

Your Community Voice for 50 Years

PONTE VEDRA



Recorder

January 14, 2021

Volume 51, No. 63

75 cents

Not your average newspaper, not your average reader

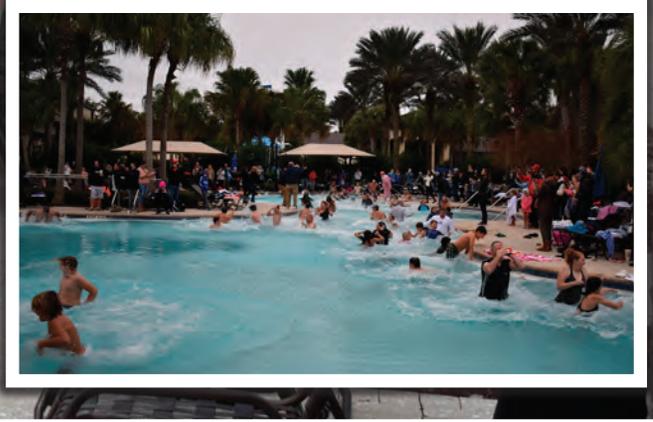
PonteVedraRecorder.com

POLAR PLUNGE!



Nocatee residents brave the colder temperatures and dress up for the annual Polar Plunge at Splash Waterpark on Sunday, Jan. 9. For more photos, go to page 5

Photos provided by Nocatee Community/Nocatee.com



What's Available NOW On **hulu**

NO ESCAPE

THE SISTER

Honda of the Avengers

All New. Simpler Way to Buy

INSIDE: CHECK IT OUT!
The Recorder's Entertainment EXTRA featuring TV listings, streaming information, puzzles and more!



School is Cool
Pages 9-12
Looking & Feeling Good
Pages 15-18

Looking & Feeling Good

Inspiration and support for a happy, healthy and beautiful new year!
Pages 15-18

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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.

NOTES TO READERS

Don't miss an issue: In case social distancing requirements get more strict, we will email you your paper. Send your email address to pvrecorder@opcfla.com.

Weekly newsletter: The Recorder offers a weekly newsletter every Monday that outlines some of the top stories of the week, as well as providing access to our E-Edition and Entertainment EXTRA! To get the newsletter emailed for free, email don@opcfla.com. We'll add you to the list.

ADOPT A PET

CAT OF THE WEEK

Why hello there. I see you looking at my picture and yes, I agree, I am beautiful! My name is Daphne and I am



a 4-year-old female tortoiseshell who loves to be pampered. I'm sitting here — quiet, easy going, and graceful — so stop in and visit me. I think we can be great friends. #56986

DOG OF THE WEEK



Howdy! I'm Billy and I am a 3-year-old male Black Mouth Cur mix who just LOVES treats. Yee haw! I am a little more introverted than the others but once we are friends, I love to go for walks and play with toys. Come on down and visit me so I can get to know you — I am sure we will be partners in no time! #56970

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.**

BRIEFS

West Pope Road sidewalk construction begins this month

St. Johns County is constructing a sidewalk on West Pope Road beginning January 2021. The new sidewalk segment will connect the existing pathways from Reef Drive to Mizell Road, and allow for a safer walking path through adjacent neighborhoods, and provide convenient pedestrian access to local businesses. The project is scheduled for completion in February 2021.

Temporary single-lane closures may occur throughout the project. For more information, call (904) 209-0142.

Food for Fines program helps St. Johns County food pantry

St. Johns County Library patrons were generous this holiday season, donating more than 3,000 non-perishable food items for the county's Health and Human Services food pantry. Food for Fines, an annual program in place from

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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1	3	6	7	9	5	4	2	8			
2	8	9	4	6	1	7	5	3			

Solutions correspond to last week's puzzles.



We're here for wildlife.
We're #HereForYou.



Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.

St. Johns County receives 3rd vaccine allotment; registration opens Jan. 14

By Shaun Ryan

St. Johns County has received an allotment of 500 COVID-19 vaccines from the state. Registration will open at 9 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 14, for appointments beginning the next day.

To schedule an appointment, eligible residents must go to <https://tinyurl.com/y52tcoaz>. Those who are unable to make

an appointment on the website can call the St. Johns County COVID-19 Vaccination Hotline at 904-295-3711 – all 10 digits must be dialed.

Vaccinations will be made at the Solomon Calhoun Community Center, 1300 Duval St., St. Augustine.

Further appointments will be opened as the county receives additional vaccines.

Vaccines are currently reserved to

those who fall within four categories: healthcare personnel with direct patient contact, long-term care facility residents and staff, people over 65 years of age and those deemed by hospital providers to be extremely vulnerable to COVID-19. Eligible people must make an appointment to receive vaccinations.

Those who do not fall within those categories will be eligible for vaccination

upon authorization of federal and state officials.

For further information, call the hotline, text SJCVCACCINE to 888777 or go to sjcfl.us/coronavirusvaccinations.

The county is also in the process of contacting those who have received their initial vaccination from the Department

VACCINES continues on Page 4

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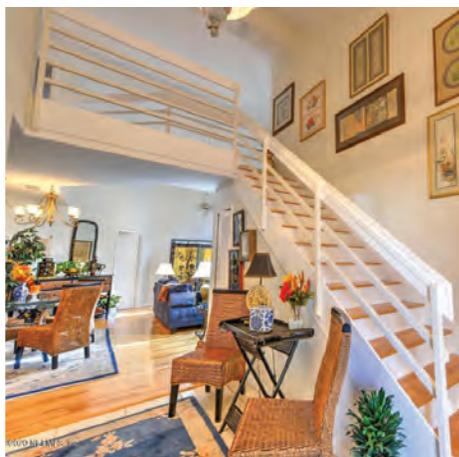
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JimZeller@WatsonRealtyCorp.com



LAS BRISAS
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Live the dream on the beach! This well-kept condo offers one carport parking spot, a kitchen with great cabinet space, & a private balcony overlooking the community pool, dunes, & ocean. Tile floors make beach living simple, & high windows & ceilings bring the outside in. Make this your beach getaway today! MLS 1075667

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SAWGRASS PLAYERS CLUB
\$422,900

Beautiful townhome in Turtleback Crossing. This well maintained two-story home features a newer roof, gas fireplace, oversized screened porch, hardwood floors, & tile in the kitchen, bathrooms, & foyer. Community has a private pool for owners & world-class pickle ball courts under construction. Located in walking distance to The Yards Golf Club & Players Club Park. MLS 1081259

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LANDMARK CONDO
\$1,750,000

Stunning oceanfront penthouse with 2 reserved parking spaces, endless views, & an open floorplan with plenty of space for entertaining. Features new flooring in most rooms, including luxury vinyl in main areas & carpeting in bedrooms. The primary owners' suite has ocean views & access to the covered terrace. Guest bedrooms include en-suite baths. MLS 1083940

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A work vehicle impedes the flow of traffic on Ponte Vedra Boulevard on Tuesday, Jan. 12. If a new proposal regarding parking on Ponte Vedra Boulevard is approved by the County Commission, delivery trucks and moving vans will need a permit to park on the street, and lawn maintenance and similar vehicles will be required to park off the street.

Photo by
Paris Moulden



New parking proposal would reduce congestion on Ponte Vedra Boulevard

By Shaun Ryan

With few exceptions, all temporary parking on Ponte Vedra Boulevard will soon be prohibited and violators will be ticketed if the Board of County Commissioners approves proposed changes to an existing ordinance.

The change has long been a topic of discussion between the county and the Ponte Vedra Beach Municipal Service District Board of Trustees. Motorists traversing the boulevard have been frustrated by the number of lawn maintenance trucks and trailers and construction-related vehicles clogging

the road and creating safety issues.

“Every single day, even Saturdays, you’ve got anywhere from 10 to 15 different landscape companies up and down the boulevard parked there,” said Board of Trustees Chair Brad Wester.

Wester addressed the topic during the board’s monthly meeting Monday, Jan. 11.

The existing ordinance prohibits most parking on the boulevard, but a loophole allows brief periods of parking for some oversized vehicles. This allows violators to skirt the intent of the ordinance by frequently moving

their vehicles five feet, thus resetting their time at that locale.

The proposed change still allows temporary parking for utility and government trucks, police and fire rescue. Furniture delivery and moving vans will be able to park by permit. Lawn maintenance and similar trucks and trailers will have to be pulled into driveways.

Wester said he expects the proposals to come before the County Commission in March or April and then to be approved by May. The change would go into effect immediately.

“It’s long overdue,” Wester said.

Vaccines

Continued from 3

of Health so that they may schedule a second-dose appointment. Anyone who has received the initial dose and provided contact information to the county should receive a phone call to make this second appointment. Second doses will be administered by appointment on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

The county has issued a statement saying that its COVID-19 Eventbrite vaccination registration system does not require credit card payment information. Residents who encounter a website requiring payment information to book an appointment should know that it is not the county’s official registration page.

This latest allotment is the third received by St. Johns County. The first allotment of 3,000 doses of the Moderna vaccine arrived on Dec. 28, but appointment slots quickly filled up. A second allotment of 800 doses was received Jan. 4, and online registration for

appointments began Jan. 7. All appointments were filled that same day.

Wednesday, Gov. Ron DeSantis announced that a limited number of vaccines are also being offered at 14 participating Publix pharmacies in St. Johns County. All of these vaccinations are by appointment only. Appointments can be made at www.publix.com/covid-vaccine while vaccines are available.

The county is accepting applications for medical, labor and clerical volunteers who want to assist with its vaccination program. Volunteers may be assigned to intake patient information, provide warehouse and equipment support or receive and answer resident calls made to the hotline. Qualified medical personnel may be assigned to administer vaccinations. To register, go to <https://tinyurl.com/SJCcovid19volunteer>.

As of Jan. 11, 15,700 total cases – 129 fatal – have been reported in St. Johns County. In the St. Johns County portion of the 32081 ZIP code, 1,170 cases have been reported. In the 32082 ZIP code, 1,967 cases have been reported.

In St. Johns County public schools, 28 employees and 185 students tested positive on Tuesday, Jan. 12. The highest number of cases were at Bartram Trail High School (33) and Ponte Vedra High School (17).

There are 44,175 students and 5,298 employees in St. Johns County schools. The school district reports COVID-19 cases on a daily basis, but a running total of specific individual cases is not available.

On Monday, Jan. 11, the state of Florida saw 14,602 new cases, bringing the total to 1,503,482. There have been 23,585 deaths.

As of Wednesday, Jan. 13, there have been 22,860,032 cases in the United States, 381,130 of them fatal. Globally, there have been 91,771,125 cases, 1,966,082 fatal.

The United States has had the highest number of cases, but it falls to 11th place when adjusted for population. Florida has had the third highest number of cases among the states, but it falls to 28th place when adjusted for population.

Publix pharmacies offer limited number of COVID-19 vaccinations

A limited number of COVID-19 vaccinations will be administered at 14 Publix pharmacies in St. Johns County. Gov. Ron DeSantis announced the partnership between the state and Publix on Wednesday in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Publix is administering vaccines in a total of 105 pharmacies in 12 counties. Outside of St. Johns County, the nearest participating Publix pharmacies are in Flagler County.

All vaccinations by Publix at their select locations are by appointment only. Appointments can be made at www.publix.com/covidvaccine.

Vaccinations are restricted to those falling in four eligibility classifications. These are: healthcare personnel with direct patient contact, long-term care facility residents and staff, people over 65 years of age and those deemed by hospital providers to be extremely vulnerable to COVID-19.

Participating Publix locations in St. Johns County are:

- Nocatee Town Center, 120 Marketside Ave., Ponte Vedra
- The Shoppes at Palm Valley, 3777 Palm Valley Road, Ponte Vedra
- Sawgrass Village, 220 Front St., Ponte Vedra Beach
- Cobblestone Village at St. Augustine, 125 Jenkins St., St. Augustine
- Anastasia Plaza, 1033 A1A Beach Blvd., St. Augustine
- Vilano Beach Town Center, 55 Ava Way, St. Augustine
- Shoppes At Murabella, 84 Tuscan Way, St. Augustine
- Shoppes at Mission, Trace 955 State Road 16, St. Augustine
- Moultrie Square, 4255 US 1 South, St. Augustine
- The Shoppes at Palencia Commons, 7462 US Hwy. 1 North, St. Augustine
- Julington Village, 450 State Road 13, St. Johns
- Plantation Plaza, 2750 Racetrack Road, St. Johns
- Bartram Market, 155 Bartram Market Drive, St. Johns
- John’s Creek Center, 2845 County Road 210, West St. Johns



Photos provided by Nocatee Community/Nocatee.com

Nocatee residents brave the colder temperatures to participate in the annual Polar Plunge on Sunday, Jan. 9, at the Splash Waterpark.

Nocatee residents brave the cold for annual Polar Plunge

By Holly Tishfield

To commemorate the beginning of the new year, and to continue a time-honored tradition, residents of the Nocatee community gathered at the new Splash Waterpark on the morning of Jan. 9 for the annual Polar Plunge.

More than 200 residents joined the plunge, bracing themselves on one of the coldest mornings of the year to take a leap into the Splash Waterpark pool.

Residents were encouraged to don their wackiest outfits and participate in a costume contest before the plunge, where awards were given to Best Dressed. Most participants and attendees opted for costumes with hats and long sleeves, such as polar bear and unicorn onesies, but some chose simply to take the jump in their bathing suits.

After the plunge, residents were encouraged to enjoy the live DJ while swimming in the Family Lagoon Pool or the Rip Tide Water Slides.

