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PONTE VEDRA



Recorder

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75 cents

PonteVedraRecorder.com

Not your average newspaper, not your average reader



Sand Castles

Pages 15-42



Teacher of the Year

Page 7



INSIDE: CHECK IT OUT!

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



Photo by Anthony Richards

Nease's Cami Robinson takes a selfie with teammate Ella Harrison during player introductions prior to a girls basketball contest in the Panther Den against Fletcher Jan. 20. There were plenty of smiles up and down the Panthers' bench all night as they beat the Senators 65-7.

Read the story and see more photos on page 53.



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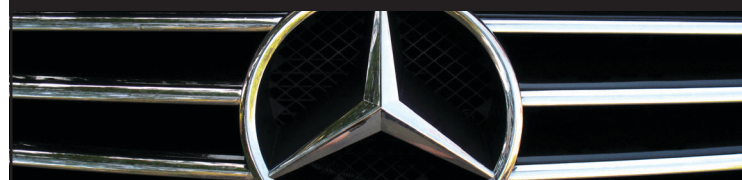
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One of Us

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In the Arts

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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

ADOPT A PET

Cody

Hello! I'm a 2-year-old male terrier mix. I love to be outside, chase balls and explore the yard. I'm a very sweet boy who loves to give kisses. I was lost and the nice people at the Pet Center took me in and now I'm ready to find my "forever" family. If you are looking to add a new pet to your family and think we might be a match, please stop by the pet center to meet me.



Mia

Hi, I'm Mia. I love loving! I love to be held and gently petted. I purr easily. I can be a wiggle-worm, too. I play very well and am likely good with kids. I'm a little more interested in people and getting loving on than with toys, but I'm getting the hang of them. I really enjoy people the most though! Come let me love on you!



St. Johns County Pet Center

Cat adoptions at the St. Johns County Pet Center 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 off U.S. 1 between County Road 210 and International Golf Parkway. Business hours are 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday-Friday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday. 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, call the **St. Johns County Pet Center at (904) 209-6190.**

BRIEFS

Novelist to speak at Sisters in Crime meeting

The Northeast Florida Chapter of Sisters in Crime will host Kaye D. Schmitz, a multi-published, multi-award-winning novelist, at its Feb. 5 meeting.

Schmitz will present "Research Like Crazy — Write Calmly" in the FOL meeting room of the Ponte Vedra Library, 101 Library Blvd., Ponte Vedra Beach.

The meeting begins at 10:30 a.m.

For further information, contact Audrey O'Neil at 904-945-5150 or by email at floridasistersincrime@gmail.com.

Clerk of Courts warns against jury duty scam

The St. Johns County Clerk of Circuit Court and Comptroller's Office is warning residents about fraudulent phone calls from scammers claiming to be representatives of the Clerk's Office or law enforcement.

Many scammers claim that the individual has missed jury duty and must make immediate pay-

ment to avoid penalties. In some cases, the scammer indicates a warrant has been issued for the resident's arrest and requests the individual provide personal information, such as Social Security number and date of birth for verification.

Additionally, some scammers seek payment of a bond or fine for failure to appear for jury duty.

Clerk's office employees will never phone a resident to request payment for failure to appear. Failure to appear for jury duty requires attendance in court prior to any penalties being imposed, which would be ordered by a judge.

When residents don't respond to a summons for jury duty, they are contacted through an official letter from the St. Johns County Clerk of the Circuit Court sent through the U.S. Postal Service.

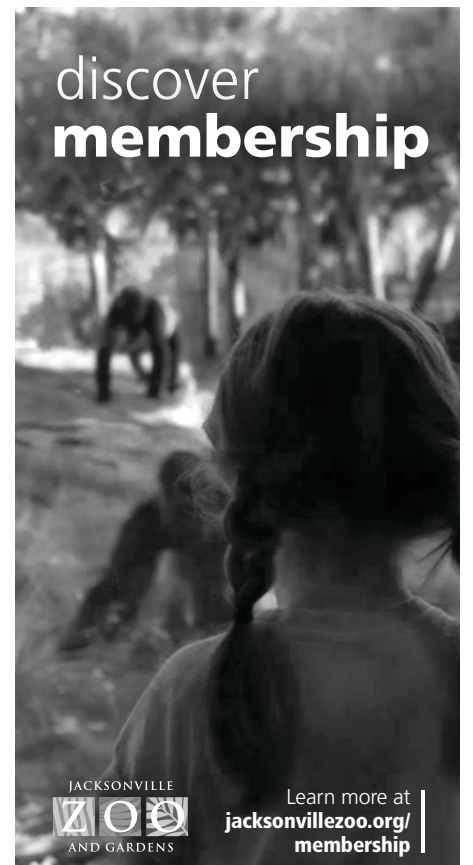
If you receive a suspicious call, the Clerk's Office advises that you provide

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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Briefs

Continued from 2

no information, end the call immediately and report the incident to the Florida Office of the Attorney General at 866-9NOSCAM (866-966-7226).

For questions regarding jury duty in St. Johns County, call 904-819-3629.

Circumnavigators forming chapter

If you've been around the world, there's a place to meet your fellow travelers.

A chapter of The Circumnavigators

Club is being formed in Ponte Vedra, and there's just one requirement: You must have been around the world on one trip.

The international club traces its origin to 1902 when two men sailed around the globe and decided to start the club to share their experiences with others. Its early members included President William Howard Taft, Harry Houdini, William Jennings Bryan and John Phillip Sousa. Today's membership includes many astronauts.

There are 14 chapters, including Palm Beach and Naples in Florida. The goal is to bring people together who are interested in world travel and the Northeast

Florida area may have many who qualify.

An introductory meeting in Ponte Vedra is planned for early April.

Information on the club is at circumnavigators.org. The local representative is Fred Seely, who can be reached at fs4569@comcast.net.

DeSantis Awards \$2.3M for CDL training, workforce education

On Jan. 20, Gov. Ron DeSantis awarded \$2.3 million in funding to support rapid credentialing workforce and education programs, including commercial driver's license and logistics training. These programs will help Floridians earn

high-wage jobs and support the supply chain that is currently in great need of workers. DeSantis made the announcement at the Hardee Campus of South Florida State College, an award recipient and strong performer in the Florida Department of Education's rapid credentialing program.

The total immediate collective impact is estimated to benefit 1,200 students by May and benefit 2,000 students by August. Class A and B CDLs remain in high demand across the state and can lead to mid-level family-sustaining wages, as can critical entry-level health care occupations.

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Pipe project to impact shopping center

The St. Johns County Utility Department recently began a pipeline project that will connect two of the county's water reclamation facilities in Ponte Vedra Beach.

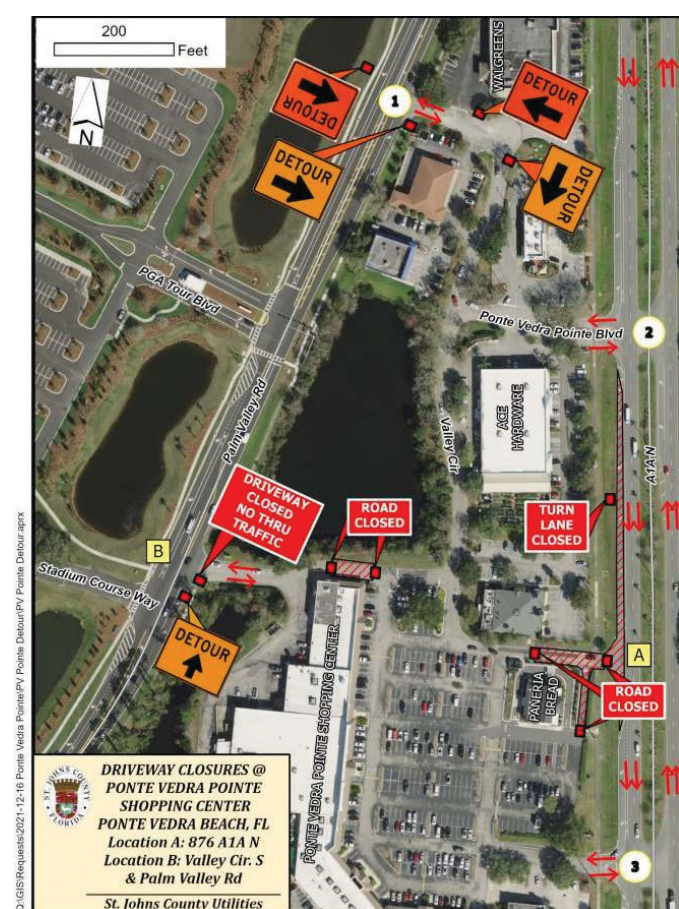
For the safety of crews and the general public, two access points to the Ponte Vedra Pointe shopping center will be impacted by the project, which is scheduled for completion in late February.

The driveway from Palm Valley Road to the Ponte Vedra Pointe shopping center near Goodwill is limited to local deliveries only, and traffic from Palm Valley Road is diverted north to the driveway near Walgreens.

Additionally, the entrance near Panera Bread will be closed throughout the project.

Additional pipeline construction on the east side of State Road A1A from Ponte Vedra Pointe to the Sawgrass Drive West-A1A intersection will occur after THE PLAYERS Championship golf tournament in March.

Once the pipeline is complete, the Sawgrass Water Reclamation Facility, 10047 Sawgrass Drive West, will be decommissioned and those flows will be diverted to the Players Club Water Reclamation Facility, 1100 ATP Tour Blvd.



County moves ahead with South Ponte Vedra dune restoration

By Shaun Ryan

The St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners unanimously approved funding and the hiring of a contractor Tuesday, Jan. 18, for the South Ponte Vedra Dune Restoration Project.

This dredging and beach fill project spans the area starting from Serenata Beach and extending north for about five and a half miles. It is unrelated to the FEMA Dune Enhancement Project, which is now under way.

The South Ponte Vedra segment of shoreline has sustained critical erosion due to a number of storms over the past six years, beginning with Hurricane Matthew in 2016. However, attempts to procure federal assistance to restore the beach were unsuccessful.

Referring to these failed attempts, Commissioner Henry Dean called the stretch “the Rodney Dangerfield of beach renourishment projects.”

The commission approved the hiring of Weeks Marine Inc. of Convington, Louisiana, to do the work at a cost of about \$13 million. The project will involve the dredging of about 670,000 cubic yards of sand from an offshore borrow site and

placing it on the beach.

The project will be funded in part by a grant from the state Department of Environmental Protection. The remainder will be funded through special taxes levied on property in that area, though that could be offset if the Legislature passes the Fiscal Recovery Infrastructure and Disaster Relief Flexibility Act, which could make the project eligible for special funding.

The total cost of the project — including contingency — is estimated at about \$15.1 million, with the lion's share, \$14.6 million, in the South Ponte Vedra segment. Just over \$600,000 will be required for the Serenata portion.

After factoring for the grant reimbursement, the net cost falls to \$7.3 million for the South Ponte Vedra portion, where homeowners will pay \$3.20 per \$1,000 of their assessed property value. The Serenata segment falls to \$303,355, with a tax rate of 61 cents for \$1,000 of property value.

These tax estimates are based on current values, so they could change before the annual budget process gets under way in July.

The project is expected to be complete by June 30.

Wolfson joins call for legislation, funding for children's mental health resources

In response to the pediatric mental health crisis, Wolfson Children's Hospital has joined the Children's Hospital Association (CHA) and colleagues across the country in a national campaign to increase awareness of the need for federal funding for mental health services.

“Sound the Alarm for Kids,” launched by the association, American Academy of Pediatrics and American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists, urges federal lawmakers to enact legislation and increase funding to address a national mental health emergency in children and teens.

“We are facing a significant national mental health crisis in our children and teens which requires urgent action,” said Amy Wimpey Knight, association president. “In the first six months of last year, children's hospitals across the country reported a shocking 45% increase in the number of self-injury and suicide cases in 5- to 17-year-olds compared to the same period in 2019. Together with the AAP, AACAP and other national child health and mental health organizations, we are sounding the alarm on this mental health emergency.”

The rates of mental health emergencies among children have significantly increased during the pandemic, including:

- A 300% increase in pediatric behav-

ioral health emergency admissions at Wolfson Children's Hospital.

- A 200% increase in requests for Wolfson Children's Behavioral Health outpatient appointments.

- A 14% increase in mental health emergencies for 5- to 17-year-olds seen at children's hospitals nationwide in the first two quarters of 2021 compared to the same period in 2019.

“This issue began long before COVID-19, but the pandemic has certainly made it worse,” said Michael D. Aubin, Wolfson Children's Hospital president. “In addition to providing care for the children in the hospital, it is our responsibility to reach into the community and advocate for children, finding ways to intervene before they end up in crisis and calling on those in power to increase funding for services.”

The On Our Sleeves program is one way Wolfson Children's is addressing the crisis. On Our Sleeves provides adults with free, easy-to-use resources to start conversations with children and teens, boost mental wellness and prevent crises.

To view resources or sign up for the monthly e-newsletter, go to WolfsonChildrens.com/OnOurSleeves. Those who need to speak with someone immediately can call the Wolfson Children's 24/7 Kids & Teens Helpline at 904-202-7900 or text LIFE to 741741.

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Veterans group blasts Biden Administration over missed VA deadline

Concerned Veterans for America (CVA) on Monday responded Monday, Jan. 12, to the news that the Biden Administration postponed its recommendations to modernize and realign the Department of Veterans Affairs, punting for at least six weeks a required report outlining their plan to modernize the agency's infrastructure footprint.

This news comes following the VA failing to meet the May 31, 2021, deadline to nominate Asset and Infrastructure Review (AIR) commissioners as required

by the VA MISSION Act.

Russ Duerstine, CVA's deputy director, had this to say about the administration's lack of commitment to our nation's veterans:

"With this delay, the Biden administration is sending a very clear message to veterans that their health and well-being is not a priority. The Department of Veterans Affairs has continued to fail our nation's heroes throughout the duration of this pandemic by canceling or delaying millions of appointments and acting

as a barrier to veterans trying to get timely and quality care. And worse, now this administration has no plan to make public the recommendations needed to fix the broken VA system. The reality is veterans are dying waiting for care under Secretary McDonough's department. The deadline has been passed for accountability and transparency. Now the question is: how many more veterans' lives will be lost before this administration makes them a priority?"

In July 2021, CVA's sister organiza-

tion, Americans for Prosperity Foundation (AFPF) filed a lawsuit against the Department of Veterans Affairs after the VA failed to respond to a series of Freedom of Information Act requests seeking records about VA wait-times from VA headquarters and in medical centers across multiple states, including Florida, Arizona, Montana and West Virginia.

The VA has faced repeated scandals in recent years over its mismanagement of patient scheduling systems and wait-time data.

Northeast Florida housing market continues historic trend

Nationwide, the 2021 housing market was one for the history books, and the same was true for Northeast Florida.

After three consecutive months of price increases, existing home sales are on pace to hit their highest level in 15 years with an estimated six million homes sold in 2021, according to the National Association of Realtors (NEFAR).

