail hour with two complimentary drinks, either draft beer or house wine or liquor, a three-course dinner, music by DJ Se7ven and champagne to toast at midnight. Cost is \$65 per person. For more information or to reserve a spot, call (904) 217-702. Fionn MacCool's Irish Pub and Restaurant is located at 145 Hilden Road in Ponte Vedra.</p>	<p>First Day Hike at Anastasia State Park Ring in the New Year at Anastasia State Park for its annual "First Day Hike." Bring some friends and family to off the new year being active and outdoors! This two-mile hike will be exercise-focused. However, there will be educational opportunities along the trail, too. Whether a first-time visitor or a regular, the park staff hopes that the First Day Hike will inspire attendees to make exercising a part of 2020's routine. To join, meet at the Hilltop Picnic Area and sign-in. Dress for the weather and bring a reusable water bottle, sunscreen, bug spray and/or any other needed items for the hike. Program is free with regular park admission fee. For more information, contact the park at (904) 461-2033. Anastasia State Park is located at 300 Anastasia Park Road in St. Augustine.</p> <p>Caregiver support group A caregiver support group will meet at noon at The Palms at Ponte Vedra, Jan. 1. The group encourages caregivers to maintain their own personal, physical and emotional health while they care for the person with dementia. In addition, the group may provide a much-needed break from caregiving responsibilities. Lunch will also be served. Registration is required and space is limited. Call Cari Eyre at (904) 281-9077 to register or for more information. The Palms at Ponte Vedra is located at 405 Solana Road in Ponte Vedra Beach.</p> <p>New Year's Day brunch at Wicked Barley Cure that hangover and join Wicked Barley for a New Year's Day Brunch from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Jan. 1. The Brunch will feature live music by Dustin Bradley and a menu featuring fresh, made-from-scratch dishes like biscuits n' gravy and much more. Get 2020 started right with house-made Beer Marys or \$12 bottomless Mead or Cider Mosas. Wicked Barley is located at 4100 Baymeadows Road in Jacksonville.</p> <p>\$1 slices at Trasca & Co. Eatery From Monday to Friday, 2 to 5 p.m., Trasca & Co. Eatery will be serving \$1 pizza slices for dine-in guests. Choose from cheese or pepperoni pizza. For more specials and information, call Trasca & Co. Eatery at (904) 395-3983. Trasca & Co. Eatery are located at 155 Tourside Drive, #1500, in Ponte Vedra Beach.</p>	<p>TaxSlayer Gator Bowl The 75th Annual TaxSlayer Gator Bowl is coming to downtown Jacksonville at 7 p.m., Jan 2, at TIAA Bank Field. The Tennessee Volunteers, the SEC is the home team, will be seated on the West side of the stadium. The Indiana Hoosiers, the Big Ten team, will be on the East side. Children ages 3 and older must have a valid game ticket to enter. For tickets, visit www.Ticketmaster.com. TIAA Bank Field is located at 1 TIAA Bank Field Drive in Jacksonville.</p> <p>Harry Potter trivia at Burrito Gallery Burrito Gallery in Jacksonville Beach is hosting a Harry Potter trivia night with Trivia Nation. Come hungry and thirsty as trivia players eat, drink and compete to see who really knows their stuff to become the Harry Potter Trivia Winners. \$300 will be awarded to first-prize winners, along with other cash prizes and more. To compete or for more information, call Burrito Gallery at (904) 246-6521. Burrito Gallery is located at 300 Beach Blvd., #1, in Jacksonville Beach.</p> <p>Nights of Lights boat cruise The Nights of Lights boat cruises are back, now through Feb. 2, 2020, for a tour of the lights along the water in downtown St. Augustine. Boats will launch out of Beaches of Vilano and run between two to three trips per night, every day of the week. For more information, call Night of Lights Cruise at (904) 248-4424. Beaches of Vilano is located at 254 Vilano Road, in St. Augustine.</p> <p>Thirsty Thursdays at Al's Pizza What's a better combination than pizza and beer? Every Thursday, from open to close, Al's Pizza serves \$1.50 Yuengling Lager and house wines. Al's Pizza is located at 635 A1A N. in Ponte Vedra Beach.</p> <p>Free calendar listings for community groups and nonprofit organizations are published at our discretion on a space-available basis. Send your event at least 10 days before publication. Submit events to Daniela@opcfla.com or call (904) 686-3939.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Compiled by Daniela Toporek</p>

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February

Continued from 7

She became close to Olivia in geometry class and when she visited during “Excel” breaks to study in her room with friends. Gebauer is a school favorite; many students find her to be welcoming and stay at her class after hours. Enough so that she has earned the nickname, Mama G.

“You develop a better relationship with the kids, and you find out more about their personal lives,” Gebauer said. “It got to the point where I’m kind of like a mother to my students. I am at that age now where they look at me like a mom, but not their mom. They will come to me and talk to me and ask me questions about their teenage problems.”

Olivia’s family owns a bagel shop, Bite a Bagel, in St. Augustine. Gebauer went there often and eventually found out the owners were her parents. Since that realization, she has been close with the entire family.

When she found out about Olivia’s accident, she said it hurt her as if it were one of her own biological kids. She went to the hospital the very next day, and she has been back many times since.

“She is such a great girl and has such a great personality,” Gebauer said. “Fun loving and easy going. Just a sweet, sweet, sun-shiny kind of person. I wanted to be the connection for the students at school to be able to send something if they couldn’t get out there.”



Photo provided by Danielle Love

Seventeen-year-old Olivia Lovewhen fell from a golf cart Jan. 2 and hit her head on the asphalt. The fall caused serious brain damage.

A TEACHER TEACHES HER STUDENT

On Jan. 17, Gebauer went to the hospital in Orange Park where Olivia Love was recovering. She brought “get-well” cards and gifts from the students at Nease. Olivia laid on the bed as her mother, Kathleen Borsody, and Danielle were speaking with the neurologist.

At that time, her recovery involved trying to get her to follow commands to understand her condition. Although her responses were weak, her family had just received the news that her brain stem was unharmed and maybe other areas of her brain were not as badly affected as previously thought.

While the neurologist was reviewing Olivia’s case with her mother and sister, Gebauer occupied herself with Olivia.

“She likes to touch your hand because she was sort of getting that kinesthetic feeling back,” Gebauer said. “She was touching my hand and playing with the rings on my finger. It wasn’t my place to listen in to what her mom and the neurologist were speaking about and she kept touching my finger one at a time. I said to her, ‘Well, do you want to count?’ At that time, she could look at you and kind of stare at you, but they were saying she wasn’t following any commands.”

So, Gebauer just did what came naturally

to her, she taught her student. Gebauer touched each one of Olivia’s fingers and counted one through five. When she was done, she asked her to do the movement by herself.

“I was just holding her hand and not touching her fingers,” Gebauer said. “I said, ‘All right, well, you’re going to count for me. Are you ready?’ She literally put her first finger up again like she was going to count in the order. Sometimes she would do her ring finger or pinky at the same time and I would say, ‘No, do it again. You’re going to count every single one of those fingers separately.’ I would say the number again. Eventually she did all five fingers. In a row. On her own.”

Gebauer called Olivia’s mother and sister over to witness the experience. They cried as they saw Olivia count her fingers one by one. She was counting, responding, and mostly, showing them that she was still Olivia. Her mom said, “Leave it to the math teacher to get her to count again.”

Olivia liked the game. After she counted to five, she rubbed Gebauer’s hand to communicate to her that she wanted to play again.

“It was the coolest thing,” Gebauer said. “She’s told me numerous times that the math is hard. If you wanted my opinion, I mean, I’m not a doctor, but I think ... I think she knew it was me. I push the kids to whatever their ability is. So, when I ask them to do stuff in my classroom, they do it.”

FEBRUARY continues on Page 14

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McIlroy narrowly defeats Furyk to win THE PLAYERS

By Kathy Bissell

Originally published on March 21

Leaderboard gravity. That's what NBC's Paul Azinger called it when there were several golfers with a chance to take the lead at THE PLAYERS on March 17.

And like regular gravity, the sheer weight of the moment brought most of them down, one after one, until only Rory McIlroy of Northern Ireland remained at 16-under 272. The exception was local Jim Furyk, who advanced all afternoon and then was beaten by one stroke, finishing at 15-under 273.

McIlroy, who has been a wunderkind since turning professional, has been inundated in recent months with questions about not winning lately and not capitalizing on final-round opportunities. He only got those questions because he is such an exceptional player, expected by most to close out any tournament when he is within four of the lead. When he doesn't, people want to know "what's wrong," even if it's something as simple as just getting outplayed by another world-class golfer.

McIlroy believes the last few months of not winning assisted him in turning the corner.

"I think all the experiences I've had over the last few weeks in terms of trying to win and not getting over the line definitely helped me today," he said after winning THE PLAYERS. "The fact that this win has come at this golf tournament, a tournament where Sawgrass and I didn't have the greatest relationship starting off, and I'm very thankful to the PGA TOUR for putting it back to March. That was very helpful for me."

The rest of the field didn't make it easy, at first, and neither did the golf course.

Those who were in the lead or within two shots of the lead during the day included Furyk, Tommy Fleetwood, Jon Rahm, Ollie Schniederjans, Abraham Ancer, Jonnattan Vegas, Jason Day and little-known Eddie Pepperell from England. Pepperell even finished as clubhouse leader about an hour before McIlroy was walking up 18.

As the day wore on, the scores went topsy-turvy several times with golfers shooting up and down, in and out of contention. You needed a magnet board with names to shift people in and out of the top spot. For a while, there were three or four tied for first and at least four or five tied for second. You couldn't blink or somebody



ABOVE: Rory McIlroy shows off his new hardware and matching PLAYERS Championship-themed Nike Victory Tour golf shoes he wore throughout the tournament.

LEFT: McIlroy celebrates with caddie Harry Diamond after winning THE PLAYERS on March 17.

Photos by Micah Green

would change positions.

McIlroy hurt his own chances with a double-bogey at the fourth hole. He came up short with his second shot. Water.

"I wasn't aiming that far left for sure," he explained. "I was trying to land it like 10 yards on the green just right of the hazard, and if it had have been just that little further right, it would have probably landed in a good spot, but it just came out a little bit left."

While a birdie at the sixth was helpful, the following-hole bogey didn't help him much. He finally made another birdie, however, at the ninth, and righted the ship.

The back side is where McIlroy put the tournament away. Even though it wasn't perfect golf, it was good enough golf to win. There's a difference. Sometimes golfers just don't miss a shot, but usually at TPC Sawgrass that doesn't happen. It's how a guy recovers that matters.

For instance, McIlroy had a bogey on 14, usually the toughest hole on the course, and then his drive at the 15th went into he wasn't sure what. Because of where the

marshal was standing, he feared it was in some unmentionable grass stuff that might make his next shot impossible, but it was a clean lie in the bunker. He was relieved and hit a 6-iron.

"The second shot on 15 to set up that birdie putt was the best shot of the day by far," he said.

He made the 14-footer for a much-needed birdie.

Like most who win THE PLAYERS, McIlroy played the final holes well. He birdied the 16th, then headed to the 17th tee.

"(I) kept telling myself on the way to the 17th tee, just make three more good swings," McIlroy said. "To step up and make those three good swings, it's very satisfying knowing that it's in there when it needs to be."

He ultimately made par on 17 and 18, and picked up his first win at THE PLAYERS. He joins Tiger Woods and Henrik Stenson as the only players to win at least one FedExCup, THE PLAYERS, a major and a World Golf Championships event.

YEAR IN REVIEW
MARCH 2019

While it's an intangible, McIlroy said he likes the March date versus May. He said the rye grass does a better job of visually defining fairways and rough. It gives him a better landing area for his ballistic drives. So, certainly, he's a fan of the change. And he's gaining life perspective.

For Jim Furyk, who finished a few holes ahead of McIlroy and was in the lead at the time he came up 18, it was a welcome experience. He's been injured most of the last two or three years. Finally healthy, some good golf came out. A change to the arm-lock putting style has also helped.

"I felt like I was pretty solid from 5 feet and in," Furyk said. "But I wasn't making a lot of 8- to 20-footers for birdie, or even better yet, I didn't think I was hitting quality putts and giving enough of those putts a chance to go in."