Coffee and hot chocolate were provided to the chilled swimmers, along with complimentary towels courtesy of the event's sponsor, David Weekley Homes.

Shivering children and adults alike gathered for warmth around the fire pits while drying off, and celebrated an exciting start to a promising new year.



Pristine Waterfront

Immaculately maintained home located on a cul de sac on the largest lake in Marsh Landing features a spacious floor plan, first floor master, and expansive 180-degree water views showcased throughout.

4 bedrooms, 4.5 bathrooms \$1,150,000



Guana to Ocean Views

A masterpiece of design and craftsmanship, this custom beach home was thoughtfully designed by Nesting Place Interiors & Heritage Homes and offers a neutral coastal palette with panoramic views of the Ocean & the Guana. **4 bedrooms, 3F/2H bathrooms \$3,600,000**



Ideal Investment Condo

Ideally located within walking distance to restaurants, grocery shopping, TPC and much more. This unit offers vaulted ceilings, new AC unit, wood burning fireplace and nature preserve views. Ideally located in Grand Cay Villas in the heart of Ponte Vedra Beach. **1 bedroom, 1 bath \$154,000**



Atlantic Beach Retreat

Ideally located in Atlantic Beach, this 3-story townhome is only two blocks away from the ocean as well as the Beaches Town Center. Enjoy the home's rooftop deck or the easily maintained backyard oasis complete with a 6-ft privacy fence, covered patio, and relaxing hot tub.

3 bedrooms, 2F/2H bathrooms \$810,000



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Oceanfront Beach Escape

Located between The Lodge and the Cabana Beach Club, this second-story condo gives elevated views of the beach while maintaining the unit's privacy and security. Includes a large covered balcony and ground floor storage. **3 bedrooms & 3 bathrooms \$1,585,000**



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www.ElizabethHudgins.com



Kathy Fleming is the executive director of the St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum, a position she has held for more than 26 years. She also serves as the executive director of the Lighthouse Archaeological Maritime Program, which conducts research and maritime archaeology throughout the region and beyond.

Kathy Fleming

As told to Holly Tishfield

Can you please briefly tell us about your background?

Being a museum director was all I ever really wanted to do. After graduation from Wake Forest University, I worked in a Southern art museum coordinating public relations and doing educational tours. I also studied professional advertising with the man who did the first Pepsi jingles coming out of the Carolinas. Later I studied organizational leadership at Gonzaga University.

I became a museum director first in 1989, at a historical society in New York state. It needed a turnaround. Teamwork was critical. We were successful because of a partnership with a fantastic group of trustees, staffers and volunteers. Three years later, I moved to Florida to marry my husband of 30 years, Andy. I did a stint working for Easter Seals as their development director, helping folks with disabilities. Then I took the job at St. Augustine Lighthouse, which was then called the Lighthouse Museum of St. Augustine. Andy's granddad worked on lighthouses in the Bahamas, so it was a way to combine family history with a passion for my industry, museums. I started working for the Junior Service League of St. Augustine in December 1994. In 1999 we separately incorporated as the museum you know today, now known as St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum, Inc. I work for them today. We were accredited a couple of years ago by the AAM. I could not ask for a better group of folks with whom to work.

What do you enjoy most about your role?

Honestly, problem-solving and the discovery of new stories of the past.

What are some of the challenges that your industry/company is facing?

Well, COVID-19, coupled with complexity and technology, is a challenge. As with all nonprofits, we have a double bottom line, which is messy enough, but COVID brought immense change and loss of revenue. Diving on shipwrecks with our archaeology team is on hold. Preservation projects may have to wait. We had to redesign or reimagine events, student programs, camps, memberships and field schools. But we still want to give back. Today, we feed the needy via a partnership with Farm Share. Many local businesses help. Belk's Department Stores, Sunbelt Rentals, Wilson Heating and Air and the Lincolnville Cultural Center and Museum deserve our thanks for in-kind support.

A whopping 60% of the last group we served had veterans in their family, and many were seniors or had lost a job because of COVID. Feeding the community hearkens back to what lighthouse keepers used to do when keeping the port open for local farmers. We don't make money at it, at all — zero. It just helps the community because they need it.

Back onsite, we work to save and share the stories of local veterans. We study how wild-caught shrimp and how local families changed the world's foodways. We investigate how lighthouse keepers faced political and social changes or how re-discovered shipwrecks met their end. We preserve thousands of artifacts of us and others. We need healthy tourism and personal donations and memberships to continue. There are many pieces of a complicated puzzle.

What are your primary roles/responsibilities?

I'm the executive director at the St.

Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum and at the Lighthouse Archaeological Maritime Program (LAMP). I implement the board of director's policy and vision. I help them grow support for the museum via fundraising and community engagement. We align in one direction under a strategic plan. I try to do it all, but honestly, no one person can. It takes a team. We have a remarkable one led by board chair Capt. Bob Buehn, U.S. Navy (retired). I'm not the most important person; the team matters more.

What do you enjoy most about living in the North Florida area?

I really love this region's people. They are spirited and smart. The people that I work with make this community for me from the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce to the volunteers at the museum to our remarkable board of trustees, and our fabulous staff. There are just a lot of brilliant minds and friendly people, working hard.

What do you hope people learn as they visit the lighthouse?

Well, the lighthouse itself is beautiful and historic. But, there is so much more. I hope they spend time exploring a shipwreck from the end of the American Revolution in the keepers' house and then see the WWII exhibit about our coast and the Battle of the Atlantic in 1942. I want them to know we aren't alone in experiencing a time of struggle. I hope families can take from every tour or program, even the ghost stories, some heritage and knowledge about hard work and hope. I hope families leave with a feeling that they are personally connected to our stories and the sea. And I hope they can relax and have fun.

What do you like to do in your free time?

Well, I'm not only mom to Phoebe, Jack and Zeke, but I have two loving doggies named Dougal MacDougal and Belle. I spend time with all of them and Andy. We cook, travel and enjoy many dear friends.



Photo provided by Kathy Fleming



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Congratulations to our December Leaders!



Matt and Naomi Wilkinson



Cherya Cavanaugh Team



Kelly Whitaker
& Wanda Petersen



James Valenti



Elizabeth Parsons



Mary Higginbotham



QUAIL POINTE IN SAWGRASS COUNTRY CLUB

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MLS 1081904. Offered at \$449,000.

Call Susie Mullinax at 904-910-1121



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Lower level end unit with all the bells & whistles! Home features 4 large BRs & 4 full baths. Open floor plan with beautiful kitchen, screened lanai overlooking lake.

Only a few steps to the community amenities.

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Lovely lake view. Offered at \$364,989.

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NOCATEE TWENTY MILE VILLAGE

Large preserve lot, this Madison floorplan features 5 bedrooms + bonus + office, 3-car garage. Loaded with upgrades, perfect for entertaining. A+ rated schools and resort style Nocatee amenities. Offered at \$798,500.

Call Kelly Whitaker 904-233-1991
or Wanda Petersen 904-537-4594



OCEAN GRANDE AT SERENATA

Don't miss this opportunity!! Just coming on the market, a highly sought after corner unit with marsh and gorgeous old oak tree views. 3 BR 3 BATH condo across the street from Serenata Beach Club and the beautiful Atlantic Ocean. Offered at \$567,500.

Call Meredith Schwarz at 904-309-3036

Three locations to serve you ... Nocatee, Ponte Vedra Beach, and St. Augustine

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158 Marketside Ave., Suite 14
(904) 834-7682

PONTE VEDRA BEACH

100 Corridor Road, Suite 101
(904) 280-1115

ST. AUGUSTINE

85 Ava Way, Suite 107 (Vilano Town Center)
(904) 814-8964

Volunteers in Medicine to honor 8 Women with Heart at annual signature event Feb. 3

On Wednesday, Feb. 3, Volunteers in Medicine (VIM) will host the fifth annual Women with Heart Luncheon. Traditionally held at the Florida Blue Conference Center, the 2021 event will be hosted virtually using an innovative, exciting online platform.

Eight women will be honored at the luncheon. The 2021 honorees are:

- Lakesha Burton, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office
- Catherine Christie, University of North Florida
- Sadie Durham, Ascension St. Vincent's
- Dianne Johnson, MBB Radiology
- Sherry Mahoney, The Mayo Clinic
- Patricia McElroy, Baptist Health
- Amy Ruth, Florida Blue
- Karen Wolfson, dedicated children's advocate and retired educator

Women with Heart honorees are chosen because they are committed to leadership, advocacy and the health of our community.

"These women have demonstrated exceptional commitment to the health of the community through their professional and personal engagement and accomplishments," said VIM Board Chair Ann Carey.

The luncheon kicks off a year-long awareness and fundraising campaign.

Each honoree has committed to a month of advocacy and service to the clinic. This year's luncheon features a drawing for the 2020 "Heart of Jacksonville" necklace, donated by Allen's Jewelers and valued at \$10,000. Tickets can be purchased for \$100; only 150 tickets will be sold.

"These women are community leaders, advocates and key influencers," VIM CEO Jennifer Ryan said. "Their dedication to the health and well-being of the community is vital in making real change."

This year, Florida Blue is the Women With Heart Presenting Sponsor. Other sponsors include:

■ **Honor sponsors:** Baptist Health, Dottie and Dr. George H. Dorion, Dr. Jim and Mary Burt and Helen Morse and Fritz Skeen.

■ **Hero sponsors:** Brooks Rehabilitation, Firehouse Subs, Memorial Hospital Jacksonville, Regions Bank and Trust.

■ **Table sponsors:** Ascension St. Vincent's, Catherine Christie, Forcura, Jan Healy, MBB Radiology, Sherry Mahoney, UF Health Jacksonville, University of North Florida and Vystar Credit Union.

There are still opportunities for more sponsors to take part. These sponsors are

helping to ensure that those who do not earn enough to meet their basic needs, the Asset Limited, Income Constrained Employed, or ALICE, population, have access to healthcare. This is especially the case for women, who make up 69% of VIM's patients. Roughly three out of every four households headed by single women live below the ALICE threshold.

By supporting VIM through the Women with Heart Luncheon, the ALICE population is given a medical home. This is opposed to making trip after trip to emergency rooms, a resource proven to be finite over the past year. The consequences of illnesses going undetected and unmanaged have been revealed as well; chronic conditions such as diabetes and hypertension quickly go from debilitating to deadly. Through funding the clinic, the impact of Women with Heart will be felt by many in the community.

Anyone who wants to view the event will be able to access it live via Facebook and YouTube. For more information, go to www.VIM-JAX.org. Limited tables and tickets for the luncheon are available. Call (904) 399-2766 or go to VIM-JAX.org/become-wwh-sponsor/ for sponsorship and ticket information.

Briefs

Continued from 2

Thanksgiving through New Year's, enables patrons to donate food for families in need to "pay down" their overdue fines.

Health and Human Services provides a wide variety of services for approximately 10,000 clients in St. Johns County throughout the year.

To learn more about the library system, go to www.sjcpls.org.

Cummer Museum offers free admission in honor of MLK Day

The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens announced it will provide free admission and programming to commemorate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on Monday, Jan. 18.

In-person and virtual programming, sponsored by The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida's Presidential Grants Program, will be presented throughout the day.

Members and guests are required to reserve a ticket in advance to ensure safe capacity limits throughout the day. Registration is required for virtual events.

Reservations are recommended for the Cummer Café, which will be open from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. To reserve tickets and register for events, go to cummuseum.org.

Join us for this Virtual Luncheon with Networking | Wednesday, February 3, 2021 | 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.



LAKESHA BURTON

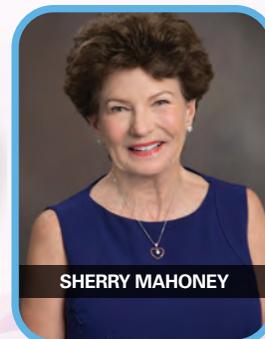


CATHERINE CHRISTIE

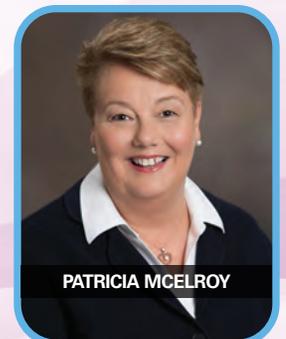
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INK! names finalists for St. Johns County Teacher of the Year award

INK!'s (Investing in Kids) 2020-2021 Teacher of the Year awards campaign is a special recognition program to honor educators in St. Johns County public schools.

The St. Johns County Education Foundation, which operates as INK! had a group of panelists who recently interviewed nominees with more than three years in the classroom. On Wednesday, Jan. 6, INK! board members, staff and volunteers along with St. Johns County School District Superintendent Tim Forson and officials visited schools and recognized the following teachers as finalists for outstanding demonstration of instructional skills, student interaction, professional excellence and importance in the lives of hundreds of students.

Finalist recipients include Allison Birbal, a sixth-grade science teacher at R.J. Murray Middle School with more than 10 years of experience as an educator. Birbal has presented at various conferences including the Southern Regional Education Board "High Schools That Work" conference as a featured presenter. She has previously been named Teacher of the Year at R.J. Murray Middle School and Pacetti Bay Middle School. Birbal's teaching philosophy includes when a child's well-being takes precedent, educational success will follow. She added, students must view school as a second home where they feel cared for, safe and loved. Birbal believes learning cannot begin, especially during a global pandemic, without these specific basic needs to be met first. Birbal is an avid STEM educator who believes that teaching students through the interconnected disciplines of science, technology, engineering and mathematics opens doors for them that were previously closed, and sparks a sense of curiosity in all children. She resides in St. Augustine.



