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PONTE VEDRA



Recorder

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PonteVedraRecorder.com

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RIVALRY ON THE HARDWOOD

A packed crowd watched Nease host rival Ponte Vedra in a girls basketball contest Jan. 13. The Panthers jumped out to an early lead and never looked back, defeating the Sharks 51-39.

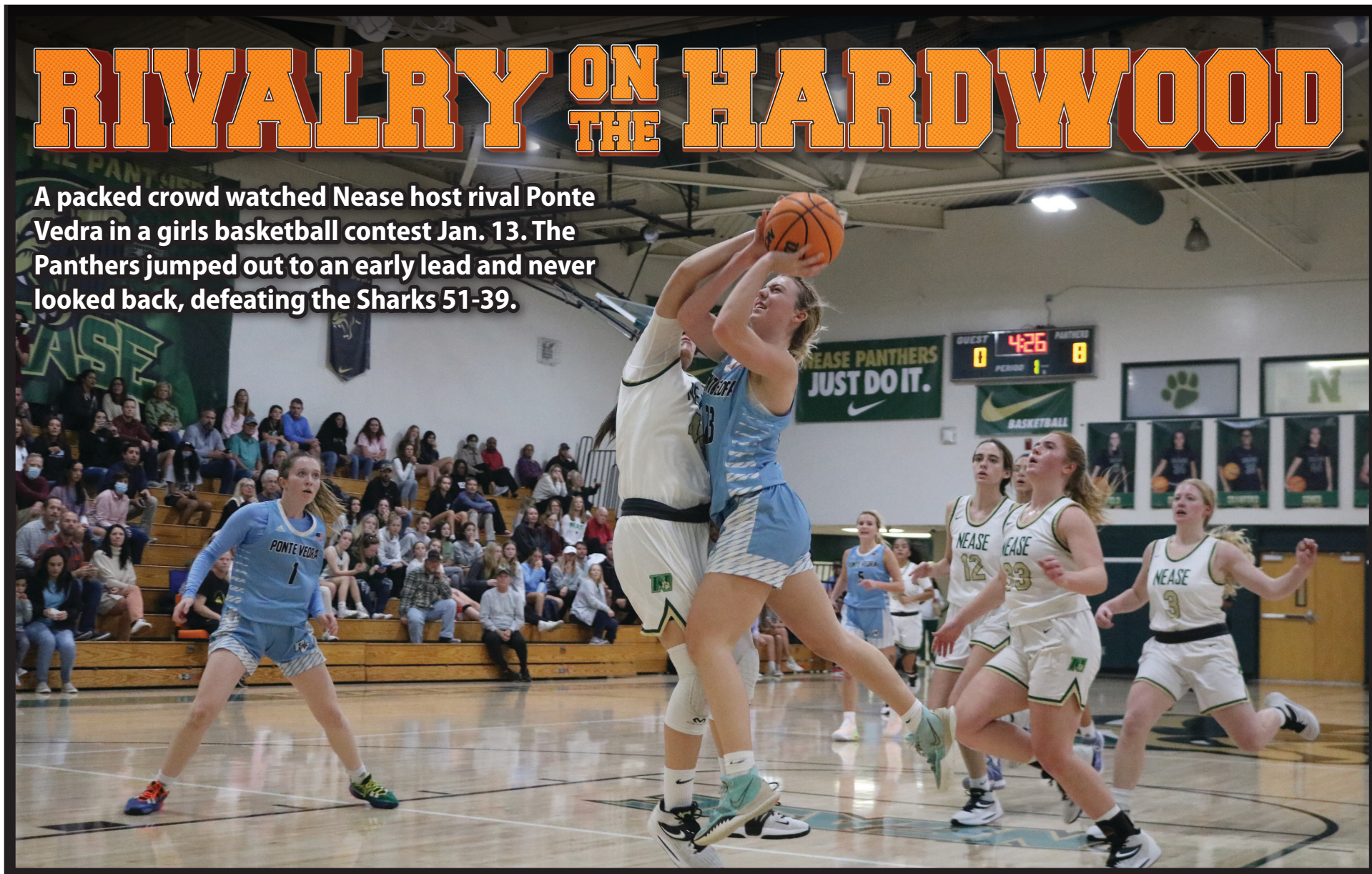
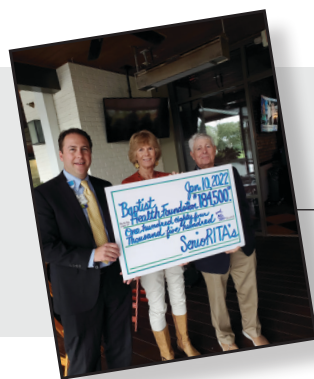


Photo by Anthony Richards



INSIDE: CHECK IT OUT!

The Recorder's Entertainment EXTRA featuring TV listings, streaming information, puzzles and more!



Who's Who in Healthcare

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Sports

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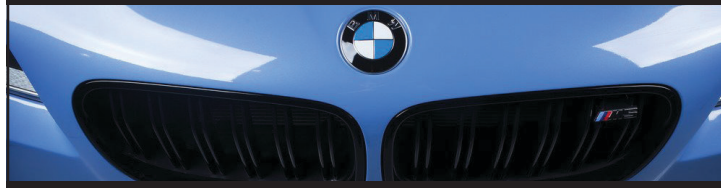
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Send us your news

We welcome submissions of photos, stories, columns and letters to the editor. Let us know what's happening. If you have hard copies of photos you want us to feature, feel free to bring them to our office — we'll scan them and hand them right back. E-mail submissions to news@pontevedrarecorder.com or bring them by our office at **1102 A1A N., Unit 108, Ponte Vedra Beach.**



Visit our new website at www.pontevedrarecorder.com

Plus, find the Recorder on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ThePVRecorder

Area business leaders launch Tail Waggers Charitable Foundation

Tail Waggers Charitable Foundation has recently formed as a group of community leaders who assist, support and help dogs and owners in need as a 501(c)3 nonprofit based in St. Johns County.

The foundation raises funds to provide assistance to benevolent canine organizations to further help take care of dogs and pet owners throughout Northeast Florida.

The organization was founded by Stefanie Robinson, a longtime business owner and civic leader in St. Augustine. She will serve as executive director along with David M. Hartzel as vice president and John S. Robinson as secretary and treasurer. Other board members include Caroline Forbis, Julianna Howe, Peggy Tennyson and Dr. Jack Schmidt.

According to Robinson, she and her team find and fund assistance for abused and neglected dogs as loyal, loving companions.

"All too often, we hear of dogs who are abused, neglected and forgotten," she said. "Some of the lucky ones find their way to shelters and rescues where they are given another

chance at a positive life and can be adopted into loving, forever homes. These stories are what formed Tail Waggers as a group of community leaders coming together to help sustain and maintain the well-being of dogs in our many area communities."

Robinson and her team are already providing homes and positive dog rescue stories as heart-warming testaments to local pet owners who are willing to give a dog a healthy, new opportunity.

She added, "Many of the dogs have great obstacles to overcome from past traumas; however, local pet adopters who work through the difficulties show unconditional love to their rescue dogs. Saving a dog is not always easy, and sometimes you need to gain a dog's trust. However, the love and loyalty that you get back once you earn that trust can come back to you forever."

For further information about Tail Waggers go to tailwaggersfl.com. To donate, go to www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=KVBPI8X5RKMHU.

The Facebook page can be found at [facebook.com/TailWaggersCF](https://www.facebook.com/TailWaggersCF).

BRIEFS

St. Augustine plans Arbor Day ceremony, sapling giveaways

St. Augustine's annual Arbor Day ceremony will take place at 11 a.m. Friday, Jan. 21, at Coquina Park, located in the South Davis Shores neighborhood at 91 Coquina Ave.

Limited street parking for those who wish to attend the ceremony will be available nearby and residents are encouraged to walk or ride bikes.

To celebrate the city's designation as a Tree City for 39 consecutive years, this year's ceremony will include opening remarks by Vice Mayor Nancy Sikes-Kline, the planting of one live oak tree by city officials, and remarks from the Street Tree Advisory Committee Chair, Freemont Latimer.

In addition to the saplings being distributed at Coquina Park, there will be a drive-through distribution of saplings from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., or while supplies last, via the West Castillo Drive entrance of the Historic Downtown Parking Facility, located at 25 W. Castillo Drive.

This year, city staff will give away live oak, magnolia and loquat trees.

Students named to university's President's List

The following local students have been named to the Fall 2021 President's List at Southern New Hampshire University.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.7 and above are named to the list.

From Ponte Vedra: David Shortman and Donna Stone. From St. Augustine: Lena Allison, Susanna Byler, Stephanie Digregorio, Colin Gerdes, DeWight Jackson, Kimberly Scott, Kelsi Swertfager and Brittany Thomas.