He messed around with arm-lock. But he was not convinced it would work for him. Then, just as Tim Clark had given Webb Simpson a tip on arm-lock putting, Simpson gave Furyk a tip. And ultimately he said it proved to be the difference.

"I've told him like six times since how much I appreciate his help," Furyk said. "He spent 60 seconds with me, and in 60 seconds he gave me two tips, and one of them has changed my focus on how I putt with that putter. And it was the way he grips it. He said, there's two ways to grip it with your left arm, Bryson (DeChambeau) and Stewart (Cink) do it one way, he and Kuch (Matt Kuchar) maybe do it another."

So, the first tournament with a gold trophy, return to March and St. Patrick's Day date is in the books. As expected, the weather could have been 85 or 55, and it was — all in one week. The luck of the Irish, however, must be real, because not only did McIlroy win THE PLAYERS on St. Patrick's Day, he also won the Arnold Palmer Invitational in 2018 on St. Patrick's Day.

Top that.

February

Continued from 11

"Whether they want to or not, whether it's hard or not, I ask them," Gebauer continued. (With Olivia) I don't really know what's going through her brain when it's had that much damage, but I really do think that she was trying to say, 'Hey, I know you're here. Watch me do this.'"

MOVING FORWARD

Presently, Olivia is brushing her teeth by herself, giving high-fives, waving, applying Chapstick and making silly faces to get her family to laugh. She can say "Ow," when something hurts. Her family is teasing her, telling her they will finally be able to see what her real hair color is now that her head is shaved. She has a long road ahead of her.

Danielle, who has taken a semester off from college at the University of Central

Florida to be with her sister, said the family is doing okay, "considering." She uses the word "optimistic" when speaking of Olivia so often it resembles a mantra. She is trying to practice positivity. No matter what, Danielle Love works at focusing on the brighter side of everything that has happened.

"My parents are hanging in the best they can," she said. "I think this whole experience under the worst circumstances has brought us closer together. We are just

standing together to get through this — for her."

Gebauer said when she finally gets to speak with Olivia again, she mainly wants to just, "talk to her about stuff that kids talk about." She did add, however, "Of course I'll make her talk about math. But we will also joke around. Maybe I'll say, 'Now that you're doing better, let's do some math. You know math is a brain workout. Let's get back on track.'"



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2019 IN REVIEW

December 2019



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Year in Review



ISABELLE RENAULT
President/CEO, St. Johns County
Chamber of Commerce

Filled with change is how I would define this past year! When we began our year, your Chamber's St. Augustine office was located in the St. Augustine Record Building and your Ponte Vedra Beach Division Director was Toni Boudreaux-Godwin. Now, the St. Augustine office staff has a 4th floor view in the Ameris Bank Building across from Flagler Health+ and the direction of the Ponte Vedra Beach Division has not missed a beat as Sandy Kavanaugh filled in as Interim Director for a few months before Karen Everett began her tenure as Director in October.

Thanks to the continuing and steady efforts of Lucia Miller, the Senior Coordinator for the Division and the hard working members of the Ponte Vedra Beach Division Board and Ambassadors, the Ponte Vedra Beach Division is steadily continuing its mission in the Ponte Vedra area.

Adding to that mission is the advocacy of the Ponte Vedra area as a destination for visitors. I have enjoyed working with stakeholders in the Ponte Vedra area to identify and define themes to illustrate. We have all

learned more about our unique community and will begin sharing the many experiences to be had for our residents and visitors soon.

We will begin with experiences under the theme of "Ponte Vedra Naturally." We'll then proceed to define assets in the Wellness area and conclude with the many opportunities in the Arts area.

Look for more information on this project; in the meantime, I know you and your families are pleased to live and work in an area with an abundance of outdoor opportunities. Resolve to take advantage of them in 2020! The Ponte Vedra Beach Visitors Center (200 Solana Road, Ste. B) has lots of information.

Another exciting bit of news—Cathy Newman joined the Chamber last week as Economic Development Manager. I know she looks forward to learning more about the Ponte Vedra community. I look forward to seeing you soon.

Regards,
Isabelle

Leadership St. Johns Class includes Ponte Vedra residents

Several residents of Ponte Vedra Beach were selected for the new 2019-2020 Class of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce's Leadership St. Johns Program (LSJ). This year-long program selects participants from all sectors of industry, commerce and public service across St. Johns County.

Andrew Aleman, Managing Attorney, St. Johns Title, Ponte Vedra Beach; Suzan Lupton, Branch VP, VyStar Credit Union, Ponte Vedra Beach; and Matt Price, Regions Bank Vice President/Commercial Banking, Ponte Vedra Beach, were selected for the current class. "The networking with other business leaders throughout St. Johns County is rewarding and the Program Days have been real eye-openers," said Matt.

The LSJ program began in 2001 and has over 350 alumni including Flagler College President Joseph Joyner, Superintendent of Schools Tim Forson, Flagler Health + CEO Jason Barrett, local entrepreneur and St. Augustine Distillery founding partner Phillip McDaniel, St. Johns County Commissioner Jeremiah Blocker and St. Augustine Fire Chief Carlos Aviles among many other notable graduates.

The Leadership St. Johns Program was established to educate, connect and encourage elite and emerging professionals



Photo provided by SJC Chamber of Commerce

Andrew Aleman, Matt Price and Suzan Lupton

as they strive to make a positive impact on the local economy and community.

According to Bob Porter, the Chamber's LSJ program director, LSJ graduates continue to be mentored by program alumni who maintain and promote a positive difference in the region. "The program provides a way to recognize talented individuals who will benefit from the experience and who can utilize the opportunity to advance their organizational and personal professional goals," said Porter. "Additionally, strong connections established among class members are invaluable throughout one's career and beyond."

The Chamber will begin accepting applications for the next class in Summer 2020. Additional information can be found at: www.sjcchamber.com/leadership-st.-johns. The program runs from October through the following June. Class members must be committed to meeting one day each month to experience a full-day of policy briefings and onsite tours providing an in-depth

overview of the challenges and opportunities faced by St. Johns County's many industries, government agencies and non-profits. The course will begin with an evening reception, a 1 ½ day retreat, eight full class days and conclude with an evening graduation in June, 2021. Class members who successfully graduate from the program are accepted into the prestigious ranks of leadership alumni in St. Johns County and across Florida. Many LSJ graduates have gone on to the prestigious state-wide Leadership Florida program.

Isabelle Renault, the Chamber's President/CEO and a graduate of Leadership St. Johns and Leadership Florida, suggested that involvement in LSJ can be a stepping stone to participating in non-profit and volunteer government advisory boards as well as involvement in future elected office. "We also want our class members to consider using the skills honed through the LSJ experience to engage actively in the governing of St. Johns County."

UPCOMING PVB DIVISION EVENTS

JANUARY

Chamber Before Hours

Date: Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2020

Time: 8-9 a.m.

Location/Sponsor: Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery – Nocatee office
480 Town Plaza Ave., #150,
Ponte Vedra, FL 32081

PVB Division Joint Luncheon w/ Jax Chamber Beaches Division

Date: Wednesday, Jan. 22, 2020

Time: 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Location: Casa Marina Hotel &
Restaurant, 691 1st St. N.
Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250

Info: Jared Rice, Vice President PGA TOUR and Executive Director THE PLAYERS Championship, will give the members an update on the 2020 edition of THE PLAYERS Championship.

Sponsor: Fields Auto Group

Chamber After Hours

Date: Wednesday, Jan. 29, 2020

Time: 5:30-7 p.m.

Location/Sponsor: Aesthetix Plus
486 Town Plaza Ave., Suite 420,
Ponte Vedra, FL 32081

Info: Join us for this great networking event and meet business owners in the area! The host will provide beverages and delicious bites. Bring your business cards!

For more information and to register, visit www.sjcchamber.com or call the PVB office at (904) 285-2004.

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



KAREN EVERETT

*Ponte Vedra Beach Division Director,
St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce*

Reflecting back on 2019 and looking ahead to 2020, no wonder the month January is derived from the Greek god Janus (he with two heads).

The biggest change for me was my transition to the Director of the Ponte Vedra Beach Division in October after several years as the Chamber's Economic Development Manager. Thank you for my warm welcome—it has been a smooth transition due to the efforts of Lucia Miller, the Senior Coordinator for the Division and the hard working members of the Ponte Vedra Beach Division Board and Ambassadors.

My experience with economic development is helpful in my new role as current businesses expand and new ones move to the Ponte Vedra community. We have joined forces with the St. Augustine Ambassador corps several times to welcome new businesses, especially along U.S. 1 and County Road 210.

As we reflect on 2019, we recall signature events such as the annual Membership Appreciation Awards and the Annual Ponte Vedra Auto Show. And, we re-

cently celebrated at the Annual Jingle and Mingle in a stunning model home by Arthur Rutenberg Homes on Ponte Vedra Beach Boulevard.

Lucie and I have been filling in dates for 2020 to ensure a busy productive year. Plan to attend our monthly Before Hours, After Hours and Luncheons. We're beginning the year with a bang on Jan. 22 when we co-host a luncheon with our partners at the Beaches Division of JAX Chamber. Jared Rice has agreed to share some insights into our area's premier event, the Tournament Players Championship (March 10-15, 2020).

And, speaking of TPC — mark your calendar for the TPC After Hours on Thursday, March 5, 2020. Another joint collaboration with JAX Chamber, this sold out event will be open for registration soon.

We can mark the New Year as "Ponte Vedra Naturally." We are so blessed to have so many outlets for our outdoor selves—Make a resolution to enjoy them in 2020! See you soon.

BEST OF THE BEST OF PONTE VEDRA



Photo by Susan Griffin

Sandy Kavanaugh and Isabelle Renault hold a certificate awarded to the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce - Ponte Vedra Beach Division for being voted the Best Networking Group in the Ponte Vedra Recorder's inaugural Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra contest in 2019.

Chamber to hold Politics in St. Johns in Ponte Vedra and St. Augustine

As we rush into an election year, your St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce will once again host several events designed to give you information you'll need to make your voting decision.

As in 2018, a Candidate Forum will be staged in Ponte Vedra and St. Augustine. Exact dates and venues are being finalized; for reference one was held in Ponte Vedra Beach in July 2018 and one was held in St. Augustine in August 2018.

Plan to attend the 2020 Legislative Breakfast in June, when we'll hear from current elected officials about current issues.

CONNECTIONS: YEAR IN REVIEW

A look back at the Connections covers from 2019.



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JANUARY 2019

Trasca & Co. Eatery General Manager Karina Coryell and Owner Sara Frasca gather with Trudy Toche of Mary Kay at a Chamber "Before Hours" event on Jan. 9.

Photo by Susan Griffin



Trudy Toche with Mary Kay hosts Chamber Before Hours at Trasca & Co. Eatery

Trudy Toche with Mary Kay hosted/sponsored a Before Hours event for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce on Jan. 9.

Held at Trasca & Co. Eatery, the event allowed attendees to network and enjoy breakfast before work.

THE PLAYERS Championship executive director provides updates on tournament at Chamber luncheon



Photo by Jon Blauvelt

Jen Hendrich, Lucia Miller, Jackie Smith, Lori Adams and Jared Rice gather at the luncheon.

The change in date from May to March, parking and ridesharing, a new entrance into the tournament and a campaign to invest in the tournament's equity colors, were among the topics discussed by THE PLAYERS Championship Executive Director Jared Rice at a Chamber of Commerce luncheon on Jan. 10.

Held at Sawgrass Country Club in Ponte Vedra Beach, the event was a joint luncheon hosted by the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce and the Beaches Division of the JAX Chamber. Rice served as the keynote speaker and provided a few updates on the tournament, which took place March 14-17.



Photo by Susan Griffin

OYBC HOSTS CHAMBER FOR RIBBON CUTTING

Optimal You Brain Centers (OYBC) participates in a ribbon-cutting ceremony with representatives from the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce on Jan. 24. OYBC, which opened its office in the later part of 2018, provides a full suite of chiropractic services including adjustments, pain management, massage therapy and neuroplasticity exercises.



Photo by Susan Griffin

Standfast Asset Management President and CEO Scott Grant addresses attendees of the Chamber "After Hours" event held at his office on Jan. 30.

Standfast Asset Management hosts Chamber After Hours

Standfast Asset Management hosted an After Hours event for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce on Jan. 30.