Allison Birbal, R.J. Murray Middle School



Andrea M. O'Brien, Durbin Creek Elementary School



Alicia Ali Pressel, Creekside High School

Also, finalist Andrea M. O'Brien is a pre-kindergarten through fifth-grade library media specialist at Durbin Creek Elementary School with more than 19 years of teaching experience. She holds numer-

TEACHERS continues on Page 10

INK! receives AT&T Foundation grant for Nease, Creekside students

The St. Johns County Education Foundation which operates as INK! (Investing in Kids), has an ongoing mission to provide innovative programs and classroom resources to promote the academic success of students in the St. Johns County School District.

The nonprofit was recently honored with funding for students at Allen D. Nease High School in Ponte Vedra Beach, and Creekside High School in St. Johns. The schools will benefit from a statewide investment by the AT&T Foundation this year, one that seeks to increase understanding of how classroom curriculum translates into STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) careers.

Specifically, the \$2,000 funding for

each school will include program administration by INK! and student scholarships in the ACE Mentor Programs for students with disciplines in architecture, construction and engineering (ACE), and exploration of potential careers in these fields. Mentors from local industry professional firms and related companies will meet with students for two hours once a week for 20 weeks. During the sessions, students are presented with a request for proposal (RFP) and work in teams to create hands-on, practical solutions for real-world projects. For more information, view the video at AT&T 2020-21 STEM@Work Grant Awards.

GRANT continues on Page 11

Pages 9-12

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Ponte Vedra Focus accepting submissions for blog-writing scholarships

The Ponte Vedra Focus, a local community blog, is now accepting submissions for its third annual \$1,000 blog-writing scholarship. Sponsored by The Volen Group, Keller Williams Luxury International and Gwinn Volen, creator of the Focus blog, the scholarship is open to all high school seniors in Duval or St. John's counties who plan to continue their education after graduation.

"Over the past five years the blog has given me an outlet to showcase our area's personality," Volen said. "And the blog submissions we have run via the scholarship have been a wonderful addition."



Last year's winner wrote an article about the best run routes in the area, and the prior year, the winner showcased area farmer's markets.

Posts should be well-written, interesting articles about the greater Jacksonville community. Entries can be funny

or serious, and the main point is for them to have a local flavor. The top five submissions will be published on the blog.

"I encourage any students with a penchant for writing to submit," said Volen. "We don't have restrictions on school choice, GPA, or class rank, and the goal is really to add some cushion to what we know will be an expensive four years and hopefully lessen financial anxiety just a hair."

Deadline for submissions is March 15.

Go to www.pontevedrafocus.com/scholarship to apply or for more information.

Teachers

Continued from 9

ous honors and awards for instructional delivery, teacher of the year in elementary education, head coach for students in reading with the Battle of the Books team, and promoting books in school and home, among others. According to O'Brien, her philosophy about teaching is to make sure that each student knows that she loves them and their appreciation for books, reading, and to create a strong bond between herself and her students. She uses a school-wide management program set up to focus on rewarding general positive behaviors overall and activities related to the library.

She recently received a grant for a book vending machine in order to support the initiative, from Community First Cares

Foundation and INK! (Investing in Kids). O'Brien believes that kindness and positive reinforcement will inspire a mutual feeling of acceptance and respect to promote a positive learning environment. She resides in St. Augustine.

Finalist Alicia "Ali" Pressel, has been teaching at Creekside High School since 2008. She teaches four levels within the St. Johns County Career Academies program, the Academy of Environmental Sciences, and Advanced Placement (AP) Environmental Science. She sponsors the Environmental Club and the Geospatial Mapping Club at Creekside and works with multiple community business partners to bring grant opportunities, internships and job shadow experiences to her students to promote career readiness. She is a regular speaker on project-based learning and STEM initiatives at national conferences. In addition to

serving on the Teacher Advisory Council with the National Geographic Society, Pressel was recently named a 2020 National Geographic Emerging Explorer for her work integrating mapping software and "place-based learning" within the environmental science career academy program at Creekside. Pressel resides in Jacksonville.

The countywide awards program builds community awareness of the region's best educators. The St. Johns County Teacher of the Year winner will be named during a virtual event on Thursday, Jan. 27, with an opportunity to apply for the overall Florida Teacher of the Year program. The St. Johns County winner will receive various awards including a new car from Beaver Toyota St. Augustine.

An inaugural yearbook provided by All American Air Charitable Foundation (AAACF), a 501c3 organization in St.

Augustine, and Leonard's Photography has been produced and includes Teacher of the Year and Rookie Teacher of the Year nominees, finalists and winners along with testimonials from the community, sponsors and more. The book will be in full color with photo collages and lighthearted moments, all reflecting teacher and student life and campaign highlights, to name a few. Comments collected with online messages about heartfelt thanks to area teachers will be featured in the yearbook with the submitter's name, family and business with each entry.

INK! provides innovative programs and classroom resources to support academic success for all St. Johns County public schools. For the 2020-2021 school year, there are 56 public schools in the county, serving 40,734 students with more than 2,500 teachers.

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Ella Schellenberg

Bolles journalism students to receive FSPA top honors

Ponte Vedra Beach resident Gabriel Coleman among winners in Digital Contest

The Florida Scholastic Press Association named five Bolles journalism students as All-Florida winners in its fall 2020 Digital Contest.

Isabel Bassin '24 (32217), Cameron Gratz '23 (32256) and Grace Albaugh '23 (32207) received contest honors in the commentary categories, while Gabriel Coleman '24 (32082) and Ella Schellenberg '21 (32257) received All-Florida designations in the deadline prose category.

The Bolles students, most staffers on The Bolles Bugle, were among 100 winners from across the state named in the annual contest. They were the only students

from Jacksonville to be designated All-Florida award-winners.

Digital Contests allow Florida student journalists to showcase their work in a variety of categories such as writing, design, photography, art, broadcast and multimedia journalism. Students receive prompts and have between 24 and 72 hours to craft stories and layouts in response. Professional journalist and photographer judges, many of whom are certified journalism teachers, assign a numeric score to each and provide written feedback. FSPA recognizes All-Florida winners online and names a Best of the Best at convention for each category.

The All-Florida winners will be evaluated and one piece will receive the ranking Best of the Best so all of the Bolles students' pieces are now eligible to compete in that contest.

Grant

Continued from 9

According to Donna Lueders, INK!'s executive director, ACE is an effective way for students to experience the reality of what architects, contractors and engineers do during a typical working day. The program culminates with a year-end event where teams present projects for judging with plans for presentations to industry stakeholders such as future employers, family, friends and the general public. As part of the event, senior students are presented with scholarships to help fund their continued education.

For the 11th consecutive year, AT&T is working with the Consortium of Florida Education Foundations (Consortium) to provide experiential learning opportunities for students in school districts across Florida through STEM@Work.

Actual application of STEM education concepts, problem-solving and critical thinking skills will all be key elements of the 35 separate projects to be organized and funded through Consortium member local education foundations, including INK!.

"We are honored to be awarded the grant which follows our mission, programs and services to promote STEM initiatives and exemplary student activities plus performance," Lueders

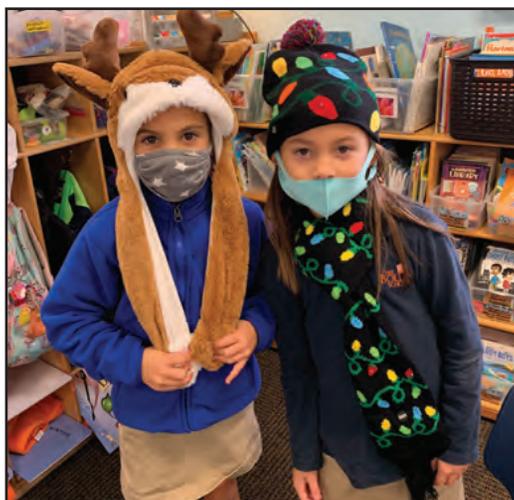
said. "We strive for an interdisciplinary approach to public education where rigorous academic concepts and everyday lessons can be applied to STEM."

"Industries engaged in STEM disciplines will create many of the high-value, high-wage jobs of tomorrow. We also know that many jobs today and in the future will require education beyond a high school degree," said Joe York, president, AT&T Florida. "The consortium and other organizations are key to ensuring that young people are exposed to the educational and skills development opportunities to prepare them for success in their careers."

This year's statewide grant brings the total investment by the AT&T Foundation to more than \$1 million for more than 11 years. More than 75,000 students have been directly impacted through 469 projects involving 932 local workplace partners in 53 school districts throughout Florida.

"When I think back on my school years, the times I got to do something hands-on and outside the classroom are my strongest memories. Some of those experiences influenced my career path," said Mary Chance, president of the consortium. "We are so grateful that the AT&T Foundation continues to see the value of giving students experiences which allow them to experience how math and science are applied in careers through STEM@Work."

DRESSED FOR THE SEASON



Photos provided by Bolles Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach Campus

It was holiday dress-up week on the Bolles Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach Campus last month. Students enjoyed "Mad for Plaid Day" on Monday, Dec. 14, and on Tuesday, Dec. 15, it was all about hats and scarves. The week also included opportunities to wear crazy socks and holiday pajamas.



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Photos provided by Lisa Farese

ABOVE: Treat bags created by students at Ocean Palms Elementary School for local skilled nurses and assisted-living patients.

RIGHT: OPE's Deck the Chairs light-up installation is now in the front of the school to thank first responders.



What a treat: OPE ambassadors give back

The fifth-grade student ambassadors at Ocean Palms Elementary School are giving back to the community.

In fact, 72 treat bags were hand-created and delivered to Bayview's skilled nursing and assisted living facilities. The student ambassadors crafted special cards out of recycled materials and attached them to treat bags with candy the students donated.

Additionally, the student ambassadors unveiled a special "thank you" to area first responders at this

year's Deck the Chairs. Their light-up installation, made from recycled materials they collected and repurposed, was aglow with two otters (the school's mascot), a message saying, "OPE loves our first responders," and backed by an American flag. The students are also creating special gifts they will deliver to area first responders this winter.

So, even in a year of distancing, area students are finding ways to bring the community together — in spirit.

When it comes to community giving, look at local schools

When people want to give back, many look to support national charities and other causes that they hold near and dear. Certainly these are worthwhile causes. However, giving back on a local level is a great way to help the people you see every day.

Schools are the heart of many communities. School buildings may serve as gathering spaces for sports practices or meetings for various organizations. Even though schools are likely to receive municipal funding for certain operations, budgets are frequently being cut and schools may need all the help they can get. This year the boundaries of the budget may be pushed even further as schools revamp their spaces and implement certain safety protocols to confront the pandemic. Now more than ever schools may need help. Here's how to do just that.

■ **Volunteer your time.** Find out ways you can volunteer time at school. This may be helping teachers make copies of assignments, supervising children at recess or lunch hours, serving as a chaperone at school functions, or being a coach or mentor for afterschool activities.

■ **Attend and participate in fundraisers.** Fundraisers are essential to help offset costs for many special events and services for students. Whenever possible, give wisely through fundraisers.

■ **Provide supplies for classrooms.** Teachers often have to supplement their classrooms with supplies bought out of pocket. Reach out to teachers to see which items they need and do your best to supply them.

■ **Join the PTA or a similar school-sanctioned organization.** Many groups perform functions that facilitate strong connections between home and school. Joining and

GIVING continues on Page 13



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"Being able to attend DA was extremely important to my development as a musician and person. That place changed my life. It wasn't just high-level instruction from world class teachers. It was the environment filled with extremely bright and talented students. That energy was contagious and motivating. Thank you DA. Now, I'm a successful artist, creating moments through music with a range of creatives around the world." — Jamison Ross



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United Way of Northeast Florida receives historic gift

Philanthropist MacKenzie Scott recognizes local nonprofit with largest donation in organization's 96-year history

United Way of Northeast Florida recently announced it received a \$20 million donation from renowned author and philanthropist MacKenzie Scott. This gift is the largest single donation in the organization's 96-year history and underpins the critical role United Way plays in the community.

"We are humbled by this recognition and the show of confidence Ms. Scott

placed in us with this gift — and for raising awareness about the critical issues communities like ours are facing," said Michelle Braun, president and CEO of United Way of Northeast Florida. "This profound commitment is a testament to the work of our team and our partners — and to the meaningful change we accomplish together."

United Way of Northeast Florida is

one of 384 organizations selected from among 6,940 as a recipient of an exceptional donation from Scott. According to Scott's announcement, organizations were chosen for their "strong leadership teams and results, with special attention to those operating in communities facing high projected food insecurity, high measures of racial inequity, high local poverty rates and low access to philanthropic capital."

United Way and its partners work together to address immediate needs faced by struggling individuals and families, while also making long-term investments

that tackle the root causes of these issues.

"The community and our nonprofit partners depend on the annual funding we raise each year from our incredible donors," Braun said. "Their support for the day-to-day work meeting our community's needs is how we fuel change. While Ms. Scott's gift is significant, the needs in our community are great and escalating dramatically during these challenging times. It is our hope this gift will serve as a springboard for more people to get involved because change doesn't happen alone."

FHLBank of Atlanta appoints executive director of St. Johns Housing Partnership to Affordable Housing Advisory Council

The Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta has appointed Bill Lazar, executive director of St. Johns Housing Partnership (SJHP) in St. Augustine, to its Affordable Housing Advisory Council.