SuperSpeed golf clinic planned

A six-week SuperSpeed golf clinic will begin Jan. 28 at Treaty Park, 1595 Wildwood Drive, St. Augustine.

The cost is \$210, and participants can rent the SuperSpeed set for \$10 per session.

Sessions will be 4-5 p.m.

For more information or to book a spot, contact Tommy Aycock at 904-209-0350 or taycock@sjcfl.us.

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

C	A	M	P	S	S	A	W	I	L	K	S	
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Hearing from the people

Blocker set for 'office hours' at PVB Branch Library

By Anthony Richards

People in public office are seen as the voice of the people they represent, especially at the local level, and St. Johns County Commissioner Jeremiah Blocker is taking this to heart with his upcoming scheduled "office hours."

The first "office hours" will be held Jan. 28, as well as days scheduled Feb. 28 and March 25. More dates will be released in the future.

Blocker will be at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library, located at 101 Library Blvd., from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on those days to hear from residents and get their opinions about certain things in a one-on-one environment. Residents must call 904-209-0300 to reserve an appointment.

Blocker came up with the approach before becoming a commissioner.

According to Blocker, the genesis of the idea was so that people living elsewhere in the county would not have to drive all the way to St. Augustine just to meet with their commissioner.

"I always thought if I got elected, I might be able to do something about that," Blocker said.

It is not the first time Blocker will have held the "office hours" sessions, but he is hoping this is the start of getting back to having one each month, which has not been the case since March 2020 due to the concerns with the COVID-19 pandemic.

He is not sure if other commissioners are taking similar approaches, but he has heard interest, especially from Commissioner Christian Whitehurst.

From Blocker's understanding, the "office hours" had not been done for a while prior to him starting it up.

"Local government is the most in tune with the county," Blocker said. "Dialogue and talking to find a common ground is a good thing and something that we need."

The diverse nature of the Ponte Vedra Beach and Nocatee areas, as well as that of St. Johns County, is what Blocker believes also provides unique perspectives when searching for ways to improve the current standing.

"People have lived other places and they can really bring some great ideas to the table," Blocker said. "The vast majority of citizens are vested and very respectful of the process. There's always

a balance."

When choosing a place to hold the "office hours," the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library quickly came to Blocker's mind, and seemed like the perfect fit.

"I'm a big supporter of the libraries," Blocker said. "They serve an important function. It's like the town square of the community."



Photo by Anthony Richards

Commissioner Jeremiah Blocker has scheduled "office hours" sessions Jan. 28, Feb. 28 and March 25. They will be held at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library.

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ELIZABETH HUDGINS

OBITUARIES



Sidney Johnson

Sidney Johnson

On December 18th Sidney Johnson, a kind, loving, gentle man, took his final train ride on The Glory Train to be with his departed parents Darwin and Mary McCrae Johnson, family, friends and pets. What a reunion and celebration! Sid's life was blessed with opportunities and accomplishment. He liked to say, "I am an ordinary man from Co-shocton, Ohio, who has done some extraordinary things." He worked his way through college flying computer boards to corporations, waiting tables and working in the main frame lab while obtaining his engineering degree at Ohio University. After joining the Army he was chosen to work for the

Office of the President of the United States. His duty took him around the world on multiple trips with President Nixon and Vice President Agnew as a communications officer with the White House Communications Agency. With many Federal job opportunities after his service, he chose to follow his passion: Trains. He enjoyed a long and successful career helping modernize the industry with technology and increased safety. After retiring at the age of 54 as a Vice President of Transportation for CSX he and his wife traveled the world by train, plane, ship and boat. He loved planning trips from living in Mongolian yurts in the Gobi desert or South African tribal tents to black tie dinners on his favorite trains — the Blue Train, Rovas Rail and the Royal Scotsman — or staying at the Goring in London. He loved travel and that he had been to 97 countries, visiting family, listening to his "oldies" ... and enjoying good food and fellowship with friends at his favorite restaurants.

Sid is survived by his loving wife Jeri, children Andrew (Shannon), Travis (Sarah), Traci, grandchildren Bayard, Amelia, Ava and Charlotte. His beloved rescue dog, Sweet Baby James, joined him on January 3rd.

A service to celebrate Sid's life will be held at a later date. As he was a past master and an actively participating Masonic Lodge member for 52 years in the Scottish Rite, York Rite and Shrine, please consider a donation to the Shriners Hospital.



Photo by Shaun Ryan

Kaihan, a former Afghan combat interpreter, thanks the community for helping his family at a special event Friday, Jan. 14, at the Greater Beaches VFW Post 3270.

Local residents welcome Afghan ally, family to America

By Shaun Ryan

Area residents filled the Greater Beaches VFW Post 3270 on Friday, Jan. 14, to welcome a former Afghan combat interpreter and his family to America.

The post and Save Our Allies, a direct-response Afghan rescue organization, hosted the event for Kaihan, his wife Shamila, three-month-old daughter Dunya and a sister-in-law. Because Kaihan fought alongside American troops and supported other U.S. agencies, he and his family had been granted special consid-

eration for expedited Special Immigrant Visas.

But getting out of the war-torn nation as the Taliban re-asserted control amid the recent U.S. withdrawal and settling in a new land were fraught with challenges, to say the least.

To ease the family's transition, Carol Williams of Ponte Vedra and an army of local volunteers stepped forward to provide housing, furniture, clothes and children's items. Joining the effort was a group from Christ Episcopal Church, who are collecting donations to pay for the many expenses.

Williams felt compelled to help after watching news coverage of the chaotic withdrawal at the Hamid Karzai International Airport. She organized the local effort to welcome, support and resettle Kaihan and his family.

"This is a community effort to do a good thing to right a terrible wrong," Williams explained. "This is an opportunity for Americans to stand together, to stand proud, to do the right thing."

This is not the first time Williams has been involved in helping war refugees. In the 1970s, she and a group from Rochester, New York, helped a family of Vietnamese refugees following the cessation of hostilities in Southeast Asia.

In August, seeing images of people falling to their deaths as they tried to cling to the exterior of planes evacuating refugees from Afghanistan and video of a newborn baby being passed to strangers in an attempt to get the child to safety, Williams knew she had to do something.

With the help of the World Affairs Council of Jacksonville, Save Our Allies, Christ Church and a growing number of local residents, Williams was able to get Kaihan and his family resettled in the greater Jacksonville area.

Donations toward this effort may be sent to the attention of Rhonda Toonk at Christ Episcopal Church, 400 San Juan Drive.

NOTE: This is an abridged version of the article. To read the entire story, go to pontevedrarecorder.com.

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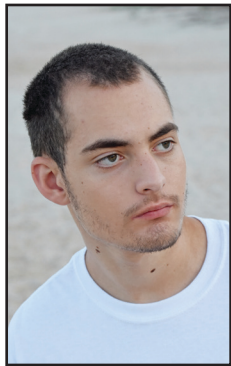
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Best Wishes!

Nonverbal teen overcomes obstacles, publishes book of poetry

By Shaun Ryan



Brady Wright

When her son, Brady, typed his first sentence, Danielle Wright, who describes herself as “not a crier,” could not hold back the tears.

For the first time in his 13 years, the nonverbal boy was able

to communicate with his family and the world around him. It was – as he himself had typed – a “groundbreaking” moment.

“I just knew we just embarked on a whole new way of life, Brady now being a full participant in his life and ours,” said Wright.

In the five years since, Brady has learned not simply to use the language to communicate, but to reveal a talent that lay hidden behind the veil of the neuro-motor disorder with which he had been diagnosed at a young age.

The talent: poetry.

Now, Brady Wright has written and published a volume of his poetry, and it is certain to open up his world to those who delve into it.

Finding the words

Brady was 3 when he was diagnosed with autism, 5 when he was found to have apraxia, which affects the communication between the muscles of the mouth and the brain. Verbal communication was not possible, which left his mom and dad, Danielle and Brian Wright, making their best guesses at what he wanted to express. This could be especially challenging when there was a health or medical concern.

What changed everything was a process called facilitated communication, also called typing.

A facilitator provides support. While monitoring her communication partner’s posture and eye contact, she offers a kind of guidance to stabilize movement so as to make typing possible. The level of this physical support varies with the individual, from resistance to a light touch. Over time, this support might decrease to where the communicator is able to demonstrate an ability to type without physical touch.

Before discovering facilitated communication, Brady said it was hard to get people to understand him.

“No way to get my thoughts out,” he wrote in an email. “I felt locked away from the world.”

Now that had changed, but there was yet another discovery to be made.

The poet within

Brady’s talent for poetry came to light at an otherwise dark time.