Hosted at the business' office at 100 Executive Way (Suite 114) in Ponte Vedra Beach, attendees enjoyed networking, beverages and hors d'oeuvres. Catering was provided by Savour Sensations.

For more information on the Chamber of Commerce, visit www.sjchamber.com.



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JANUARY 2019

Chamber EDC breakfast focuses on transportation

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Council (EDC) hosted its quarterly breakfast Jan. 25 at the World Golf Hall of Fame at World Golf Village. Transportation trends, near-term projects and the role of transportation in economic development were discussed by Jeff Sheffield, executive director of North Florida Transportation Planning Organization (NFTPO).

“Transportation goes beyond building roads,” Chamber President and CEO Isabelle Renault said. “We need to focus on using technology and data sharing to increase mobility in order to increase efficiency without having to invest more heavily in major construction infrastructure.”

To find out more about the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce or to



Photo provided by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Isabelle Renault, president and CEO of the St. Johns County Chamber, joins Jeff Sheffield, executive director of the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization and Mike Davis, chairman of the St. Johns County Chamber's Economic Development Council Executive Committee, at the Jan. 25 EDC Quarterly Breakfast.

become a member, visit www.sjcchamber.com, call (904) 829-5681 or find them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/sjcchamber. For more information about Jeff Sheffield's presentation, visit www.sjcchamber.com/edc-quarterly-breakfasts. For additional information about the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization, visit northfloridatpo.com.



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FEBRUARY 2019

The Setzer, Cochran, Soares & Hubbard Pediatric Dentistry team gathers with representatives from the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce during a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Feb. 1.
Photo by Susan Griffin



Setzer, Cochran, Soares & Hubbard Pediatric Dentistry hosts Chamber ribbon cutting to celebrate PVB office

Setzer, Cochran, Soares & Hubbard Pediatric Dentistry celebrated the practice's new office location at Sawgrass Village in Ponte Vedra Beach with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Feb. 1 attended by representatives of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce. The ribbon cutting was also held in recognition of the practice's new membership with the Chamber.

Located at 340 Front St., Suite 770, the practice offers orthodontics, emergency care,

pediatric anesthesiology, preventative care, extractions, fillings and crowns, among other services.

Opening its location in Ponte Vedra Beach in September 2018, the Sawgrass Village office is open on Wednesdays from 1 to 3 p.m. and Fridays from 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. The practice also has a location on Bayberry Road in Jacksonville. Visit www.setzerandcochran.com/ for more information.

Chamber Ponte Vedra Beach Division Director Toni Boudreaux-Godwin and Sawgrass Country Club Director of Membership Services Janet Collins stand in front of the rendering for the new Sawgrass Country Club clubhouse, which is projected to be complete in late fall 2020.



Photo provided by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Sawgrass Beach Club hosts Chamber Before Hours cutting to celebrate PVB office

The Sawgrass Beach Club hosted a Before Hours event for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce on Feb. 6. Attendees enjoyed the opportunity to network and eat a little breakfast before heading into work.

Visit www.sjchamber.com for more information about the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce.



Photo provided by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

The Guana Outpost gathers with representatives of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce for a ribbon-cutting event on Feb. 10 to celebrate the re-opening of its paddle launch.

Guana Outpost hosts Chamber for ribbon-cutting event

The Guana Outpost recently celebrated the re-opening of its paddle launch in Ponte Vedra by hosting representatives from the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce on Sunday, Feb. 10 for a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Located at 4415 Mickler Road, the Guana Outpost offers kayaks, paddleboards and surfboards, as well as bait and tackle, clothing, beach gear, sunglasses and accessories and more.

Visit www.northguanaoutpost.com for more information.



Jay Owen, the founder and CEO of Design extensions and a Nease graduate, addresses attendees of the Chamber at Noon event on Feb. 20 at the Sawgrass Beach Club.

Photos by Susan Griffin

Chamber at Noon event features discussion on storytelling in the business world



David Godwin and Gloria Dongara

The Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce hosted marketing guru Jay Owen at its most recent Chamber at Noon event last Wednesday, Feb. 20 at the Sawgrass Beach Club.

Owen, the founder and CEO of Design Extensions and a graduate of Nease High School, shared tips on storytelling in the business world and how to tell stories the right way to promote a brand and build customer loyalty.

Visit designextensions.com/ for more information on Owen and Design Extensions.

FEBRUARY 2019

The Morgan Company celebrates office relocation with Chamber ribbon cutting, After Hours event

The Morgan Company celebrated the relocation of its office to the Hodges and Butler Boulevard area by hosting a ribbon-cutting ceremony and After Hours event with the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce on Feb. 27.

“It was a super turnout,” said Kim Scott, president of the Morgan Company. “We felt like we got to spend some quality time with customers and dear friends from the Chamber. Our move has really just

kind of (created) ... a new energy. There’s some great new energy and I’m excited about 2019 and exploring some opportunities and changes that we’ve never done before.”

Previously located at the Beaches, the women-owned business was opened by Scott and her mother, Samm Morgan, in their home office in 2000.

The Morgan Company now has five employees and expects to expand even more this upcoming year.



The Morgan Company celebrates its office relocation to the Hodges and Butler Boulevard area with the Chamber of Commerce on Feb. 27. Photos by Susan Griffin

“I’ve made a number of leaps of faith over the last few years and surrounded myself with some amazing women,” Scott

said. “I am excited and proud to continue to grow The Morgan Company as a successful women-owned business.”

MARCH 2019

Business, community leaders network at Chamber’s annual After Hours at THE PLAYERS



Photos by Susan Griffin
Lucia Miller, Bethany Taylor and Monisa Thompson

The festivities of THE PLAYERS Championship kicked off for several hundred business and community leaders at the Chamber of Commerce’s After Hours at THE PLAYERS event on March 7.

Held this year at the Stadium Village near the new Nicklaus Entry, the annual event is organized by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce and the JAX Chamber. Guests enjoyed networking, complimentary refreshments and food from several local restaurants.

Sponsors included the Ponte Vedra Recorder, which hosted a table and distributed copies of its Insider’s Tournament guide, as well as Stretch Zone Ponte Vedra, ASAP Towing & Storage, Optimal You Brain Centers, Cologix, Florida Blue and Trulieve.



The Ruth’s Chris Steak House team



The Ponte Vedra Recorder table



Photo provided by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce
Representatives of VyStar Credit Union and guests enjoy the Chamber “Before Hours” event on March 6.

VyStar Credit Union hosts Chamber ‘Before Hours’ event

VyStar Credit Union hosted a “Before Hours” event for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce on March 6.

Attendees of the event enjoyed the opportunity to network and eat breakfast before heading to work.

Brian Zehren, Toni Boudreaux-Godwin, Richard Goldman, Moe Ghanimah and Isabelle Renault gather at the Chamber at Noon event March 20 at Sawgrass Beach Club.



Photo by Susan Griffin

Chamber at Noon features discussion on tourism industry with Richard Goldman

The Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce hosted Richard Goldman, president and CEO of the St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches Visitors and Convention Bureau, at the Chamber at Noon event March 20.

With the event held at Sawgrass Beach

Club, Goldman discussed tourism in the area over the past fiscal year and the positive impact it has on the business community. Among several other topics, he also provided updates and looked ahead to the future, sharing plans about new lodging and renovations to lodging in the area.

APRIL 2019



Photo by Susan Griffin

Gloria Dongara and Ponte Vedra Wellness Center owner Dr. Erika Hamer gather at a Chamber Before Hours event held at the business on April 3.

Ponte Vedra Wellness Center hosts Chamber Before Hours

The Ponte Vedra Wellness Center hosted a Before Hours event for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce on April 3.

The event was also held at the business' Nocatee location. Guests enjoyed networking and breakfast before work.

Ponte Vedra Wellness Center also hosted an anniversary party and community appreciation event April 11, to celebrate its third year of operation in Nocatee.

Beaches leaders provide updates at joint Chamber luncheon

The Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce partnered with the JAX Chamber Beaches Division to host a joint chamber luncheon on April 11 that was attended by Beaches leaders.

Held at Sawgrass Beach Club, the event allowed the leaders to provide updates on their

current projects and provide an overview of what to expect throughout the year.

Leaders in attendance included St. Johns County District 4 Commissioner Jeremiah Blocker, Neptune Beach Mayor Elaine Brown, Jacksonville Beach Mayor Charlie Latham and Atlantic Beach Mayor Ellen Glasser.



Photos by Susan Griffin

St. Johns County District 4 Commissioner Jeremiah Blocker



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PEACE OF HEART COMMUNITY HOSTS RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY WITH CHAMBER



The team from Peace of Heart Community participates in a ribbon-cutting ceremony with representatives from the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce on April 17. Located on Roscoe Road in Ponte Vedra, Peace of Heart Community encompasses a residential home for young women with autism, a community garden and art program. The nonprofit recently became a new member of the Chamber. Visit www.pohc.org for more information.

Photo by Susan Griffin



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APRIL 2019

EvenTide hosts Chamber After Hours event

EvenTide, an intimate enclave planned for 23 luxury coastal homes located along Ponte Vedra Boulevard, hosted an “After Hours” event for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce on April 17.

Attendees of the event enjoyed the opportunity to check out one of the homes by Arthur Rutenberg Homes/Marcus Allen Homes and network among Chamber members and guests.



Joan and Mark Refosco address attendees of a Chamber After Hours event April 17 at a home in EvenTide. Joan is vice president of sales for Arthur Rutenberg Homes, and Mark is a franchise owner for the home builder.

Photos by Susan Griffin

Flagler Health+ President, CEO discusses hospital's future in keynote speech at Chamber EDC breakfast

Flagler Health + President and CEO Jason Barrett discussed his hospital's expanded mission, expansion, rebranding initiative and changes in the healthcare industry, as the keynote speaker of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce's Economic Development Council Quarterly Breakfast on April 26, at the World Golf Hall of Fame in World Golf Village.

Previously known as Flagler Hospital, Flagler + will expand to include health villages in Nocatee, Murabella and other future locations.

The hospital is also introducing virtual urgent care visits available via its website and mobile app, downloadable in the Apple and Google Play app stores.

As part of its focus on addressing social determinants of health, Flagler Health+ is expanding Care Connect — its community alliance designed to connect area residents with resources in a co-



Photo by Susan Griffin

Flagler Health + President and CEO Jason Barrett provides his keynote address at the Chamber's EDC Breakfast April 26 at the World Golf Hall of Fame in World Golf Village.

ordinated way throughout all of St. Johns County. In the coming year, Care Connect will introduce programs that further support mental health in adolescents while continuing to focus on key issues like homelessness and access to care.

To learn more about Flagler Health+, visit www.flaglerhealth.org.



Photos by Susan Griffin

Representatives of UF Health and the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce gather for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of UF Health's new family medicine and pediatrics office on April 25 in Nocatee. Pictured is David Godwin, Dr. Victoria Array, Isabelle Renault, Dr. Leon L. Haley Jr., Dr. Katherine McMullan and Toni Boudreaux-Godwin.

UF Health holds ribbon-cutting ceremony for new Nocatee clinic

UF Health hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony April 25 with the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce for its new clinic in Nocatee located off Valley Ridge Boulevard.

Opened April 1, the family medicine and pediatrics office will provide annual checkups, chronic disease management, flu shots and vaccinations, geriatric care, minor procedures, sports physicals and well-baby visits. Additional on-site services will be offered by UF Health specialists and include gynecology, psychiatry and urology.

The primary care physicians live in Nocatee and welcome patients of all ages, from infants to senior adults. Victoria Array, MD, has been a UF Health pediatrician for 28 years. She and her husband recently moved to Nocatee, and she is looking forward to treating children in her new community. Katherine McMullan, MD, specializes in family medicine. She joined UF Health in 2018 and loves living in Nocatee with her family.

The office is located at 203 Fort Wade Road, Suite 200, 1 mile north of the Nocatee Town Center. For more information, visit ufhealthjax.org/nocatee.

MAY 2019

PALENCIA DENTAL CELEBRATES REBRANDING, EXPANDED SERVICES WITH RIBBON CUTTING

The team from Palencia Dental in St. Augustine gathers with representatives from the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce at a ribbon-cutting ceremony on May 2. The event celebrated the practice's rebranding and expanded services. Visit www.palencidental.com for more information on Palencia Dental.