The council serves an important role in helping FHLBank Atlanta fulfill its community lending and affordable housing mission and works closely with the FHLBank Atlanta board of directors and management to ensure the community lending and housing finance needs of communities within the bank's district are met.

Lazar has worked with nonprofit affordable housing programs for 30 years.

He founded SJHP in 1996, and under his leadership the organization has grown to provide various affordable housing



Bill Lazar

services, including home repair to more than 100 households each year, financial literacy, purchase and preservation of rental properties, and purchase and retrofit of single-family homes

to green-certified standards.

The mission of SJHP is to promote safe, decent and affordable housing in North Florida by creating links between the public and private sectors on projects that create low- and moderate-income housing and rebuilding neglected homes and neighborhoods.

SJHP has a nationally recognized HUD

counseling services staff specializing in foreclosure prevention.

Additionally, Lazar has been a board member of the St. Johns Builders Council since 2003, twice serving as chairman. He is also a past board member of the Florida Green Building Coalition (FGBC) and a strong advocate for incorporating green building features and FGBC certification into affordable housing programs.

He joins three other new appointees to the 15-member council.

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Giving

Continued from 12

working with such organizations can improve the school experience for everyone.

■ **Buy "Box Tops"-affiliated products.** The Box Tops for Education program donates 10 cents per box top label collected and submitted by schools back to that school. More than 80,000 elementary schools have earned money through the

program to buy equipment and supplies. Box Tops can be found on many different food packages.

■ **Treat the teacher.** In addition to supporting Teacher Appreciation Days and other school events, send in an uplifting note, snack or another way of showing you appreciate his or her efforts.

Schools play integral roles in many communities, and efforts to give back can begin on campus or through school-sponsored programs.

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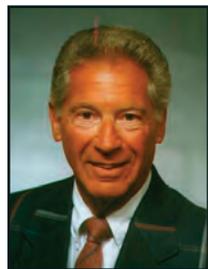
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OBITUARIES

Ted M. Klein

Ted M. Klein (Theodore) died on Wednesday, December 16 in Sewickley, PA. at the age of 94, or as he always said, in his 95th year. He was born April 16, 1926 in Louisville, Kentucky where he graduated from Louisville Male High School. Teddy, as he was known to family



Ted M. Klein

and friends, was born to Rose Scher and Milton Klein, owners of well-known Uncle Miltie's deli on 4th Street in downtown Louisville. He served in the Army's 10th Mountain Division from 1944-46, including 7 months

in the European Theater of Operations, and fought in the Northern Apennines and Po Valley Campaigns. He was awarded the Bronze Star for heroic conduct in Italy. Before the war, he was a member of an acting group called The Simulators with friends Armand Essig, Norton Cohen, and occasionally his brother Larry. During the war, they worked with the special service entertaining troops in G.I. shows. After the war, The Simulators were employed by various organizations including the Artists' Bureau and were booked in cities all over the region. According to one article they "left their audiences convulsed with their pantomime renditions to recorded music" and attracted the attention of a Hollywood scout and the New York Paramount. Ted was a salesman, spending most of his career in the jewelry business until his retirement to the beautiful beaches of Florida, his favorite place. In 1986, he met his partner Barbara LeVoy and they would spend the next 35 years seeing the U.S. and the world. They lived happily in Ponte Vedra Beach where he rekindled his love of golf. Until moving to Sewickley, PA Ted could be found 3 mornings a week when the sun came up at Jacksonville Beach Golf Course with his regular group of buds for 9 holes, which they followed with clubhouse conversation. Ted was an amazing father and even though he and his daughter Kim lived apart for most of their lives, he offered weekly doses of sanity, clarity, and a shared love that he received from his wonderful mother Rose.

Ted is pre-deceased by his parents Rose and Milton, his brother Larry, and first wife Doris Klein. He is survived by his daughter Kim (Louisville), his partner Barbara LeVoy (Sewickley), her daughter Karen Fadzen (Sewickley) and her children Colin and Cameron, and Barbara's daughter Lara LeVoy (Chicago), husband Dave and children Ella and Ray. Ted is also survived by his niece Carrie Klein (Chapel Hill), her husband Arnie Rosenthal and children Chelsea (Vancouver) and Zoe (New York), his nephew Keenan Klein (Michigan), cousin Elaine Bornstein (Louisville) and her children Lynn Callif (Cincinnati) and Jim (Louisville), and cousins Linda Ray Rubel (Cincinnati) and

Richard Shampain (Texas). Expressions of sympathy may be sent to your charity of choice in his memory.

Joanne Ragans

Joanne Ragans, 80, daughter of the late Kent and Hazel Crisp of Fernandina Beach, FL, passed away January 4, 2021. She was born December 30, 1940 in Fernandina Beach, FL.

Joanne's life was defined by her passion for education. After graduating from Florida State University, she went on to complete her master's degree at The University of South Florida. Joanne spent 40 years as an educator in the Duval County School System. As both a teacher and principal she truly loved to educate young people. Even in her later years, she regularly kept in touch with many of her former students.



Joanne Ragans

She took great pride in being Miss Fernandina Beach in 1959 and being selected head majorette at Florida State University, regularly marching with the alumni band into her 50s. She was a lover of life, was a wonderful friend and a beloved grandmother.

Joanne was preceded in death by her husband of 52 years, James Ragans. She is survived by her son Brent; daughter-in-law Laure; sister, Maryellen McQueen; grandchildren Grant, Seth, Arden, Sophie, and Alix; and many nieces and nephews.

A celebration of Joanne's life will take place later in the year. In lieu of flowers a donation can be made to Beaches Educational Foundation, Fletcher Scholarships, www.beacheseducationalfoundation.com.

Please visit the online Tribute at www.quinn-shalz.com. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home.



Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre
1600 Third Street South, Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250
Phone: 904.249.1100 Fax: 904.241.7554

Joan Van Vleck

Joan Van Vleck, 90, of Ponte Vedra Beach, FL passed away peacefully January 5, 2021 after a brief stay at Vicar's Landing Health Center. She was born July 27, 1930 in Pendleton, OR and graduated from Principia College in Elsah, IL with a BA in Education. While at Principia she met the love of her life Jim Van Vleck.



Joan Van Vleck

During their 68 years of marriage, they travelled the world living in 2 countries (Switzerland and Belgium), 5 states (AR, MA, VA, OH, FL) and moved 18 times supporting Jim's career.

They have lived in the Ponte Vedra area since 1986. Thirty-five years ago, while living in frigid Dayton, OH, Joan bought

a condo in Sawgrass, FL. She had a love for the water and ocean, having spent many childhood summers on the coast at Neskowin, OR. Ten years in Sawgrass led them to buy a more permanent home on the beach which led to another 10 wonderful years in Ponte Vedra before moving back to Jacksonville for 11 years to pursue philanthropic interests before eventually returning to the beach and Vicar's in 2018.

Joan was a humble and kind person with a sense of humor who set high standards in everything she did. She had a soft spot for family and never missed a family event. In her day she could be found boogie boarding in the ocean and planting sea oats in the dunes with her children and grandchildren. Another favorite was sunset cruising with the entire family on Lake Burton, GA. She was loved by her family and affectionately known as "JJ" to her grandchildren and great-grands.

She was an avid golfer, tennis player and gardener. She became a Master Gardener as well as a member of the Late Bloomers Garden Club. Her love for gardening was exhibited in the flower beds at her beach house dunes and her involvement in the Cummer Gardens, the revival of Memorial Park in Jacksonville and the establishment of Bird Island in Ponte Vedra. Joan was a smart, independent woman who was passionate about advocating for the advancement of women as shown in her involvement with the Women's Giving Alliance and the Delores Barr Weaver Policy Center. She was not afraid to take on tough jobs and tackle them head on as evidenced in her founding the Patrick Henry Drug & Alcohol Council in VA. She practiced what she preached and was known to many as the "velvet hammer" for accomplishing hard tasks graciously. She was named one of the Top 10 Women in Dayton, OH for her outstanding community involvement and Philanthropist of the Year for Jacksonville in 2019. She truly touched so many lives in countless ways.

She is survived by her husband, Jim Van Vleck of Ponte Vedra; daughters Susi Patton and Betsy Aliffi (Tony) of Atlanta; 5 grandchildren Christie Corley (Jason), Ginny Patton (John) both of Charleston, Chris (Atlanta), Megan (Denver), Margot (Dallas) Aliffi; and 4 great-grandchildren Caroline, Katherine, Elizabeth and Charlotte (Charleston).

The family will be holding a private memorial sometime in 2021. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to: The Women's Giving Alliance/Community Foundation or Memorial Park Foundation/Community Foundation 245 Riverside Avenue Suite 310 Jacksonville, FL 32202 or The Gardens at the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens, 829 Riverside Avenue Jacksonville, FL 32204.

Please visit her Tribute online at www.quinn-shalz.com. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home.



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Phone: 904.249.1100 Fax: 904.241.7554

Elliot Ballard

Elliot Ballard, 61, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Jan. 4, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – (904) 285-1130 – www.pontevedravalley.com

Carolyn Chelette

Carolyn Chelette, 78, of Jacksonville Beach, Florida, died January 4, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – (904) 285-1130 – www.pontevedravalley.com

William Cox

William Cox, 68, of St. Johns, Florida, died Jan. 5, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – (904) 285-1130 – www.pontevedravalley.com

Jack Dyer

Jack Dyer, 84, of Jacksonville, FL, passed away on January 7, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – (904) 285-1130 – www.pontevedravalley.com

Wilburn Carlyle Finch, Jr.

Wilburn Carlyle Finch, Jr., 73, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Dec. 31, 2020. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. (904) 249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

Taylor Fries

Taylor Fries, 31, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Jan. 1, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – (904) 285-1130 – www.pontevedravalley.com

Carolyn J. Hasson

Carolyn J. Hasson, 83, of Jacksonville Beach, Florida, died January 8, 2021. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. (904) 249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

Joseph Huppmann

Joseph Huppmann, 82, of Ponte Vedra, Florida, died Jan. 8, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – (904) 285-1130 – www.pontevedravalley.com

Kirk Thomas Lewis

Kirk Thomas Lewis, 72, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Jan. 6, 2021. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. (904) 249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

Florence Mullin

Florence Mullin, 91, of Atlantic Beach, died Jan. 7, 2021. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com (904) 249-1100.

Claude Thomas Wilson, Jr.

Claude Thomas Wilson, Jr., 86, of Neptune Beach, Florida, died Jan. 5, 2021. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. (904) 249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

Looking & Feeling Good

Inspiration and support for a happy,
healthy and beautiful new year!

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Featuring Meet Your
Eye Doctor
Pages 19-20

New fitness center offers fast, efficient workout

By Holly Tishfield

Finding the time for a workout amidst a busy schedule can seem impossible. With so many other important things happening in a single day, scheduling the time for an hour-long fitness routine may seem like a chore. A new fitness center in Jacksonville Beach has come up with the perfect solution to incorporating a healthy workout into a full lifestyle: 20-minute workout sessions.

Fit20, a brand new private-fitness studio with two locations in Jacksonville, opened its doors to the public in May of 2020. Since then, it has helped hundreds of clients achieve a faster and more efficient style of working out.

“This is a great, quick way to get strength training in for the week, and to build endurance,” said Krista Patrick, marketing manager of the Fit20 studios.

At Fit20, clients sign on for 20 minutes of muscle-burning and strength-building once a week with a personal trainer in a private studio. You will not find large classes or group workouts at this studio, instead, Fit20 specializes in a completely customized and one-on-one experience with a trained professional.

The studio is kept at a constant 63° F, which means that clients do not have to worry about changing into workout clothes



Photos provided by Krista Patrick

Fit20 boasts two locations for fast, efficient workouts. One is in Jacksonville Beach and the other is at Tapestry Park.

or hopping in the shower once they wrap up. The experience is meant to be fast, easy and efficient, perfect for anyone.

“The very busy people,” said Patrick, “we get them in and out and on their way. It is a great supplement.”

On a client’s first training session, trainers will take around 45 minutes to discuss health and fitness goals, perform a health assessment and introduce the science of slow motion resistance training. The studio uses eight different machines to give

clients a variation of options in their 20-minute session.

“[The 20-minute sessions] are less volume with reps, but higher weight with timing,” said Patrick.

Fit20 prides itself on being a unique approach to personal training options, boasting one of the most affordable memberships in Northeast Florida. And since the studios are private, and training is never more than one-on-one or two-on-one, the Fit20 studios provide a safe space to knock

out an invigorating workout despite the pandemic.

Patrick said that the trainers are excited to “educate the community on the importance of healthy living and fitness,” and that they look forward to providing a perfect environment for busy individuals.

Fit20 has two locations: one in Jax Beach and another in Tapestry Park. They are open six days a week, and interested clients can visit their website to book a reservation or purchase memberships.