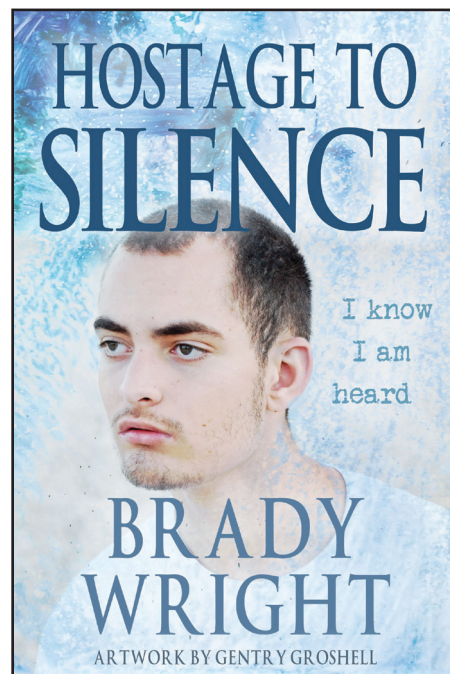
His grandmother, Yaya, had been diagnosed with ovarian cancer, and his mother had gone to South Florida to help her parents. Brady took the situation hard and dealt with it through his typing.

During one of his sessions, he asked if he could write a poem. It would prove to be the first of many.

According to Brady, poetry has given him “freedom to finally welcome my thoughts.” His interest in this literary form eventually grew, though he still needed to work out some things.

“I think I needed to understand Brady first,” he admitted.

Since that first poem, a message to his grandmother, Brady has been posting his work on his website, hostagetosilence.com.



Contributed photos

The cover of Brady’s book, ‘Hostage to Silence.’

Published author

Soon enough, Brady decided he’d like to write a book of poetry.

“I wanted to share my experiences with the world,” he wrote. “Some way to advocate for the voiceless.”

It was hard to write – as many an author will appreciate – and he labored at it for “days and days” over a period of roughly four years.

He soon realized he needed an illustrator, and fortunately, had gotten to know an artistic young woman who, like Brady, had learned to communicate via facilitated communication.

As a nonverbal child, Gentry Groshell first learned to express herself on canvas as an abstract artist. Starting with watercolor paper and progressing to large canvases, she developed a style using

bright colors in broad brushstrokes and leaving the interpretation of her designs to the viewer.

She reveals her own poetic sensibilities in the titles of her art, such as “Lost Love” and “Beautiful Heart.”

Her work proved to be just right for Brady’s poetry.

“Gentry paints with her heart and emotions,” wrote Brady. “I believe my book shows that as well. She is kind, so she is the perfect choice.”

The book is titled “Hostage to Silence” and, though it has just been published, it has already hit No. 1 on Amazon for a new release in disability parenting.

It can be purchased via Amazon, Barnes and Noble, Kobo, Scribd and Apple Books.

Brady wrote that those who read his book will learn a lot about him, his quiet life, friends and family. They’ll also learn about how he copes and about some of his fears, as well.

Reading his poetry, one comes to realize that Brady thinks deeply about things and has an appreciation for the differences in other people.

“Everyone has a face (face means reality),” he wrote, “and a favorite way to communicate. Not everyone is the same.”

Meet and greet

Brady and Gentry are planning a meet-and-greet and book-signing from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Jan. 29 at Peace of Heart Community, 14A South Roscoe Blvd., Ponte Vedra Beach.

The public is welcome but must RSVP to admin@hostagetosilence.com.

NOTE: This is an abridged version of the article. To read the story in its entirety, go to pontevedrarecorder.com.

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Zach Vinal is the Director of Golf at The Yards, which is one of the newest golf clubs in Ponte Vedra Beach, having opened in 2020. He brings an array of expertise to the position, having spent time as both a successful collegiate golfer and a history of teaching the game and overseeing the operations of a golf club.

Zach Vinal

As told to Anthony Richards

Can you please tell us a little bit about your background?

I'm originally from Syracuse, New York, the coldest place in America, and I had a very decorated junior golf career. I was all-state five times and was heavily recruited to play Division-1 golf and ended up committing to Maryland University.

My older brother went to Binghamton University, which was only an hour away (from Syracuse). Unfortunately, my dad got sick, and it was just easier to stay close to home.

I'm a big believer in why things happen and that everything happens for a reason, so I ended up going there (Binghamton) and we had a great team that made the NCAAs a couple of times, and I was an All-American my junior year.

I planned on staying at Binghamton to get my master's, but ended up actually getting rejected from grad school, which was funny because my GPA and all that stuff was outstanding to say the least. But then I got an offer for a job in California, and although I had zero interest to move to California, I went out there for one day and saw that it was 72 degrees and sunny and every day was like that, so I ended up spending almost 11 years in Southern California and wound up getting my master's at Long Beach State University in kinesiology and sports management.

What was the path like to your current role as Director of Golf at The Yards?

I started working at Virginia Country Club in Long Beach, and Mike Miles, who is my GM here, was one of the teaching pros there. I started working there in 2008 and began assistant golf pro and spent nine years there before going back to New York in 2018 to be the Director of Golf at Lakeshore Yacht and Country Club.

I spent three years there, and it was always part of the plan for me to come down here to Florida.

Mike called me in August of 2020 and asked when I could get here.

I think I'm done moving. This is it for me.

Basically, all the coolest things I've done in my life have been because of golf.

How do your varying experiences help in your current role?

Mike put it to me best after I was very close to qualifying for the U.S. Open one year, but I played terrible, and it was huge let down because I was expecting to be playing in the U.S. Open.

He said, "Zach, it doesn't matter, whether it's work, life or golf, you're going to learn a lot more when you get your butt kicked than when you succeed."

It helped me learn a bunch about getting to this point, because now I know all the stuff not to do. I've learned how much of the golf industry is really a people business.

When you come to work, what do you look forward to the most?

We probably have the best staff of people that I've ever



Photo by Anthony Richards

Zach Vinal is the Director of Golf at The Yards, which was established in 2020.

worked with, as far as understanding the day to day.

In the country club business, something is different every single day. Being able to do all those different things is probably the most fun.

This is my 14th year teaching golf, and having people understand the joy of hitting a really good golf shot and being a part of that is a pretty rewarding experience.

What are some of the challenges that you face?

The hardest part is just trying to make sure everyone is on the same page in terms of a member's standpoint, as far as understanding the vision and the reasons behind why we make decisions.

Having that group of people believe in what you are doing is big.

It's the hardest part, but also the most rewarding, because when you see that membership grow you know you're doing something right.

What do you enjoy most about living in Northeast Florida?

Growing up in Syracuse was great, but once you get to that no-winters component, it is one of the greatest things. Knowing that it's 3 (degrees) in Syracuse and I get to come to this every day is pretty darn nice, although I would love to work on the humidity component.

What do you like to do in your free time?

I watch a lot of golf, because I have some friends who are on tour, and I try to be as supportive of a friend as I can.

My girlfriend and I like to be outside, and we're going to start taking tennis lessons and doing what Florida people do.

I'm pretty normal, but a big sports guy, so it's fantasy football and all that kind of good stuff.

Student organization helping refugee children

A local, student-led nonprofit organization is helping young refugees find a new and better life. JaxTHRIVE is welcoming refugee children to America through tutoring and mentoring.

Founded in 2017 as a one-on-one, in-person Saturday learning program, the organization transitioned to virtual tutoring with the emergence of COVID-19. Although anxious to get back to in-person tutoring, JaxTHRIVE found that by offering a virtual option, it could engage volunteers and refugee students from all over the world.

The charity partners with Lutheran Social Services, Kim's Open Door and other organizations in the refugee resettlement arena to make a difference. Most recently, it announced a new partnership in Miami with the Refugee Assistance Alliance.

JaxTHRIVE boasts a current virtual enrollment of 25 students but expects that number to increase as more Afghanistan Special Immigrant Visa refugees are resettled into the United States.

JaxTHRIVE's Leadership Council is led by co-presidents Hope Freedman and Alexis Magnano who work to bring together a group of talented and diverse individuals to engage their community, show leadership, and work together to spread their mission. The nonprofit offers comprehensive services, including SAT/

ACT test preparation, financial literacy boot camps and college admission strategies in addition to academic tutoring. Its goal is to help students advance in the classroom and flourish in the community.

COVID-19 has not stopped JaxTHRIVE from pursuing its goals. The organization launched various special service projects such as "Holiday in a Bucket" to offer its volunteers additional ways to contribute. Volunteers were matched with either newly arrived families from Afghanistan or foster children from Jewish Family Services. Buckets were decorated and filled with gift items and homemade treats for the families to share. Girl Scout Troop 27 helped by hosting a clothing drive. The clothes were handed out along with the buckets.

Many of the Afghan families in Jacksonville were given special status because they risked their lives to help our U.S. soldiers.

In November, with funds awarded from the America's Promise Power of Youth Award, JaxTHRIVE partnered with Lutheran Social Services and with the refugee students for lunch in the park and a trip to the Cummer Museum.