In Northeast Florida, sales prices reached new heights, inventory scraped rock bottom and homes sold in record time, often for well above the asking price.

"December capped off an exceptional real estate market year in Northeast Florida," said NEFAR President Mark Rosener. "Sales of all property types were brisk throughout the year clocking in at nearly 38,000 properties sold for 2021."

In single family residential housing across Northeast Florida, the median sales price for December rose to \$350,000, a small increase over November's median of \$349,013 but a 22% increase from December 2020.

"The median sales price of all properties sold is at an all-time high of \$323,900, although it appears that this

may be showing signs of moderating as the December median sales price was virtually the same as it was at the end of November," Rosener said.

Meanwhile, the region's inventory of homes fell to 1.1 months' supply, a 20.2% decrease from November 2021 and a 25.9% drop from December 2020.

"The end of December is historically our lowest inventory level, and we would anticipate that more homes will be coming on the market to take advantage of the spring selling season," Rosener said. "Inventory remains at a record low with just over 3,400 properties actively for sale at the end of December, which represents just over one month's supply at our current sales level."

With a median of 24 days on the market in December, homes are still selling at a fast clip with 99.6% of sellers receiving their asking price and 31.5% closing above the listing price, which is a 91% increase from a year ago.

"We still see a very short marketing time of days on market, with most properties selling at or slightly above list price, although these two indicators seem to be moderating in December as well,"

said Rosener.

New listings of single-family homes in December dropped to 1,841 homes, a 19.4% decline since November 2021 and a 4.9% decline from the year before.

In St. Johns County, the median sales price in December for single-family homes was \$490,250, a 3.1% increase over November 2021 and a 24.1% increase from a year ago.

St. Johns single-family homes spent a median of 28 days on the market. All sellers received their list price with 29.9% receiving more than the asking price.

In the Ponte Vedra North area, the median sales price in December was \$1,986,000, a jump of 38.8% since November 2021, with the median days on the market of 33 and 95.5% of sellers receiving their list price, and 16.7% of homes selling for over the asking price.

In Duval County, the median price in December of single-family homes was \$319,920, a 2.9% rise since November 2021 and a 25.5% rise since December 2020.

Duval County homes spent a median of 22 days on the market, and 99.4% of sellers received their asking price with

34.3% of homes selling at more than the list price.

"Whether someone is buying or selling, it has never been more important to get the advice, guidance and expertise of a trusted Realtor to navigate the new normal of our real estate market in Northeast Florida," Rosener said. "The pandemic has certainly impacted the seasonality of real estate sales and the consumer behaviors. Demand for homes remains strong. The millennial generation is getting to its prime home buying age, while investors are still active in our market, and consumers from larger metropolitan areas keep looking to make Northeast Florida their home. I believe the spring market will see an uptick in available homes for sale to meet that demand."

Waterworks Building may become venue for arts, culture

The St. Johns Cultural Council is working with the City of St. Augustine on an agreement to activate one of North City's most significant historic buildings.

The Waterworks, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was built in

1898 as the pumping station for the city's first water utility and remained in service until a new water plant opened in 1927 on West King Street.

The site was then developed into Davenport Park, and the building continued to be used as the Little Theatre, then a home for the St. Augustine Arts Club and later as the St. Augustine Garden Club.

The proposed collaboration between the city and the Cultural Council would dramatically increase access to arts, culture and heritage programming for residents and provide

much-needed space for St. Augustine-based organizations to meet and host community events.

Each partner will make significant financial contributions to the effort. The city has recently completed restoration of the facility, which includes an auditorium and an outdoor music platform. The Cultural Council would make extensive improvements to the interior of the building to facilitate concerts, theatrical performances, exhibitions, educational programming, community meetings and more.

On-site staff — provided by the Cultural Council — would ensure that the space is well managed and cared for and would collaborate with community partners to create and present high quality programming year-round.



Contributed photo

A historic picture of the Waterworks Building.



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Trudy Toche is the owner of Positively Profiling. She was recognized in December as the Ponte Vedra Beach Division's 2021 St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ambassador of the Year and was recently appointed as the ambassador chair for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division.

Trudy Toche

As told to Anthony Richards

Can you please tell us about your background?

I am a Mississippi Gulf Coast native. I graduated from the University of South Alabama located in Mobile, Alabama. I received an undergraduate degree in health science with an emphasis in recreational therapy.

Post college I moved to New York City and New Jersey where I worked most of my career in the health care field at Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation, working directly with patients who suffered from spinal cord, traumatic head injuries and other neurological impairments.

A career highlight was working with Christopher Reed and his rehab team on cutting edge modalities in spinal cord research.

Living in Chatham, New Jersey in 2003, I decided to step away from my full-time career to enjoy being a mom for the first time.

Although I loved being mom, I missed the role of helping others on a daily basis, so in 2004, I discovered an amazing opportunity with Mary Kay Inc.

Mary Kay Inc. is a debt free, privately held U.S. based international cosmetics company serving nearly 40 countries with headquarters located in Dallas, Texas.

The company was founded in 1963 by Mary Kay Ash with the mission of living by the Golden Rule.

Mary Kay will be celebrating over 57 years of providing top products in skincare and color cosmetics.

This was the perfect flexible opportunity for the last 18 years.

I have had the amazing opportunity to be a part of Mary Kay's Leadership program while building a successful personal business and most importantly being a full-time mom of two active boys.

I am proud to have been recognized multiple times nationally with several awards in sales and leadership. That would not be possible without my wonderful supportive clients which span the U.S. Thank you all who continue to support me in my growing Mary Kay business. I am truly grateful.

I know you are also the owner of Positively Profiling, how did that venture get started?

The Mary Kay Foundation is the nonprofit sector of the business. All sales force members are encouraged to help make the world a better place by educating others in the community on topics i.e., social impact, women's empowerment, sustainability, cancer research, domestic violence and so much more.

I enjoyed educating and inspiring others to make the world a better place by speaking at various community and nonprofit groups. Before I realized, I was being asked to speak more frequently.

In 2018, I launched Positively Profiling, a motivational speaking and teaching business. Under this business model I want to highlight all things positive.

I am excited to be able to use my years of experience in the area of personal growth and development to continue to help others in a different way. I offer a coaching service, motivational and inspirational programs for small or large groups and retreats.



Photo courtesy of Trudy Toche

Trudy Toche is the owner of Positively Profiling.

What are the most rewarding parts of you have found from your jobs?

Post Covid, there is a huge need for individuals to stay positive in the world, and I can help them.

I love growing two businesses that both serve and help individuals be a better version of themselves. Making a difference truly is intrinsically rewarding.

When I have individuals give me feedback from attending a program or event, that tells me I have in some way made a positive difference in their life. That is truly rewarding!

If you are interested on hearing more great things about what Positively Profiling can offer you or your business in the area of personal growth, please contact me on social media on Instagram @trudypositivelyprofiling, LinkedIn or directly at trudytoche@icloud.com.

What are some of the challenges that you face with your jobs?

What does not challenge you will not change you. I welcome challenges as an opportunity to grow.

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

I truly love Ponte Vedra Beach. Being steps away from the sand.

What do you like to do in your free time?

Travel of course, I am a proud solo mom of two teen boys, and I enjoy making memories with them whenever we get the chance.

Valley Ridge Academy band director Andrew Burk named St. Johns County School District 2021-22 Teacher of the Year

INK!'s (Investing in Kids) 2021-22 Teacher of the Year awards campaign culminated on Jan. 20 with a special recognition banquet and program, along with honors and a tribute to Andrew Burk, band director at Valley Ridge Academy who was named Teacher of the Year among finalists from St. Johns County public schools.

Kaitlyn Holle, a middle school science teacher at Mill Creek Academy was named as this year's Rookie Teacher of the Year.



Pictured from left: Kaitlyn Holle, Rookie Teacher of the Year, stands next to Ryan Goodwin of Equitable and Superintendent Tim Forson.

During the event, St. Johns County Superintendent of Schools Tim Forson congratulated Burk and Holle, and gave accolades from local business leaders, and recognition for all Teacher of the Year finalists.

Additional presentations included Burk's comments and affirmations from many educators who were previous award winners, along with attendance by families, friends and students who joined the evening event at World Golf Village Renaissance St. Augustine Resort.

As Teacher of the Year, Burk will be awarded a car from Beaver Toyota and a \$500 gift certificate from Staples. He also becomes the representative from St. Johns County in the State of Florida Teacher of the Year competition.

Burk will begin a yearlong professional development and leadership program with fellow Teachers of the Year from all 67 counties around the state. As Rookie Teacher of the Year, Holle will receive \$500 from Equitable.

Additional Teacher of the Year finalists this year include Veronica Fuata, second-grade teacher at Cunningham Creek Elementary School; Robie Hagan, instructional literacy coach at Wards Creek Elementary School; Patricia McElhone, academic interventionist at St. Johns Virtual School; and Sharon Warwell-Murden, fifth-grade teacher at R.B. Hunt Elementary School.

The countywide awards program commemorates recipients as local scholastic leaders who help to build community awareness of the region's best educators.

Since 2017, Burk has been teaching sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade music classes, beginning in South Florida. In 2019, he started teaching the same grade levels in band at Valley Ridge Academy. He holds a bachelor's degree in music education and majored in instrumental music education at Florida State University. Burk resides in Jacksonville.

Burk has received awards as an outstanding educational leader and for high academics. He is a member of several professional educator associations and a volunteer mentor with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Florida.

Burk's focus is helping students learn how to play instruments through world-renowned music programs. The method allows students to start on specific instruments for faster learning so they can play harder, more impressive music as they grow, and to play additional instruments.

According to Burk, his proudest accomplishments outside of the classroom are being the co-founder of Collegiate Music Education Day at the Florida Capitol and an advocate for a legal provision in a large education bill that lists music as a core subject in Florida public schools.

He has partnered with the Florida Music Education Association and worked with more than 20 House and Senate offices while hosting the first-ever legislative advocacy event related to music education in the State of Florida.

As a music teacher, Burk's philosophy is to focus on students working together, exerting effort and making sacrifices as a team.

He requires all students to help set up chairs and stands each morning, with responsibilities to move equipment, perform instrument maintenance and organize paperwork for the band to emphasize



Photos provided by Leonard's Photography and INK!

Andrew Burk, Teacher of the Year.

personal ownership of the program.

Burk assigns every student to perform three minutes throughout the year to present their favorite song to the band and to help build a caring, supportive band family. Burk teaches students that, as individuals and through cooperation, they will benefit from their class experience as they work to provide value to the group.

"I am so proud to have played a role in educating students and music teachers in and beyond the classroom," said Burk. "Within St. Johns County School district, I have taken on the role of leading the professional learning community for middle school band directors where

TEACHER continues on **Page 9**

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Msgr. Daniel Logan processes out following a Palmer Catholic Academy mass held at Our Lady Star of the Sea wearing a hardhat associated with the new gymnasium he added to the school. Upon his retirement, the gym was named the Msgr. Daniel B. Logan Gymnasium and Community Center.



Photos provided by Palmer Catholic Academy

From left, Bishop John Snyder, Msgr. Daniel Logan, Bishop Felipe Estevez and Bishop Victor Galeone at Msgr. Logan's jubilee celebrating 50 years as a priest in July 2013.

Leaving a lasting impact

Community reflects on Msgr. Logan as priest, friend

By Anthony Richards

The local Catholic community recently suffered a tough loss with the passing Dec. 27 of Msgr. Daniel Logan, who was a fixture throughout the Northeast Florida area, at 83 years old.

He left his mark on the residents of Ponte Vedra Beach after spending more than a decade as the head pastor at Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church and helping expand the resources of Palmer Catholic Academy.

During his time overseeing Palmer, he was able to elevate the school to new heights, including being named a blue ribbon school within two years.

One of the common themes expressed when describing Logan, was that he was a teacher at heart, and it reflected in everything he did.

Some of the progress the academy made under his watch was the addition of a gym and a center for arts and music.

"He always encouraged me to dig deeper," Palmer Principal Linda Earp said. "He had a way of making us all feel

like we were part of the family."

Words of advice offered by Logan that continue to resonate with Earp are "You never make it about yourself; you make it about everybody else. It's not your school; it's our school."

Earp was happy that he was able to make one last trip to the school weeks before passing away.

The visit took place on Dec. 3, and he had lunch with Earp and a group of staff members.

"When he walked into a building, you smiled," Earp said. "That's just the type of person he was."

Logan's love for teaching harkens back to his days as a teacher and eventual president at Bishop Kenny High School from 1965 to 1989.

"He knew things and had a way of getting it across to people," said Cindy Horine, a longtime parishioner at Our Lady Star of the Sea. "His mind was always thinking."

As a result, Logan had a knack for always wanting to better current situations,

which also meant having great foresight and the ability to have an excellent plan for the future.

"He knew which way he wanted to go, and he always went that direction," longtime parishioner Ernie Bono said. "He was a holy priest you could go to for council, and he would tell you how it was. He had a positive influence on the parish, the Diocese (of St. Augustine) and the city of Jacksonville. He really made an impact on a lot of people."

Prior to coming to Our Lady Star of the Sea in 1999, he founded Holy Family parish in Jacksonville in 1974.

Horine was working in the parish office when Logan was assigned to Our Lady Star of the Sea.

"I worked for him in multiple ways, but the best part were the Monday night meetings for about 10 years with the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) program," Horine said.

Some of the fondest memories Horine has pertain to Logan's dog Pepper and how he took him most places with him,



Msgr. Daniel Logan with Palmer principal Linda Earp and Building Committee Chairman Michael Lenahen during the gym groundbreaking ceremony in August 2011.

including the RCIA meetings.

"He went everywhere with him," Horine said.

After Pepper, Logan rescued another dog, a mini-Sheltie named Lacy, who served a similar role.

"He was like the church's pet," parishioner Debbie Graham said.

Graham first met Logan when she was

MSGR. LOGAN continues on Page 9



Msgr. Daniel Logan holds up a plaque during a ceremony celebrating Palmer Catholic Academy winning the U.S. Department of Education No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Award in 2005.



Many bishops, priests and deacons attended Msgr. Daniel Logan's jubilee celebration in 2013.

Teacher

Continued from 7

I guide teachers during monthly band director meetings.”

“We are currently planning the 2023 St. Johns County Honor Band,” he added. “Inside my classroom, I have hosted three college interns and directed them through a day in the life of a young middle school band director.”

Burk said he was “honored and humbled to receive such an amazing distinction as Teacher of the Year.”

“We have an exceptional group of educators in St. Johns County, and it is a privilege to collaborate with them each day,” said Burk. “The school year has been challenging in many ways. Yet, it has provided us with a unique opportunity to reflect on our teaching practices and think about our relationships with

our students. And it reminds us that what matters most is to help students truly engage in their own learning experiences.”