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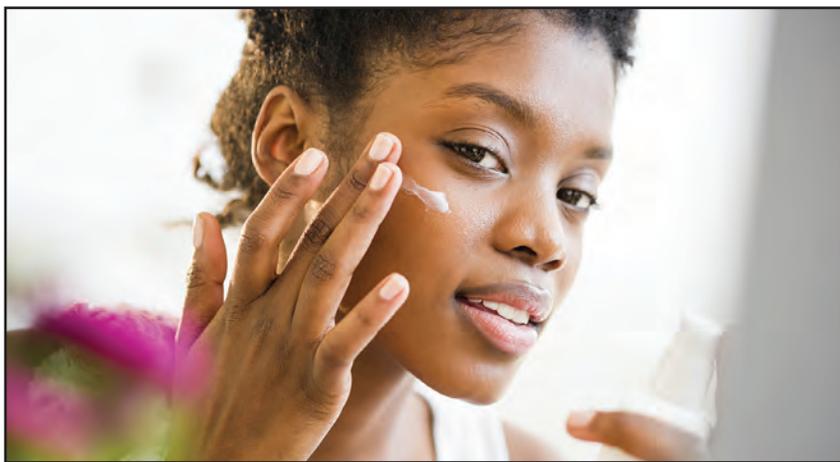


Photo provided by metrocreativeconnection.com

Skincare tips for cooler temps

As summer transitions to fall and winter, many changes take place. In addition to changing landscapes, men and women may need to adapt their health and wellness habits to ensure that they stay healthy and happy. Part of that daily regimen includes how to care for skin as the seasons change.

Just as skin requires certain protection from the sun and heat in the summer, skin has special needs in the fall and winter. Fall and winter are often characterized by cold, dry weather, which can make these times of year particularly challenging for people with dry or sensitive skin. These tips can help people maintain their skin's appearance and health.

■ **Don't skip the sunscreen.**

Sunscreen is not a summer-only requirement. UV rays can damage the skin any time of year, even if the rays are not as strong as during the summer. UV radiation accelerates and increases the risk of skin cancer. It also can lead to premature aging. Utilize a sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher every day.

■ **Invest in a humidifier.**

Dry, cold temperatures can rob the skin of essential moisture, even indoors. Dermatologists suggest using a humidifier at home to boost the amount of moisture in the air. This can make

SKINCARE continues on Page 18

Reframe resolutions to make fitness goals more attainable



Marie Merritt
Momentum Fitness

Since we have just entered the new year, most people are thinking about the goals they want to accomplish and the things about themselves that they want to change.

Most people want to look better, to improve their health and to basically reinvent

who they are in order to become the person they think they should be. When we make all these changes and set expectations for ourselves to do all of this at once, it removes any margin for error, and we inevitably don't live up to our high expectations and we feel like we have failed, so we give up.

Let me reframe resolutions for you. First, try to set a few small goals for yourself and only change one or two behaviors at a time. I recommend adding in small amounts of activity every day, such as walking after a meal, going to the gym a couple times per week, or moving your body by doing something fun and outside your normal activities.

MOVEMENT IS MEDICINE!

The more we move, the better we feel,

and the more likely we are to integrate more activity without it being a chore. When we feel better, we look better and the effect grows exponentially.

When it comes to changing our dietary habits, making small changes, like drinking more water or eating more vegetables will set us up for more long term success versus trying to do some crazy crash diet and failing within weeks of beginning.

Here are the secrets to success. Create a plan. Write it out. Be consistent in your efforts to achieve what you want.

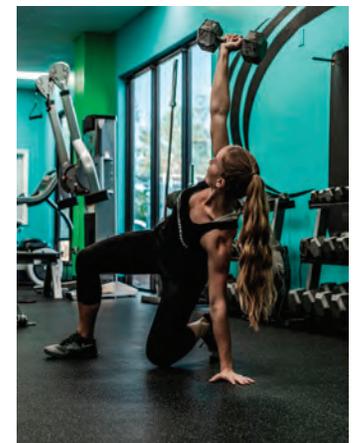
When working with clients, I sit with them and help create a schedule for their lives. We create consistent sleep and wake times. We put when to move and when to eat on their calendar so their bodies know what to expect. We also work around their current lives, so the changes are easy to integrate into their current behavior patterns. When creating a schedule for yourself, take a look at all the moving parts of your life and add movement in.

When we feel better, our self esteem improves and people will notice.

Create an environment for success by having an accountability structure and let people know what you are trying to achieve.



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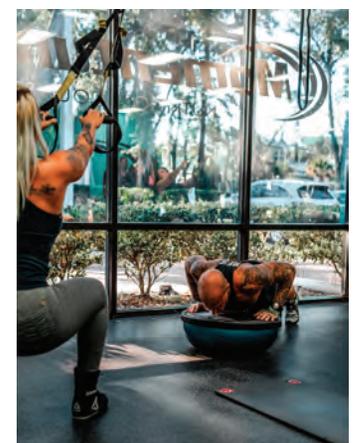
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RENEW IN THE NEW YEAR

The Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa is offering an 80-minute Elemis Marine Dream Facial special for \$150 (\$185 value). The offer is available through Jan. 31 (not valid on Saturdays). Note: A 20% spa service charge will be added to all services. Call (904) 674-4772 to make a reservation.

Skincare

Continued from 17

skin more comfortable and can have other health benefits as well.

■ **Skip hot showers.** It can be tempting to sit under a hot stream of water to warm up. However, hot water dries out the skin by depleting its stores of natural oils, says Glacier Med Spa. Take warm showers

instead and don't stay in for longer than 15 minutes.

■ **Limit exfoliation.** While exfoliation can remove dead skin, overdoing it can make already sensitive skin more raw. Increase the time between exfoliation treatments. Consult with a dermatologist for more advice about dealing with flaky skin.

Modifications must be made to skincare routines in anticipation of seasonal weather changes.

THE BEST WAY TO PREVENT AND TREAT CHAPPED LIPS

Chapped lips can be an unpleasant reminder that the weather is changing. Many different people experience chapped lips periodically, but they seem to be especially common when the air is dry and cold. The health and wellness resource Healthline.com says because the lips do not contain oil glands like other areas of the skin, they are more prone to drying out. Therefore, people need to take extra steps to keep their lips moist.

■ **Stop licking your lips:** Licking your lips when they are dry is a reflex habit, and one that will only temporarily address the dryness. The Mayo Clinic says saliva evaporates quickly, which can leave lips drier than they were before you licked them. Flavored lip balms may entice you to lick your lips more, so avoid them if that flavor is just too much to resist.

■ **Protect your lips:** If you know it's going to be cold and dry outside, apply a lubricating lip cream or balm before heading outdoors. Products containing petroleum, beeswax or coconut oil can help lock moisture in. Reapply often.

■ **Drink more fluids:** Be sure to drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration, which can dry out lips and skin.

■ **Avoid mouth-breathing:** Drawing air in through your mouth can further dry out the lips. Alleviate a stuffy nose so you can breathe through your nose more easily.

The Mayo Clinic recommends speaking with a doctor if chapped lips are chronic and not easily remedied, as this may be a symptom of an underlying condition.

Take a hands-on approach to life.



Hand and wrist pain can get in the way of everything you love to do. How do you know when it's time to see a doctor?

If you're experiencing any of these symptoms, you could make your hand or wrist pain worse by waiting:

- Swelling
- Numbness or tingling
- Feeling a painful pop
- New deformity
- Finger gets stuck



Kamal Bohsali, MD



David Graham, MD

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MEET YOUR EYE DOCTOR

Pages 19-20

Stop eye strain before it starts

It's that time of the year when many areas of the country are under the cold cloak of winter. Unforgiving temperatures can translate into an increase in hours spent indoors, whether at work or at home, and more time relying on devices to pass the hours.

Spending more time watching television, playing video games, texting friends or browsing the internet can lead to a condition known as "computer vision eye strain." Eye strain also may be caused through intense eye use, such as while driving long distances or engaging in activities that require close attention, such as crafting or reading.

The American Optometric Association says digital eye strain can result in various forms of discomfort, which increase with the amount of screen use. The most common symptoms include:

- Headaches
- Blurred vision
- Dry, watery or burning eyes
- Increased sensitivity to light
- Neck and shoulder pain.

The AOA says viewing a computer or digital screen often makes the eyes have to work harder. The AOA notes this is different from reading a printed page. The letters are not as precise or sharply defined, and areas of contrast can be muted. Also, the presence of glare and reflections on the screen may make viewing difficult. Furthermore, the Mayo Clinic says people tend to blink less while using digital devices and view them at less than ideal distances or angles.

Alleviating eye strain from digital sources involves making changes in daily habits or the environment. Taking regular eye breaks and looking at objects from

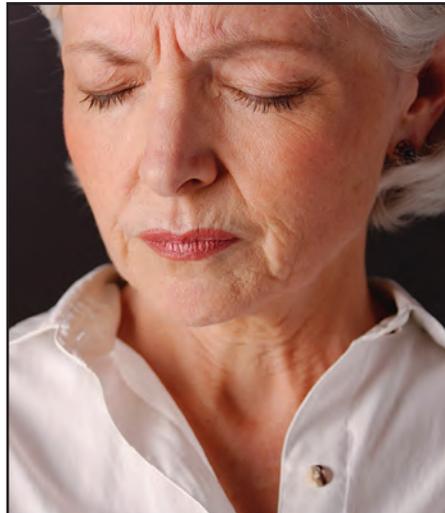


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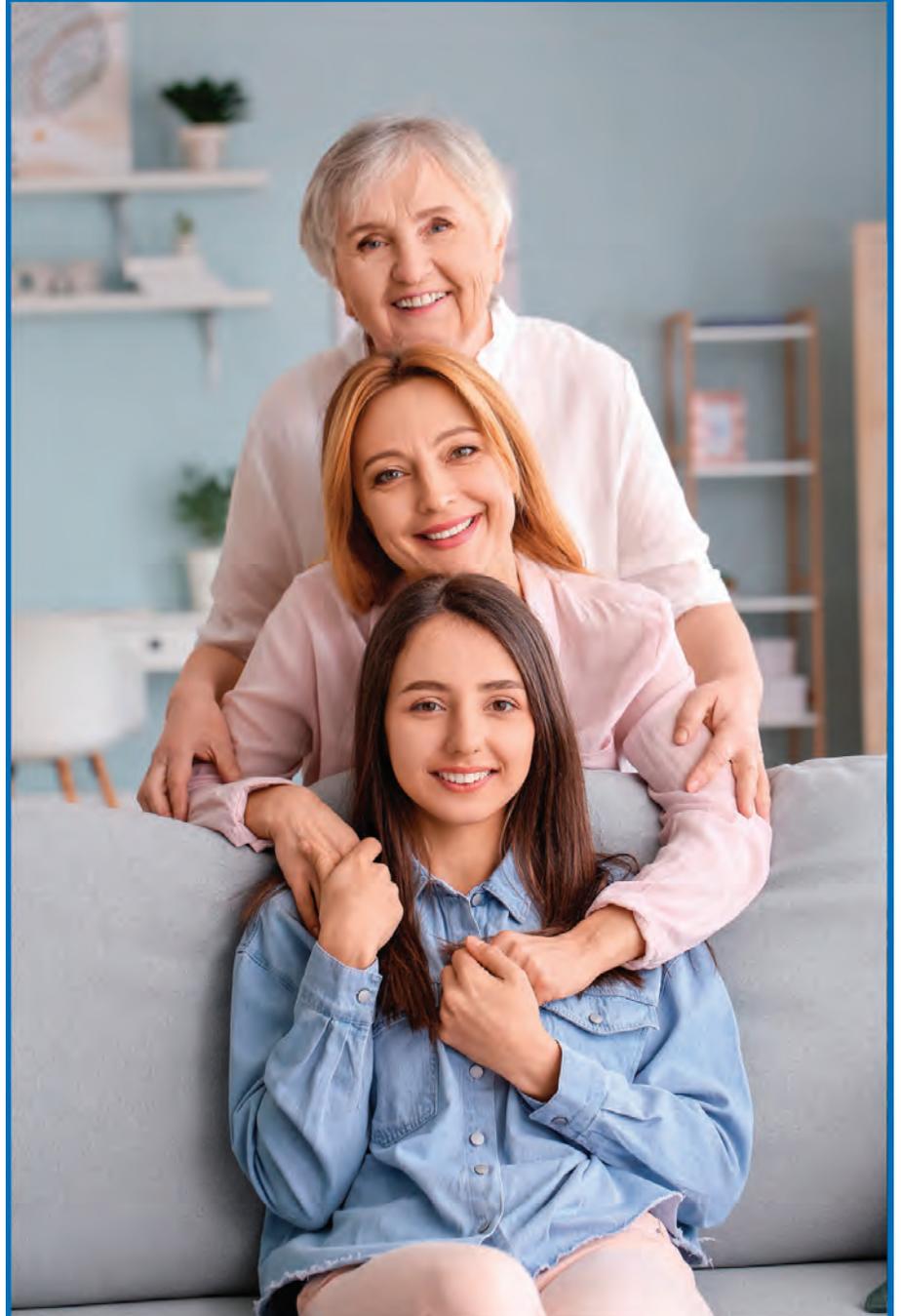
Alleviate the potential for digital eye strain by limiting screen time and taking breaks.

different distances can help them focus. These tips may help as well.

- Adjust the lighting to reduce glare on screens or your task.
- Limit screen time as much as possible and engage in other activities.
- Consider the use of artificial tears products to lubricate dry eyes.
- Choose the right eyewear, and work with an eye professional to find products that can assist you. Specialized glasses or contact lenses are designed for computer work. Investigate tintings and coatings that also may help.
- Blink often to refresh the eyes.
- Talk to a doctor if eye strain persists or changes in severity.

When the weather gets cold, people may rely on digital devices for recreation more than they otherwise would. Avoiding eye strain in such situations can help people avoid discomfort.

Get Rid of Glasses, at ANY age!



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WHAT IS DIABETIC EYE DISEASE?