JaxTHRIVE was recently awarded a grant through the Whole Foods Market Community Giving Program, which aims to support the local community, so they

partnered with Lutheran once again to coordinate a field trip to visit Sweet Pete's, the largest candy store in the Southeast United States. A master candymaker led the teens in a candy cane workshop and, afterwards, they were given a behind-the-scenes tour of the candy factory.

JaxTHRIVE volunteers have also been

helping to set up new apartments for the families coming from Afghanistan.

On Jan. 29, JaxTHRIVE is planning a winter festival to celebrate the relaunch of the in-person tutoring program in partnership with Kim's Open Door, though it will continue to offer virtual tutoring.

To learn more, go to jaxthrive.net.



Contributed photo

The JaxTHRIVE Leadership Team

March For Life



Photo by Shaun Ryan

The streets of St. Augustine were filled Saturday, Jan. 15, as a multitude of people marched from Mission Nombre de Dios, along Avenida Menendez and St. George Street to the Plaza de la Constitution for the 16th annual March For Life. The pro-life procession was bookended with speakers and live music.

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Fun activities planned at the link

There's a lot going on at the link this month!

Kid's Night Out

At the link, kids have fun while their parents have a well-deserved night out.

On Jan. 28, there will be a Kid's Night Out, with art & crafts, a P.J. party, pizza, snacks, games and movies. Parents can enjoy a well-deserved night out while their children are having the time of their lives.

Cost is \$50. To register, go to thelink.zone/getactive and click "This Month" and "Kids Night Out."

Comedy Series

It's time to laugh, to forget for a moment about the challenging times we are all living in. The link is launching a Comedy Series. This Jan. 21, enjoy the comedy of Marcus Crespo, Morgan Gallo and Mike Freed in a night of magic and fun. Limited seating.

Tickets are \$25 for this adults-only show, which starts at 8:30 p.m. Seats are first-come, first serve. Tickets include two complimentary drinks.

Crespo has a unique perspective and interesting take on reality, of-

fering his take on life, his own fears and his chronicles as a mall security officer.

Gallo is a St. Augustine-based comedian who has traveled throughout the Southeast sharing her unique, bold take on life. She recently was featured in the 2021 Ladies Room Comedy Festival in New York City and is a winner of the Jackie Knights Comedy Showdown in St. Augustine.

Freed is a clean observational comic who counts as his influences Demetri Martin, Steven Wright, Mitch Hedberg and Jerry Seinfeld. He performs regularly at the Comedy Zone in Jacksonville and at other clubs and venues nationally. His material is largely self-deprecating and draws on the trials and tribulations of being a little bald guy in a big-person world and his role as a father, husband, lawyer and a runner.

Entry during the event will be through the parking lot side only. Masks are not required but not discouraged. No outside food or drinks are permitted. Additional alcoholic drinks may not be sold on premises.

For tickets, go to thelink.zone/getactive and click "This Month" and "Special Events."

Artist Talk and Walk

Jan. 25 will be a night of art at the link. Starting at 5 p.m., visitors will see the work of German-American artist Susanne Schuenke. You will be inspired as she explains her paintings.

Schuenke's works are exhibited in public, corporate and private collections in the United States, Great Britain, Germany, France, Singapore, Japan, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, Lebanon and South Africa. Admission to this event is free.

New classes at the link

- Hip Hop at the link with Ms. Reilly. Wednesdays at 4:15 p.m. \$70 per month, with one class each week. Age 7+. To register, go to thelink.zone/getactive and click "This Month" and "Dance."

- Jiu-jitsu, starting Jan. 31. Classes for adults and kids on Mondays and Wednesdays. To learn more, go to thelink.zone/getactive and click "This Month" and "Martial Arts/Jiu Jitsu."

- Writer's Workshop on Feb 1. Coming back after successful first round of classes at the link. Further information will be available at thelink.zone.

Food for Fines collects 3,500 items for families in need

St. Johns County Public Library patrons were generous over the holiday season, donating more than 3,500 nonperishable food items for St. Johns County's Health and Human Services Food Pantry through Food for Fines.

The Food for Fines annual program enables patrons to donate food to local families in need and help "pay down" their overdue fines during the holiday season.

"It's a real benefit to the community we serve to have the Food for Fines program," said Tracy Dillon, social services manager for St. Johns County. "The food donated by library patrons replenishes our dwindling food supplies and allows us to operate our Food Pantry for nearly the whole year."

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

"We've seen the Food for Fines program grow every year since we first implemented it in 2007," said Library System Director Debra Rhodes Gibson. "For each item of food donated, a dollar of fines is taken off their account. It's even supported by our patrons who don't have fines. The whole community gets behind it."

Food for Fines is one of several collaborative programs that the St. Johns County Public Library System participates in with other county departments, extending its reach to St. Johns County residents.

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



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Baptist Health, Wolfson designated as clinical center for treatment of blood vessel disease

Baptist Health and Wolfson Children's Hospital were recognized as a designated clinical center by the Angioma Alliance for the treatment of cerebral cavernous malformations (CCM) in both adults and children.

A cerebral cavernous malformation, also known as a cerebral cavernous angioma or cavernoma, is a raspberry-shaped collection of abnormal blood vessels with thin, leaky walls, most often found in the brain and the spinal cord.

They can grow at any age, including in young children, though they are most likely to become symptomatic when a

person is between ages 20-40.

Wolfson Children's is the first children's hospital in Florida to receive this designation and the only pediatric hospital in the Southeast. Baptist Health is the only designated CCM clinical center in the Northeast Florida region.

"It's an honor to be the first children's hospital in Florida to receive this designation," said Philipp Aldana MD, co-medical director of the Walter and Michelle Stys Neuroscience Institute at Wolfson Children's and pediatric neurosurgeon at the UF College of Medicine – Jacksonville. "Our team has worked

closely with the Angioma Alliance to move this program forward as we are committed to providing outstanding care closer to home for children and families affected by CCMs. We look forward to raising visibility for this complex disease and helping patients get faster access to optimized treatments."

Angioma Alliance is a patient/family advocacy organization dedicated to informing, supporting and mobilizing those impacted by CCMs and driving research for better treatments and a cure. Baptist Health and Wolfson Children's were required to meet specific criteria to achieve

CCM clinical center status.

"Only one in 500 people have a cerebrovascular cavernous malformation," said Ricardo Hanel MD, neurosurgeon at Baptist Health. "While most people will have no symptoms, the condition can be devastating. Patients and families facing this diagnosis search for a team with expansive expertise that will create an individualized care and treatment plan. We're honored to provide this coordinated, compassionate care at Baptist Health and Wolfson Children's Hospital and to be recognized by the Angioma Alliance for our CCM program."



Leigh Cort

SenioRITAs raise \$184,500 for cancer center

By Leigh Cort

This year marks the 22nd anniversary of the SenioRITAs Tennis Tournament at Sawgrass Country Club. The all-volunteer team

effort continues to ensure that 100% of SenioRITA proceeds go directly to fighting

breast cancer through research and patient services.

When the RITA tournament began in late 1996 at Deercreek Country Club, the tennis committee was trying to create a great event; committee chair Charles Jantz suggested that Jacksonville needed a women's tennis event to raise money for a local charity. Breast cancer research was chosen.

Throughout the past 25 years, the

organization has expanded to include the "Mixed Ritas" and the "SenioRITAs," which has just presented a donation for \$184,500 to Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center's Senior Director of Development Jason Simpson.

SenioRITAs is a grass-roots volunteer organization that is increasing awareness of self-examination programs, treatment options and research programs within the Jacksonville community.

What makes SenioRITAs and RITA different from some other nonprofit organizations is that they're all-volunteer, meaning no salary, no rent and no overhead costs. Adding the major sponsors' generosity means that 100% of the net proceeds from each event is donated to local Jacksonville agencies. Every dollar stays in our community.

SENIORITAS continues on Page 11

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To book an appointment, call **904.720.0799** or visit **baptistheartspecialists.com**.



SenioRITAs

Continued from 9

To date, SenioRITAs have raised more than \$2 million to benefit research and patient services at Mayo Clinic, Baptist Medical Center Beaches and the Buddy Bus Mobile Mammography Unit.

“Thank you to Chuck Jantz and Karen Aaro and the entire SenioRITAs committee for their hard work and dedication,” said Jason Simpson, senior director of development for Baptist/MD Anderson Cancer Center. “Over the years, they have been passionate about the fight against breast cancer. Our patients are the true beneficiaries; in addition to helping fund the latest technology, the donations have been instrumental in offering financial support to the patients who lack resources in obtaining mammograms via the buddy bud, providing amenities to patients such as Dignicap and establishing an endowment so that we can plan for the future needs of our breast cancer patients at the beach and in North Florida. We are blessed to have such a great partner like SenioRITAs as we plan to serve our patients in the future!”