All Teacher of the Year finalists were honored during surprise visits in December by INK! (Investing in Kids), school district officials and 2020-21 St. Johns County Teacher of the Year Ali Pressel from Creekside High School. Visits also included program sponsors and supporters who provided flowers, applause and accolades at each school with school principals, staff members and students. Beaver Toyota St. Augustine hosted the day with its Bucky the Beaver mascot on prize patrol.

Old Town Trolley Tours provided transportation with Leonard’s Photography donating photography.

During the visits, board members, staff and volunteers, along with Forson and officials visited schools and recognized the finalist teachers for their outstanding

demonstration of instructional skills, student interaction, professional excellence and importance in the lives of hundreds of students.

The St. Johns County Education Foundation, which operates as INK!, facilitated a group of panelists as they interviewed nominees who have more than three years as professional educators in the classroom.

Emcees and presenters at the Jan. 20 event included Paul Ray, INK! board president; and St. Johns County Teachers of the Year with Pressel; Amy Grimm, Teacher of the Year 2017-18 from Julington Creek Elementary School; Julie Haden, Teacher of the Year Finalist 2019-20 from Freedom Crossing Academy; Becky Welu, Teacher of the Year Honoree 2020-21 from R.B. Hunt Elementary School; Ashley Grimm, Teacher of the Year honoree 2019-20 from Freedom Crossing Academy; and Lauren Wood,

Rookie Teacher of the Year 2020-21 from Valley Ridge Academy.

According to Donna Lueders, INK!’s executive director, the importance of the countywide awards program builds community awareness of the region’s best educators. Lueders and her team of professionals provide innovative programs, services and classroom resources to support academic success for all St. Johns County public schools.

INK! promotes academic success for all St. Johns County public school students by providing innovative programs and resources to support more than 45,000 students and approximately 2,785 teachers.

The office is located at 1 Christopher St. in St. Augustine. For more information, contact Donna Lueders at 904-547-7120 or email Donna.Lueders@stjohns.k12.fl.us. The website is ink-stjohns.org.

Msgr. Logan

Continued from 8

in the eighth grade and was a student at Bishop Kenny while Logan was president.

Her father was on the committees helping to raise funds and construct Holy

Family. Because of her father’s close relationship, Logan became a close family friend and even brought her mother into the faith when she converted to Catholicism at 40 years old.

“He was a man of the people,” Graham said. “Anyone who experienced his teachings just raved about them. I’m blessed to have known him; he will be

terribly missed.”

Bono was another that worked closely with Logan on many fundraising campaigns over the years.

He will always remember the relationship the two developed and will miss Logan calling him at night when he couldn’t sleep to discuss what was on his mind.

“My relationship with him was chippy

at times, but it was a loving chippy,”

Bono said. “How a friend would tease another. It was a unique relationship and one that I’ll always covet.”

One of the things Logan passed along to Bono is that life is not made of experiences but made of moments.

“I certainly had a lot of moments with him,” Bono said.

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Rabbi to retire after 13 years of service to local congregation

By Shaun Ryan

For Rabbi Michael Matuson of Beth El, the Beaches Synagogue, the decision to retire came naturally — as naturally, perhaps, as his decision to become a rabbi in the first place.

“It was the right thing,” he said. “It was just time.”

On an afternoon not long ago, while meeting with a boy preparing for his bar mitzvah, Matuson was explaining the value of reciting the words of the Torah just as generations did before, and just as future generations will do.

And then, it occurred to him: the time had come to step aside.

“I thought to myself: We need a younger rabbi,” he said. “We’re growing. We need more energy.”

And so, in June, after 13 years serving the synagogue and 38 years since he began his career, Matuson will retire.

A chance discovery

Matuson’s choice of career is rooted in his childhood living in Brooklyn, New York.

“I was surrounded by Judaism,” he said. “It wasn’t anything that I thought about. I don’t think anybody else thought about it, either. It was just something that you learned. Something that you did. There was a naturalness about it.”

He always found comfort in the synagogue.

“I went to the synagogue as a child, obviously, and I found it a profoundly spiritual experience,” he said.

He also found rabbis to be extraordinarily accessible and willing to listen — even to a kid.

So, the seed of his future was planted early, and it took root in his youth. Then, something that happened quite by chance set him on the path to becoming a rabbi.

He was in Jerusalem and happened upon an application to Hebrew Union College, where every future rabbi must begin his post-graduate studies. The application was sitting on a library desk when Matuson found it. He filled it out and soon forgot about it.

Then, he received a letter saying that an interview had been set up for him. He went to his interview, and before long he received another letter. He had been accepted to the college.

Taking a stand

Matuson began his career in earnest in 1984 as assistant rabbi at Congregation Ahavath Chesed, The Temple in Mandarin. After two years, the Temple appointed him associate rabbi.

During his time in Duval County, he served as president of the Jacksonville Food Bank and was an active member of the Interfaith Council of Jacksonville, the Jacksonville Board of Rabbis and Habitat for Humanity.

Eventually, however, it was time to go out on his own. In 1989, he served as senior rabbi at B’nai Zion in Shreveport, Louisiana. He was also an adjunct professor at Louisiana State University and Centenary College and was awarded an honorary doctorate from LSU in 1991.

It was during this time that he was called upon to take a stand against hate.

David Duke, a member of the Louisiana House of Representatives who had been a neo-Nazi and grand wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, was running for governor.

“He was ahead in the polls, and we were seeing Duke signs everywhere,” said Matuson. “And the Klan was walking in front of the synagogue in full Klan regalia. Every Saturday morning, they’d be marching.”

The rabbi got involved in anti-Duke activities, but due to the synagogue’s tax-exempt status he was forbidden to mention any candidate by name.

That’s when the congregational president asked him to speak out, promising that the congregation would pay any IRS fines he incurred.

So, Matuson met this challenge head-on.

“It was a grueling experience,” he recalled. “You’re exposed to ugliness from people that really hated Jews. And not in a passive way. In an active way.”

He endured numerous threats, and the ATF and FBI had to post agents in the sanctuary to protect the congregation. At one point, the authorities arrested two youths from Dallas who were planning to drive to Shreveport with maps of the synagogue, Matuson’s home address and a collection of weapons.

For his courage in combatting racism, Matuson was awarded the Ralph Waldo Emerson Humanitarian Prize.

Back to Florida

When the senior rabbi at The Temple in Mandarin retired in the late 1990s, Matuson returned. But after several years there, he knew that he needed a smaller congregation where he could form real, genuine relationships with the individuals.

“I wanted to be able to look out at the faces in the sanctuary and know who they are,” he said.

So, in 2008, he came to Beth El, the Beaches Synagogue in Ponte Vedra, where he has served as the rabbi ever



Photo by Shaun Ryan

Rabbi Michael Matuson of Beth El, the Beaches Synagogue plans to retire in June.

since.

He has found Beth El the kind of place where — as in the song for “Cheers” — everybody knows your name.

“If somebody were not at services, I would know that they were missing,” he said. “And other people would, too. And we would call, we would check: Are you OK?”

Over the years, Matuson said those relationships have enhanced his own sense of spiritual development.

“I think I’m a different man — I’m sure I’m a different rabbi — than I was,” he said. “The things that I thought really mattered when I was younger now don’t. And other things are priorities.”

One of the key lessons he said he has learned was the importance of listening.

“The other person isn’t a comma, just some delay until you think of the next

important thing that’s got to be said,” he explained. “That all changed for me. It was the listening that I found lovely. It was what I received rather than dispensed that was more important to me.”

A few years ago, Matuson pledged \$100,000 of his own money toward paying off the synagogue’s mortgage. This inspired others to contribute. Now, Matuson expects the building, constructed in 2004 at a cost of \$1.8 million, to be paid off by the time he retires in June.

The rabbi of Beth El for the past 13 years doesn’t have a lot of plans for his retirement. He’s leaving that open-ended for now.

But he said he’d still be involved in the synagogue, where he has had a lasting impact, and where he continues to go to pray.

Area residents join Community Foundation board

Brian J. Davis, U.S. District Court judge for the Middle District of Florida, will lead The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida as chair of the board of trustees for the next two years.

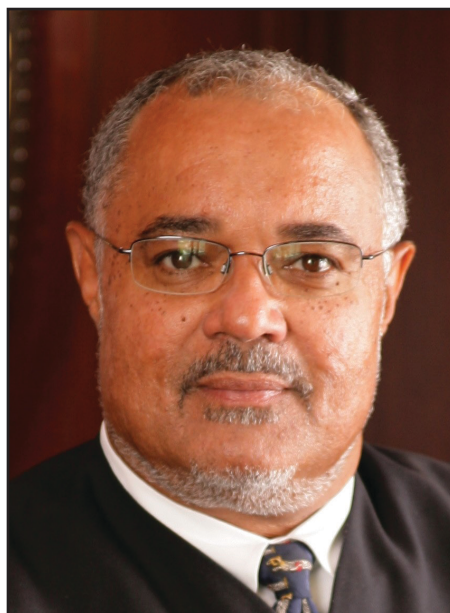
Davis has been a trustee since 2014 and has volunteered with Leadership Jacksonville, NCCJ, Urban League, NAACP, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Jacksonville Community Council, Hubbard House, Help Center, PACE Center for Girls, OneJax and the Jaguars Foundation.

He also chaired the Mayor's Domestic Violence Task Force in 1999. Most recently, he chaired the Jacksonville Public Education Fund and is an advisory board member of the North Florida Council, Boy Scouts of America.

Davis succeeds Martha Frye Baker, whose two-year term as chair ended in 2021.

Also, two community leaders have joined the board for an initial three-year term: Lauren Rueger and R. Halsey Wise, replacing trustees Ryan A. Schwartz and Dori Walton, who rotated off the board at the end of 2021 after 10 and nine years of service, respectively.

Rueger is a communications consultant and an alumna of the foundation's Weaver Philanthropic Initiative.



Judge Brian J. Davis

She has also been a community member of the foundation's Program and Initiatives Committee. She is a member of the Baptist Health Foundation Board of Directors, co-chairs the Communications Subcommittee of the Wolfson Children's Hospital Advisory Council and is an active member of the Parents' Association at The Bolles School.

She will remain on the foundation's



Lauren Rueger

Program and Initiatives Committee.

Wise is the founder, chairman and CEO of AfterNext HealthTech and founder and CEO of Lime Barrel Advisors, a private investment and advisory services firm.

He served on the board of directors of the Jefferson Scholars Foundation at the University of Virginia and continues to chair the UVA Jefferson Scholarship Selection Committee for North Florida.



R. Halsey Wise

Wise also served on the board of trustees of the Episcopal High School in Alexandria, Virginia, and The Fessenden School in West Newton, Massachusetts. He is the founder of the Garden of Hope at the Huntsville, Alabama, Botanical Garden.

He will join foundation's Investment Committee.

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COA Center in Nocatee announces February events

The following programs will be held at COA Center at Flagler Health+ Village at Nocatee, 351 Town Plaza Ave. Registration is required, and space is limited. Unless specified otherwise, registration should be made by emailing pbrunell@stjohnscoa.com or by calling 904-819-3234.

FITNESS CLASSES

Chair Yoga:

Tuesdays, starting Feb. 1 for four weeks. Class time: 10:30 am. Cost: \$30. Instructor: Alison Vitta. Register: coajc.coursestorm.com/category/coa-center-at-nocatee.

Stretch, Strengthen, Move and Groove:

Tuesdays, starting Feb. 1 for four weeks. Class time: 12:30 p.m. Cost: \$30. Register: coajc.coursestorm.com/category/coa-center-at-nocatee.

Tai Chi:

Wednesdays, starting Feb. 2 for four weeks. Class time: 1:30 pm. Cost: \$30. Instructor: Dennis Sheils. Register: coajc.coursestorm.com/category/coa-center-at-nocatee.

EDUCATIONAL CLASSES (open to adults 18+)

Herbology:

Create your own herbal products. Tuesdays, starting Feb. 1 for four weeks. Class time: 3 p.m. Cost: \$30. Register: coajc.coursestorm.com/category/coa-center-at-nocatee

FREE SPECIAL EVENTS

Advance registration for free events is required by calling 904-819-3234 or by email to pbrunell@stjohnscoa.com.

Make Life Easier – Caregivers:

A free presentation by Prachi Rath. Tuesday, Feb. 1 at 2 p.m.

Valentine Card Making with Denise:

Make and send homemade greeting cards. Three cards for \$6. Wednesday, Feb. 2 from 3 to 4 p.m.

Cooking for Heart Health:

Carla Defuria, registered dietitian and health coach at Flagler Health+ Village at Nocatee, will tell participants what they need to eat to have a healthy heart for a healthy life.

Wednesday, Feb. 9 at 10 a.m.

Exploitation of the Elderly and Disabled:

The second in a series of lectures by attorney Megan Wall, St. Johns County Legal Aid. Wednesday, Feb. 23 from 10 to 11 a.m.

FREE CLUBS AND MEETINGS

No instructor will be present at these events. Meetings will be self-guided by the group except for the Caregiver's Support Group. Advance registration for clubs and meetings is required by calling 904-819-3234 or via email to pbrunell@stjohnscoa.com.

TUESDAY CLUBS

Widows and Widowers:

Social group meeting the second and fourth Tuesday of every month from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Meeting Feb. 8 and 22.

Caregiver Support Group:

All caregivers are welcome. Meets every Tuesday from 1 to 2 p.m. except holidays.

There is a trained facilitator present at every meeting to guide the group.

WEDNESDAY CLUBS

Community Crafting:

Bring your craft and work on it with friends. Get new ideas and socialize with other crafters. Meets every Wednesday from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Parkinson's Meet & Greet:

A meeting for people living with Parkinson's disease and/or their loved ones. A representative from JAX Hope will be there, and discussion will include local support and resources. Wednesday, Feb. 2 at 3 p.m.

Genealogy Group:

A genealogy expert will offer guidance. Feb. 16 from 1 to 2:30 p.m.

Mah Jongg Meet Up:

For experienced players. No instructor present. Wednesday, Feb. 2, 9 and 23 from 1 to 3 p.m. and Wednesday, Feb. 16, from 3 to 5 p.m.

Series to help students find careers amidst evolving technologies

By Shaun Ryan

The world is changing quickly. Too quickly, parents might say, to help their children prepare for the careers of the future.

Complicating the usual challenge of finding and pursuing a viable career is the ever-evolving technological landscape that will produce jobs that do not even exist yet. How can students and parents keep abreast of these developments and identify skill sets so that today's youth will become tomorrow's leaders – especially with the limited research time available in their busy lives?

Local technologist and entrepreneur Raghu Misra has proposed a solution. Beginning Feb. 2 his landmark facility, the link, will host a weekly series of interactive presentations titled "Future In Series." This initiative is part of the nonprofit Sapna Foundation.

These sessions will resemble the widely popular TED Talks, and will consist chiefly of 1-3 experts on the topic of the week speaking for 10 to 15 minutes. Prior to, and following, each session, there will be time for networking when students – and adults – can chat with these experts.

It is also hoped that information regarding curricula, academies in the St. Johns County School District and colleges that focus on the topic under discussion for that week will be made available.