Photo by Susan Griffin



Photo by Susan Griffin

Jessica Braack, Lindsay Hardy, Lauren Ingalls and Gail Ingalls

North Guana Outpost hosts Chamber Before Hours

North Guana Outpost hosted a Before Hours event for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce on May 8.

Attendees enjoyed the opportunity to network, while also kicking off the first Spring PaddleFest at North Guana Outpost held May 11.

MAY 2019

OVM FINANCIAL CELEBRATES NEW OFFICE WITH RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY

New St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce member John Kersey, a mortgage loan originator with OVM Financial, celebrates his new office in Ponte Vedra Beach by participating in a ribbon-cutting ceremony with his team and Chamber representatives on May 9. OVM Financial is an independently owned and operated retail mortgage lender serving Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Maryland, Florida, Colorado and Texas with plans for continued expansion in new markets. The business has several branches and satellite office locations with the bulk of its operations team located at the corporate headquarters in Chesapeake, Virginia. For four years running, the company has been recognized by Inc. 5000 as one of America's fastest-growing private companies. The new Ponte Vedra Branch is located at 822 North A1A Highway, Suite 310.

Photo by Susan Griffin



Photo by Susan Griffin

Flagler College President Dr. Joseph Joyner addresses attendees of a Chamber at Noon event May 15 at Ruth's Chris Steak House in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Chamber at Noon features discussion on Flagler College

The Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce hosted Flagler College President Dr. Joseph Joyner at its Chamber at Noon event on May 15 at Ruth's Chris Steak House in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Joyner discussed the value of Flagler College to the community, its neighbors and the world. Visit www.flagler.edu for more information on Flagler College.



Photo by Susan Griffin

K9s For Warriors President Brett Simon addresses attendees of the Chamber "After Hours" on May 22 at Camp K9.

K9s For Warriors hosts Chamber After Hours event

K9s For Warriors hosted an After Hours event for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce on May 22.

Hosted at Camp K9 in Ponte Vedra, the event was held in honor of Military Appreciation Month

and sponsored by Marsha Flock. Attendees of the event enjoyed the opportunity to network with business owners in the Nocatee area and enter a raffle. Flock collected items for K9s For Warriors, including fleece blankets, peanut butter and gift cards, among other items.

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Photo by Susan Griffin

Honorees at the Chamber PVB Division's Membership Appreciation Awards gather with their awards on May 29 at Sawgrass Beach Club.

Chamber honors local business leaders at Membership Appreciation Awards

The Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce honored nine local business leaders and organizations on May 29, at the organization's annual Membership Appreciation Awards.

Held at the Sawgrass Beach Club, the safari-themed event recognized Chamber members for going above and beyond. Sawgrass Country Club received the Pat Morgan Outstanding Member Award, while the HEAL Foundation took home the Jeff Jenkins Community Service Award. Jen Hendrich, community outreach manager at the PGA TOUR, was named the Board Member of the Year.

Additional awards presented included:

- **Going the Distance:** Ellen Taylor, SERVPRO of St. Augustine

- **Key Contributor:** Ricki Taylor, Synovus Mortgage Corp.

- **Rookie of the Year:** Optimal You Brain Centers

- **Crushing It:** David Godwin, Trans-america Agency Network

- **Dedicated Service:** Lori Adams, Cabi Independent Fashion Stylist

- **The Spotlight Award:** The Morgan Company Promotional Advertising

In addition to the awards presentation, guests also enjoyed hors d'oeuvres, beverages and live music oceanfront.

JUNE 2019



Photo by Susan Griffin

Karina Coryell Trasca, Toni Boudreaux-Godwin and Lauren Trice, Spherion

Trasca & Co Eatery hosts Chamber Before Hours

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division joined Trasca & Co Eatery for some networking during a Chamber Before Hours event on June 5.

Attendees enjoyed breakfast and conversation before starting the work day.



Photos by Susan Griffin

Dr. Erika Hamer, Gloria Dongara and Felicia Cox

Iberia Bank hosts Chamber After Hours

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division held a networking After Hours event hosted by Iberia Bank on June 19.

The pool party-themed event featured food, fun beverages and music.



Kim and Andy Scott and Tanya Guydos



Photo by Susan Griffin

Pat McManamon, president of Sandler Training, discusses the "Intention of Success" at a Chamber at Noon meeting June 12.

Chamber at Noon meeting focuses on 'Intention of Success'

Pat McManamon, president of Sandler Training (Jacksonville), was the featured speaker of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division's Chamber at Noon meeting on June 12 at the TPC Clubhouse.

McManamon's topic of discussion was the "Intention of Success: Designing the blueprint for your success and creating the 'flywheel effect.'"

Fields Auto Group sponsored the event.

SPAVIA CELEBRATES OPENING WITH RIBBON CUTTING



Photo by Susan Griffin

Spavia Day Spa celebrated its opening with representatives of the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce on June 13. Spavia is located at 80 Pine Lake Drive, Suite B in Ponte Vedra. The ribbon-cutting ceremony boasted food, drinks, giveaways, chair massages, mini-facials and more. For more information on the Ponte Vedra location, go to spaviadayspa.com/ponte-vedra-fl/. Trasca & Co Eatery provided food for the event.



Photo by Susan Griffin

State Sen. Travis Hutson and Kerry McCarthy

State officials offer legislative update at Chamber breakfast

A panel of Florida elected officials from the area provided a legislative update during a breakfast held by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce on June 21 at the World Golf Hall of Fame.

The panel discussion featured Florida Senator Travis Hutson, Florida Representative Paul Renner, St. Johns County BCC Chair Paul Waldron and St. Augustine Vice Mayor Leanna Freeman. The panel discussed the state's latest legislative session with attendees.

JULY 2019

Chambers of Commerce partner to honor military personnel

On July 11, the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce - PVB Division and the Jax Chamber Beaches Division honored local service members for their commitment to community service over and above their duties as active military personnel. Members and guest met for a luncheon at Sawgrass Beach Club in Ponte Vedra Beach.

The chambers collected donations for the Greater Jacksonville Area USO Council, and a special request was made for diapers, baby formula, canned vegetables, pasta and pet food.



ABOVE: Members and guests stand for the presentation of colors at the July 11 joint Chamber of Commerce meeting to honor military personnel.

Photo provided by the SJC Chamber

LEFT: Chris Smith and state Rep. Cyndi Stevenson

Photo by Susan Griffin



Photo by Susan Griffin

Christine Swanbeck, Toni Boudreaux-Godwin and Sandy Kavanaugh gather during the Chamber's After Hours event at Ruth's Chris Steak House on July 24.

Chamber After Hours sells out

The SJC-Ponte Vedra Beach Division Chamber After Hours event was sold out July 24 at Ruth's Chris Steak House in Ponte Vedra Beach.

The purpose was to network among members and guests and the host provided beverages and delicious bites.

For information about future Chamber After Hours events, call (904) 285-2004.

NOCATEE HOSTS RIBBON CUTTING FOR NEW APARTMENT COMPLEX

Nocatee recently hosted a ribbon cutting to open its new apartment complex, The Reserve. The community offers one-, two- and three-bedroom layouts with amenities including a clubhouse with fitness facility, beach entry pool and dog park with dog wash and bike care facility. The apartments' kitchens feature granite countertops, stainless steel appliances, modern cabinetry and even USB ports.

Photo by Susan Griffin



Photo by Susan Griffin

Spavia owner Chris Stoll (second from left) mingles with guests at a recent Before Hours event held by the St. Johns County Chamber-PVB Division.

VISION EXPRESS CELEBRATES 10 YEARS WITH RIBBON CUTTING

Vision Express at the Ponte Vedra Pointe Shopping Center celebrated its 10th anniversary with a ribbon cutting July 25. Members of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce - Ponte Vedra Division and guests participated.

Photo by Susan Griffin



Chamber-PVB Division holds Before Hours event at Spavia

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce-Ponte Vedra Beach Division held its Before Hours on July 31 at Spavia Day Spa in Ponte Vedra.

Attendees had the chance to get to know a local business while networking with fellow chamber members. These morning networking events provide a great way to start the workday with a little breakfast and conversation.

For information about future events, call (904) 285-2004.

AUGUST 2019

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu school opens in Ponte Vedra Beach

By Daniela Toporek

Self-defense instructor, John Manis Jr., recently opened a martial arts school for Brazilian Jiu Jitsu in Ponte Vedra. The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division hosted a ribbon cutting Aug. 5, the first day of classes.

“I think it’s the most effective form of self defense,” he said. “I knew Ponte Vedra didn’t have jiu jitsu, I think we did a good job in finding the right area where there’s enough traffic.”

Manis started training in martial arts at the age of 4, when his mother enrolled him in classes for being so shy.

“That’s what sparked the passion and I haven’t stopped ever since,” he recalled.

Manis hopes to spark that same passion with his younger students and build their confidence, especially his two daughters, who he wants to prepare for the real world.

“As a father of two girls and as someone who’s done martial arts his whole life, it was a goal of mine to give them that life skill of self defense, knowing how to protect themselves,” he explained.

Manis wants to build confidence, not only for his daughters, but for the youth in the Ponte Vedra community, who may just need time away from all the screens and technology or who might be insecure or



The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division hosted a ribbon cutting for the opening of John Manis Jr.'s Brazilian Jiu Jitsu school, Aug. 5.

Photo by Susan Griffin

bullied at school.

“I know a lot of kids need to get away from their computers and get a ‘digital detox,’ as I like to call it,” he joked. “But also, it’s a lot about making people better people. For example, if there’s someone new in school and they’re quiet or alone,

as someone who does jiu jitsu, just go up to them, smile at them and ask them how they’re doing.”

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu classes are available for all ages.

For more information, visit www.pvbjj.com or call (917) 697-0932.

Chamber holds Before Hours networking breakfast at AAA

By Christine Rodenbaugh

The Ponte Vedra Beach Division Chamber Before Hours event was held Aug. 7 at AAA-The Auto Club Group located at 840 A1A North, Suite 180 in Ponte Vedra Beach. The monthly event allows members to get to know a local business and learn about its services. Attendees have an opportunity to make strong business connections while sharing conversation and breakfast.



Photo by Susan Griffin

Sandy Kavanaugh talks with Gloria Dongara, incoming chair for the PVBD Board of Directors at the Chamber Before Hours event Aug. 7.

Gloria Dongara, life specialist at AAA Ponte Vedra, is the incoming chair for the PVBD Board of Directors and will take office Oct. 1.

For information about Chamber events, call (904) 285-2004.



Sandy Kavanaugh (left) and Jim Moyler attended the Aug. 14 Chamber at Noon meeting to hear featured speaker Sara Frasca (right).

Photo by Susan Griffin

Chamber at Noon event features innovative speaker

By Daniela Toporek

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division hosted Chamber at Noon at the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club on Aug. 14, to discuss harnessing innovation.

The event featured speaker, Sara Frasca, vice president of innovation enablement for Platypus Labs, a management consultant firm in Detroit, Michigan, that focuses on elevating companies of all sizes by unlocking the creative potential of its employees.

Some may also recognize Frasca as the owner of Ponte Vedra’s Trasca & Co. Eatery.

Frasca discussed her position at Platypus Labs and her role in transforming creative ideas into powerful results.

“Most leaders agree that innovation is important in continuing to propel businesses forward, but don’t know how to grasp or harness that innovation,” Frasca said. “Our team comes in and gives

them (the employees) tools and techniques and we practice them and apply them to the business.”

Frasca also mentioned that targeting innovation within companies rather than hiring new individuals leads to increased productivity and a better retention rates.

Frasca said she received positive feedback from attendees and told her that she “captured the attention of everyone in the room” and that the presentation was “very informative and right on the money.”

“Every business can take responsible risks, challenge the status quo and find new paths,” she said. “Creativity will harness and fuel the future.”

For more information about the SJC Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division, visit www.sjcchamber.com/ponte-vedra-beach-division.

For more information about Sara Frasca or Platypus Labs, visit www.platypuslabs.com or www.sarafasca.com.

Chamber conducts ribbon cutting at Cryoskin

By Daniela Toporek

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division held a ribbon cutting Aug. 8 at Beaches Cryoskin, 5150 Palm Valley Road, Suite 208 in Ponte Vedra Beach. Chamber members and guests were served delectable edibles at the lunchtime ceremony.