“In 2021, our events included our annual Pussers Party, the Sawgrass Country Club SenioRITAs Auction Party and the big weekend Tennis Tournament,” said Committee Chair Karen Aaro. “Our friends, families and sponsors were very

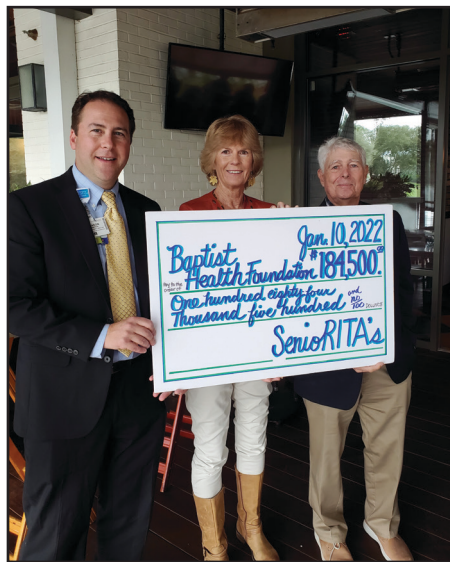


Photo provided by Leigh Cort
The SenioRITAs recently donated \$184,500 to Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center. Pictured from left are the center's Senior Director of Development Jason Simpson and committee chairs Karen Aaro and Chuck Jantz

generous this year, and the icing on the cake was a \$30,000 donation from an anonymous donor, which made 2021 the best year we ever had!”

Now, 25 years later, the RITAs and SenioRITAs have donated \$5,331,270 by “knocking that little ball over the net.”

For local information about joining the SenioRITAs tournament, volunteering, attending events or making a donation, send an email to chuckjantz@gmail.com or go to the-rita-foundation.org/senioritas.

Wellness clinic unveiled

Cypress Village recently unveiled its new wellness center location in its Assisted Living and Memory Care neighborhood with a cocktail reception and grand opening. Pictured are Victory Sloan, director of assisted living at Cypress Village, and members of her staff.

Contributed photo



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Crossroads Health and Wellness Center opens



Contributed photo

Crossroads Health and Wellness Center, 5960 Beach Blvd. Ste. 3, held a ribbon cutting and open house Thursday, Jan. 13. The center offers behavioral and mental health, substance abuse and primary care services, as well as crisis interventions 24 hours, seven days a week.



New Year, New Food

Celebrate the Chinese New Year with a Five-Course Meal at Hakka Kitchen.

Saturday, January 29 at 7pm

Hakka Kitchen, a new gourmet restaurant from The House of Leaf and Bean, offers Plant-based Chinese countryside cuisine made from fresh, organic ingredients paired with hand-picked teas and fine wines. Dining experience curated by Chef Marshall Ziehm.



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Congratulations, Mary DaCorta

For nearly 20 years, Mary DaCorta has tirelessly advocated for residents and helped countless families navigate the challenges of elder care as a member of the Social Services team at River Garden. Mary's professionalism and passion for the welfare of others embody the spirit of the late Minnie Schreiber, for whom this award is named. Congratulations, Mary – indeed your kindness is contagious! We are grateful for your dedication and heart in service to our residents and their families.



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County COA to focus on caregiving at upcoming events

By Anthony Richards

Getting sick or battling a disease like dementia is difficult for everyone involved, especially for the ones who are serving as caregivers for their suffering family member.

The St. Johns County Council on Aging Center is doing something that may help current and future caregivers with a pair of informational events pertaining to the subject coming in February at its location at Flagler Health+ Village at Nocatee.

One of the events is called “guidance through the caregiving journey” and will consist of three sessions, February 3, 10 and 24, each from 10 a.m. to noon.

Each session will focus on an entirely

new lesson.

The topics of the sessions are as follows:

- Lesson 1: Learning to understand; the journey starts with you
- Lesson 2: Learning to accept – how changes in the brain changes everything
- Lesson 3: Learning to find peace and harmony even during those difficult times

The lessons are designed to help answer questions that new caregivers may have about their role and the challenges they may encounter as part of their caregiver duties.

Paulette Kozlowski, adult day services manager at the COA, will be leading each of the lessons.

To RSVP for the lessons, residents must email Kozlowski at pkozlowski@stjohnscoa.com or call 904-209-3674.

Continuing with the caregiver theme will be a separate lecture scheduled for Feb. 17 from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. detailing the effective communication techniques caregivers can use.

Leading the lecture will be Gary Joseph LeBlanc, the educational director of the Dementia Spotlight Foundation.

He joined the foundation to help in their efforts after spending decades as a caregiver himself for family members.

LeBlanc is considered a certified specialist in dementia communication and has written several books on the topic

over the years.

The Dementia Spotlight Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization that was established in 2016 with the purpose of better understanding the complexities of dementia and the stigmas and fears that can often be associated with it.

According to the foundation’s website, 5.4 million Americans are living with Alzheimer’s or other forms of dementia.

Residents can reserve their spot to hear LeBlanc by contacting Sharon Gesek by email at sgesek@stjohnscoa.com or by calling 904-460-3946.

The COA Center is located at 351 Town Plaza Ave., Suite 205 in Ponte Vedra.

Baptist Medical Center Beaches first in Florida to provide new treatment for women

Every year, approximately 540,000 hysterectomies are performed for non-cancerous conditions, including uterine fibroids. Now, Baptist Medical Center Beaches offers the Acesa ProVu system, an effective, minimally invasive alternative for women with symptomatic fibroids who would otherwise require hysterectomies or another inpatient surgical procedure.

The Acesa Laparoscopic Radiofrequency Ablation is the first and only system to utilize controlled radio frequency energy to

destroy uterine fibroids. Once treated, the fibroid cells shrink over time, ultimately resolving fibroid symptoms.

Samuel Brown MD, infertility specialist and medical director of Brown Fertility, is the first to perform this procedure in Florida.

“Women with symptomatic fibroids often experience excessive menstrual bleeding, severe cramping and pain with sex,” said Brown. “This procedure is an effective, minimally invasive option that

greatly improves women’s quality of life. Many are able to return to normal activities within one to three days.”

The procedure usually takes about an hour and patients go home the same day.

There are a minimum of three incisions made, one in the navel and two near the bikini line. “Scarring is not usually visible,” said Brown. “The best part is that 94% of patients report that the treatment has been effective in eliminating their symptoms.”

The procedure is recommended for

pre-menopausal women (typically younger than 55) who are tired of living with the ongoing pain and discomfort of fibroids and are looking for a minimally invasive option that does not require an overnight hospital stay. The procedure keeps the uterus intact and allows women to return to daily life quickly after the procedure.

More information about this laparoscopic procedure, which is available at Baptist Beaches, can be found at baptistjax.com/fibroids.

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How to organize your next home move

Moving into a new home is perhaps the greatest organizational opportunity you can get. The average person only moves 11 or 12 times in their lifetime, so you need to take advantage.

Not only will this help bring peace and organization to your new home, but money as well. Moves are priced by both weight and space taken up in the truck, so the less you have, the less your move will cost you.

Here are some tips from local Jacksonville moving company, MoveDay Movers, on how you can best organize your move:

Start early – it's recommended to begin four to six weeks early to ensure you have time to book your first-choice mover, as well as properly pack and organize.

Go through one room at a time. Set a schedule of when you're going to be combing through each room, and what your goals are for going through items. Each time, make sure you set out three large boxes – one for giving away, a "maybe" box, and one for garage sale items if you're planning to have one.

Ask yourself if the item is worth paying to take with you. Throughout the organization process, remember that moves are charged by weight and space, so every item you have can add to the bottom line. This is a realistic and harsh way to approach purging items that can help you let go.

Set up a garage sale or sell items online. You may have some items you love, or that were expensive, but you also know they won't work in your new home. If you already know they won't work, or aren't worth taking with you, find a way to sell them prior to your move to avoid having to deal with them in your new space. Facebook Marketplace is an easy option if you can't go through a whole garage sale.

Enlist the help of friends and family. Organizing and getting rid of our personal items is hard. Friends and family can help you get through the emotion of this transition, and you may even be able to pass along some items to them that you no longer need.

Consider professional packing. Quality moving companies will provide services beyond just moving, including professional packing. This service can give you more time to get rid of unwanted items while also organizing your packing process so you start off correctly in your new home.

Professional packing may not be as expensive as you think, since moves are priced based on weight and the cubic feet you're taking up in the truck. Professionals are able to pack items well enough that you'll need fewer boxes and take up less space.

Color code boxes by room. No matter if you choose DIY or professional packing, color

coordinate your boxes as well as labelling them. Moving day can be hectic, and this will help everyone know exactly where boxes belong.

Set aside an essentials box. There are items you will need the first day you arrive in your new home. Towels, sheets, cleaning supplies, kitchen items like paper plates and more could be on that list. Decide what these items are for your family and either take that box personally or distinguish the box from others being moved to easily find it.