Though the series will have a great educational value, it will also be helpful



to anyone of any age who wants to understand the changes that are taking place around them.

How will artificial intelligence impact our lives? Which careers will be forever changed by automation? What role will advances in robotics play?

Some topics are so big and evolving so rapidly that they will be addressed every second month. One example: blockchain.

A blockchain is an arrangement of data that protects it against alteration. It makes the data impossible or nearly impossible to hack. The applications of a blockchain are numerous, as are the ways it will impact various industries.

Thus, a single session would not be sufficient to address it.

The primary audience for these sessions will be students in grades eight through 12 and their parents. The hope is that it will save them valuable time when seeking out the right career.

"I truly believe our life is all a game of elimination," said Misra. "The sooner we understand that we are not interested in something, we stop wasting time and energy on that particular thing and try to find something we are going to be more passionate about.

Because not everyone will be able to

attend these sessions in person, they will also be made available online. In addition, Misra wants to archive them online so that students can benefit from them after the fact.

Working with Misra on this initiative are representatives of the school district.

Emily Harrison, director for career and technical education for the district, called the series a great collaboration tool between the link and the school system in identifying career clusters of interest to students.

The state Department of Education has identified 17 career clusters. These are general fields with uniform curriculum frameworks, so that the same information is available to students statewide.

"This is a great way of getting that knowledge to the students and their families so that they stay informed," Harrison said with regards to the series.

The district offers students numerous career and technical education options. In addition to the academies, it has the St. Johns County Center for the Arts, junior ROTC programs, advanced academics and a technical college that offers dual enrollment.

Though there are many ways families can learn about these opportunities, the Future In Series will increase awareness about the trends of the future and plotting a pathway to get there.

The sessions are free to students, \$10 for members and \$20 for nonmembers. They start at 6:30 p.m. and are held on

Here's a look at the Future In Series schedule:

Feb. 2: Smart Buildings

Feb. 9: Education

Feb. 16: Esports

Feb. 23: Blockchain

March 3: Cyber Security

March 23: AR/VR/Metaverse

March 30: Supply Chain

April 6: Aerospace

April 13: A.I.

April 20: Esports

April 27: Blockchain

May 04: Veterinary

May 11: Healthtech

May 18: Emerging Technologies

May 25: Space Economy

June 1: Parenting

June 8: A.I.

June 15: FinTech

June 22: Engineering

June 29: Blockchain

July 20: Emerging Technologies

July 27: Education

Wednesdays at the link, 425 Town Plaza Ave., in Nocatee.

The first session, Future In Smart Buildings, will be held on Feb. 2. Speakers will be Tim Miscovich, chief commercial officer at wtec; Usman Shuja, vice president and general manager at Honeywell; and Matias Klein, CEO at Kognition.

To register, go to thelink.zone/getactive. The registration link can be found by checking the Future In Series box.

Legislation would fund completion of new K9s For Warriors facility

A bill introduced by state legislators would fund completion of a Ponte Vedra-based facility capable of shortening years-long waitlist for veterans seeking service dogs.

K9s For Warriors, the nation's largest provider of trained service dogs to military veterans, recently recognized key Florida leaders at an event in Tallahassee for their efforts to fund the completion of the nonprofit's Mega Kennel facility.

Once completed, the facility will enable the organization to rescue more dogs from high-kill shelters and train them to save veterans who are struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injuries and military sexual trauma.

The facility would include more than 150 kennels, a full veterinary clinic, an indoor training center and K9 enrichment areas.

K9s For Warriors thanked Senate President Wilton Simpson and Speaker of the House Chris Sprowls, as well as Florida Sen. Travis Hutson, Rep. Sam Garrison, Sen. Cord Byrd and Sen. Jennifer Bradley for their consideration and support of HB 9049.

"We are extremely grateful to our state leaders and representatives for their sup-

port in our mission to continue saving veteran lives by building the world's largest rescue-to-service dog facility," said K9s For Warriors CEO Rory Diamond. "This Mega Kennel training facility will support the K9s For Warriors mission to end veteran suicide by pairing veterans with highly trained service dogs. The current wait time to receive a service dog is approximately four years; this facility will cut that time in half. This gives us the ability to get service dogs in the hands of our warriors sooner so they can regain a life of dignity and independence."

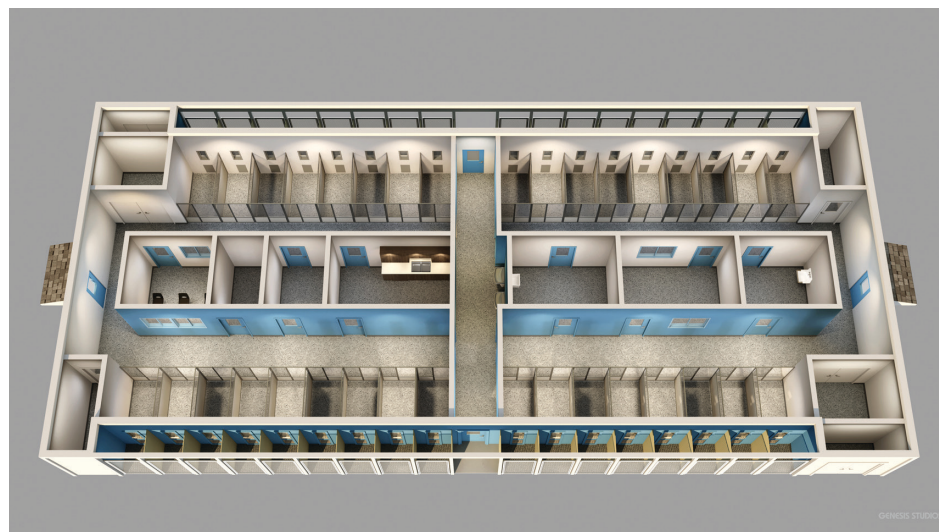
"With roughly 20 veterans dying by suicide every day, we need to do everything we can to support and save our veterans," said Garrison. "K9s For Warriors has proven the incredible impact service dogs can have on veterans suffering from the invisible wounds of war. This Mega Kennel facility will exponentially increase the number of service dogs available to veterans in need and allow more of them to get their lives back."

Founded in 2011, K9s For Warriors has rescued approximately 1,500 dogs across the country and paired more than 700 veterans with trained service dogs.

To learn more, go to k9sforwarriors.org.



Images provided by K9s For Warriors
K9s For Warriors CEO Rory Diamond speaks during an event in the State Capitol to recognize supportive members in the Legislature.



A rendering of the interior of the proposed Mega Kennel.

A homecoming for new St. Francis in the Field rector

Father Justin Yawn, formally of Austin, Texas, is coming home to Northeast Florida to take over as the new rector of St. Francis in the Field Episcopal Church in Palm Valley.

Yawn grew up in St. Simon's Island, Georgia, and graduated from UGA with a bachelor's degree in business administration in risk management and insurance. After college he attended The Candler School of Theology at Emory University.

From 2012 to 2015, Yawn served as the senior associate rector for youth and families at Christ Episcopal Church in Ponte Vedra Beach.

He and his wife Vanessa are excited to be back in this familiar area and to serve the community in a variety of ways. With Yawn's 12 years of experience as an ordained priest, he has covered a plethora of ministries, including corporate church, pastoral care and youth.

"I love Jesus and sharing the Gospel



Contributed photo

Father Justin Yawn has been named the new rector at St. Francis in the Field Episcopal Church.

to the world," he said. "I look forward to ways we can share in ministry together. Go Dawgs! (But I promise not to be in your face about it.)"

Yawn's first Sunday as rector is Feb. 6.

County property appraiser announces outreach hours

The St. Johns County Property Appraiser Eddie Creamer and his office staff will be holding mobile office hours at selected branches of the St. Johns County Public Library System beginning this month.

Staff will be there to take remote exemption applications, including homestead, low-income senior and disabled veterans' exemptions, as well as assist business owners with their tangible personal property returns.

The outreach will begin Jan. 25 at the Hastings branch library with other dates scheduled Feb. 8 at the Bartram Trail branch and Feb. 17 at the Ponte Vedra branch. Each session will last from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The St. Johns County Property Appraiser's Office will also be making "after hours" appearances to provide exemption outreach to community residents.

Exemption outreach is currently planned in the following communities:

- Nocatee Community, Crosswater Hall on Jan. 20 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

- TrailMark Community, Welcome Center on Jan. 26 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

- Maderia Community, Amenities Center on Feb. 2 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

- Markland Community, Amenities Center on Feb. 10 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

- SilverLeaf Community, Amenity Center on Feb. 16 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

- Rivertown Community, RiverClub Café on Feb. 25 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Residents with questions can call the St. Johns County Property Appraiser's Office at 904-827-5500.

Local archaeologists discover a trophy of war

Button dates back to American Revolution

On the evening of the St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum's annual Luminary Night, Lighthouse Archaeological Maritime Program (LAMP) Conservator Andrew Thomson was air scribing when he made an exciting discovery.

Air scribing is a conservation process where a cleaning tool uses air to remove built-up minerals and other gunk from a concretion, a rock formed in saltwater from the interaction between metals and the surrounding environment. One concretion can hold several undiscovered objects.

Thomson was working on a concretion from a 1782 British shipwreck. The vessel represents one of potentially 16 ships that wrecked on the treacherous St. Augustine bar on New Year's Eve during a nor'easter. Many artifacts from the storm wreck (archaeologist's name for this wreck site) are already displayed in the exhibition *Wrecked!* inside the Keepers' House at the St. Augustine Light Station.

The exhibit displays a ship's bell, a rare swivel gun, Artois shoe buckles, sailors' spoons and x-rays of Brown Bess muskets. Archaeologists also recovered and conserved coat buttons from various British regiments. The 63rd and the 71st

Regiments of Foot and the Royal Provincials were among these.

"These troops were garrisoning Charleston, South Carolina, at the end of the war," said Thomson.

Yet, this discovery on Luminary Night was different.

Yes, the button was also made of brass and featured three interlocking Roman letters, similar in style to an order requisitioned by the Continental Army from the French in 1778. But this button isn't British at all. It's American, with the letters U.S.A. distinctly revealed on its front side.

Suddenly, a button from George Washington's Continental Army was revealed in the lab, with the public looking on.

No one knows when Continental soldiers first received U.S.A. buttons, but the agreed-upon date is around 1777. The Continental Congress formally declared the new nation's name in September of 1776. There are dozens of different styles of U.S.A. buttons, but this one appears almost identical to a button found at Valley Forge, lost during the harsh winter of 1777.

So how did it get on this shipwreck?

One plausible theory is that the but-

ton is a trophy of war. The collecting of souvenirs was not uncommon. Soldiers far from home sent evidence of victories back to loved ones for reassurance and often kept mementos.

The button could have been picked up on a battlefield or taken directly from a fallen enemy, removed from the American prisoners aboard a prison ship in Charleston Harbor, or taken at the Battle of Monmouth. This is where the 63rd, one of the British Regiments whose coat buttons also appeared on the storm wreck, took part in an indecisive but significant conflict near Freehold, New Jersey, on a scorching day in June of 1778.

Monmouth was the first battle after Washington's army trained extensively at Valley Forge.

"Wherever it is from, the U.S.A button represents evidence of direct contact between the Patriots and the British Army," said Kathy Fleming, the museum's executive director. "It is up close and personal. This button is among the earliest evidence we will see in St. Augustine of the acronym 'U.S.A.' used to represent our young nation. Finding it was like the cherry on top of the maritime history of the Oldest Port."

The button will go through an exten-



Photo courtesy of The St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum

This button, recently discovered in a 1782 British shipwreck, dates back to the American Revolution.

sive conservation process, with the first step being desalination. After that, it will be coated with a corrosion inhibitor, waxed and ultimately documented. The degree to which salt has penetrated the button will determine how long the overall process will take.

The St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum plans to display the button in the *Wrecked!* exhibit once conservation is completed.

In 2017, LAMP archaeologists added the storm wreck to the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places, a designation of distinction due to the level of its historical significance.



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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Jacksonville, FL 32250
(Near San Pablo Blvd)



Buy Tickets and More Info at
LoveHakkaKitchen.com

Southeastern Grocers offers more than 2 million N95 masks

As a preferred retail partner of the Federal Retail Pharmacy Program, Southeastern Grocers is partnering with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to distribute more than 2 million high-quality N95 masks to customers, while supplies last.

The masks will begin arriving in the grocer's pharmacy locations as early as Friday, Jan. 28.

Customers are encouraged to visit their neighborhood Fresco y Más, Harveys Supermarket and Winn-Dixie in-store pharmacies to receive a free N95 mask to help further protect themselves, their loved ones and communities.

N95 masks will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis and are limited to three masks per person, while supplies last.

In addition, the grocer continues to offer online appointments (preferred) and convenient walk-ups (as available) for all Johnson & Johnson, Moderna and Pfizer

vaccines.

Southeastern Grocers encourages eligible individuals to go to frescoymas.com/pharmacy/covid-vaccine, harveysupermarkets.com/pharmacy/covid-vaccine and winndixie.com/pharmacy/covid-vaccine for timely updates, including available appointments, pharmacy locations, frequently asked questions and guidance to support the health and well-being of the communities it serves.

Southeastern Grocers says it remains committed to caring for and supporting the communities it serves while following local, state and federal guidelines.

The grocer encourages all customers to practice social distancing and wear masks while shopping in stores.

For more information about Southeastern Grocers' coronavirus response, vaccination updates and other pharmacy services, go to the pharmacy page of frescoymas.com, harveysupermarkets.com and winndixie.com.

Sand Castles

LUXURY * LIFESTYLE * REAL ESTATE



IN THIS SECTION:

- ◆ Recipe Spotlight: Make 2022 the year for 'real food!' *Page 16*
- ◆ A Christmas holiday in Italy *Page 20*
- ◆ A book signing with Brian Kilmeade and friends *Page 26*
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- ◆ Before and after: Marsh Landing home receives coastal modern refresh *Page 38*

January 27, 2022

Celebrating 50 years of the
PONTE VEDRA 

Recorder

Welcome to Sand Castles

By Janet Westling



Janet Westling
Contributing Editor

Welcome to Sand Castles and to 2022. As we leave behind 2021 and focus on the New Year, we can be grateful for many things.

I think we can all agree that we are grateful for where we live. I used to have a saying that Ponte Vedra Beach is Florida's best kept secret, but not anymore.

With our favorable tax rates, beautiful beaches and warm climate, it is easy to understand the migration to our coast. And our St. Johns County schools are consistently ranked in the top tier of school districts statewide.

According to the Jacksonville Business Journal, Jacksonville, Florida is among the nation's fastest growing cities, adding more than 60,000 residents in the past five years. Forbes magazine also ranked

Jacksonville as one of the top U.S. cities for job growth because of the business friendly and pro-development policies. That is good news for buyers, sellers and investors in the real estate market.

In this issue of Sand Castles, you'll learn how Hollywood producer Frank Sutura transformed a beautiful traditional Marsh Landing home into a stunning coastal contemporary in this Before and After Issue. Several of the top Realtors in our community also share stories of their great listings.