Cryoskin uses non-invasive techniques used for slimming, cellulite reduction and toning that some clients compare to a cool massage. Beaches Cryoskin offers CryoToning Cellulite, CryoSlimming and CryoToning Face. Procedures take about 28 minutes. For information about Beaches Cryoskin, call (904) 862-1999.



Photo courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber

Beaches Cryoskin celebrated a ribbon cutting Aug. 8 held by the Chamber of Commerce.

AUGUST 2019

Keynote speaker Eric Silagy, president of Florida Power & Light, speaks with St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce members at the quarterly Economic Development Council breakfast Aug. 16 at the World Golf Hall of Fame.

Photo by Christine Rodenbaugh



Chamber meeting focuses on energy

By Christine Rodenbaugh

St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Isabelle Renault welcomed members and guests to the Aug. 16 Economic Development Council quarterly breakfast in Shell Hall at the World Golf Village.

The keynote speaker was Eric Silagy, president and CEO of Florida Power & Light. Silagy cited Florida's \$1 trillion economy and lack of state income tax as two driving forces that attract an average of 1,000 new residents to the state daily. Increased population increases the demand for energy.

To meet that demand, FPL has experienced a paradigm shift and is no longer the power company of yesteryear.

"We are a technology company that

delivers energy," Silagy said.

FPL's dependence on oil to produce energy is almost nil. Instead, FPL continues to develop clean energy sources including solar, natural gas and nuclear energy products. Silagy said one option in the works is to install 40 acres of batteries to provide power, which removes emissions and requires no water, is efficient and enhances reliability.

"When it comes down to energy, it's a national security issue," Silagy said. He said FPL's focus is to help make the country energy independent.

FPL has invested \$4 billion in storm hardening.

"After Irma, power was back on to 50% of customers in 24 hours," he said. "This is about being predictive instead of reactive."



Photo by Susan Griffin

Sandy Kavanaugh, Rob Schlingmann and Ashley Folladori address members and guests at the Chamber After Hours event at the Plantation at Ponte Vedra Beach Aug. 21.

Chamber After Hours hits Beach Club

The St. Johns County Ponte Vedra Beach Division Chamber After Hours event was hosted at the Plantation at Ponte Vedra Beach on Aug. 21.

Members and guests celebrated the exclusive Beach Club and networked while enjoying beverages and delicious bites. The Plantation's private Beach Club is a space for members to relax and watch the waves break or race the waves, splash around in the Junior Olympic-size pool or hang upside down on the jungle gym with the kids.

Cook a meal on one of the grills or choose to order from the chef's menu. There are poolside lounges, all with an ocean view. The Beach Club is located at 1111 Ponte Vedra Blvd. in Ponte Vedra Beach.

SEPTEMBER 2019

Chamber holds Before Hours event at OYBC

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division hosted Chamber Before Hours on Sept. 11 at Optimal You Brain Center at 151 Sawgrass Corners Drive, Unit 102, in Ponte Vedra Beach. The event was rescheduled from Sept. 4 because of Hurricane Dorian.

Optimal You Brain Center provides chiropractic, neuroplasticity and functional medicine care for pediatric, adult and elderly patients. The practice seeks to combine the passions of staff doctors to offer services designed to benefit a wide array of persons spanning all periods in life.

There was a drawing for a wellness package valued at \$450 which included an examination, one-hour massage and



Photo provided by SJC Chamber of Commerce

Dr. Thomas and Dr. Lexie Romero, owners of Optimal You Brain Center in Ponte Vedra, hosted the Sept. 11 Chamber Before Hours.

two adjustments. For information, visit www.oybcs.com.

Chamber Before Hours events are free to members. Nonmembers interested in future events may contact PVB Chamber office at (904) 285-2004.



Photo by Susan Griffin

Speaker and Florida Partnership Specialist for the U.S. Census Bureau, Nadine Meinhardt (far left), stands with Sandy Kavanaugh (from left), Pam Kennedy and Lucia Miller.

Chamber at Noon looks at 2020 Census

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division hosted its Chamber at Noon at the Sawgrass Beach Club on Sept. 18, to discuss the 2020 Census.

Sponsored by Fields Auto Group and Setzer, Cochran, Soares and Hubbard Pediatric Dentistry, the Chamber discussed how state lawmakers are considering how to assure that citizens are accurately accounted for, explaining that

while the census is a federal responsibility, its result can shape many aspects of local communities.

Florida Partnership Specialist for the U.S. Census Bureau, Nadine Meinhardt, spoke at the meeting to share updates and inform the Chamber of what's to come.

For more information or view upcoming events, visit www.sjcchamber.com/events.

SEPTEMBER 2019

Wellness Expo presented at Chamber event

After Hours celebrates Ponte Vedra Wellness Center 15-year anniversary

Ponte Vedra Wellness Center hosted a Florida Fall Festival and Wellness Expo on Sept. 26 to celebrate 15 years of operation at the Beach. The event, in cooperation with Center State Bank, was held outside their Ponte Vedra Beach office on Corridor Road. The event was in cooperation with the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce as part of its Chamber After Hours event series.

Raffle tickets were sold to benefit lo-

cal nonprofit The HEAL Foundation, an organization dedicated to helping to enrich autistic lives. Prizes included overnight get-aways, gift certificates to local restaurants, fitness memberships, and wellness baskets, all donated by local businesses.

Practice owner Dr. Erika Hamer said, “I really feel like this year is a milestone – this practice has grown so much over the past 15 years and seen a variety of changes. From the beginning, I have always considered it to be a great honor for me to be able to positively impact the health of so many and contribute in a positive way to their wellbeing. This practice has always enjoyed a very significant retention rate of patients and now, after 15 years, I



Ponte Vedra Wellness Center celebrated its 15th anniversary with a Florida Fall Festival and Wellness Expo as part of a Chamber After Hours event. Pictured are Dr. Casey Means (from left), Ponte Vedra Wellness Center owner Dr. Erika Hamer, Janine Parker, Lisa Tromsdorff, Daniel Brauch, Jackie Payne and Marcelo Salcedo.

Photo by Ed Johnson

am treating the children of people I saw when I first opened. In fact, just recently, I adjusted the newborn baby of someone I began seeing when they were in middle school. They had been brought in by their parents, who were patients. I also treated the parents’ parents — so in just one family I have been able to treat four generations

— an incredible honor!

Attendees also toured the Wellness Village, where over a dozen local community partners set up to discuss services and offer free samples or special offers.

For more information or to see upcoming events, visit www.sjccchamber.com/events.

Ponte Vedra Auto Show field overflows with cars, spectators

17th annual event hosted by SJC Chamber of Commerce, presented by Fields Auto Group

On Sept. 22, The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce, hosted the 17th annual Ponte Vedra Auto Show presented by Fields Auto Group at the Nocatee Event Field. The cars were perfectly aligned allowing spectators to take an up-close, personal look. The field was overflowing with incredible, one-of-a-kind vehicles from the 1934 Ford two-door Sedan, the 1957 Grumman Delivery Kurbside and the 1932 Ford 3W Coupe Street Rod.

The PV Auto Show welcomed a staggering 250 entries of collectible and classic car participants with over 4,000 car lovers, enthusiasts and vendors in attendance. Notable awards included The Best in Show Classic, sponsored by Wells Fargo Advisors, awarded to Douglas Greer for his 1950 Plymouth Special Deluxe and the Best in Show 61st Anniversary of the Mini, sponsored by VyStar Credit Union, awarded to Nancy Marquis for her 1979 Mini Cooper Austin Cooper. The Porsche Jacksonville “For the Spirit of It!” award went to Bert Harris, sponsored by Porsche Jacksonville. The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce presented the PV Auto Show in Nocatee for the fourth year in a row.

“We would like to thank the Parc Development Group for its continued support, and we want to thank our volunteers for their efforts and hard work. We appreciate the time put in to make this event successful and could



Photos by Susan Griffin

Douglas Greer’s 1950 Plymouth won Best in Show Classic In Honor of Larry Weisman at the 2019 Ponte Vedra Auto Show on Sept. 22 at the Nocatee Event Field.

not have produced this event without our strong support system. Our staff, judges and amazing volunteers work hard to ensure that everything runs effortlessly each year as we welcome new faces and new entries,” said Isabelle Renault, CEO/president of SJCCC.

To see the full list of winners, visit www.pvautoshow.com or call the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division at (904) 285-2004.

To learn more about the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce, visit www.sjccchamber.com. The Ponte Vedra Auto Show is funded in part by the St. Johns County Tourist Development Council.



The Mobile Trophy golf cart makes the rounds at the event.

OCTOBER 2019



Photos provided by St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Karen Bourque Everett (from left), Erika Hamer, Christopher Walker, Alessandro Apolito, Shannon M. Peabody and Bethany Reichard pose for a photo at the Chamber Before Hours event at Lippes Matthias Wexler Friedman LLP.

Local law firm hosts Chamber Before Hours

The SJC Ponte Vedra Beach Division Chamber Before Hours was hosted at 9 a.m., October 2, at Lippes Matthias Wexler Friedman LLP, where Chamber members and guests united to network and learn from one another's businesses.

The law firm's Partner-In-Charge, Christopher Walker, and other attorneys started the day informing guests about

the firm, connecting with Chamber members and the public while preparing for the day up over coffee.

"The event was mix and mingle as much as possible for the early morning," joked Shannon M. Peabody, director of marketing for the firm. "Everyone enjoyed themselves."

For more information on Chamber events, visit www.sjcchamber.com.

CHAMBER HELPS RECORDER CELEBRATE 50 YEARS



Photo by Christine Rodenbaugh

Bonnie Hayflick (left) and SJC President Isabelle Renault join many others from the Ponte Vedra Beach community to help the Ponte Vedra Recorder celebrate its 50th anniversary with a Cheers to 50 Years party Oct. 23. Held in conjunction with the Ponte Vedra Beach Division's Chamber After Hours event, state and local officials, staff and former staff, advertisers and longtime area residents celebrated the longevity of the paper and its place in the community.

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OCTOBER 2019

David Godwin accepts Grace Hayes PVBD Ambassador of the Year Award

By Maggie FitzRoy

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce recognized area business leaders that have made their mark this year at its annual awards event, “2019 Branded Innovation” Friday, Oct. 25 at Shell Hall, World Golf Village.

David Godwin, with Transamerica Agency Network, Inc., received the Ponte Vedra Ambassador of the Year Award, dedicated in memory of Grace Hayes, former editor of the Ponte Vedra Recorder.

Robin Burchfield, with St. Augustine Youth Services, received Ambassador of the Year. Other award winners included: Beth Sweeny, with Flagler College, Public Policy Member of the Year; Mary O’Brien, with Meridian Waste, President’s Award; Cecil Gibson, Ameris Bank, President’s Award; Jim Bush, with Florida Power & Light Co., 2019 Chamber Member of the Year; Vested Metals, Small Business of the Year; and Melissa Rowe with Puroclean Emergency Restoration Services, Chairman’s Award.

Keynote speaker Craig Dickman, Managing Director for Titledown Tech, and a believer in “one size fits one in innovation,” engaged in a conversation with



Photo by Maggie FitzRoy

David Godwin accepts the Graces Hayes PVBD Ambassador of the Year Award Oct. 25 at World Golf Village.

the audience during his speech after the awards.

After he received his commemorative trophy, Godwin said, “It feels great to have won. It’s an honor for sure.”

Godwin said he enjoys being an Ambassador with the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce, because it makes him feel like he is part of something larger than himself.

He said he is also enjoying success in his career in insurance, after serving in the U.S. Navy for 14 years and in the U.S. Army for 3 years. He served in a special operations group that worked with Navy Seals—as a combat rescue swimmer, who jumped out of helicopters.

“Now I do insurance,” he said. “How about that for a transition? I love it. I get to help families with a certain future.” Selling life insurance, he said, “I give people a guaranteed future for their loved ones.”

ELECTRIC BIKE SHOP HOLDS GRAND OPENING CEREMONY

A grand-opening ribbon cutting for Pedego Electric Bikes in Sawgrass Village was held by the SJC Chamber of Commerce PVB Division on Oct. 25 at the store at 340 Front St., Suite 750, Ponte Vedra Beach. Store owners Glenn and Annette McIntosh gather with manager Joe Kelleher and Cassidy Castleman gather with members of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce.