The best tip for having an organized move is to enlist the best possible mover to help you. If you feel confident they are professional, trustworthy and skilled, then you can focus on making the transition as smooth as possible for you and your family.



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THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 2022

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Rice talks THE PLAYERS at joint Chamber at Noon

By Anthony Richards

Now weeks into 2022, the focus begins to shift to the Ponte Vedra Beach's most marquee event, THE PLAYERS.

Tournament vice president and executive director Jared Rice was the guest speaker at the Jan. 12 Chamber at Noon event, which was hosted by both the St. Johns County and Jacksonville Chambers of Commerce.

He talked to the crowd in attendance at the Casa Marina Hotel and Restaurant in Jacksonville Beach about the excitement surrounding the current plan for this year's event.

"This tournament is the flagship and the gold standard for our tour," Rice said.

Despite the viewing audience remaining steady throughout the pandemic, with 215 countries and territories receiving event programming, Rice acknowledged that the last couple of years were rough and presented unique challenges for all involved.

It started with the 2020 championship, which was taking place when many sport leagues across the nation began shutting down due to the concern revolving around the COVID-19. As a result, that year's event was cancelled.

"I think everyone knows where they were on March 12, 2020," Rice said.

The championship was back in 2021, but procedures were in place with safety in mind including having a limited capacity of fans. Despite the challenges, the tournament went off as usual and was a success.

"Internally, it was widely viewed as our finest hour," Rice said.

However, Rice is anxious for what 2022

will hold and it will start and end with the inclusion of more fans.

"We all trust it will be an uncapped environment," Rice said. "But we have also shown we are flexible, and health and safety will always be in mind."

According to Rice, the festivities during the week leading up to tournament play will once again take place this year, with military members honored Tuesday along with a concert starring a country musician that will be named in the coming days.

This year's military appreciation theme will center around "women in the military."

In turn, he expects the championship to provide the local economic impact that had become accustomed before the pandemic.

The pre-pandemic economic impact figures on Northeast Florida included \$212 million brought in annually to the area, as well as \$115 million of off-site spending from event attendees.

"We expect to get back to those levels," Rice said.

From a business perspective the tournament brings an array of opportunities with more than 500 businesses on-site seeking to reach out to local, national and international markets.

Tournament Chairman Matt Welch was also on hand to speak to the Chambers about the initiatives THE PLAYERS does to give back to local charities.

"It's much more than just a golf tournament," Welch said. "The money it raises stays within the five-county area."

According to Welch, since its inception



Photo by Anthony Richards

Charlie Tramazzo with USO, THE PLAYERS vice president and executive director Jared Rice and tournament chairman Matt Welch at the Jan. 12 joint Chamber at Noon.

THE PLAYERS has helped support 300-plus charities that benefit local residents.

The amount of money donated is one of the things he is most proud of from all the success the tournament has had.

"We don't just write checks but go out and help the charities get where they want to be," Welch said. "By coming out to the tournament and supporting it, you are playing a part."

Tickets for this year's championship are now on sale at THEPLAYERS.com/tickets with parking sold separately. A new parking pass will be needed each day.

One of the neat changes this year is the implementation of allowing up to two children ages 15 and under with a ticketed adult.

According to Rice, the goal behind it is to continue to promote the game of golf to the next generation.

Gemstone Media wins Emmy

Gemstone Media, a Jacksonville-based video production company has been awarded an Emmy Award by the National Academy of Television and Arts & Science for Best Coverage.

This is Gemstone Media's third Emmy, and it is based on production excellence, creativity and coverage of the 25th Amelia Island's Concours d'Elegance.

"We are honored that our work and our team is being nationally recognized by the Academy," said Executive Producer Ray Hays.

"Driving Amelia" is a one-hour nationally televised documentary covering the 25th Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance, produced by Gemstone Media.

It is about automobile enthusiasts and owners and the passion that drives them. The documentary includes stories with legendary drivers, the Cannonball Run and how NASCAR teams used to "bend" the rules.

The show features stories on how pre-war banter gave birth to the Jeep, how a team of children judged the cars and the experience of driving the Eight-Flags Road Tour.

"Our talented group of directors, producers, script writers and video crew at Gemstone Media continue to go above and beyond to make the impossible possible," said CEO George Birnbaum. "We are here to support our clients and celebrate the work of our immensely talented and creative team."

Gemstone Media partnered with Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance and its foundation to benefit local charities. Proceeds from the commercial sponsorship of the program benefitted the foundation, which donated about \$4 million to Community Hospice, Spina Bifida and other local charities.

"Not only do we celebrate these awards internally but also as success stories with our clients," said Gemstone Media President Philip Green.

Local author's books focus on emotional intelligence

Published author, professional coach and corporate trainer Karen D. Nutter has launched two new books and training methods through her business, CBK Advising.

Nutter is based in Atlantic Beach, and her publications focus on emotional intelligence and working and living in a tumultuous world to develop the ability to perceive, use, understand and manage emotions, and finding harmony during difficult times.

According to Nutter, people with high

emotional intelligence can recognize their own emotions and those of others, use the correct information to guide thinking and behavior, discern between different feelings, label them appropriately and adjust emotions to adapt to environments. Her books cover wisdom and practical exercises as readers learn to let go of fear, develop knowing and acceptance, and the practices necessary to find inner peace through chaos.

"No matter what happens in the world around us, we need new opportunities

to create a stronger, more engaged and productive business and personal life to help us achieve goals in 2022," she said.

Nutter's books, "Finding Contentment in a Chaotic World" and "The Power of EQ: Stronger Leadership through Emotional Intelligence," offer a variety of methods and techniques to improve organizational and personal culture, leadership development, professional engagement and communication.

For more information, call 904-323-2946 or email Karen@CBKAdvising.com.

In the Arts



Send your arts news to
news@pontevedrarecorder.com

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First Coast Cultural Center launches new season

First Coast Cultural Center is launching its latest programs to support the non-profit, including youth and adult fine art and music programs and a new, personal empowerment class to enhance a variety of creative processes.

Classes and workshops for adults and children run through April this season and include:

- Monthly Open Figure
- Online Series with Ellen Diamond
- Chinese Ink Class with Kimberly Miller
- Unlock Your Power
- Travel Watercolor with Teresa Cook
- Nature and Art: Drawing in the Outdoors with Elaine Bergstrom
- Art Mingler with Amy Angelilli
- Drawing Fundamentals 1 with Marisela Quiros

- Drawing Fundamentals 2 with Marisela Quiros
- Private Resin Party
- Virtual Private Piano, Violin, and Cello Lessons with Sabrina Krisberg
- Community Studio

Children’s classes include:

- Kick StART After School Programs
- Private Piano and Orchestra
- Youth Drama and Improv Classes with Sheri Lahris
- Creative Birthday Parties

According to Donna Guzzo, First Coast Cultural Center’s president and executive director, the nonprofit is pleased to present updated classes and programs featuring renowned fine artists, musicians and speakers.

New to the lineup is Unlock Your Power. Guzzo’s expertise in leadership,

training and personal development will be featured in the class along with Carla Rodrigues, a trained empowerment coach who owns and operates Empowered Within, and a holistic veterinary practice in Jacksonville.

Unlock Your Power is a collaboration that offers area women tools and inspiration and an in-depth study about the female existence, the complexities and an artistic twist.

“As with all of our classes, programs and workshops, artistic expression is most notably linked to inspiration,” said Guzzo. “We are proud to hold our newest class with Dr. Rodrigues and discussions covering the pillars of self-empowerment, discovering one’s value and unveiling fulfillment. Just like art, confidence-building can be a first step towards leadership,



Donna Guzzo



Carla Rodrigues

alignment and purpose. We invite participants to be their unique selves in genuine love and light.”

For more information about programs, workshops, costs, policies, dates and times, call Jill Titcomb at 904-280-0614, ext. 1206, or go to firstcoastculturalcenter.org.

The center is open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays at 3972 3rd St. South, Jacksonville Beach. It holds programs there as well as at CareConnect+, 351 Town Plaza Ave., Nocatee.

Blues rock guitarists to perform at Ponte Vedra Concert Hall

Alligator Records artists Tommy Castro & The Painkillers and Tinsley Ellis will make a stop in Ponte Vedra Beach on their T’N’T tour. Castro and Ellis will each perform a full headline-length set at the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall on Jan. 27.

Guitarist, singer and songwriter Castro is on tour with his band, The Painkillers — bassist Randy McDonald, drummer Bowen Brown and keyboardist Michael Emerson — celebrating the release of his trailblazing new album, “Tommy Castro Presents A Bluesman Came To Town.”