Brian Kilmeade, co-host of FOX News Channel's Fox and Friends, held two sold-out book events in Ponte Vedra Beach in December for his best-selling novel, "The President and the Freedom Fighter."

Holly Hayes, broker with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices in Ponte Vedra

Beach, weighs in on the state of the market in her Market Watch, while food columnist Alice Hickox shares a recipe for sun dried tomato parmesan crusted salmon.

Also in this Before and After edition, Brian Sexton shares his analysis of the Jaguars season, offering his insights for "a quick turnaround."

Our home is our castle, and at the Beaches, it is our castle in the sand. From palm trees to sand dunes, and golf courses to resort living, Jacksonville, Ponte Vedra Beach and the Beaches communities offer the most desirable living in Northeast, Florida.

Janet Westling, REALTOR, GRI, CIPS
Berkshire Hathaway Homeservices
Florida Network realty
Sand Castles Creator and Contributing Editor
www.janetwestling.com

MARKET WATCH

Beaches market update

By Holly Hayes

Northeast Florida homeowners celebrated another year of record home value appreciation in 2021, with a year over year gain just over 20 percent. The absence of a state income tax, coupled with the year-round outdoor living our area offers, led to an enormous influx of homebuyers from the Northeast as well as California, Chicago and Atlanta, and these new residents can continue the drive to purchase in our area.

Access to our natural resources seemed to be the priority of buyers, with waterfront properties at the Beaches, the Intracoastal Waterway and the St. Johns River commanding the highest sales. Oceanfront properties have certainly been the hottest market, with 11 properties selling between \$6.5 million and just over \$10 million, and the Intracoastal Waterway and St. Johns River waterfront properties provide outstanding opportunities as well. Specifically in the Beaches areas, the median sales price for December was up year over year 21.7 percent!

Overall, 2021 saw record sales in a high-velocity market with record low Days on Market and many sales happening pre-market. Days on market capped out at 18 days, which is a whopping 45.5 percent less than December 2020. Multiple offers were the norm, with buyers offering as much as 20 percent over asking price and/or post-occupancies to sellers to give them time to find a home for themselves. The Beaches areas had over 37 percent of sold homes close over list price – an increase of nearly 25 percent over the previous month of November. At any given moment, our inventory numbers showed record lows, but the movement in the market was astronomical. In fact, 2021 should go on record nationally with the most

homes sold in one year.

Many buyers grew weary writing five to six offers on homes and losing out to buyers willing to pay cash, well over asking price and/or waiving inspections or appraisal contingencies. This squeezed out many first-time home buyers from the market or buyers that simply wanted to finance due to the low interest rates. Additionally, with an increasingly hot rental market, investors added to the pressure as they captured up to 25 percent of single-family home sales. Active listings in December were down 38 percent year over year to less than 1 month of inventory. Regardless, with the millennial market moving into the homebuying stage, the buyer's market is not waning.

We expect 2022 to continue with strong sales and prices, especially due to the persistent lack of inventory. In addition to the pent-up buyer demand, we are also experiencing pent-up seller demand as many sellers would like to enjoy the equity appreciation in their home but have not listed for lack of a plan of where to go. Local home builders should offer some relief, as new home starts in December were higher than normal and this will open up opportunities for buyers as well as giving sellers options to move up or downsize. We do expect more sellers to enter the market as we approach our peak selling season from March to August.

Many predict a moderating or slowed appreciation of prices in 2022 nationally. Our wonderful weather, lack of a state income tax, master planned communities, excellent school options and affordability will certainly play into how our local market reacts. The most determining factor moving in to 2022 will be inventory. Only time will tell in this unpredictable real estate market!

RECIPE SPOTLIGHT

Make 2022 the year for 'real food'!

By Alice Hickox

Lettuce Do Dinner



Alice Hickox
Lettuce Do Dinner

A new year is a fresh start – a chance to set new goals, change your lifestyle and adapt to the new normal in a peri-pandemic world.

The past two years have changed so many of our lifestyles, some moderately and others drastically. Suddenly, working from home has us moving and traveling significantly less than we previously did. Ordering takeout is easier than ever, and we don't even

need to walk those extra steps anymore to park and walk inside a store with the convenience of delivery direct to our cars. As much as this is needed to prevent the spread of COVID, the downside is that it has created other health issues such as an uptick in Type 2 diabetes and unhealthy weight gain in both adults and children alike, just to name a few.

Having fought and beat cancer over this past year, I decided to dig deeper and pursue several certifications as a

Real Food

Continued from 16

nutrition and wellness coach in addition to my personal chef business. One of my goals is to shift the focus of my clients off of what they can't have to what they can have.

Whether you have goals to incorporate more clean foods into your diet or lose a few pounds, we can all agree that salmon is one of the most clean, absorbable and true-to-nature sources of Omega-3 fatty acids, which have a lot of heart-related benefits – a much needed addition to anyone's diet. There are many other excellent food sources to choose from as well as other fish, nuts, olives, avocados and good olive oil in homemade salad dressings or drizzled on roasted vegetables. Here is a great recipe to get those Omegas in!

I won't lie: This salmon recipe is seriously one of the best. I would love to take the credit, but my nephew made this last week for a surprise date night with his girlfriend. It sounded amazing, so after several jaw-dropping photos and texts of his before-and-after photos, he graciously brought me a generous leftover portion the next day, and I was stunned! Literally. I am not a fan of leftover fish, but if it tasted this good the next day, I was imagining how awesome it would be right out of the oven. So, I made it myself. Unbelievably delicious! It is so rewarding to see the love of cooking run in my family.

I forgot to mention this is an easy, quick, sheet-pan meal. It's done in 30 minutes start to finish, with only 12 minutes of cook time. I am using my nephew's recipe, which he found via, "The Novice Chef" with a few adaptations. So here we go...



Photo provided by Alice Hickox

SUN-DRIED TOMATO PARMESAN CRUSTED SALMON

- 1.5 pounds wild salmon
- 3 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup breadcrumbs, preferably panko
- 3/4 cup freshly grated parmesan cheese
- 1/3 cup roughly chopped sun-dried tomatoes (dry, not packed in olive oil)
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp each sea salt
- 1/2 tsp fresh ground pepper
- 1 bag (12 ounces), fresh trimmed green beans - preferably organic
- Additional vegetable such as Brussels sprouts or broccoli (optional)
- Fresh basil, loosely chopped (optional for garnish)

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper or aluminum foil. Combine bread crumbs, parmesan, sun-dried tomatoes, garlic, salt and pepper in a food processor. Process, slowly drizzling in 1 Tbsp of extra virgin olive oil until well combined.

Note: if you do not have a food processor, a blender will do. You may need to scrape down sides and mix in between pulses.

Place salmon on the baking sheet. Season liberally with salt and pepper. Press the sun-dried tomato mixture all over salmon so the entire filet is coated. Scatter green beans around the salmon on baking sheet and drizzle with remaining 2 Tbsp of olive oil. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.

Bake for 12 minutes until salmon is cooked through and beans are just starting to brown. Remove from the oven. Serve with green beans with any leftover sun-dried tomato/parmesan mixture.



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Mobile golf club repair truck brings custom services to Beaches homes



Contributed photos

Julie and Zack Lee with their daughters, Locke and Lucy.

Ponte Vedra Golf Shop is a mobile business offering golf club repair services to your front door. Founded in 2021, Ponte Vedra Beach native Zach Lee is the golf club repair guy for the city of Jacksonville and the Beaches at large. With more than a decade of experience repairing golf clubs, this former University of Florida golf letterman wants to improve your game through technology with clubs that are built to fit your swing.

The sparks that created the golf club repair truck came from the demand for an a la carte custom golf service and an immense passion for the game. As most projects do, PVGS started in the garage,

repairing and creating customized golf clubs for locals in the Jacksonville area. As word spread and social media began to grow, PVGS eventually began doing jobs for golfers coast to coast.

“The rewarding feeling I get from working with my hands and helping improve a golfer’s game is what it’s all about,” Lee said.

“If the past few years have taught us anything,” he continued, “convenience is the driving force behind a consumer’s decision to purchase products. PVGS is bringing the concept of the custom tailor to our golfing community.”



Inside the mobile Ponte Vedra Golf Shop



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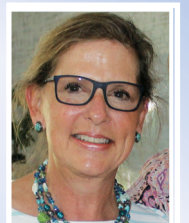
High ceilings, no carpet, pocketing sliders between family room and screened porch, and wonderful views of Harbortown Marina. Rarely used! Private oversized garage. Private community pool + exercise & party rooms. What a lifestyle!



Clare Berry

JACKSONVILLE BUSINESS JOURNAL 2020
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Re-connecting in the heart of Argentina's Gaucho Country..

A new report released by Luxury Portfolio International found the chaotic real estate market created by COVID-19 is slowly stabilizing and that luxury buyers are concentrating more on what is important to them: better locations, making wise investments and a focus on sustainability.

Lifestyle investments have been a key focus of affluent second homebuyers who see value in buying properties that give one meaningful experiences and shared memories. What better way to build on meaningful experiences than to hone one's skills at winemaking, owning a vineyard and/or a beautiful retreat in the heart of Argentina's wine country?

Villas are a special part of the experience at The Vines Resort & Spa. Offering deluxe villas ranging from 1000 – 2700 square feet, these spacious living spaces are luxurious spots to watch the sun both rise and set, and take in the majesty of the Uco Valley.

The Vines of Mendoza is more than an extraordinary place. It's a style of living and being. Rooted in the pleasures of making



and sharing wine, The Vines immerses you in the delights of Argentine culture, rustic natural beauty, and warm-hearted hospitality. What pairs better with exceptional Argentine wine than some of the world's finest meals prepared by Internationally acclaimed chefs creating inspiring regional dishes?

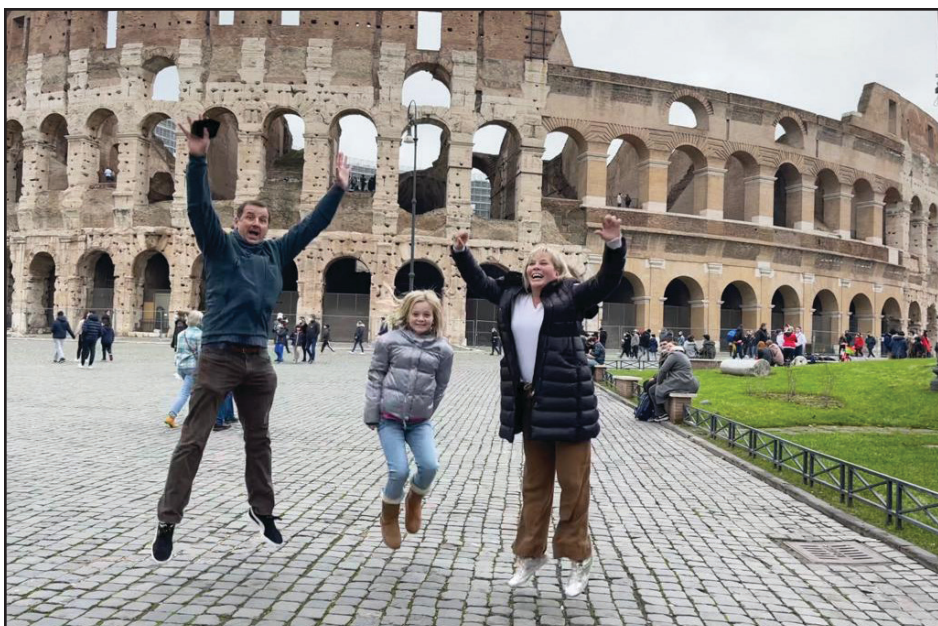


Proudly earning recognition by Travel & Leisure, Condé Nast, and The Robb Report's Best of the Best, The Vines Resort & Spa offers laid-back luxury at the base of the majestic Andes Mountains, where we create unique, uncommon adventures for wine lovers enjoying Argentina's finest rustic, fiery fare. Gallop through the vineyards into the rugged countryside or in the mountains of nearby Manzano Historico, guided by authentic Argentine gauchos.

Mendoza's Uco Valley is a new frontier to explore and discover. With hundreds of wineries, limitless outdoor activities - including heli-skiing right from our resort - and 300 days of sunshine a year, the outer regions beckon through rugged mountains, sprawling countryside and flourishing vineyards.



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Contributed photos

A Christmas holiday in Italy

By Christy and Todd Budnick

Mangiare! Mangiare! Thank goodness the airline did not weigh passengers like it does suitcases on the way out of Italy, or our family would have been stuck! Come to think of it, that would not have been such a travesty.

An Italian vacation has been on our family's list for awhile now. Of the nine of us who traveled to Italy this past Christmas for the most amazing two-week holiday, all but one of us had been there before, but never together as a family, and we have Linda Sherrer, the matriarch of the family to thank. Five years ago, Kim and Ben were invited to the Reschio Estate in Umbria by some business clients and they absolutely fell in love with the property. Now, we all know why.

The Reschio Estate dates back to the 10th century, when the initial construction of the castle began. As one can imagine, the 1,500-hectare estate has an amazing history, and throughout the years approximately 50 farmhouses were added to the property. But by the end of the 1900s, the majority of the homes were dilapidated and the estate overgrown.

The Bolza family purchased the entire estate in the 1990s and in 2021, the original castle opened as a hotel, and over half of the old farmhouses have been redesigned and brought back to life. We arrived a few days prior to Christmas, or Natale, and stayed in the Arrighi house, an amazing five-bedroom cozy abode replete with a Christmas tree decorated with the most ornate glass-blown balls.

Arrighi sits atop one of the many rolling hills in the Umbria countryside, and left us with spectacular views that changed colors throughout the day. The home is approximately one mile from the

main estate, which housed the castle, the restaurant and the equestrian center with 40 Spanish stallions.

Arrighi was our home base, and from there we stretched out across Umbria and Tuscany to visit the charming countryside cities of Arezzo, Assisi, Cortona and Montepulciano. We found acclimating to the six-hour time difference a bit challenging, thanks in part to late night family games of Uno by the fire, Nintendo golf, and enjoying many varieties of the local wine. Thus, our excursions usually began later than we wanted, but meant that we stayed into the evening and enjoyed all the Festive Christmas lighting, and a Christmas market or two.

Our first excursion was to Cortona, the walled-in community high atop the hillside, on Dec. 23. While our plans were focused around dinner at Osteria del Teatro, none of us had eaten much and were starving when we arrived in town around 2:30. So, we found the most wonderful Caffè Degli Artisti and its soups and pizzas. Funny thing, we learned this trip that Italians do not generally serve pizza for lunch, but we were sure thankful this one did. The food was so memorable that parts of our family made two return visits.

Christmas Eve was spent strolling the hilly streets of Assisi, enjoying the Christmas lights and music (surprisingly all in English), and visiting the Basilica of Saint Francis of Assisi. The Basilica dates back to the 1200s and is an incredible example of Italian Gothic art including frescoes by some of the most well-known painters of the 13th and 14th centuries. Definitely worth a visit, although the young girls in our party will tell you their favorite part of Assisi was the lavender store, where almost everything inside looks or smells



like lavender.