The term "diabetic eye disease" refers to a group of eye conditions, such as diabetic retinopathy and diabetic macular edema, that can affect people with diabetes. The National Eye Institute notes that all forms of diabetic eye disease can potentially cause severe vision loss and even blindness. However, the NEI says that vision loss can be prevented or delayed if diabetes patients take their medications as prescribed, stay physically active and eat a healthy diet. Seeking timely treatment by consulting a physician the moment they notice changes in their vision, however insignificant those changes may seem, is another way for diabetes patients to protect themselves against vision loss. It's especially important that diabetes patients heed that advice, as the NEI notes that vision lost to diabetic eye disease is sometimes irreversible. It's also important that diabetes patients know that help could be on the way, as the NEI is conducting and supporting research to find better ways to detect, treat and prevent vision loss in people with diabetes.

Less than half of Americans receive recommended eye care, research finds: Tips to prioritize eye health in 2021



Dr. David A. Kostick, M.D.
Florida Eye Specialists

Do you remember your last eye exam?

Recent surveys show less than half of individuals receive regular eye exams. When respondents were asked why they skipped an annual eye exam, most said their vision hadn't changed. However, this mindset can spell trouble for your eyes.

Many eye conditions develop slowly, and patients don't notice the signs until it's too late. For example, an estimated 50% of glaucoma patients don't realize they have this common eye disease. When left untreated, glaucoma can lead to blindness — and by the time patients realize, it's too late to save vision.

Your sight makes a huge difference in your quality of life. It's important to take care of it. With the New Year underway, now is the time to prioritize your eye health and protect your eyes.

SEE YOUR EYE DOCTOR REGULARLY

A recent survey shed light on a common myth surrounding eye health: that we have no control over vision loss. Less than half of people surveyed believed they could prevent their eyesight from deteriorating. Respondents felt that vision loss is a part of aging and they have no control over it. In reality, the prevention and treatment of life-altering eye conditions starts with a single eye

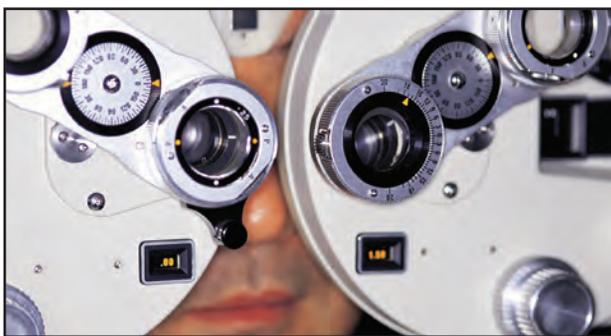


Photo provided by metrocreativeconnection.com

exam. Eye exams are about more than vision. An eye exam can detect over 270 different medical conditions— from diabetes to heart disease.

Early detection and treatment by annual eye exams is essential to halting or slowing down the progression of the disease and saving eyesight. Many vision-threatening eye diseases have minimal symptoms or none at all, until the disease has progressed. These can include glaucoma, macular degeneration, cataracts and diabetic retinopathy. That's why regular exams are so crucial. The sooner the condition is diagnosed, the sooner sight-saving treatment can begin.

REDUCE DIGITAL EYE STRAIN

When we spend too much time staring at screens, such as our phones, laptops and tablets, the efficiency of our eye muscles is reduced. This means the eyes are less able to converge up close so we can see what's on the screen.

We also blink less when staring at screens, which affects our tear film and creates issues focusing and strain.

Thankfully, there are ways you can reduce the impact of screen time and protect your eyes. The first is to maintain proper distance. Screens should be at arm's length from your eyes and positioned below your natural line of vision. Also consider your brightness setting. A setting that's too bright or too dim can cause strain and headaches. Your screen should be bright enough that you don't need to squint.

EAT FOODS THAT PROMOTE HEALTHY EYES

When it comes to protecting your vision, what you eat may affect what you see. Certain vitamins and minerals may play a role in preventing two common causes of vision problems: cataracts and age-related macular degeneration. Make sure you're eating enough fruits and vegetables, especially yellow and orange varieties, and leafy greens. Egg yolks are an even richer source of these nutrients.

This year, make it a resolution to protect your sight. At Florida Eye Specialists, we recommend that patients ages 60 and older have a comprehensive dilated eye exam at least once every two years. Why take any chances with your vision? If you have questions or are due for your exam, call our Ponte Vedra Beach office at (904) 564-2020.

Dr. David A. Kostick, M.D. is a board-certified ophthalmologist at Florida Eye Specialists. For more information or to schedule an appointment, visit FloridaEyeSpecialists.com or call (904) 564-2020.



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Business Weekly

PAGE 21 THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 2021

Wounded Warrior Project offers job-seeking tips for veterans in 2021

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Photo by Susan Griffin

Flagler Health+, which opened a new facility in Nocatee last month, is investing deeper into Care Connect+, its social health service which strives to improve housing, income and education for residents in the community.

Flagler Health+ shares 2020 milestones of Care Connect+ and expansion plans

Flagler Health+ recently announced key milestones and expansion plans for Care Connect+, the health enterprise’s social health organization that connects area residents with a single access point to services that address social determinants of health in a coordinated way across communities. Care Connect+ has made significant strides to improve circumstances such as housing, income, education, food adequacy and other factors tied to social determinants of health, which research has shown affects 80%

of health outcomes.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has shined a light on the important role that Care Connect+ continues to play in building healthier communities across Northeast Florida,” said Flagler Health+ President and Chief Executive Officer Jason Barrett. “With an emphasis on collaboration, innovation and seamless care navigation, the team at Care Connect+ is closing the gap in healthcare disparities and helping area residents and communities thrive. This would not be possible

without our growing base of community partners.”

In 2020, Care Connect+ helped decrease the unsheltered homeless population by 39% and increase access to youth behavioral health resources by 20%. Programs such as BRAVE, a partnership with St. Johns County School District that connects students across 39 schools with behavioral health providers, saw a 160% increase in the number

CARE CONNECT+ continues on Page 23

A stock 'crash' is coming



Harry Pappas
Columnist

At the risk of appearing sarcastic, cavalier and perhaps insensitive, I say whoop-dee-doo!

The title of this column is 100% true and 100% irrelevant albeit with one

caveat; that one is properly diversified (stocks, bonds, cash and real assets) based on his or her risk (volatility) tolerance. Please keep in mind that diversification is employed to help reduce risk not to increase return.

Now that we got that out of the way, I would like reiterate my position that a stock crash is coming and there is and will continue to be news to support my position. Therefore, given my forecast, would it be prudent to reduce some of our stock exposure now and then buy back when prices are lower? I hope you are rolling your eyes in disbelief at my suggestion. If not, you should, because nobody and I mean nobody knows when the next so-called crash is coming, so don’t even think about playing the market timing game.

Disrupting one's diversified portfolio because of a concern about a stock decline has proven to be a failed experiment for so many that try to time the market. However, there is always a good case for “rebalancing” from stocks to bonds. For example, if an investor starts her portfolio with 60% in stocks and 40% in bonds and

PAPPAS continues on Page 22

Local real estate professional unveils virtual story book

By Holly Tishfield

Ponte Vedra local and real estate marketing professional Kathleen Floryan has helped many members of the community successfully find and secure beautiful homes along the coast. Before devoting her days to working full-time in real estate, she was a registered nurse for over 30 years, until she translated her nursing and



Kathleen Floryan

business skills into running a real estate business, thus changing people’s lives.

Recently Floryan’s real estate business rolled out its newest method of showcasing homes, a completely digital and interactive story book.

“Most listings have a virtual tour — flat photos, drone photography, a 3D guide — but this [new technique] puts it all together in one spot,” said Floryan.

Floryan’s listings will be showcased using the interactive storybooks, where interested buyers have the opportunity to flip through digital pages and experience cinematic storytelling of a property. Moving photos, immersive layout tours and

in-depth explanations now await on the pages of each listing’s book.

This method gives buyers a simplified and unique approach to touring a property, without all the fuss of scrolling through flat photos and digging around for specific details. Floryan’s interactive storybooks combine all of what she does into one

STORY BOOK continues on Page 24



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Pappas

Continued from 21

the stock market increases in value while bonds decrease, she might find herself with 70% in stocks and 30% in bonds. So, she could sell stocks and buy bonds, thereby restoring her portfolio to her original asset allocation.

During my 36 years as a financial advisor, I have repeatedly urged clients to

“stay the course” during times of market turmoil. By following my advice, at times, we saw our portfolio’s decline in value over many months while we journeyed through the storm.

The pain and frustration were, of course, unnerving. It was scary. It was disturbing, but in the end, history has proven time and time again, stocks recovered and so did our portfolio.

Far too many folks make investing too darn difficult. Successful investing is about fundamental principles; diversification, discipline and the value of experienced guidance.

I believe from the depth of my being that if we adhere to the following simple (not easy) four step investment doctrine all will be well in the end.

1. Implement an efficiently diversified investment strategy.
2. Stick with the strategy in both good and bad times.
3. Continue to educate ourselves with resources that support our strategy.
4. Turn off our emotions!

The takeaway message is to stay the course. In other words, don’t do something, just stand there.

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Shapiro Group, 2012.

Wounded Warrior Project reveals employment tips for veterans in 2021

With 2021 in full swing, many veterans are considering new goals, new wishes and potentially new jobs as they continue their transitions to civilian life.

Although a 2020 Wounded Warrior Project (WWP) survey of the wounded warriors it serves found that 41% experienced employment challenges due to the pandemic, there is reason for optimism. WWP helped place nearly 2,000 wounded veterans and family members in new careers in 2020, with combined first-year salaries totaling nearly \$94 million.

Here are tips to help veterans and their families find a new job in the new year:

- Register with WWP and enroll in the nonprofit's career counseling program, Warriors to Work.
- Ensure your military skills translate into civilian job requirements when updating your resume and LinkedIn profile. For example, if you were a supply sergeant, write instead that you were a logistics manager.
- Network with former colleagues, relatives, neighbors and friends. Use job boards and social media beyond LinkedIn to expand your reach.
- Embrace the changing employment landscape. Many traditional jobs have pivoted to remote positions, providing opportunities not previously available to military families. Once the pandemic subsides, these jobs may remain remote, revert to in-person office positions, or become hybrid.
- Don't assume you can make a lateral move. You may have to accept a lower-level position and reestablish yourself to secure a new opportunity. If this is the case,



Photo provided by Wounded Warrior Project

make sure the employer has a process for promotions.

- Adjust to the new normal of virtual job interviews. Ensure your background is uncluttered, the camera's focus is on you, and that your attire is as professional as an in-person interview.
 - Survey the employment landscape like a military exercise, and understand which industries provide opportunity. For example, tech employers or organizations that provide services (e.g., transportation and delivery) will continue to prosper.
- "The employment landscape has changed significantly, but job opportunities still exist for veterans," said Bryan Rollins, director of WWP's Warriors to Work program. "Considering these tips will help land them."

Care Connect+

Continued from 21

of students proactively working with providers. The alliance also helped more than 1,300 residents affected by COVID-19 secure housing and utility payment assistance, food and other critical needs. An infographic provides a full summary of the 2020 impact of Care Connect+ in addressing homelessness/affordable housing, adolescent mental health and COVID-19-related social needs.

"The collective effort of our partners and supporters helped individuals and families navigate some of life's most challenging circumstances," said Care Connect+ Executive Director John Eaton. "As we work to increase coordination and access to the resources people need to keep their families safe and healthy, we are working towards realizing our vision to advance physical, social and economic health in Northeast Florida."

Care Connect+ has grown tremendously in recent years, expanding to include more than 60 community-based organizations that serve nearly 5,000 clients in both St. Johns and Flagler County. Key expansion plans for 2021 include:

- Expanding BRAVE to Putnam County (January 2021)
- Launching BRAVE 2 Speak, an online community to promote mental health and wellbeing by connecting youth with providers and access to peer support (January 2021)
- Establishing the first permanent supportive housing program for veterans in St. Johns County in (June 2021)

To learn more about Flagler Health+ Care Connect and its resources, go to stjohnscareconnect.com.

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Celebrate National Peanut Butter Day with irresistible peanut-butter dip



Leigh Cort
Table Talk

For more than a century, peanut butter has been one of the most popular healthy spreads — renowned as a food for the wealthy and served for its deliciously smooth consistency and protein-rich attributes.

If you're a peanut butter fan, you might even

know that the use of peanuts dates back to the Incas and Aztecs. Many methods of preparation of peanut butter have been developed by pharmacists, doctors and food scientists — now acknowledging Jan. 24 as National Peanut Butter Day.

I, for one, take my peanut butter for granted — never realizing in order to get it to my pantry there are many processes that take place — from planting and harvesting to shelling, roasting and cooling. Continue with blanching and grinding before finally adding other ingredients and packaging before it becomes classic peanut butter!

Tina Parks, a newcomer to Northeast Florida from Smithfield Kentucky, traded in her nursing career to embark on an exciting journey creating www.NuttyScoopz.com. With an undying entrepreneurial personality, she is obsessed with immune system health. She created NuttyScoopz as a functional

snack food to decrease the damaging effects of inflammation that riddled her own health and debilitating disability. Her mission is to help others find healthier options without the damaging effects of sugar, so she sweetens her peanut butter dip with monk fruit.

“Monk fruit juice concentrate is a natural fruit juice that is 15-20 times sweeter than sugar while the powdered extract is 150-200 times sweeter than sugar with a clean flavor profile and no bitter aftertaste,” Parks said. “It is used to reduce or replace sugar in a wide range of foods and beverages.”