Armed with his signature molten licks, melodic riffs and rousing, intense solos, blues-rock guitarist, vocalist and songwriter Tinsley Ellis is among the blues world’s best loved, hardest working and most well-traveled statesmen. Ellis’ is on tour celebrating the Jan. 21 release of his new Alligator Records album, “Devil May Care.”

Showtime is 8 p.m. Tickets are \$38-\$54 and can be purchased at ticketmaster.com.

Further information is available at pvconcerthall.com.

Blues acts to perform at Ponte Vedra Concert Hall



Two blues acts, GA-20 and JD Simo, will perform at Ponte Vedra Concert Hall on Jan. 23. The show and U.S. tour together support of both acts’ new studio albums.

Nashville-based JD Simo’s new album, “Mind Control,” was released Nov. 5 via

Crows Feet Record. It’s the follow-up to his acclaimed 2020 self-titled album. In addition, Simo has also been added to the bill of the Allman Family Revival show.

Boston-based GA-20’s acclaimed new LP, “GA-20 Does Hound Dog Taylor: Try It... You Might Like It!” landed at the No. 1 spot on Billboard’s Blues Albums Chart in September, and it’s been receiving 4-star reviews from the likes of The Guardian, Rolling Stone, American Songwriter, MOJO, Shindig!, DownBeat and others.

The album is a tribute to the late Chi-

cago blues great, Hound Dog Taylor. The group is led by blues legend Charlie Musselwhite’s longtime guitarist Matt Stubbs and vocalist/guitarist Pat Faherty.

The LP was released on Aug. 20 and is a co-release with both Karma Chief Records and Alligator Records. The album is getting spins on more than 350 radio stations worldwide.

The local show will begin at 7:30 p.m. Jan. 23 at Ponte Vedra Concert Hall, 1050 A1A N, Ponte Vedra Beach. Tickets cost \$21-\$31. They can be purchased at ticketmaster.com.

2022 ALHAMBRA THEATRE SCHEDULE

<p style="font-style: italic;">Treat yourself with</p> <h1 style="margin: 0;">ALHAMBRA SEASON TICKETS</h1>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> <p style="font-weight: bold;">GUYS AND DOLLS</p> <p style="font-style: italic;">January 13 - February 13</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> <p style="font-weight: bold;">THE WIZARD OF OZ</p> <p style="font-style: italic;">Summer Family Show June 16 - July 31</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <p style="font-weight: bold;">THE PLAY THAT GOES WRONG</p> <p style="font-style: italic;">February 17 - March 13</p> </td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <p style="font-weight: bold;">GRUMPY OLD MEN</p> <p style="font-style: italic;">August 11 - September 18</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <p style="font-weight: bold;">ROCK OF AGES</p> <p style="font-style: italic;">March 24 - May 1</p> </td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <p style="font-weight: bold;">GHOST THE MUSICAL</p> <p style="font-style: italic;">September 29 - November 6</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <p style="font-weight: bold;">42ND STREET</p> <p style="font-style: italic;">May 12 - June 12</p> </td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <p style="font-weight: bold;">WHITE CHRISTMAS</p> <p style="font-style: italic;">November 17 - December 24</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p style="font-weight: bold;">GUYS AND DOLLS</p> <p style="font-style: italic;">January 13 - February 13</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold;">THE WIZARD OF OZ</p> <p style="font-style: italic;">Summer Family Show June 16 - July 31</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold;">THE PLAY THAT GOES WRONG</p> <p style="font-style: italic;">February 17 - March 13</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold;">GRUMPY OLD MEN</p> <p style="font-style: italic;">August 11 - September 18</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold;">ROCK OF AGES</p> <p style="font-style: italic;">March 24 - May 1</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold;">GHOST THE MUSICAL</p> <p style="font-style: italic;">September 29 - November 6</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold;">42ND STREET</p> <p style="font-style: italic;">May 12 - June 12</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold;">WHITE CHRISTMAS</p> <p style="font-style: italic;">November 17 - December 24</p>
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Sports



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Fast start propels Panthers past rival Sharks

By Anthony Richards

Anytime Nease and Ponte Vedra meet there is a certain intensity that surrounds the game, no matter what sport it is.

Most recently, the two schools met on the hardwood for a Jan. 13 girls basketball contest where the host Panthers defeated the Sharks 51-39.

“This game had been on our calendar for a while now,” Nease senior Sydney Gomes said.

For Allison Fifield and the rest of the seniors that have been in the program the past four years, they can now proudly say that they never lost to Ponte Vedra during their high school career.

“All four years,” Fifield said. “I love playing this game, and it’s always close no matter what because it is a rivalry.”

The Panthers (15-3) never trailed on the night and stormed out to a 13-1 lead

following the tip-off.

Gomes had 10 points in the first quarter and the Panthers hit four three-pointers, including a pair by Camryn Robinson, the second of which beat the buzzer to give the Panthers a 21-11 lead.

“We knew Ponte Vedra can shoot threes, but we don’t usually shoot that many, so hitting those ones right before the quarter was key,” Nease head coach Sherri Anthony said.

Contributing to the lead was that the Panthers started the game in a full-court press and forced the Sharks (11-7) to speed up their play at times, which allowed the Panthers to jump into passing lanes and find points in transition off the turnovers.

Not only did the Panthers have success with their press, but they also demon-



Photo by Anthony Richards

Nease senior Sydney Gomes splits Ponte Vedra's Regan Chappell and Maya Richards on her way to the basket. She finished with 30 points to lead all scorers on the night.

PANTHERS continues on Page 22

The Pros return to Ponte Vedra Beach March 2022

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Goal-filled first half leads Sharks past Bulldogs

By Anthony Richards

The Ponte Vedra Sharks boys soccer team remained undefeated and improved to a record of 9-0-2 following a 3-1 win over the visiting Bolles Bulldogs Jan. 12.

It had been a while since the Sharks had played a game, with their last coming on Dec. 16, so there was some expected rust that the squad had to shake off en route to the victory.

“We’ve been practicing a lot, which really helped out,” senior Aaron Novak said. “I love our team this year and being undefeated is really cool. We’re just trying to keep it alive.”

However, once the Sharks found their groove, they were able to take advantage with three first half goals.

The scoring was a product of the Sharks controlling possession for much of the first half and creating several opportunities in the box or just outside as a result.

Novak opened the scoring on the night for the Sharks. The chance was set up following a corner kick from Andreas Villasana that was initially headed by Jake McGowan before Novak buried it in the back of the net with 33:28 to play in the first half.

“The defender wasn’t stepping to the ball, and I thought I could poke it in,” Novak said. “I didn’t think I could score at first, but it went in, which was pretty cool.”



Johnny Luce (No. 9) celebrates with teammates Andreas Villasana (No. 13) and Dylan Ball (No. 5) following his goal that put Ponte Vedra up 2-0.

The Sharks added to their lead and went up 2-0 after Johnny Luce knocked in a goal thanks to a well-placed throw in by Liam Burchell with less than 14 minutes in the first half.

However, the Bulldogs answered with pressure in front of the net and a header that found its way to cut the Sharks’ lead back to one only a minute later.

But the Sharks were unfazed by the sudden goal and pushed right back as Cade Greenwald made a run down the left side and it led to a goal from Dylan Ball, who fought to get prime position in front of the net, and he knew exactly what to do

with it.

“Whenever I see the guy going down the sideline, I watch the runners to see where they go and I try to find that open space,” Ball said. “Once you find that open space, you just hope it (the ball) gets to you.”

The Sharks led 3-1 at halftime and maintained it throughout the second half, as the defense held tight against the attacking Bulldogs and Will Sheehan was strong in net, only allowing the one goal.

According to Novak, the defense has continued to improve since the start of the season, even despite some shakeups



Andreas Villasana pushes the ball up field during a three-goal first half, in which the Sharks controlled possession.

Photos by Anthony Richards

within the lineup.

“We’ve had a few players, with Sammy Soares and Dylan Ball converting from winger to defense, which has really helped,” Novak said.

The transitions were made during the early part of the season and both players have gelled into their roles with each game that has passed.

“What I really like about this team is that we can trust each other,” Ball said. “Last year was a tough year with COVID and everything, but this year we have a big group of seniors that are really motivated to make it far in the playoffs.”

Jorts Open: A zany tournament for a good cause

By Shaun Ryan

Don’t know the difference between a putter and a wedge? Ever wonder why a golfer who shoots a 70 is so great when you can easily shoot three times that? Think a mulligan is a stew?

Then grab whatever you’re using for a golf bag and register for one of the craziest tournaments in the sport.

The Jorts Open, now in its 11th year, is scheduled for April 30 at the Palm Valley Golf Course. Proceeds benefit North St. Johns County Young Life.

With its hillbilly theme, the Jorts Open does not take itself too seriously.

Each golfer gets three clubs, and the tournament is limited to nine holes. But participants will want to leave their usual golfing attire at home in favor of something less flashy. A lot less flashy. (For the uninitiated, “jorts” is short for “jean shorts,” a preferred garment for the event.)