Photo by Ed Johnson



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NOVEMBER 2019

BLOCKER DISCUSSES VETERAN HEALTH AT CHAMBER LUNCHEON

The Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division held a luncheon Wednesday, Nov. 6 at Sawgrass Beach Club. Guest speaker was County Commissioner Jeremiah Blocker, and the topic was Fire Watch, a regional program to extinguish veteran suicides. The commissioner addressed efforts to reduce veteran suicides within the area community.

Photo by Susan Griffin



RIBBON CUTTING FOR BOARD AND BRUSH



Photo provided by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce. A ribbon cutting was held Nov. 13 to celebrate the opening of Board and Brush at its new location in Ponte Vedra Beach at 840 A1A North, Suite 150. St. Johns Chamber of Commerce PVB Division members celebrated the opening while networking with fellow chamber members. For many, it was a way to start their workday with a little breakfast and camaraderie.

Chamber holds After Hours event at Skinny Jax

St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Division members gathered at Skinny Jax in Jacksonville Beach, Nov. 20, for an afterhours networking opportunity. Beverages and delicious bites were provided.

Skinny Jax is a medical weight loss spa that offers customized weight loss programs that include personal counseling from a board certified physician and a skilled staff that monitors customers' progress and makes adjustments to help them meet their goals.



Photo by Susan Griffin

Karen Everett, director St. Johns County Chamber Ponte Vedra Beach Division, and Skinny Jax owner Alyson Cannady

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DECEMBER 2019



Photo by Susan Griffin

Representatives from Pennington Insurance Services hold a ribbon cutting with St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce members Dec. 2.

Veteran-owned Pennington Insurance Services holds ribbon-cutting ceremony

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting with Allstate Insurance Company Dec. 2 to celebrate the opening of a new office in St. Augustine.

Located at 10440 U.S. 1 North, it is independently owned and operated by David Pennington, a U.S. Army veteran, who has more than 15 years of experience in the financial services and insurance industries. He is dedicated to helping families accomplish their goals while delivering impeccable service, drawing upon his experience as an Army Sergeant in the 82nd Airborne Division from 1999 to 2005.

Pennington's office sells auto, property and life insurance as well as protection for motorcycles, boats, renters and more. Additionally, the agency specializes in helping small businesses throughout Northeast Florida with business insurance and voluntary employee benefits. They

offer insurance services in both English and Spanish to meet the growing needs of the community.

"As a veteran, husband, father, and active member of the community, it is important to me to help families protect the things that matter most – their family, home, car, boat and more," Pennington said. "And with over 110,000 veterans in Northeast Florida, I am proud to serve the veteran community with their insurance needs."

The five-person team at Pennington Insurance Services has over 40 years of experience, and primarily serves Jacksonville, Saint Augustine, Ponte Vedra and Nocatee families and business. The office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Evening hours are available by appointment. Reach Pennington and his team at (904) 347-2443, or email David. Pennington@allstate.com.

RIBBON CUTTING HELD AT NEW LUXURY LIVING APARTMENTS



The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce and Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting Dec. 3 for the new Sentosa Beachwalk Luxury Apartment Living community. The apartments feature one, two and three bedroom floor plans, and the community features a resort-inspired pool with cabanas, fire pit with outdoor lounge, 24/7 fitness center, dog park, beach volleyball court, access to the Beachwalk Crystal Lagoon and more.

Photo by Susan Griffin



Photos by Susan Griffin

Mark and Joan Refosco



Cyndi Stevenson and Isabelle Renault

Stunning home hosts Chamber holiday party

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce PVB Division celebrated the holidays Wednesday, Dec. 4, with a Jingle and Mingle Party.

The evening event was held at the EvenTide Model Home at 181 Sea Glass Way in Ponte Vedra Beach. The stunning Arthur Rutenberg home, located north of Mickler's Landing, provided the perfect setting for festivities that included great door prizes, cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, delicious desserts provided by Ruth's Chris Steak House and live music by Samuel Sanders.

'Economy seems to have strong momentum'

By Christine Rodenbaugh

Economist Mark Vitner said those who were nervous about the November jobs report, anticipating a jobs gain of about 180,000, were pleasantly surprised Friday morning. In a Dec. 6 news release, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported total nonfarm payroll employment rose by 266,000 in November, and the unemployment rate was little changed at 3.5%. Notable job gains occurred in health care and in professional and technical services. Employment rose in manufacturing, reflecting the return of workers from a strike.

Vitner, managing director and senior economist at Wells Fargo Securities was the keynote speaker at the Dec. 6 Economic Development Council Quarterly Breakfast at the Renaissance, St. Augustine Resort in World Golf Village. The strong jobs report was the starting point for Vitner's topic,

"Economics, A Look Ahead."

"There are a lot of positive things going on in our economy right now," he told the filled meeting room.

The national unemployment rate in October was 3.6% nationwide and 3.2% in Florida. The St. Johns County unemployment rate in September was lower than both at 2.5%. Vitner said employment growth remains very strong.

He said recession fears topped out in August. It's been more than 10 years since the last recession — the longest span ever in the U.S. He said in the last recession everything was tied to housing. Consumers went from too optimistic to too cautious and, in 2007, the Fed raised interest rates higher than people expected. There were other factors related to real estate that contributed to the last recession, as well.

"It's kind of hard for me to see a recession... even kind of far out there," he said.

"Barring unforeseen events like a war."

He said the Fed has set a very high bar to raise interest rates, and we may see one more rate cut in March. Vitner anticipates interest rates will remain relatively low.

"Our (U.S.) economy is the strongest advanced economy in the world," he said.

He also reported households are in strong economic shape today, and that includes gaining strength in the bottom 40% of the earning spectrum.

"That's important because those folks spend more of their paycheck," Vitner said. "I think the holidays will really surprise people on the upside," indicating consumer confidence is strong.

Local dignitaries seated at the president's table included State Representative Cyndi Stevenson, District 2 Commissioner Jeb Smith, District 5 Commissioner Henry Dean, Police Chief Barry Fox, Airport Authority Board Member Suzanne Green



Photo by Christine Rodenbaugh

Mark Vitner, managing director and senior economist at Wells Fargo Securities, speaks during an EDC Quarterly Breakfast Dec. 6 at World Golf Village.

and Property Appraiser Eddie Creamer. St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Isabelle Renault made opening remarks and announcements. EDC Chairman Mike Koppenhafer served as emcee. Adam Gregory delivered the invocation and Todd Neville led the Pledge of Allegiance. Victor Raymos presented sponsor remarks and introduced Vitner.



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Outpost lawsuit settled between Ponte Vedra Corporation and St. Johns County

By Amber Lake

Originally published April 25

An amicable end to the Outpost lawsuit between Ponte Vedra Corporation (PVC) and St. Johns County was reached April 16, with all five county commissioners voting in favor for the settlement agreement.

The settlement came after a 2016 suit regarding the rezoning of the 99-acre parcel of land owned by the Ponte Vedra Corporation, a subsidiary of GATE Petroleum. The parcel is commonly referred to as the “Outpost,” which lies adjacent to the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve. PVC has plans for a 66-home residential community there called “Vista Tranquilla.”



Photo by Lucas Peters, Aerial Photography Jacksonville

The Outpost property is located at the end of Neck Road and adjacent to the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve.

PVC argued in the lawsuit that the boundaries of the Outpost had been ambiguously labeled as Conservation by the county’s Future Land Use Comprehensive Plan and should be subject to change.

In the recent settlement, PVC agreed to keep the wetlands and a small portion of the uplands classified as conservation. The company will still seek a land use change for a portion of the land for “low density” residential development.

The local environmental advocacy group, Save Guana Now, claimed the lawsuit was only intended to bypass the public hearing process that comes with formally applying for a land use designation change. PVC has denied these claims.

Following a dismissal from the circuit court regarding PVC’s motion for a Partial Summary Judgement in December 2018, PVC recently moved to settle the rest of



the lawsuit. According to Misty Skipper, vice president of marketing and communications for GATE, the company plans on filing the applications for the land use change and anticipates the public

hearings to be held later this year.

“We’re pleased that the Ponte Vedra Corporation and the county have dismissed what’s left of the lawsuit, and that their settlement agreement contains no concessions or compromises from the county,” said Nicole Crosby, founder of Save Guana Now. “We welcome public hearings, however, we still remain hopeful that PVC will consider a resolution that is appropriate to the conservation designation of the land.”

According to the settlement agreement, PVC does have the option to withdraw the application at any time during the approval process.

In a statement released by PVC, however, Drew Frick, president of GATE Lands, said that he “looks forward to the process and public discussion.” Exactly when the hearings will happen has yet to be announced, although advocates for Save Guana Now said they have been a long time coming.

As far back as June 2014, PVC first discussed plans for a subdivision and the land use change at the Outpost. Now that the lawsuit has ended, the process to develop it can continue once again.

Ponte Vedra lacrosse wins 1st state championship

By Jon Blauvelt

Originally published May 16

The Ponte Vedra Sharks are the 2019 FHSAA boys lacrosse state champions after defeating St. Thomas Aquinas 19-7 on May 11 in Boca Raton.

Winning its first state championship in program history, Ponte Vedra scored in the first 15 seconds of the game and never looked back. Up 7-3 at half, the Sharks blew the lead open in the third quarter with nine goals.

“That third quarter is one of the best third quarters I’ve ever seen in high school lacrosse,” Ponte Vedra head coach Tom West said. “We could have beat a college team.”

Due to the Sharks’ dominance, the game clock was set to a running clock, which West said has never happened before in the state championship game.

Junior midfielder Dylan Hess, who is committed to Georgetown, led the Sharks with five goals and four assists. Senior attack Patrick Dotsikas, a Merchant Marine Academy commit, scored three goals. Committed to play at Notre Dame, junior midfielder Carter Parlette finished with three goals and two assists. Senior attack Jack Dowd, a Furman commit, and sophomore midfielder Freddie DiMarzo each had two goals. Junior long-stick midfielder Tommy Zitiello led the team with seven groundballs and also had a goal.

Ponte Vedra defeated Jupiter 10-8 on Friday in Boca Raton to advance to the state championship. After jumping out to a 4-0 first-quarter lead and a 7-3 halftime lead, Jupiter mounted a comeback, coming within one goal of the Sharks twice



in the second half. In that game, Carter Parlette led the Sharks with three goals and two assists, while Dowd, Hess and sophomore midfielder Joe Taraboletti each scored two goals.

West said the Sharks didn’t get to play some of their offensive players in the game versus Jupiter, which resulted in them being fresh against St. Thomas Aquinas. West believes that depth was a crucial factor in Ponte Vedra ultimately winning the championship. The Sharks’ head coach also said the team had a good game plan for the final and that everyone believed in each other.

Ponte Vedra has reached the state championship final four seven times in the program’s 10-year history. Just once did the Sharks reach the championship in 2016, when they matched up with St. Thomas Aquinas for a first time. Ponte Vedra lost

that year 13-11. The win on Saturday, therefore, was redemption for the Sharks.

West said losing in the final four in 2018 with a young team also proved to be the difference in 2019.

“Everyone just was committed to being the best that we could and to really play Ponte Vedra lacrosse the way we wanted to play it,” West said.

The Ponte Vedra coach also noted that the team hosted a Navy SEAL for a day during the preseason, and his message also proved to make a significant difference.

MAY continues on Page 37

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The Ponte Vedra boys lacrosse team celebrates after defeating St. Thomas Aquinas 19-7 on April 20 in Boca Raton to win the state championship.

Photo provided by PVHS Athletics



May

Continued from 35

“We just talked about how you fight for each other and when things don’t go your way, you have to be successful and fight through it,” West said. “That happened six or seven times this season, where we came back to that training. In the past, maybe we would have folded or not played our best. This year, whenever we came to a situation whether there’s a roadblock, a rainstorm, or things aren’t going our way or the refs aren’t making calls, we just said ‘good’ and put a smile on our face and kept on playing. That was the difference this year.”