What better test market could Parks find than when she brought a snack to her neighborhood group at Christ Church in Mandarin. With only peanuts and apples on hand, she created her first batch of peanut butter dip and it was a huge success. Joining SCORE in Jacksonville, Parks met mentors, friends and fans who encouraged her to create her business and move along with her product development at lightning speed.

Parks' attractive heavy-duty gift box with a choice of two or four clear containers of NuttyScoopz, has propelled her newfound business into the spotlight. Her peanut butter is artisan-crafted with no preservatives, sugar free and handmade in small batches in Jacksonville. It's an added bonus to receive your gift box accompanied by a ‘surprise’ collection of delicious organic snacks that



Photo provided by Leigh Cort

Tina Parks with her NuttyScoopz creation.

are perfectly used as peanut butter dip “dippers.”

If you're a foodie who enjoys receiving monthly treats delivered to your door, Parks has created a monthly subscription to receiving her three flavors of NuttyScoopz — regular, peanut butter and jelly or heat.

Giving back to the community is one of the most important facets of Parks' company. Included in the NuttyScoopz box is information about Catty Shack Ranch Wildlife Sanctuary — with a commitment from Parks that a portion of the proceeds of the NuttyScoopz Snack Pak benefits the sanctuary.

So, Happy National Peanut Butter Day! I'm thinking about all of the creative ways to enjoy my NuttyScoopz — pretzels, skewered fresh fruit, organic dried fruit and crispy rice crackers! Bon Appetit!

For more information, email Tina Parks at tina@nuttyscoopz.com or go to www.NuttyScoopz.com.

Story Book

Continued from 21

pocket, easing the typical frustration of buying.

Unlike clicking through rolls of flat photography, these digital storybooks can give buyers a better feel for not only the home itself, but the community and the environment, as well. The goal is to give a near-exact replicated experience of what being a part of the community could potentially look like.

“I want them to feel like they are actually in the house,” said Floryan, referring to the way her storybooks contain videos and moving photography of each aspect of the property.

Floryan's new method will be used to create a one-of-a-kind community listing, where potential buyers from other cities or states can gather a good idea of what it is like living in the Ponte Vedra and Nocatee communities.

For sellers, Floryan's virtual storybooks are also the best and most powerful way to display their homes, to tell the story of their home. The digital storytelling used by Floryan's real estate business is the only one of its kind in Northeast Florida, and offers a distinct way to bring the future of realty into the hands of interested residents.

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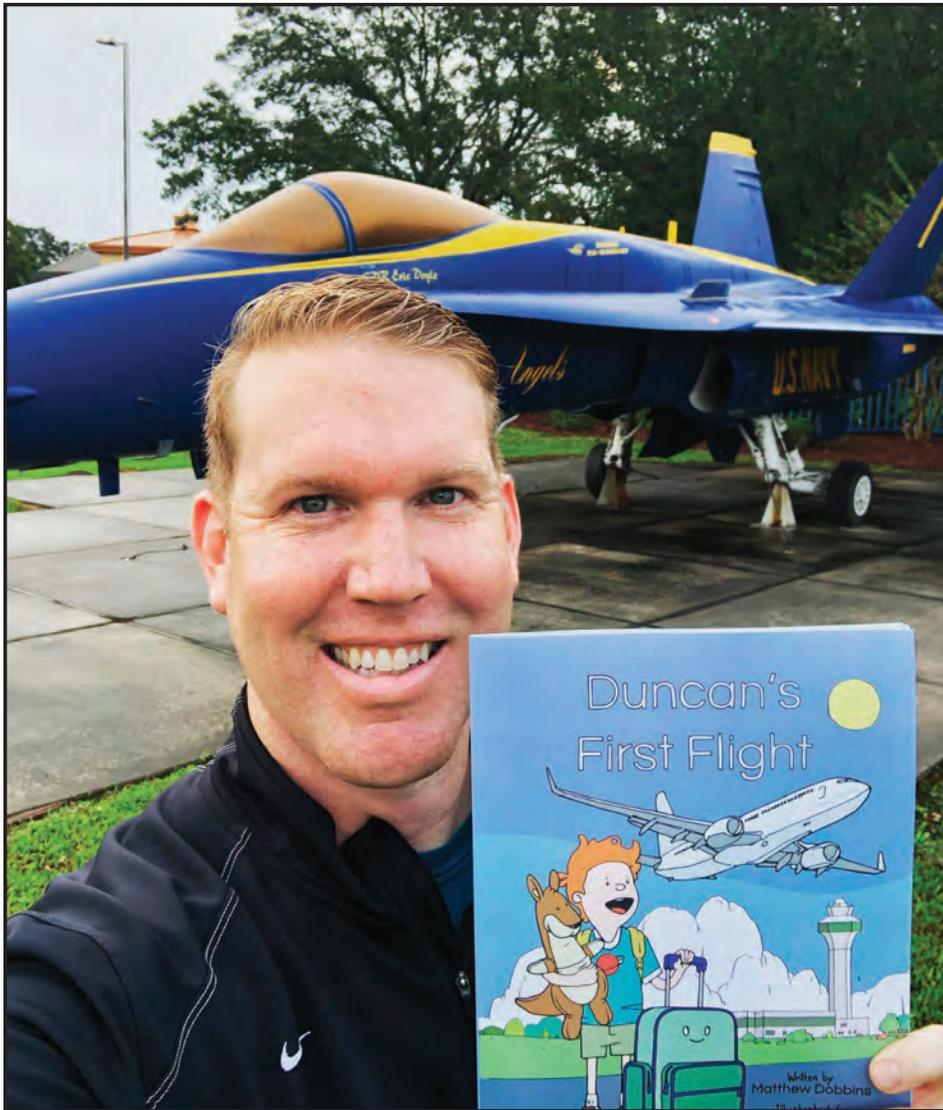


Photo provided by Matthew Dobbins

Local author Matthew Dobbins holds up a copy of his book, "Duncan's First Flight."

Local author's book tells story of a boy's anxiety over flying

By Shaun Ryan

Matthew Dobbins' journey to becoming a successful children's author began with a chance encounter.

Preparing to fly home to Riverside following one of his frequent business trips, he claimed his usual seat next to the airplane's window. Soon, a woman made her way down the aisle and sat next to him.

Without introducing herself, she said, "Did you realize that 35% of people are scared to fly?"

"No," Dobbins admitted. "Are you scared to fly?"

She said yes and proceeded to explain her anxiety. Before long she fell asleep, and Dobbins began to jot notes about the conversation on a Delta Air Lines napkin.

That was the last he thought about the encounter for some time.

Then, this past March, he opened his notebook to search for something, and the napkin flew out.

"I was like, 'Oh, yeah; I forgot about this,'" he said.

At the time, air travel was being restricted due to the COVID-19 outbreak, and he thought if he couldn't travel, he could write something — maybe a travel

book — based on his notes. He'd had some experience in that area, having run a travel blog in his spare time.

But the end result was something quite different: a children's book titled "Duncan's First Flight."

It's the story of a boy named Duncan who is about to take his first flight. He is nervous about flying but is able to overcome his fear with the help of Ridley Roo, his kangaroo sidekick.

Though Dobbins had never written a book before, he had a background in telling stories. His mother was a professional storyteller.

"She was paid to tell stories in schools," he said. "She had contracts with the county I grew up in, Seminole County."

As a boy, Dobbins would travel with his mother on her storytelling tours, and he attended the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesboro, Tenn., several times.

Once he finished "Duncan's First Flight," Dobbins asked his wife, Serina Hedrick, to read it. She had been a teacher and asked other teachers she knew to read it over as well. They provided Dobbins with some useful feedback on the book.

FLYING continues on Page 27



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Artwork at local gym inspired by graffiti style

By Shaun Ryan

Not all works of art are found in a traditional gallery. Businesses, for instance, have found that displaying original art can enhance their ambience.

And this is not limited to framed paintings and sculpture. Often, transforming a large, blank wall means adding a mural or a graffiti-related work.

One business that went this route is Anytime Fitness, located at 880 A1A North in Ponte Vedra.

The 24-hour, full-service gym has been open for nearly two years. But last year business owner Deanna Yu realized it needed something on one bare wall.

“It needed something cool,” she said, “something that represents where we are.”

She mentioned it to trainer Jay Worley, who said he knew just the guy to take care of it: Beaches artist Beau Jenney.

Over six days in December, Beau transformed what was once described as a “big, ugly orange wall” into a mural celebrating both Ponte Vedra Beach and Anytime Fitness.

It has a strong graffiti influence but is very much reminiscent of those postcards featuring stylized words that always begin with “Greetings from ...”

Stylized lettering reads: “Ponte Vedra Beach.” The words are surrounded by easily identifiable elements, including the business’s “running man” logo.

Though many artists working on such large pieces use a grid system to keep the details in proportion, Beau does it all freehand. It’s something that impresses Worley.

“It just blows me away that somebody can do that, freehand, without doing any type of lines or a grid,” he said.

The precise elements were the result of discussions between the artist and Yu, who wanted to emphasize the recognizable attributes of the community but also her business.

Keeping true to his client’s wishes was important to Beau.

“I can’t charge someone for something that they don’t like,” he said. “So, communication is key when it comes to commissions.”

Originally from Pittsboro, North Carolina, Beau and his family moved to the Beaches when he was six. He began drawing as a young child but didn’t get serious about his art until about age 15.

He attended Douglas Anderson School of the Arts in Jacksonville for about three years but left during his senior year to pursue football. Due to an injury, however, he never played a game.

In discerning his future, he fell back on what had really made him happy: his art.

“I can do realism portraits,” he said. “I can do business logos. I can do landscapes, as well.”

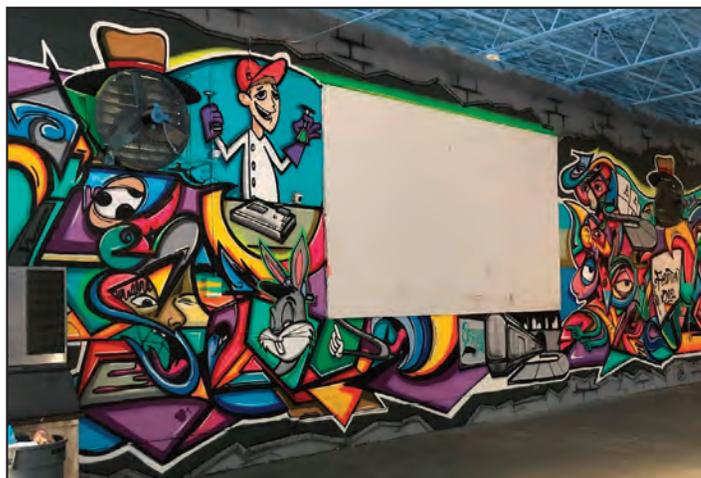
But his favorite genre is a type of stylized graffiti. His largest piece to date is



Beau Jenney is seen in front of the mural he painted on one wall inside Anytime Fitness.



ABOVE: Anytime Fitness franchise owner Deanna Yu (from left), artist Beau Jenney and trainer Jay Worley hold up some of Jenny’s art works. Photos by Shaun Ryan



LEFT: Jenney painted this large wall inside Toon Town Jax. He had to work around the screen at the center and the large wall fans to either side. Contributed photo

a full interior wall at Toon Town Jax, a former warehouse on Talleyrand Avenue in Jacksonville that has been transformed into an arts and entertainment complex. The complex is run by Kyle Bryce Monteiro, who uses the professional name of KBM, an accomplished artist whom Beau says has inspired his own work.

Beau said another influence on his art has been the internet, which gave him an opportunity to see what kind of work oth-

ers are doing. This was especially important in his early years when he lived in the suburbs and had no exposure to urban and street art.

Describing his art, Beau said he uses spray paint in a lot of fluorescent colors. For the piece at Anytime Fitness, he used about 20 colors.

To increase the brilliance of his colors, he often paints a layer of white underneath. He is cognizant of which colors are adja-



Contributed photo

Jenney starts his mural on the wall inside Anytime Fitness.

cent to other colors and places an emphasis on line.

“I’m a big stickler with straight letters and with line quality,” he said. “I believe the more precise your lines are, the bigger your stuff is going to pop out.”

One of the qualities in Beau’s work that people have noticed is how well it looks regardless of the viewer’s distance.

“It can look cool up close, but I had to make it look good from far away,” he said. “So I had to really push those values of darker shades of color.”

Those who were able to watch Beau work were impressed with his technique.

“Just to stand back and watch him look at what he’s looking at, I’m sure it’s more than what I’m looking at,” admitted Worley.

Where does this vision originate?

“It just comes out of me,” said Beau. “I really don’t know where it comes from.”

Local painters invited to apply for solo exhibitions in Lightner Museum's East Room Gallery

With support from the Benjamin and Jean Troemel Arts Foundation, the Lightner Museum recently announced Lightner Local. Created to showcase the extraordinary talents of artists who live in the Northeast Florida region, three artists will be awarded with solo exhibitions at the Lightner.

Painters in Northeast Florida are invited to apply for solo exhibitions to be displayed in the museum's East Room Gallery. A panel of local professionals involved in arts and culture will select the top submissions. The Lightner will host three separate exhibitions in April, July, and September, 2021. Each exhibition will be run for six weeks.

The gallery space includes approximately 90 feet of linear wall space for hanging artwork. The East Room Gallery is currently open to the public from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Artists interested in applying who would like to visit the gallery space may do so by entering through the Café Alcazar door located on Granada Street.