The most interesting dining experience also came in Assisi at Michelin-rated Ristorante Il Fontaio, where they served us a welcoming course entirely made up of olive oil – including baby snow cones, macaroons and crepes. Needless to say, the taste was interesting, but not something any of us would recommend.

When not dining out, we had the welcome fortune of Chef Filippo, a jolly old soul in his own right, preparing meals at Arrighi. Chef Filippo not only kept our bellies full for three-hour eating extravaganzas, but joined in with our family singalongs. One of the great memories for Linda's daughters growing up was of their uncles singing after dinner. While that talent seemed to skip a generation, it appears to have been revived in the grandkids. Cate, Will and Holland harmonized, while the rest of us did our best to keep up.

Getting back to Chef Filippo, where to begin? Most days he arrived at the house in the morning to prepare dinner for the evening. Every item was as fresh as could be, and he even left some delicacies out until he could be certain it met his standards. While every meal was "heaven in the mouth," as Cate likes to say, the most fun we had was pizza night. Chef Filippo heated the outdoor wood baking oven to nearly 1,000 degrees (a seven-hour



ordeal) and then peppered us with pizza after pizza filled with an array of delicious toppings.

Just before the new year, the Budnicks headed off from the rest of the pack for a few days of exploring Ancient Rome, and a stay at the St. Regis, where the staff went overboard in welcoming and celebrating Cate's birthday. Upon arrival, there was champagne, fruit and breakfast fare waiting in our room. Later, they sent up a birthday cake, balloon and even a couple presents to top off the celebration.

Cate loves to cook, thanks to Grandpa Ricky's teachings, and so we celebrated her birthday at InRome Cooking school, where Mario helped us create the most delicious gelato and pasta from scratch. Bellissimo!!

When it came time to see all that Rome

ITALY continues on Page 27



HUDGINS + ALEXANDER



3904 ALHAMBRA DRIVE



104 TROON POINTE LANE



108 TROON POINTE LANE



128 OAK VIEW LANE



330 PONTE VEDRA BLVD



334 2ND STREET



341 SAN JUAN DR



611 PONTE VEDRA BLVD, 124



698 BEACH AVE



724 PONTE VEDRA BLVD

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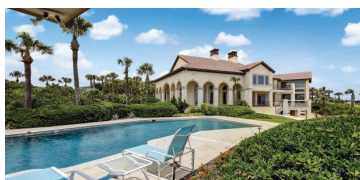
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901 PONTE VEDRA BLVD



1104 PONTE VEDRA BLVD



1830 SAN MARCO BLVD



3077 S. PONTE VEDRA BLVD



4725 APACHE AVE



4530 GOLDCREST LANE



61 PHILLIPS AVE



917 1ST STREET S, 901



14402 MARINA SAN PABLO, 604



1123 PONTE VEDRA BLVD

FROM COTTAGES TO CASTLES

Riverfront villa is boater's dream

By Michelle Mousin

This Villa Calissa townhouse is a boater's dream home! Situated on the Sebastian River in St. Augustine, this beautifully designed and fully furnished end-unit townhome boasts 2,132 square feet, 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths and offers casual luxury.

There are only 11 harbor residences located in this special enclave that is Villa Calissa. Coastal-inspired architecture designed by Cronk Duch features a combination of stucco and Hardie lap siding with Caribbean-style metal roofs. Interior home finishes include porcelain plank flooring, Quartz counter tops in the kitchen and bath, gas range with convection, 42" European-style cabinetry with crown molding and under-cabinet lighting, smart home technology, a gas tankless water heater and is elevator ready.

This home comes with a private access, deep water 50-foot boat slip and breathtaking views of the water. Enjoy watching the wildlife and the boats pass by on your upstairs balcony off the primary bedroom or downstairs covered porch under the towering oaks. Historic St. Augustine is just a short bike ride away, while restaurants, grocery, fitness centers and a full-service marina are all within walking distance. Don't miss this special and unique property.

47 Iroquois Avenue in St. Augustine is offered at \$1,100,000 by Michelle Mousin of Engels and Volckers.



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The Great Migration for the perfect cocoon in Florida Real Estate – A look back to spectacular properties SOLD in 2021



A Tuscan Villa in Marsh Landing with water to golf views in a private country club setting. 105 Palm Forest. \$2,170,500.00



8070 Lakecrest Drive in Deerwood Country Club is a stunning property that received multiple offers over asking price! Let me help negotiate your next offer in this seller's market to be the winning bidder on the home of your dreams! \$1,365,000.



55 Quail Lane on the marsh to the intracoastal located in Jacksonville Beach just sold. I re-designed and staged this home to sell! Contact me to hear how I can help you list, stage and sell your home or find the perfect home! \$935,000.



4314 McGirts on the Ortega River. Completely remodeled with designer furniture on the historic Ortega River with views of Jacksonville's Skyline \$1,467,500.



297 Dosel Lane - Palencia is one of North Florida's best kept secrets in St. Johns county. A+ school district. Let me help you find a home that is perfect for your family. \$536,000.



800 Cypress Crossing in Palencia, one of St. Augustine's most sought after communities. Call me to find out how I can help you redesign to sell your home over asking price! \$499,000.



Custom built, beautifully designed and recently updated pool home on the water in the Yacht club community of Queens Harbour. \$1,284,000.00



Spacious, sophisticated and beautifully designed home in the heart of Marsh Landing 5070 Bentgrass Circle \$1,050,000.00



297 Dosel Lane - Enjoy Florida's best kept secret with the perfect coastal lifestyle in Palencia in St. Augustine. Sold twice in 2021 for almost \$200k over last price. \$718,000.



4537 Carrara Ct. Views of the lake from almost every room. Enjoy the boutique community of Villini at Glen Kernan where Mediterranean beauty abounds. \$795,000.



5577 Hecksher Drive. Your private oasis close to downtown! Water lovers paradise and fishermen's dream on 3.6 acres off Little Andrews Island. \$625,000.



3427 Westover Rd. Spectacular riverfront home in the heart of Fleming Island with 1.48 acres on the St. Johns River. \$625,000.00



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SPORTS SPOTLIGHT

A quick turnaround



By Brian Sexton

The Jaguars' season-ending shellacking of the Indianapolis Colts is more than a few weeks old by now. In the hours after their thorough 26-11 dismantling of a team that seemed headed to the playoffs, a truth emerged. And in the days since, it has only become more clear.

They have some of what they need, and they can turn this ship around and do it in short order if they do a few simple things and don't overcomplicate it.

The first and most important step, of course, has already been taken. Trevor Lawrence is on deck to become the next great quarterback in professional football. He struggled at times during his rookie campaign, but the next few items on my to-do list will correct the mistakes of the former coach and shorten the timeline to winning for the next guy. Lawrence has everything in the physical realm needed to succeed and everything in the mental realm that you could possibly want in a quarterback. He is the reason for the Jaguars' hope.

He needs a little hope in return. Lawrence spent almost the entire season in the red zone and I'm not talking about the opponents 20-yard line. The lack of speed down the field and a consistent running game meant the safeties squatted 10 yards from the line of scrimmage, which meant that Lawrence was playing against the defense in a crowded space just like when a team is in scoring territory... except he faced it on every square inch of the field.

Defenses could crowd the line of scrimmage without fear of being beaten down the field, which meant there were always at least eight guys in the box to stop the run. It's popular to rip the offensive line, but there isn't a front five

in football that could consistently create space against that. It also meant the defensive coordinators could attack the quarterback with ruthless efficiency since again, they didn't have to fear the deep pass. It was a brutal combination.

Here's how to fix it. The running game is first. That goes against the grain in most conversations, where speed down the field is the primary concern. A consistent running game is a quarterback's best friend: It puts the quarterback in manageable second downs and moves the chains on third. It's pretty important to the wide receivers as well. The ground game keeps safeties near the line of scrimmage and gives receivers more room to get open. Ask Jimmy Smith or Keenan McCardell what Fred Taylor meant to their production.

That means adding offensive linemen to a group that could lose left tackle Cam Robinson, left guard Andrew Norwell, right guard AJ Cann and interior swingman Tyler Shatley to the free agent market. Luckily, for the Jaguars, there are upgrades available at the top of the draft and they shouldn't hesitate to take Alabama's Evan Neal if he checks out this spring. He's a 6 foot, 7 inch, 360-pound road grader who also happens to have quick feet and long arms to go with a massive frame that's tough for pass rushers to get around.

No one is going to get excited about adding an offensive tackle with the first overall pick. But in a draft where we could see offensive or defensive line go with the first five or six picks, there isn't likely to be a chance to trade back and add a haul of extra draft picks. They're going to have to stay at No. 1 and take the best available player. They won't regret taking another player who can be a cornerstone of the future of the franchise

no matter what position he plays.

The next step is to add size to the defensive front. They did a terrific job against Jonathan Taylor, the NFL's leading rusher, in the season finale but two weeks earlier they let the Jets run for 271 yards. Big bodies capable of filling multiple gaps allow the linebackers to run to the football and this season those guys were fighting through blocks way too often. Defensive tackle Malcom Brown is a good player, Roy Robertson-Harris was disruptive, Davon Hamilton had his moments, but this is a group that needs a dynamic game-wrecker in the middle of the line. When you have that guy, it frees up the rest of the front to beat their man one-on-one.

Run the ball and stop the run only sounds like an antiquated formula from the Vince Lombardi era. It remains a fundamental truth of professional football. The Jaguars have to be better at both.

The third and final item on my to-do list is to find a No. 1 receiver. Maybe it's as easy as spending some of that nearly \$70 million in cap room, but alpha receivers rarely hit the free agent market. They're too valuable in a league where the rules are tilted against defensive backs. What I know is that Davante Adams is the most explosive receiver in the game today, and if he hits free agency, the Jaguars should write the biggest check a receiver has ever seen to get him.

Keep in mind, Adams was a fifth-round draft pick in Green Bay, and the Jaguars have to find and develop their own version of Adams also. Receivers are more abundant than talented big guys, which is why it's third on my list. They will be there in the second round and third and fourth...they'll find guys.

They should be able to be in the conversation next season. What's the conver-



Photo provided by Brian Sexton

sation? If in December they're watching to see if the Broncos won and the Browns and Dolphins lost so that they might be in a position to make the playoffs...that's a massive turnaround. Imagine if they were in a position similar to the Steelers who, thanks to their win over the Colts and the Raiders' win over the Chargers, made it to the post-season in quarterback Ben Roethlisberger's final year.

The 2016 Jaguars were 3-13. The 2017 Jaguars were 10-6. The difference? Six players added in free agency and the NFL Draft. The Jaguars have 12 draft picks, including the first pick in nearly every round, and they have a wealth of salary cap room to supplement the roster. They can, if they do it right, turn this ship around in a matter of months.

Sales open at The Preserve at Bannan Lakes

Successful VIP Sales event results in 20 sales during first week

PulteGroup has announced that three decorated model homes are open and sales are underway at The Preserve at Bannan Lakes. The Preserve is a new construction community offering single-family homes from the \$300,000s within the Bannan Lakes master-plan community in northern St. Johns County.

“After hosting an extremely successful VIP sales event that resulted in 20 sales, we are pleased to officially open

at The Preserve at Bannan Lakes,” said Tony Nason, president of PulteGroup’s Northeast Florida Division. “Our newest community in St. Johns County is ideal for families of all ages with completed amenities and thoughtfully designed single-family homes on preserve and water-view home sites.”

The Preserve offers 40-, 50- and 60-foot homesites and 16 single-family floor plans ranging in size from 1,720 square

feet to more than 4,100 square feet. Designs include three to six bedrooms and two to six bathrooms.

Bordered by 20,000 acres of preserve land, yet only half a mile from Interstate 95, Bannan Lakes offers a variety of amenities, including a resort-style pool, clubhouse, fitness center, sport courts and more. Bannan Lakes is a natural gas community. It is located at International Golf Parkway and Bannan Lakes Boulevard.

For more information, call 904-604-7254 or go to Pulte.com/PreserveBannon.

Bannan Lakes is the latest of multiple new projects for Pulte in Northeast Florida. In St. Johns County, sales are underway at the Trails at Grand Oaks and they will open soon at Summer Bay at Grand Oaks.

For more information, go to Pulte.com.





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42 MEDJOOL TRAIL
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ST. AUGUSTINE OCEANFRONT
4BR/4BA, 5,224 sq. ft. estate home with stunning 180 degree water views! Private deep-water dock with a 33,000 lb. boat lift. Represented buyer. Sold for \$3,850,000.



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OCEAN LINKS
Conveniently located in the heart of Ponte Vedra. Ocean Links is the perfect place to call home. 421 is under contract but contact me to find out about the coming-soon condos not yet on the market! Offered for \$275,000.



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Pictured from left, Pat O'Rourke, Lisa O'Rourke, Alyson Mansfield, Katie Johnson, Dawn Kilmeade, Brian Kilmeade, Janet Westling, Cecilia Fatscher and Rick Fatscher.



Local residents gather during a book signing with author Brian Kilmeade.

Contributed photos



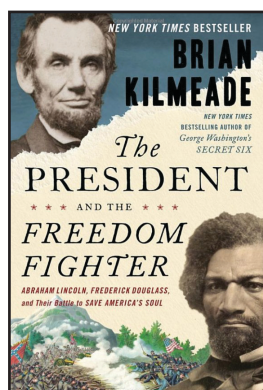
Katie Johnson, Brian Kilmeade, Kelly Cressman and Greg Cressman

A book signing with Brian Kilmeade and friends

By Janet Westling

On December 4, 2021, my husband Dale and I hosted an early breakfast and book signing with Brian Kilmeade, co-host of Fox & Friends and author of the bestselling novel “The President and the Freedom Fighter” at our home in Sawgrass Country Club.

Brian Kilmeade has written seven best-selling novels and this event sold out within days of sending out invitations to friends in our community. Over 200 books were pre-sold and all who attended had the opportunity to meet this leading nationally syndicated radio host, New York Times bestselling author, Fox & friends co-host, and do some early Christmas shopping!



Brian gave a wonderful talk on a beautiful Florida day in a perfect outdoor setting. The best-selling author was joined by his wife, Dawn, who celebrated their 28th anniversary the night before on December 3rd, with a tribute and flowers at the sold-out Ponte Vedra Concert Hall. Brian's childhood friends -- Pat and Lisa O'Rourke and Rick

and Cecilia Fatscher from Long Island – joined in the lively discussion along with Brian's ace producer from FOX, Alyson Mansfield. This engaging author shared details on the history, inspiration and development of the characters in his sixth historical novel. This genuine and natural speaker made quite a connection to his audience, going from table to table posing for photos and signing their books.

In the words of Dr. Ben Carson, “The President and the Freedom Fighter” is “a riveting page turner that illuminates the fascinating and history-altering relationship between President Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass.”