In fact, participants will be judged on their attire in addition to their golf score. “It’s a golf tournament unlike any other that I’ve seen,” said Chris Bretton,

area director for North St. Johns County Young Life.

And there’s a special hole-in-one prize, in case a golfer should make that toughest of shots: a John Deere tractor.

Last year was the first time Young Life was the beneficiary of the Jorts Open. And despite the impact of the pandemic, the tournament attracted more than 120 golfers.

For that reason, the event has been split into two flights this year. Golfers may register for the morning flight (10 a.m. to

JORTS continues on Page 22



Contributed photos

In addition to players’ golf scores, Jorts Open participants are judged on their attire, which is selected to go with the tournament’s hillbilly theme.



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THEME: WINTER OLYMPICS

ACROSS

1. Sleeps in a tent
6. Horror movie franchise
9. Varieties
13. Mozart's "Die Zauberflote"
14. Road crew supply
15. Moron
16. Workman's cotton, once
17. Exclamation of surprise
18. Monte Cristo's title, in French
19. *Olympic Athletes from _____, 2018 hockey winners
21. *Figure skating jump (2 words)
23. Capone's ilk, e.g.
24. Attention-getting sound
25. Eminem's genre
28. Cashier's call
30. Hit-or-miss
35. It will
37. *Triple one in figure skating
39. Hustle and bustle
40. German Mrs.
41. A mile racer
43. a.k.a. horse mackerel
44. Jargon
46. Workbench holding device
47. Health club offering
48. Diner, e.g.
50. Latin for "and others"
52. _____ Aviv
53. Ill-mannered one
55. Curiosity's victim?
57. *2022 Winter Olympics location
61. *Torch Relay starting point
64. "_____ the Family" TV series
65. Refrigerator sound
67. Poppy seed derivative
69. Bitterly regretting
70. Egyptian cobra
71. Part of a stair
72. Seedy source of Omega-3s
73. More, in Madrid
74. Changes to a manuscript

DOWN

1. Cape _____, MA
2. Copycat
3. Carte du jour
4. Spectrum maker
5. Delilah's lover
6. Roofed colonnade
7. Expression of satisfaction
8. Angry
9. Revered one
10. Fancy ride
11. Japanese zither
12. Pas in ballet
15. "Freezing" Marvel character
20. Letter-shaped girder
22. "_____ the land of the free..."
24. Designer's studio
25. *Biathlon gear
26. Skylit lobbies
27. Manufacturing site
29. *2022 Winter Olympics number
31. Like Curious George
32. Monocot's alternative
33. "Killers of the Flower Moon" Oklahoma location
34. *Olympic award
36. *Olympic sled
38. For fear that
42. Respond
45. Circling
49. Far, old-fashioned
51. Capital of Punjab
54. Early Irish alphabet
56. Sort of warm
57. Vomit
58. Twelfth month of Jewish year
59. Pelvic bones
60. Put a hex on
61. Concert units
62. Not yet final
63. Edible fat
66. *Miracle on Ice winner
68. Not Miss or Ms.

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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.



Photo by Anthony Richards

Camryn Robinson of Nease dribbles against Ponte Vedra's Paige Hulihan.

Panthers

Continued from 20

strated a suffocating half-court defense that really took away driving lanes for the Sharks and forced them to take jumpers on many occasions.

"We're playing so much more together, and it's just smooth out there," Fifield said. "Our final goal is to win, and it's just been working out really well."

However, the Sharks clawed their way back thanks to lights-out shooting from beyond the arc.

Ponte Vedra's Morgan Gavazzi hit a pair of shots from long range to help cut the Sharks' deficit to five, 31-26, at halftime.

She hit four three-pointers on the night and finished with a team-high 14 points.

However, the Panthers were able to keep pace and hit their share of shots, as the sister pairing of Sydney and Savannah Gomes had a huge night.

"Tonight, I was definitely soaking it in,

because we haven't had a crowd like that since I've been here (the last two years), so that was pretty cool," Sydney Gomes said.

She was unstoppable at times and appeared to be everywhere on the court as she led all scorers with 30 points.

"They came out in man, so I knew I could probably beat them off the dribble and get to the rim and finish," Sydney Gomes said. "I hit most of my layups today, which hasn't happened in a while."

Savannah finished with eight points and knocked down a pair from bonus land, which was a sign that her confidence is continuing to grow since returning from a knee injury last season, which took place against the Sharks.

"We all really stepped up tonight, and I just couldn't be happier," Savannah Gomes said.

According to Savannah, although driving to the basket may be a little different following the injury, her shot has always been something she can rely on.

"That never went away," she said.

Jorts

Continued from 21

1 p.m.) or the afternoon flight (4 p.m. to sunset). Organizers hope this will accommodate 200 or more entrants.

Young Life is a nondenominational ministry for youth in grades six through 12. Currently, more than 400 area families are involved with the nonprofit. Young Life builds relationships with youth who might never set foot in a church and thus never have the benefit of belonging to a traditional youth group.

Adults take the time to show up in the lives of the young participants. They have

a weekly "party with a purpose," a Bible study for youth who wouldn't normally attend a traditional Bible study, and summer and weekend camps.

And, while faith is a big part of Young Life, it's not limited to that.

"We talk about more than Jesus," said Bretton. "We talk about life."

To register for one of the tournament flights, purchase raffle tickets or sign up to be a sponsor, go to northstjohnscounty.younglife.team/young-life-jorts-open-2022.

Palm Valley Golf Course is located at 1075 Palm Valley Road, Ponte Vedra Beach.

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<p>Private Party Line Rates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$14.00 1 week • \$23.00 2 weeks • \$31.00 3 weeks • \$37.50 4 weeks <p><i>Add lines \$2.15 each</i></p> <p>(Couches, TV's, Beds, Household Items, Etc.)</p>	<p>Commercial Line Rates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$22.50 1 week • \$39.00 2 weeks • \$55.50 3 weeks • \$70.00 4 weeks <p><i>Add lines \$2.15 each</i></p> <p>(Animals, Cars, Renting or Selling a Home or to Advertise Your Business or Services)</p>	<p>Employment Spotlight/Real Estate</p> <p>1x2 (2"x2") \$40.50/1 wk • \$70.00/2 wks. • \$100/3 wks. 1x3 (2"x3") \$61.50/1 wk. • \$112.00/2 wks. • \$150.00/3 wks. 2x2 (4"x2") \$82.00/1 wk. • \$153.00/2 wks. • \$200.00/3 wks. 2x3 (4"x3") \$123.00/1 wk. • \$225/2 wks. • \$300/3 wks.</p>	<p>Business & Worship Directory</p> <p>1.5 x 2 \$55.00/month 1.5 x 4 \$96.52/month 1.5 x 6 \$149.52/month</p> <p><i>Rate Guide for: The Recorder</i></p>
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LEGAL NOTICES

Legal Notice

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2022, The Ponte Vedra Recorder meets the requirements of the State of Florida to place legal notices according to Public Notice Criteria House Bill 35 for Newspapers. To place your legal notice, please contact April Snyder at april@pontevedrarecorder.com or by phone at 904-285-8831 x1204.

BUSINESS SERVICES

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The COVID crisis has cost us all something. Many have lost jobs and financial security. Have \$10K In Debt? Credit Cards. Medical Bills. Car Loans. Call NATIONAL DEBT RELIEF! We can help! Get a FREE debt relief quote: Call 1-877-316-7129

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Local in Ponte Vedra

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Jennifer Zeiller
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David Weekley, Tradewind model on a private fenced, corner lot. Media room, upgraded wood flooring, new carpet and storage galore. 4 BR, 3 BA, 3,031 SF MLS 1148570 \$739,900
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THE GROVE AT TWENTY MILE

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Matt & Naomi (904) 234-5014



COASTAL OAKS

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RAVENSWOOD

Water View Lot! Located in one of the fastest growing areas of St. Augustine, 53.5' x 150' lot has giant oaks and views of the marsh and San Sebastian River. MLS 1132810 \$175,000
Malia Finger (904) 994-8444



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John Richardson (609) 335-2186



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SUMMERWOOD FLOOR PLAN with an upgraded gourmet kitchen, wrap around covered lanai and an oversized lot. 3 BR, 2 BA, 2,000 SF MLS 1144463 \$547,000
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Estate Home by ICI Homes! Soaring ceilings, stunning Linear gas fireplace and a gourmet kitchen featuring California style island. 4 BR, 4 BA, 3,839 SF MLS 1147105 \$1,149,900
Michael Paull (904) 705-1004



COASTAL OAKS

San Tropez open floor plan on a 70' preserve lot! Office and an upstairs loft. Dream Kitchen with Stainless Steel appliances. 4 BR, 3.5 BA, 3,123 SF MLS 1144342 \$869,000
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