Selected artists will receive the following:

- In-person solo exhibition at the Lightner Museum in the East Room Gallery
- Artist video produced by the Lightner Museum
- Promotion via the museum's website,

lightnermuseum.org

- Press outreach
- Social media outreach
- Exhibition opening during First Friday Art Walk
- \$1,000 honorarium to cover installation cost

Lightner Museum staff will work directly with the selected artists to produce the exhibition, and will promote it through print and online media. Artists who submit a proposal may also be considered for future opportunities with the Lightner Museum such as art fairs, group shows, and online solo shows. Submission deadline is March 1.

Applications requirements

Artists should send the following:

- Five images of recent work
- Image list – including title, dimensions, medium, and date for each work
- Exhibition title
- Exhibition proposal – 500 words or less
- Artist statement – 500 words or less
- Artist bio – 500 words or less

Note: Do not send actual artwork.

Applications should be emailed to: info@lightnermuseum.org or mailed to Lightner Museum Artists Initiative, 75 King St., St. Augustine, FL 32084

Flying

Continued from 25

Because Dobbins was not an illustrator, he enlisted the aid of his brother-in-law, Charles Hedrick, who had studied art in college.

When the book was complete, Dobbins self-published it in November. Reaction from the public was swift. At one point, the short book was the number one new release at Amazon.com. Even a month after publication, Dobbins said the book was ranked in the top 1% in the world.

One character he often gets questions about is Ridley Roo, which he based on a stuffed animal he had as a child, Bingo Bear. Bingo, like Ridley, was a friend who could help a child overcome discomfort or anxiety.

The character is a positive role model for young fans of his book.

"We can all be like Ridley Roo," Dobbins said. "We can all give a little encouragement or be a mentor to somebody – just a wave and a smile to a neighbor. If we can be a little bit more like Ridley Roo, the world's going to be a better place."

Dobbins posts a special feature on his Facebook and Instagram pages that has been a big hit with fans.



Photo provided by Matthew Dobbins

"Duncan's First Flight" tells the story of a boy who is nervous about flying on an airplane.

"People take a picture of their child with the book, or themselves with the book at the airport or wherever, and they can be 'Duncan's Friend of the Day,'" he said.

The posts can be found by searching @duncan.ridleyroo or #DuncansFriends.

Dobbins is working on some ideas for follow-up books, though nothing is set in stone yet.

"Duncan's First Flight" can be found at Chamblain Bookmine and San Marco Books and More, as well as Amazon.com.

THEME: GRAMMY AWARDS

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ACROSS

1. Nothing-but-net in basketball
6. "Zip it!"
9. The _____ in Switzerland
13. Ann Patchett's novel "Bel _____"
14. "Mele Kalikimaka" wreath
15. Ten million, in India
16. Fire in one's soul
17. Crematorium jar
18. Trail follower
19. *Artist with most 2021 Grammy nominations
21. *Powerhouse Award 2020 winner with six 2021 nominations
23. * _____ Sayer's "You Make Me Feel Like Dancing"
24. Pettifoggery
25. Lending letters
28. "Through" in text
30. Butcher's discards
35. Fortune-telling coffee remnant
37. Crew equipment
39. Asian goat antelope
40. "Polar Express" roof rider

41. Toughness
43. *Two-time Grammy winner Kelly
44. Watch word?
46. *Best New Artist nominee Cyrus
47. "Clueless" catch phrase
48. *Black Pumas' nominated record
50. Hand-me-down
52. NYC time zone
53. * _____ Loaf, winner of one Grammy
55. Nirvana's "Come as You _____"
57. *Post Malone's twice-nominated work
61. *Venue of 2021 Grammy Awards
65. Dig, so to speak
66. Reunion bunch
68. Silk-patterned fabric
69. On Elsa of Arendelle's head
70. Historical period
71. Join the cast of, two words
72. Balkan native
73. Dog's greeting
74. Bed cover
11. Like "Dead Poets Society" school
12. Blood fluids
15. Winnowing remains, pl.
20. Salmon variety, pl.
22. Flying saucer acronym
24. Event attendance
25. Kind of committee, two words
26. Movie trailer, e.g.
27. He had no cause?
29. *"_____ on Me" by Lady Gaga and Ariana Grande
31. Cheese on Peloponese
32. "...when out on the lawn there _____ such a clatter..."
33. Large-eyed lemur
34. *"Folklore" nominee and recipient of 10 Grammys
36. Nancy Sinatra's boots
38. Sinbad's seven
42. Semolina source
45. Cloth armband
49. Get the picture
51. Movie genre, pl.
54. Off kilter
56. Longer than #70 Across
57. A and B, e.g.
58. Doing nothing
59. *Katy Perry's 2013 Grammy-nominated song
60. Stewie Griffin's bed
61. Unforeseen obstacle
62. Low-cal
63. One of Great Lakes
64. Email folder
67. Composer Ger-shwin

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Sports

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 2021 • PAGE 28

Send your sports news to
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PVHS sweeps 3 before falling to Providence

By Jim Moyes

Special to the Recorder

Ponte Vedra's boys' basketball team completed yet another successful three-game stretch without a setback last week, but it wasn't easy. The three-game sweep with victories over Trinity Christian, Bolles and Fletcher stretched their record to 14 wins against but one setback, easily the best start in school history.

The Sharks began their week with a decisive 58-16 victory over Trinity Christian. So stingy was the PVHS defense that the 16 points tallied by Trinity were the fewest points allowed by a Shark team in the 13 years of Ponte Vedra basketball. With a tough Bolles squad on the docket to face the Sharks the following evening, coach Kevin Whirity was able to give several of his players some much needed rest as 11 of his players dented the scoring column.

Bolles invaded the Shark Tank the following night with a highly ranked team that had only tasted defeat once during the season. A fired-up PVHS five got off to a resounding start as they bolted out to 17-2 start against the visiting Bulldogs.

The Bulldogs showed why they boasted an outstanding record as they chipped away at the deficit and seemingly had



Ponte Vedra's Rory Mayer (11) and Alex Madson (9) celebrate as the final buzzer sounds during the Sharks' 61-52 victory over visiting Bolles on Tuesday, Jan. 5.

Photo by Sean Kelly

the Sharks on the ropes. With the Sharks clinging to a one-point lead with about 2 minutes remaining in the hard-fought contest, senior guard Alex Madson came up with the pivotal play of the game. Madson took an inbounds feed from JT Kelly and banked in a contested layup to give the Sharks a 53-50 lead. Fouled on the play, Alex cashed in the free throw that

ignited a closing 10-1 run by the victorious Sharks.

Madson was terrific in the 61-52 victory and drew high praise from his coach.

"Alex has been a rock for us all season," gushed Whirity. "His ability to contribute and impact the game across so many facets is uncanny. The guy can flat out play, and no stage is ever too big."

Madson scored 20 points on 8-of-9 shooting from the field while adding a trio of steals and assists. A defensive stopper as well, Madson equaled a school record the previous evening with eight steals in the victory over Trinity Christian.

Two days after the big program victory over Bolles, the Sharks were dealt a rude awakening from a talented Fletcher team. The Sharks played a poor first half against the visiting Senators that did not at all please the Sharks energetic second year mentor.

"Our guys needed a quick reminder of the game plan and that our effort level was poor," said Whirity, who called on his reserves to play much of the second quarter. "Fletcher was playing as a team and was executing with much higher energy."

It looked like the Sharks were doomed to defeat when they trailed by 10 points with but 6 minutes remaining. Suddenly, after shooting seemingly nothing but blanks at the basket for much of the contest, coupled with some clutch out court shooting from Jack Polian and JT Kelly as well as a stifling defense, the Sharks roared back with a 15-2 run to keep their winning streak intact with their comeback 50-46 win.

SHARKS continues on Page 29

JAGA announces 2020 award winners

Five prominent members of the Northeast Florida golf community were recognized as winners of 2020 Jacksonville Area Golf Association awards at the organization's opening meeting of 2021 at San Jose Country Club.

The winners were:

■ **Community Service Award:** Jared Rice, Executive Director of THE PLAYERS Championship

Rice was recognized for his outreach and impact in the community on behalf of the PGA TOUR's showcase championship.

■ **JAGA Director of the Year:** Randy Nader, Sawgrass CC

Nader was recognized for his support of JAGA events and programs. In addition to chairing the Men's Senior Amateur,

he was the major sponsor of the annual JAGA Scholarship Trust benefit golf tournament, and also funded JAGA's application for an IRS tax exemption. It was the first time an outgoing JAGA president has been named Director of the Year.

■ **Pro of the Year:** Tim Cooper, Deerwood CC

Cooper cemented the JAGA/PGA relationship as president of the Northern Chapter of the North Florida PGA by encouraging stronger communication and involvement between the two organizations. He also gave very freely of his time to assist and promote amateur golf in the area.

■ **Club Executive of the Year:** C.W. Cook, Sawgrass CC

Cook's leadership brought national recognition to Sawgrass Country Club,



Photo provided by JAGA

From left: Tim Cooper (Deerwood CC), Randy Nader (Sawgrass CC), George Halvorsen (Marsh Landing CC), CW Cook (Sawgrass CC). Not pictured: Jared Rice (THE PLAYERS)

which was recognized with membership in an organization that includes the nation's top clubs. He has been instrumental in the planning and construction of the new Sawgrass clubhouse, which will open its doors in the very near future, and also was at the forefront of the major donation Sawgrass made to the JAGA Scholarship Trust.

■ **Earl and Eleanor Kelly Lifetime Achievement Award:** George Halvorsen, Marsh Landing CC

Halvorsen, a former banker, has been a JAGA director for over 20 years and been active in numerous projects over the years, providing valuable counsel and

JAGA continues on Page 29



Photo by Sean Kelly

Ponte Vedra's Jack Polian makes a clutch 3-pointer to help seal the victory over Bolles.

Sharks

Continued from 28

Luke Pirris led the Shark scorers with 13 points, while sophomore Nathan Buncosky had 11 tallies. Whirity was also pleased with his teams' depth over last weeks stretch. Sophomore Israel Nuhu earned some kudos from his coach after playing his best game of the season

against Fletcher with a team-leading eight rebounds and a pair of blocked shots.

"Israel continues to improve daily and the sky is the limit for this young man," added Whirity.

On Tuesday night, the Sharks fell 45-36 at Providence, the area's top-ranked team.

The Sharks will take the court Friday night at home with a contest against Ridgeview with the varsity game scheduled for a 7:30 tip-off.

5TH JAGA FIRST COAST AMATEUR ATTRACTS ITS STRONGEST FIELD

This weekend's fifth edition of the Jacksonville Area Golf Association's "First Coast Amateur" has attracted its strongest field ever. The Conservatory at Hammock Beach Resort in Palm Coast will host the championship Jan. 16-18 for the second year in a row.

The 54-hole stroke-play championship has attracted more of the nation's top amateur, collegiate, and junior talent this year. Competitors hail from 21 states, 27 colleges and 14 countries. About 20% have North Florida and Sunshine state connections.

The top finishers will receive World Amateur Golf Ranking points.

All but nine of the participants have handicap indexes of 0.0 or better.

"We've experienced a clear bump in the quality of our field and the number of World Amateur Golf Ranking players entered," said tournament co-chairmen John Milton and Jeff Adams. "The First Coast Amateur is in its fifth year and continues to improve in all areas. We were not sure what to expect in this unusual COVID-19 year, but the field response was overwhelming. Due to incredible demand, we had to turn away 60 interested contestants. Our goal is to continue to grow and strengthen the tournament in the eyes of golf's top amateur competitors."

JAGA

Continued from 28

contributions on every level. He has also been an active participant and volunteer at JAGA tournaments. In 2020, he took the lead on a key association initiative, JAGA's application to the IRS for tax-exempt status.

All but Rice were in attendance at San Jose. Rice and PLAYERS' Redcoats will be recognized at next month's JAGA directors meeting at Eagle Harbor Golf Club.

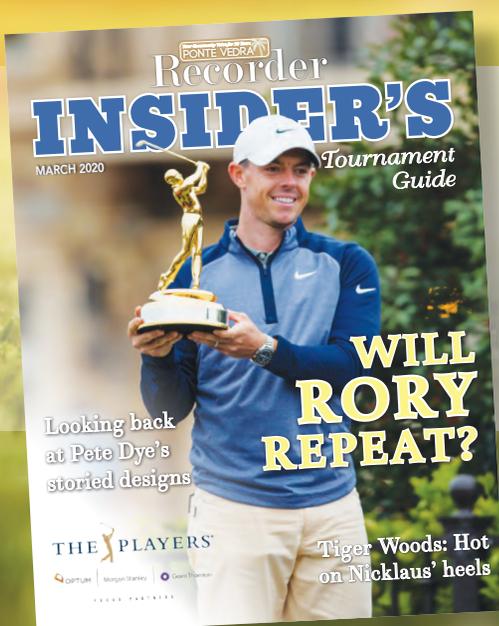
"2020 was clearly a year like no other," said recently elected JAGA president Jeff Adams. "Despite all the turmoil, tragedy and disruption many

people faced, our wonderful sport of golf was a bright and positive exception. People who manage and promote golf truly persevered.

"Our five award recipients are shining examples of that perseverance," added Adams. "Each made valuable contributions to JAGA and golf in North Florida in 2021 under unique and often challenging circumstances. We thank them for giving so much of themselves to golf in our area and are proud to recognize them as our 2020 JAGA award recipients."

The award selection is a two-step process. The Nominating Committee compiles a list of three nominees for each position, and then the Executive Committee makes the decision.

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