In addition to writing books and co-hosting the Fox & Friends morning show, you can tune into “The Brian Kilmeade Show” on 104.5FM WOKV radio weekdays from 9 a.m. to noon. Kilmeade was recently named the new host of Fox News Primetime Saturday, which premieres Saturday, January 29th at 8 p.m.



Brian Kilmeade and Dawn Kilmeade



From left: Michael Rutherford, Sue Molm and Casey Rumsey



Kathleen Fannin, Brian Kilmeade and Mel Fannin



From left: Brittany Horschel, Irene Carlson, Kandi Nawrocki, Nicole Butt

Italy

Continued from 20

had to offer, we spent two days with Rosi Bernardini whom we highly recommend (Instagram – discoverromewithrosi). Her knowledge on the history of the city is deep, and not only did we visit the must-sees like the Vatican museum, St Peter’s Basilica, the Colosseum and the Forum, we also took a walk on the Appian Way, traveled deep into the Catacombs and entered a church built in the fifth century. We had so much fun listening to Cate and Rosi go toe-to-toe on Greek and Roman

mythology as we walked the Vatican museum corridors. She was more than just a guide: She brings history to life and became a fast friend.

The rest of the family met us in Rome on Jan.2. That evening, we finished our trip with a memorable dining experience (yes, more food) at Mirabelle Restaurant at the top of the Hotel Spendide Royal, with a view of St Peter’s dome in the distance. Be sure to try Cannara’s onions soup au gratin with two cheeses and the Risotto with Castelmagno cheese, radicchio-chicory and Nebbiolo-wine reduction. Cannot go wrong with either!

For anyone concerned about travel-

ing during the pandemic, as long as one is vaccinated and can tolerate wearing a mask for the long flights, it was business as usual. More than 80 percent of the country is vaccinated and each restaurant asked to see your vaccination card or your app with the green check. An antigen test is required to travel a day prior to and from Italy, and because of the recent uptick in cases, the airlines required a specific type of mask upon our return but all in all, we felt very comfortable during our stay. The Italians certainly know how to make their guests feel welcome and we can’t wait to return!



Contributed photo



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Brand new construction in desirable South Jax Beach on prestigious Ocean Drive! Walk across the street to the beach and enjoy breathtaking views from the top levels of this stunning 3 level POOL home. 3,748 square feet, 5 Bedrooms, 5 Full Baths, 2 Half Baths. Offered for \$2,990,000.



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This house has IT ALL! Meticulously maintained & numerous updates: new roof June 2021, new pool marcite March 2021, new water heater 2020, new HVAC 2019, newer microwave & oven, carpet in the 3BR downstairs-just to name a few! Huge, brand-new Spa-like primary bathroom. Shaker cabinets, ship lap, free standing tub & oversized walk-in shower w/ dual shower heads w/ handhelds! This open, bright, classic Florida style 5BR, 4BA home located on a cul-de-sac will not disappoint! Offered for \$615,000.



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7004 Gaines Ct! Flanked by the Epping Forest Country Club & majestic oaks draped w/ Spanish Moss, this lot offers an amazing homesite overlooking the widest point of the St. Johns River, the Yacht basin, lush English gardens & breathtaking sunsets! Build your dream home on this cul-de-sac lot. Enjoy gentle breezes, meandering through the impressive gardens or strolling along the riverfront in this private, gated community. Dining, golf, shopping, grocery stores, world renown hospitals, museums, top schools & more are right at your fingertips! .32 acres homesite for a beautiful 6,500 sq. ft plus home, 3 car garage & pool! Offered for \$1,099,000.



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16 Lake Julia Drive South. At 4BR/4BA this home is one of the largest floor-plans in Lake Julia! Enter the paver courtyard to find a whole new world of relaxation! Soaring ceilings, open layout, oversized screen enclosed lanai w/ built-in fire pit, outdoor dining area & living room type setting. The kitchen has custom cabinets, newer wine refrigerator, new granite counters & newer cooktop. Primary BR on the 1st floor, has custom closets & a large bathroom w/ a jetted soaking tub, two vanities & shower. Offered for \$1,295,000



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Live the dream! 60' Boat Slip with this .41 Acre Lot. Enjoy easy access to the Intracoastal Waterway, Ponte Vedra Beaches and World-Class Golf. Offered for \$750,000. MLS#1149550.



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Brand new construction in desirable South Jax Beach to be completed Summer 2022 by Barnett Custom Homes. Enjoy amazing ocean views and cool breezes from the 2nd and 3rd floor balconies and walk to the beach access just steps away. 2,958 SF, 4 Bedrooms, 3.5 Bathrooms. Offered for \$1,975,000.



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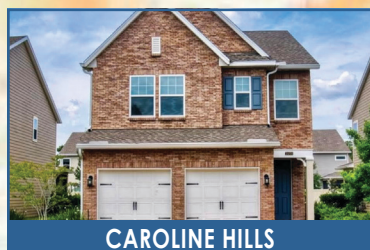

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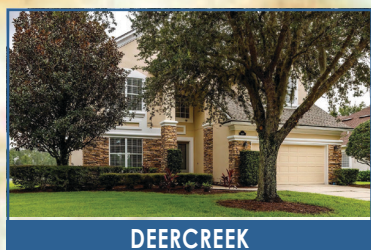




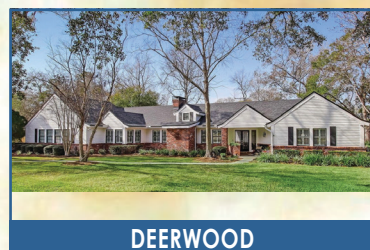
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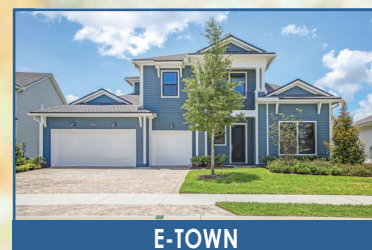
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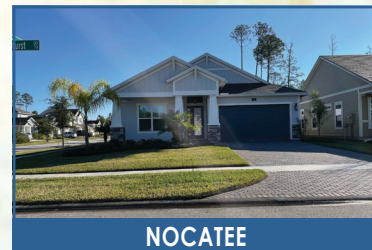
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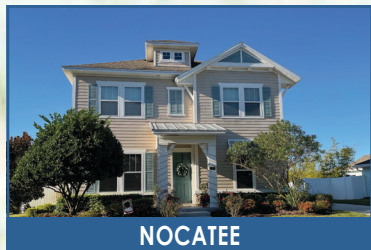
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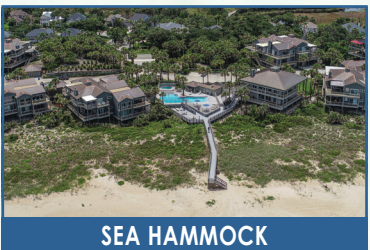
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VALENCIA

Renewing Old Florida: Atlantic Beach home boasts plenty of potential

By Jennifer Sexton

The sound of hammers reverberates across the Beaches communities, as a new post-COVID era dawns in north Florida. A wave of new Floridians, almost 1,000 per day, have discovered that they can work and live in a place that is open and seemingly on vacation daily.

The beauty of our beaches, a laid-back vibe and comparatively reasonable housing prices have attracted neighbors from all over the United States. We offer a lifestyle that can be personalized and created alongside a quaint town center where one's life mingles with another over coffee or dinner or just a bike ride to people watch. Tree-lined streets provide shaded paths to meander during the sunny summer. Bikers, walkers and skaters activate Beach Ave; a lively street that weaves together a diversity of architecture.

Atlantic Beach's architecture reflects homes of different scale and a variety of eras. With a one-year population growth of 1.32 percent, however, Atlantic Beach residents are witness to a housing revolution that has classic homes coming down and new homes going up that represent a new twist on beach life.

It is an exciting chance for a creative homeowner who knows an incredible opportunity to renovate an existing old

Florida home. With a dash of imagination in hand, a home's rich beach history can be elevated with modern conveniences without discounting the original charm of this vibrant beach community.

The home at 120 Beach Avenue is perhaps the best and most current example of such possibilities. Originally constructed 100 years ago in 1922 with various additions throughout the century, this classic home meets the requirements for beach living with the added beauty of solid wood floors, a breezeway and garage en suite. Now it could be transformed into a unique oasis just steps from the beach.

Mike Phillips has lived and built at the Beaches for nearly three decades and has grown his reputation in preserving and improving the character of the old neighborhood homes. Phillips has a unique vision for 120 Beach Avenue focused on updating its 1970s exterior and transitioning it back to a beach house with an iconic personality. His plan involves removing the roof and adding a second gable and doubling the square footage on the second floor en suite above the garage.

Phillips will marry the tradition of the early beach homes with an open downstairs floor plan. Adding to a custom feel, the home's current façade material will



be replaced with mitered corner Hardie Board siding, wide trim around enlarged windows and rafter tails under a cedar shingle roof. On the interior, updating to all the modern conveniences, refinishing the wood floors and the addition of beams to the ceiling would be Phillips' suggestion, while adding native Floridian fauna to the landscape would add character and private spaces.

As Phillips' says, "No one plans to build an ugly home, but it happens." Try renovation and give your home the chance to stand out as an Atlantic Beach Classic.

120 Beach Avenue is listed at \$2,300,000 and represented by Compass Homes, listed by Jennifer Sexton and Wes Mock.

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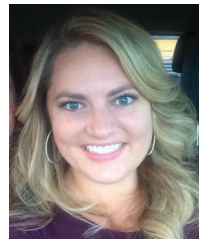
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Expansion of the square footage included a bunk “room” to sleep 6 with attached living /movie room and full bath.



The outdoor pool area featured new framing/screening using “super screens” to open up the water to golf views of the 9th Hole of the Sawgrass TPC Valley course, as well as fully covered outdoor living area with summer kitchen.

Home improvements done correctly bring high value

By Mandy Morrow

You might ask why cover this topic now, since properties in our area, regardless of condition, have multiple offers right away and typically sell for full price or more. The truth is, in this time when the supply of homes is limited, the demand is extraordinarily high. Sellers are doing remarkably well in this market due to the supply/demand imbalance. Top professionals in the world of real estate know that this trend will taper and should advise future sellers on how to improve the value of their homes.

I recently had the wonderful opportunity to list 8161 Seven Miles Drive in Ponte Vedra Beach, where my sellers made the

right improvements and – drum roll here – did the improvements the right way.

So, what do I mean by the “right” improvements? They strategically improved and expanded areas of their home that brought the most return on investment and value to buyers. According to the latest Cost vs. Value report offered by Remodeling Magazine, renovation projects that bring the most value to a home are the kitchen and expanded square footage to increase the number of bedrooms and bathrooms. The investments that allowed the homeowner to recoup much of the cost included window and roof replacement as well as patio/deck improvements.

What do I mean by doing the improvements the “right” way? My sellers

hired experienced professionals who were licensed contractors. These skilled contractors knew the code requirements and installed appliances, plumbing, flooring and other items properly. This home, even in this market, would have been considered in average condition and priced between \$1,300,000- \$1,450,000. The stunning improvements and attention to detail, however, transformed the home, giving it a larger, more open floor plan. The result was a revised recommended list price of \$1,575,000 - \$1,625,000. The sellers were on a tight timeframe, so we listed at \$1,599,000. We had 17 showings in 48 hours, six offers from which to choose and several over list price. We closed at \$1,690,000 last month. Due to

the quality and effectiveness of improvements, they realized a gain of 30 percent above the current average list price of their home.

Many of the showing agents were colleagues who I’ve known since becoming a Realtor® 17 years ago. Their resounding feedback was that the improvements allowed us to command such a price. What’s more, my sellers did these enhancements over the past several years so they too could enjoy the fruits of their labor. It was a win-win for all!

8161 Seven Mile Drive, Ponte Vedra Beach was represented by Coldwell Banker Vanguard Realty Ponte Vedra Beach, listed and sold by Mandy Morrow/ Broker Associate.



Contributed photos

Enjoy grand estate living at Marsh Landing

By Cici Anderson and Jenna Fisher

Nestled in Marsh Landing Country Club sits one of the grandest estate mansions. Featuring over 9,500 square feet on 1.39 acres with expansive marsh views, this estate home has been personally designed to be both a comfortable and family-friendly home, while at the same time an estate with grand style and class.

This spectacular property in Marsh Landing’s Peninsula neighborhood welcomes guests with a classic front entrance, granite atrium, formal living room, and a casual family room overlooking outdoor life in the pool and grill area. Always, this marsh view mansion invites guests to take in the breathtaking panoramic views that exemplify the very essence of life at Marsh Landing. This beauti-

ful estate truly embodies the best of a comfortable North Florida lifestyle in a very elegant home environment.

The excellent architectural designs are many: grand frontal entrance, wraparound porches up and down, wide hallways, oak wood flooring, elegant crown molding, graceful spiral staircase, large bedrooms, huge storage area, spacious outdoor living spaces, full four-car garage and a separate mechanical room. This home is also loaded with many special features, including a formal dining room with adjoining butler’s pantry, private study, project room, washer/dryer rooms on both floors, dual large master suites with spacious closets and beautifully appointed bathrooms, multiple fireplaces, efficient kitchen with new appliances, an expansive bonus game room, and a large yet secluded and private pool with hot tub.

An added perk is membership to Marsh Landing Country Club with no initiation fee. The club is just a short walk or golf cart ride away to enjoy golf, tennis, lunch, dinner, or a refreshing cocktail to end your day. Combined with its proximity to the beach, A-rated schools and world-class hospital systems like the Mayo Clinic, there is truly no other community like this one in Florida. Anyone who has spent time in Ponte Vedra Beach knows just how special it is, with its perfect mix of serene coastal living, top-tier golf and tennis and upscale social options, more and more people are discovering the many benefits this special seaside community has to offer.

113 Teal Pointe Lane is available for \$3,599,000, represented by MLCC Realty and listed by Jenna Fisher and Cici Anderson.