Ponte Vedra (24-1) finishes the season atop the state rankings and is currently ranked No. 1 in the country, according to MaxPreps. Nine players on the team are committed to play lacrosse in the collegiate ranks, including junior attack Cameron

Welch (Mercer); junior attack Freddie Amato (Lehigh); senior attack Patrick Dotsikas (Merchant Marine Academy); senior attack Jack Dowd (Furman); junior midfielder Dylan Hess (Georgetown); junior midfielder Carter Parlette (Notre Dame); senior FOGO (Face Off Get Off) Jimmy Burns (University of Massachusetts Lowell); senior midfielder Matayo Trumble (Merchant Marine Academy); and senior defender Max Schalit (Notre Dame). According to West, a group of three additional juniors and sophomores are planning to make their respective commitments in the coming weeks.

With only six players graduating from the team, expectations for the Sharks will be high in 2020.

“We want to get our own for that class,” West said. “We want to get another one. We want to play our best and play Ponte Vedra lacrosse. Every game. Which is very fun to watch.”

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Rahm Celebrity Golf Tournament at World Golf Village raises \$700,000 for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

By Daniela Toporek

Originally published June 6

Actor Kevin Rahm held his first celebrity golf tournament May 30 to June 2 at World Golf Village, raising \$700,000 for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

"The Rahm" was held at the World Golf Village Renaissance resort and was modeled after The Warburton, the West Coast version of the weekend-long event hosted by actor Patrick Warburton. Over 45 celebrities, such as lead vocalist John Elefante from rock band Kansas and Steve Augeri from Journey, came out in support of the cause.

The event began May 30 with a Nashville songwriters showcase, featuring songwriters Jamie O'Neal, Billy Dean, Tim Nichols and Kelley Lovelace.

On May 31, "The Rahm" Jam Session featured classic musical performances from Elefante, Augeri, The Romantics' Wally Palmar, Chicago's Jason Scheff, R.E.M.'s Mike Mills,

YEAR IN REVIEW
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Chris Daughtry, Sister Hazel and more.

The golf tournament ran June 1 and 2 at the King & Bear and Slammer & Squire courses in the World Golf Village, where each foursome was paired with a celebrity for both rounds. That celebrity also sat with the team at the Saturday Soiree, which featured a red carpet and cocktail reception, live and silent auctions, dinner and entertainment.

Spots to enter the golf tournament sold out with a long waiting list. The event's goal was to raise \$500,000, but "The Rahm" surpassed that goal with its final total.

It has been confirmed that Kevin Rahm will return with his tournament next year on May 28-31, 2020.



ABOVE: Actor Kevin Rahm takes a selfie with golfers during his inaugural celebrity golf tournament May 30 to June 2 at World Golf Village. The event raised \$700,000 for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Photo by Avra Photography



LEFT: Journey's Steve Augeri serenades the crowd with "Don't Stop Believing."

Photo by Daniela Toporek

Mickler's Wharf to provide public access to Intracoastal Waterway

By Christine Rodenbaugh

Originally published July 11

Without fanfare on June 21, the first pilings were set at the dead end of Canal Boulevard to begin construction of a 2,000-square-foot wharf to allow public access to the Intracoastal Waterway. The project first came before the St. Johns County Commission in May 2018. Canal Boulevard separates North Roscoe and South Roscoe Boulevard.

David Plummer of Outback Marine Construction had been researching the viability of the project six months before the commission meeting. Plummer was raised in Palm Valley and still owns property on Roscoe Boulevard. He saw a need for a safe place to fish, watch the annual boat parade and enjoy the Intracoastal.

"Currently it's a hazard," Plummer said. "The bulkhead drops off into oyster beds and metal. There's no exit if anyone falls in."

An avid fisherman and former president of the local chapter of the Recreational Fishing Alliance, Plummer seeks every opportunity to share the sport he's enjoyed since childhood. A safe, public place for families to fish fits that vision. And safety is a primary concern.

"The wharf will have a handrail completely around it," Plummer stated in a



Photo by Christine Rodenbaugh

Deb Chapin of the Ponte Vedra Greenway Alliance and David Plummer of Outback Marine Construction look forward to a 2,000-square-foot wharf to improve the rustic bulkhead at the end of Canal Boulevard in Palm Valley. They visited the site June 24, a few days after the first two pilings were set.

Facebook post. "Down the middle of the wharf will be back-to-back benches with a roof."

It will be called "Mickler's Wharf" in recognition of Plummer's heritage as a

member of the Mickler family.

He shared the idea of a community dock with Deb Chapin, founder of the Ponte Vedra Greenway Alliance and a member of the St. Johns County Recreation Advisory

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Board. According to Chapin, the alliance has a mission to create recreational destinations and to build a safe, multi-use recreational path. Plummer's project fits into the PVG Alliance's larger vision of creating greenway recreational spaces.

"It was timely that we came across this reputable contractor from an historic family," Chapin stated to the Recorder. "This (wharf) has historic and cultural relevance."

Outback Marine Construction is donating construction of the project to the community of Palm Valley. The PVG Alliance will provide funds to purchase composite decking after securing a grant from the Department of Environmental Protection and the University of Florida.

Six more pilings were set on June 26 and Plummer plans to have the project completed by fall.

"We look forward to seeing smiling faces on the dock and fishing



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Recorder holds inaugural Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra contest

By Christine Rodenbaugh

Originally published Aug. 8

From its humble beginnings as little more than a local newsletter, the Ponte Vedra Recorder has morphed into a weekly community newspaper serving the Ponte Vedra area. To keep up with the times, the Recorder has changed through the years to engage readers and advertisers alike. Most recently, readers had the chance to nominate and vote for the 2019 Best of the Best Ponte Vedra in the 32081 and 32082 ZIP codes. Launched May 16, the contest is in recognition of the newspaper's 50th anniversary, which will be celebrated in November (#CheersTo50Years)

Just like any other new initiative, the Recorder staff and leadership had no idea what to expect. The response was overwhelming. Nearly 2,500 businesses and individuals were nominated by the May 31 deadline. Then the voting began.

Interest was high and consistent throughout the voting period from June 1 to July 20 with more than 3,500 people casting votes.

After all 45,280 votes were tallied, 189 entrants were

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AUGUST 2019

victorious in more than 240 categories.

The winners listed in this special section and the thousands more who were nominated reflect the true nature of what makes the area so special. It's the people and businesses working together to elevate the entire community.

To the winners, wear your Best of the Best Ponte Vedra badge with pride, knowing the title comes from the

people who rely on your goods and services. It is a stamp of approval that recognizes your dedication and exceptionalism.

To the voters, thank you for the overwhelming participation. A community only flourishes if individuals take an active role in its growth and prosperity. By actively participating to name the best Ponte Vedra has to offer, voters were empowered to change how residents and visitors view local businesses.

In keeping with the changing landscape of media, the Recorder has increased its digital footprint with more online posts and a free Monday newsletter delivered to inboxes by request. This is in addition to print products like the First Coast Register and special publications delivered throughout the year.



Thank you for making us a part of your community, for spending part of your day with our products and for trusting and relying on us.

Throughout the year, rely on your Best of the Best Ponte Vedra winners to provide the goods and services at the level you've come to expect. Remind them how much you value their presence in your community.

'Tryin' to reason with hurricane season'



ABOVE:
At 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 4 the Usina Boat Ramp and fishing pier were flooded.

RIGHT:
Power crews work to restore service along Roscoe Boulevard.

Photos by Susan Griffin



By Christine Rodenbaugh

Originally published Sept. 12

On Sept. 1, Hurricane Dorian wreaked havoc on the Bahamas making landfall as a Category 5 storm. According to the National Hurricane Center, it was the strongest in more than 80 years with sustained winds of up to 185 mph. At least 50 people in the Bahamas lost their lives, according to later reports.

Dorian was an unpredictable storm. It formed as a tropical depression Aug. 24 off the lesser Antilles in the Caribbean. Hours later it was a tropical storm. Four days later, the storm struck the U.S. Virgin Islands as a Category 1 hurricane with maximum sustained winds of up to 130 mph.

On Aug. 28, Dorian's track seemed to be headed for Puerto Rico and was anticipated to continue to Florida. Governor Ron DeSantis declared a state of emergency. By declaring a state of emergency, Governor DeSantis ensured state and local governments would have ample time, resources and flexibility to prepare.

With hurricanes Matthew, Irma and Michael still fresh in Floridians' minds, preparations got underway. St. Johns County residents could fill up to 20 sandbags without charge at several locations. Businesses and homeowners boarded up windows, big box home stores sold out of generators, some gas stations ran out of fuel and water flew off grocery store shelves. Sunday, Sept. 1, the City of St. Augustine opened the downtown garage

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SEPTEMBER 2019

for free parking during the storm and the St. Johns County Fairgrounds was opened for RV and boat storage and overnight stays without charge.

St. Johns County issued mandatory evacuation orders effective at 8 a.m. Monday, Sept. 2 for Evacuation Zones A and B as Hurricane Dorian continued to churn over the Bahamas moving just 30 miles northwest in 24 hours.

By 2 p.m. Tuesday, the storm seemed to be headed toward the Carolinas, skipping landfall in Florida. But coastal residents were still nervous. Hurricane Matthew never made landfall in Florida and still caused flooding and beach erosion in St. Johns County. Hurricane Dorian did indeed remain offshore and passed by St. Johns County as a Category 2 storm Wednesday, Sept. 4.

The ocean breached recently replaced dunes in Summer Haven within weeks of the multi-million-dollar project's completion. In South Ponte Vedra, State Road A1A was closed briefly because waves broke

K9s For Warriors expanding in Nocatee thanks to Davis Family and PARC Group donation

By Maggie FitzRoy

Originally published Oct. 17

Every month, up to a dozen disabled military veterans spend three weeks at the K9s For Warriors facility in Nocatee learning how to work with their new service dogs, rescue animals from around the country.

But before soldier “warriors” and their dogs are paired, the dogs undergo three to six months of pre-pairing training on the Nocatee Camp K9 campus.

Currently, there is room for up to 60 dogs.

But that is about to expand.

Jed Davis, President of DDI and Roger O’Steen, Founder and Chairman of The PARC Group, recently donated an additional 5.5-acres to the current 9-acre facility. K9s For Warriors plans to build mega-kennels to house an additional 250 rescue dogs on the new land, which “will increase the number of warriors we can pair with service dogs,” Public Relations Manager Brianna Bentov said. A veterinary technician center, and an indoor and outdoor training center are also slated to be built there.



Nationally renowned, K9s For Warriors is the country’s largest provider of service dogs for veterans.

Founded in 2011, the not-for-profit organization is dedicated to providing service canines to veterans suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury and/or trauma as a result of military service post 9/11.

The canines, all rescue dogs, are at least a year old. They are also at least 24 inches tall, and weigh at least 50 pounds, enabling them to be able to support a warrior on command.

The Davis Family and The PARC Group donated the original 9 acres in 2014. That campus is located on Camp K9 Road, across from the Palm Valley Golf Course.



Photo by Maggie FitzRoy

K9s For Warriors canine trainer Christel Fleming (right) works with new rescue dog, Chilly, in the training facility in Nocatee, while trainer April Johnson works with Ian.

The new expansion will be located in western Nocatee, at the intersection of US1 and Nocatee Parkway, near Race-Track Road.

K9s for Warriors has not released a construction timeline yet.

But on a recent Facebook post, the organization shared: “The entire team at K9s For Warriors are so thankful for the impact that this tremendous donation will have on the warriors and rescue dogs we serve.”

September

Continued from 40

through sand barriers and flooded the right of way. Public works crews pumped water from Porpoise Point Drive and it was dry by Friday. Assessment of beach erosion will continue through Sept. 20.

For now, Florida can breathe a sigh of relief and contribute to efforts to supply aid to the Bahamas and neighbors farther up the coast. Like the Jimmy Buffett song goes, we’ll be “tryin’ to reason with hurricane season” until it ends Nov. 30. So, keep supplies left over from Dorian on hand — just in case.

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CELEBRATING 50 YEARS!

The Ponte Vedra Recorder: A look back

By Maggie FitzRoy

Originally published Nov. 7

In 1969, Richard Nixon was president of the United States.

The Vietnam War was raging and of national concern.

The Internet was born, and so was Sesame Street.

And in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, life was good.

During the first week of November, four Beaches Hospital Auxiliary members, Lib Bean, Dot Howard, Mary Hollingsworth and Marian Lewis, were thanked for raising money for the hospital.

Newcomers were welcomed to the area: Jerry and Sandra Foster, Alan and Margaret Fleener, James and Joanna Lynagh, Murray and Margaret Matteson and Charles and Lynn McCarty.

First Lt. William Collings, Jr. was awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious service in Vietnam.

And the school year was off to a good start, with six new teachers at PV-PV School: Mr. Hinsley, Mr. McDonald, Mrs. McDonald, Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Rogers.

The residents of Ponte Vedra Beach knew all this, thanks to a new newspaper in town: the Ponte Vedra Recorder, which published its first edition 50 years ago today on Nov. 7, 1969.

“We’ll never make the professional golf circuit! We’ll never paint the great American masterpiece! We’ll never write the great American novel! But maybe, just maybe, with everybody’s help, we can do something really worthwhile,” declared the paper’s co-founders, Gretchen Carpenter and Peg Bradford on the first page, continuing, “So this announces



the Inevitable Happenings in our life...the birth of the first Ponte Vedra newspaper, dedicated to accurate coverage of events taking place in our community that often pass unnoticed.”

Carpenter--editor, publisher and co-owner--and Bradford, associate editor, also printed the paper’s motto under its masthead with the words “Dedicated Community Spirit.”

Over the past five decades, the Ponte

Vedra Recorder has lived up to that motto.

And today it happily celebrates 50 years of continuing success in the community newspaper industry.

The community newspaper industry in general is fading, but it is more important than ever. Regional and community newspapers are closing their doors all around the country--sadly, because they are the glue that bind residents together.

But the Ponte Vedra Recorder is thriving. And it continues to serve its community by promoting its news in a way that is dedicated to its spirit.

The Recorder changed through the years, growing and expanding with the



community. Newspapers are called the first rough draft of history, which the Recorder has been for Ponte Vedra Beach, Palm Valley and surrounding beach towns from its inception. But it has always also celebrated the history of the area going back hundreds of years, educating readers about what came before.

In 1972, the Recorder published a serial column by Mrs. Richard Massey on three centuries of Florida history, which she first wrote for the Ponte Vedra Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

In 1976, the Recorder was “proud to present” an ongoing column by Myrtle Stanley, called “A View of the Valley,” about Palm Valley life.

The December 21, 1979 issue provided a Year in Review, reminding readers of what had occurred month by month. In February, “plans for Ponte Vedra Shopping Plaza, to be located at the intersection of A1A and SR 210, are unveiled;” in March, “Beaches Hospital installs computerized X-ray machine;” in July, “Peggy Bradford and Gretchen Carpenter are presented resolutions of appreciation from the PVCA...”

In the Recorder’s 25th anniversary “Silver Anniversary Issue,” dated Dec. 16, 1994, the Recorder reprinted a story from the Feb. 1, 1980 issue about the passing of Gretchen Carpenter after a nine-month battle against cancer. Also, in that issue, publisher Timothy Bradford, Peggy’s son,

NOVEMBER continues on Page 43

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November

Continued from 42

reprinted a story he had written for the Aug. 24, 1984 edition about the death of his mother, who had died earlier that month after “a long bout with cancer.” Dedicated Community Spirit “was more than a catchy motto,” he wrote. “Providing a vehicle to promote the community gave her great joy.”

Tim Bradford served as publisher, as well as editor, writer and photographer for many years, leading the paper until his death in February 1997. His widow, Pamela Bradford, kept it going until 1999, when she sold it to Journal Community Publishing Group, based in Wisconsin.

Then in 2011, the Osteen family of Sumter, S.C. acquired the Recorder along with three other sister publications. OPC News, LLC is owned by three members of the Osteen family: Graham, Kyle and Jack. The brothers also have holdings in Osteen Publishing Company, Inc., a Sumter newspaper operation that has been in their family for more than 100 years.

Shortly after purchasing the Recorder, the Osteen brothers gave an encouraging statement that was reprinted in the Nov. 6, 2014 issue, when the paper celebrated its 45th anniversary. In keeping with the spirit and enthusiasm first shown by Gretchen Carpenter and Peg Bradford, they said, “Ponte Vedra is a great community with an audience that traditionally loves to read newspapers. Along with the staff at the Recorder, we think we can bring a renewed vitality to the operation. We believe in the future of smaller community news organizations.”

Five years after that declaration was reprinted, it continues to ring true.

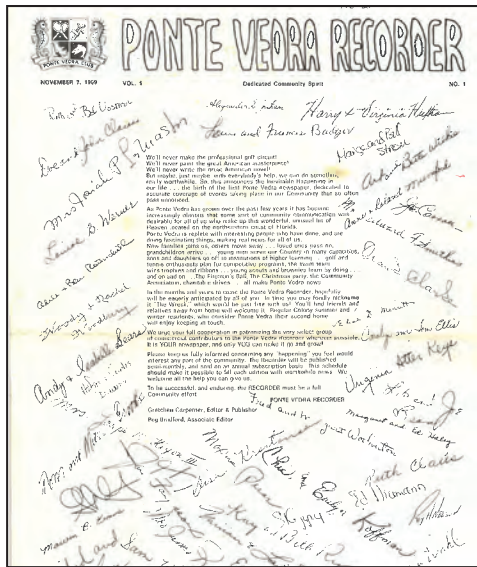
“In a fast-changing, instant gratification world, local journalism is at the heart of readers’ communities and is the conduit to the community,” Pam Bradford Williams said. “Community newspapers have the power to bring about great good and make a profound difference within neighborhoods and are the true, original social media. Congratulations to the Ponte Vedra Recorder on 50 years of success.”



ABOVE: Partygoers help the Ponte Vedra Recorder celebrate its 50th anniversary on Oct. 23.

LEFT: Jennifer Price, Parks Rogers, Susan Griffin and Lesley Vitel.

Photos by Susan Griffin and Christine Rodenbaugh



The first cover of the Ponte Vedra Recorder in 1969.




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- 14. Bud or chum
- 15. Petroleum tanker
- 16. Relating to a gene
- 17. "La" precursor
- 18. Big Dipper shape
- 19. *Between Stone Age and Bronze Age
- 21. Concentration equalizing process
- 23. *E in BCE
- 24. Youngster
- 25. *The Romans built one at Bath's hot springs
- 28. Make like a cat
- 30. Mountain cover
- 35. Instinctive motive
- 37. "General Hospital," e.g.
- 39. Fresh Prince: " ____ ya later!"
- 40. Lose coat
- 41. Upside down frown
- 43. Original thought
- 44. Not odds
- 46. Distinctive elegance

- 47. Feeling great delight
- 48. Mr. Selfridge's sphere of expertise
- 50. Green-eyed monster
- 52. *Early christogram
- 53. In the back
- 55. Granola grain
- 57. *Italian city, Mount Vesuvius' victim
- 61. *Pharaoh's resting place
- 65. Tear-jerker
- 66. *The ____ Peoples, attackers of ancient Egypt
- 68. *Infamous Athens' legislator
- 69. Continental money
- 70. Lincoln lumber
- 71. Itsy-bitsy bits
- 72. Pre-Soviet Russian ruler
- 73. Opposite of WSW
- 74. *Per Aristotle, there are 3 categories of this
- 12. *One of Greek mythology's twelve Olympians
- 15. *Mesoamerica's earliest known civilization
- 20. One maxwell per square centimeter
- 22. ____, snowshoe, tube
- 24. Movie teaser
- 25. *Mesopotamia's earliest civilization
- 26. Establish validity
- 27. End of a shoelace
- 29. *Romulus' domain
- 31. Ruler of emirate
- 32. Mothball substitute
- 33. 1st letter of Hebrew alphabet
- 34. *Founder of first Academy in Athens
- 36. *Virgil wrote of this volcano in the "Aeneid"
- 38. Blueprint or outline
- 42. Diplomat on a mission
- 45. "The Odyssey" temptresses
- 49. Hula accessory
- 51. Jamaican gang member
- 54. Bridal path
- 56. Divination card
- 57. *Virgil or Homer
- 58. Cross to bear
- 59. Actress Sorvino
- 60. Standard's partner
- 61. One side of a leaf
- 62. *Euclid's sphere of expertise, for short
- 63. International Civil Aviation Org.
- 64. Take a nap
- 67. Long, long time

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24th annual Christ Church Nutcracker maintains magical quality

By Paris Moulden

Originally published Dec. 19

“The Nutcracker” is certainly a holiday staple, but one production manages to up the magic year after year.

The 24th annual Christ Church Nutcracker and Miss Felicia’s Dance Program held its performance of the holiday classic on Saturday, Dec. 14, at the University of North Florida’s Lazzara Performance Hall. And while the Christ Church show has all the energy, amazing set design, fantastic costuming and standout performances one might expect from a major production, what makes this version of “The Nutcracker” so special are the performers, across all age groups. Felicia Rhoden, who leads the dance ministry at Christ Episcopal Church and produces and directs “The Nutcracker,” incorporates all the students from its dance ministry across all age ranges and skill levels.

YEAR IN REVIEW DECEMBER 2019

“We use everybody who wants to be on that stage,” Rhoden said.

“The Nutcracker” tells the story of young Clara, played this year by Audrey Geric, and her journey after receiving a magical nutcracker doll during her family Christmas party. After receiving her gift, Clara falls asleep and, after being saved from the Rat King by the Nutcracker prince, is taken on an enchanting journey highlighted through dance. In the Christ Church performance, the traditional tale is



Students of Miss Felicia Rhoden’s Dance Ministry at Christ Episcopal Church present the 24th production of “The Nutcracker” on Dec. 14 at the Lazzara Performance Hall at UNF.

Photo by Paris Moulden

told beautifully, but includes much more than expected. There are, of course, the Snow Queen, the Nutcracker Prince, the Sugar Plum Fairy, the China Doll, the Mouse King and his mice, the Arabian dancers, the Spanish dancers and all the rest, but Rhoden’s show also features hip-hop dancing, breakdancing, a drumline, tap dance and a lot of acrobatics. There were also plenty of laughs courtesy of the youngest cast members, including a young group of elves following the lead of their not-so-coordinated and hilarious guide. As usual, the little “cherubs” drew “oohs” and “aahs” from the audience with their adorable performance.

Despite all the time and energy and preparation that goes into putting on such an elaborate show, Rhoden said it’s the

makeup and character of the cast that sets it apart.

“They’re just happy,” she said. “There’s not a lot of stress or pressure, and I think that just shows through in the performance.”

While the show undoubtedly provides entertainment to those in the audience, what it provides beyond that is even a bigger deal. Each year, the profits from Christ Church’s Nutcracker go to sponsor children through Dreams Come True Foundation and are also donated to the Community PEDS Care hospice and Amistad Orphanage in Bolivia.

And that’s what really matters to Rhoden and the cast and crew.

“Even the littlest, from the youngest to the oldest, know they are performing to give back to the community,” Rhoden said.

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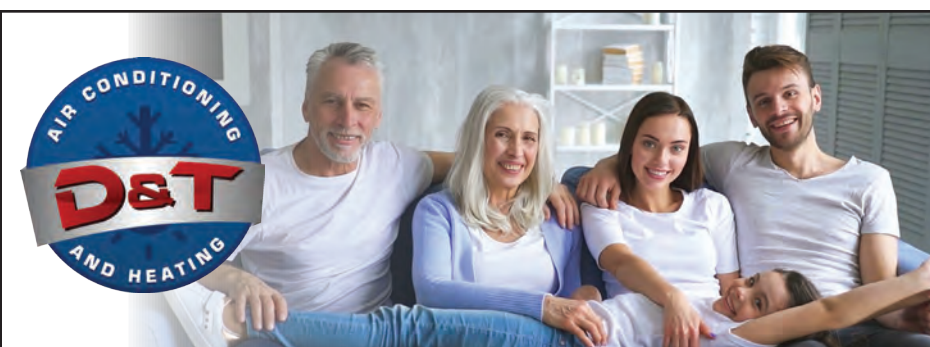


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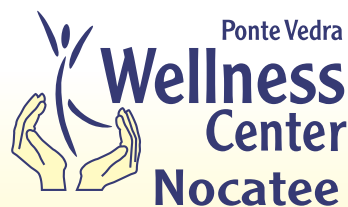
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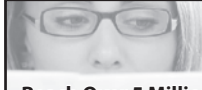
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