CICI ANDERSON & JENNA FISHER

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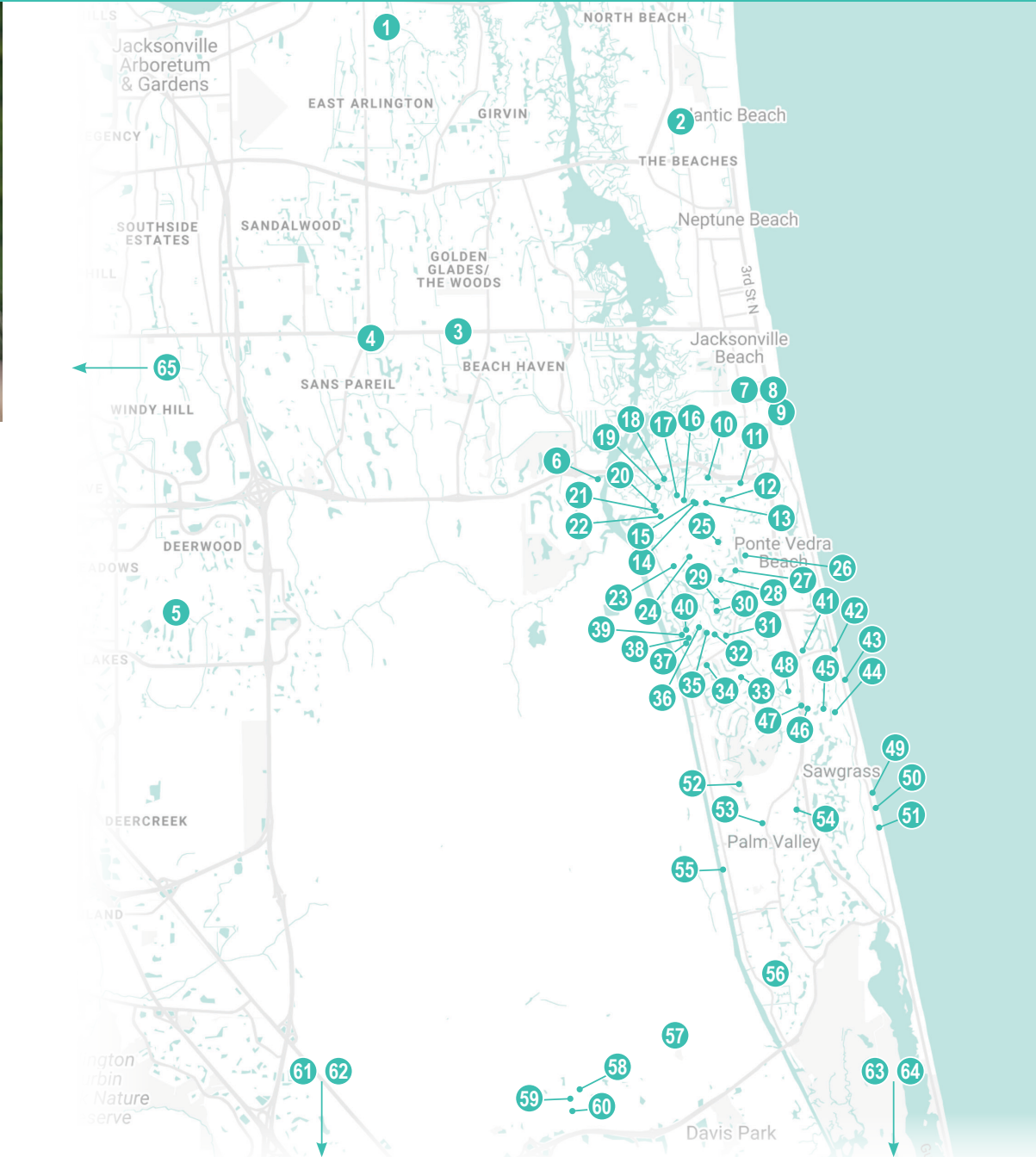


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| 3. 3738 Summerlin Lane N. Jacksonville | 15. 125 Kingfisher Dr. Ponte Vedra Beach | 33. 5127 Otter Creek Dr. Ponte Vedra Beach | 51. 965 Ponte Vedra Blvd. Ponte Vedra Beach |
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| 14402 Marina San Pablo Pl., #801 | 22. 358 Royal Tern Rd. S. Ponte Vedra Beach | 40. 169 Indian Cove Ln. Ponte Vedra Beach | 58. 292 Cobbler Trail Ponte Vedra |
| 14402 Marina San Pablo Pl., #206 | 23. 132 Teal Pointe Ln. Ponte Vedra Beach | 41. 560 Le Master Dr. Ponte Vedra Beach | 59. 126 Hatter Dr. Ponte Vedra |
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| 10. 1655 The Greens Way Jacksonville Beach | 28. 7571 Founders Way Ponte Vedra Beach | 46. 2401 Brittany Ct. Ponte Vedra Beach | 64. 4342 Coastal Hwy. St. Augustine |
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The Cici Anderson Team



The Cici Anderson Team



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Intracoastal estate exudes luxury, privacy

By Michelle Floyd

So many of our homes are architecturally interesting and are a creation of the person living in the home. The personalities of the residents are portrayed in the home through the owners' strength of character, artistic abilities and lifestyles.

This home at 141 Harbourmaster Court is the personification of the iconic individual who created the architectural integrity of the interior and exterior, the floor plan and the selection of every material and established the aura around the home. The owner of the home is the primary developer of Baymeadows in

Jacksonville and much of Ponte Vedra Beach, including Marsh Landing Country Club, Sawgrass Players Club and the Lodge and Bath Club on the beach, as well as Serenata Beach Club.

The developer's home has been the venue for many charity events as well as dinners with movie stars, politicians and world leaders. If the walls could talk ... ?

From the driveway to the front door the flavor is Old World with vines surrounding the gated entrance, courtyard and front entry. You are immediately transported into another time and a different country. Upon opening the front doors, the Intracoastal Waterway is in full view with the abundance of bird life and ma-

rine life. It is a private water oasis!

The grand entrance is two stories in height with heavy wood beams in the ceiling, giving the spacious room warmth and charm. All rooms have water views with an abundance of glass for uninterrupted gazing. The exception is the intimate, wood-paneled library off the foyer complemented with a formal elevator.

The wine cellar boasts not just storage but room for private intimate dining — truly an exceptional, unique feature for any North Florida home. Positioned down a winding stairwell, the room not only accommodates a wine collector's dream storage but allows for intimate candlelight dinners. A dining experience

only a chateau in the hills of Italy could provide.

The lanai is the epitome of relaxation with a unique pool, spa and lanai, all with water views on two sides. It is a moving canvas in front of you with boaters, kayaks and paddle boarders. There is always a wave from a boat or the leap of a dolphin from your pool and lanai.

It is no doubt that the iconic developer, movie star socialite and entertainer of political figures would select this location, with the views and privacy. A true escape from the busy world we live in!

141 Harbourmaster Court is offered at \$3,800,000 by Jack Floyd and Michelle Floyd of The Floyd Group.



Contributed photos



Peacefulness on the River

By Clare Berry

Eyes overwhelmed by the spectacular vistas. Always deep water at the dock. Great fishing and boating. Solitude. Access to Atlantic Ocean and Intracoastal Waterway. One with nature. Space to breathe.

The owners of this property found something special when they discovered this acre-plus of land in 1997, at the end of a little lane. They resided in the "little house" that was on the property while they conceived of what they could build here. In 2004, they moved into their dream home of 5 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, 2 offices (they work from home), a screened pool and plenty of yard to enjoy. One of the many bonuses here is that the border to the north is the spectacular Half Moon Preserve, part of the sprawling Timucuan Preserve, so there are no neighbors on two sides, north as well as east, where the Nassau River winds past the property. The owners moved "the little house" off the water; now it serves them as a great guest house, with 2 bed-

rooms, a den and a bathroom.

The main house's structural features include a welcoming front porch, a long back porch perfect for enjoying the breezes off the water, a huge lanai and a standing seam metal roof. The interior space was designed with few hallways, maximizing the room sizes and layout. The owner's suite and one other are downstairs.

There are unbelievable panoramic views of the Nassau River from the open kitchen/family room through the wall of east-facing windows, as well as from most bedrooms. Nature-lovers and peacefulness-seekers won't want to leave this very unique paradise. If you love the outdoors and natural Florida at its best, this property will impress you. The large circular driveway easily accommodates boat parking!

This special place is offered for \$1,150,000. For more details and to schedule your visit, please call Clare Berry, Listing Broker, Berry & Co. Real Estate, 904-382-5875.

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Coastal luxury meets laid-back vibe in this oceanfront oasis

By Mike Rolewicz

Setting a new standard for coastal luxury with a laid back vibe, this oceanfront beauty in Ponte Veda Beach mesmerizes you with ocean views from every angle as you make your way through the entry courtyard to the well-appointed downstairs living and dining space.

Your eyes are drawn up to the stunning pecky cypress ceilings and custom light fixtures that pair perfectly with the warm reclaimed elm floors throughout. Designed by Cronk Duch and built by Morales Construction in 2019 with interior design by award winning Andrew

Howard, this home is as warm and inviting as it is functional with 5 bedrooms, each with en suite baths, 2 half baths and two living spaces, each with sweeping ocean views.

The kitchen is one of a kind with pine cabinets from River City Custom Cabinetry and unique crushed oyster shell quartz countertops with plenty of storage and top of the line appliances along with a butler's pantry nearby. The kitchen opens to one of the owner's favorite features of the home: the summer kitchen and pool area, complete with a 12-person hot tub. Outdoor entertaining is easy here with a

huge covered lanai downstairs with TV and fireplace and a spacious upper deck that takes advantage of the pristine ocean views from this high, 100-foot lot conveniently located between the Ponte Veda Inn and Club and The Lodge.

The luxurious owner's suite downstairs brings a West Indies vibe, with colorful flooring and shower tiles along with dark cabinetry and light tops that flow into a dreamy owner's closet that conveniently connects to the downstairs laundry room.

Upstairs are four more large bedroom suites, with two that open to the upstairs balcony, each with its own unique

personality and feel. At the heart of the upstairs is a large yet cozy living and entertaining space with incredible details on the beams in the vaulted ceiling, complete with wet bar and the perfect peloton corner to watch the sunrise while burning some calories.

No detail was overlooked in the design or two-year building process to bring the vision for this dream home to life from a vacant lot in 2017. 501 Ponte Veda Boulevard is available for the first time at \$14,000,000 and is offered by Mike Rolewicz.



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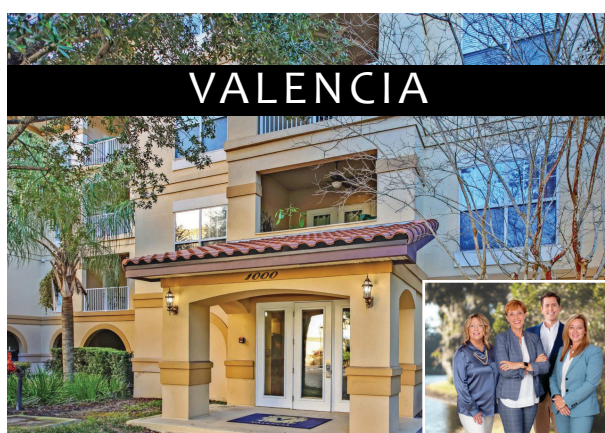
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BEFORE AND AFTER

Marsh Landing home receives coastal modern refresh

By Frank Sutera

Renovation. It's a scary word – one that keeps most of us from undertaking projects for a variety of reasons, whether it's financial, inconvenient, time-consuming, or it just seems so daunting that you continue to talk yourself out of it. Well, I want to tell you that it really isn't as bad as you think.

Just start by getting inspired? Then get started, taking it one step, or room, at a time. (Bonus: you won't believe how much street cred you'll get from your friends and neighbors for doing it yourself!)

Avoiding the project isn't always an option. Sometimes, like for us, it had to be done when we bought our home a year ago in Ponte Vedra Beach. We made the move back home to Florida after 20-plus years in the entertainment industry in Los

Angeles. We landed in the same amazing neighborhood my wife grew up in: Marsh Landing.

We're here for all the reasons you know: schools, community, beach, boating, golf, and, most importantly, proximity to family. We looked all around during a highly competitive market and found that most homes fell into one of two categories: 1) renovated, updated and overpriced or 2) pretty in pictures, but in need of real renovation. Not falling in love with anything we saw in Category 1, we went with an amazing home that firmly fell into Category 2. While beautiful, it was most certainly in need of some love to bring out its potential – something my wife Andrea has a knack for.

While living in LA, we would take on one room at a time in our beautiful 1950s ranch style estate. Andrea would have a vision of what she wanted for each room,

finding inspiration pictures in magazines or online. Then we'd set out to find the pieces to bring her vision to reality. That meant weekend trips to look for tile options, bathroom vanities at local kitchen/bath shops, and of course countless runs to The Home Depot. I would find what guidance I needed from videos on Youtube, the vendors I would bring in for quotes, or by talking it through with the folks at Home Depot when I found the product we wanted to install. Then we'd demo the space and get to work!

We did the same here, but this time with the whole house. As you'll see in the photos, we started with a 5 bedroom + 5 bath, 5,000 square foot home built in 1990 and have completely re-envisioned it as an open, bright and airy coastal modern house we now love to call home.

Before undertaking the reno, we met with several general contractors, estab-

lished builders and renovation companies. What we kept hearing from the pros was to be prepared for things to take so long, that prices were super high for materials, that labor was a real issue that would cause guaranteed delays, and that they couldn't get started for months! Quickly, the TV producer in me took over, and I decided to take on the role of general contractor myself.

I'm not naïve. Living in Ponte Vedra, I expected 'Ponte Vedra Pricing' for everything from plumbing to electrical, but some of the quotes we got were simply outrageous. We've all heard horror stories with permitting; that alone can scare you off a project. But I have to tell you, I got my own permits in one day (not the months I was warned it would take) from the amazing professionals at the St. Johns County Building Department. I just had my paperwork done, had a nice chat, paid my fees, got my signature, and was in and out in a couple hours!

Throughout the process, we took a very hands-on approach with the renovation of our home, which we gutted ourselves. I personally made sure to get bids from at least three vendors for each area needed (plumbing, electrical, structural, cabinets, countertops, etc.). We were lucky in that we landed a great painter from our awesome realtor, Janet Westling.

Every day for months, I would drop the kids off at school and get to work. Demo. Shop. Build. Shop. Install. Shop. Lots of runs to The Depot! But we did it all ourselves. We found ways to save and feel better about what was happening every day. Countless loads of trash from the demolition of room after room





2359 S PONTE VEDRA BLVD

A true oceanfront masterpiece! A residence like no other, this 5 bedroom, 6 bath estate boasts 100 feet of pristine beach frontage and 6,270 SF of luxury living space. As you make your way in you are welcomed by a grand three-story rotunda and immediately struck by lavish finishes and a 1,200 bottle wine cellar with tasting room. Take the winding staircase or elevator up to the main level and enjoy panoramic ocean views from almost every room and the floor to ceiling windows and doors embody the essence of waterfront living indoors or out. The views across the infinity pool to the ocean make for a perfect backdrop as you gather with family and friends. **\$6,800,000**



2375 S PONTE VEDRA BLVD

Lifted from the pages of Coastal Living and perfectly positioned along the banks of the Atlantic Ocean, this 4BR/3.5BA home offers a contemporary oceanfront setting with Intracoastal views. Built with entertaining in mind, this home features well-appointed living spaces, two sweeping oceanfront porches, private beach walkover and a 21' x 21' rooftop deck with panoramic water and preserve views. Passing through the private drive gate you're surrounded by an adventure waiting to happen! Days are well spent in the outdoor oasis and there are plenty of options for year-round entertaining here. **\$3,700,000**



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Refresh

Continued from 38

were hauled away from our garage by a self-employed disposal company I found online. That saved us money and from having ugly dumpsters in our driveway in view of our new neighbors and avoiding any HOA conversations. Through the vendors I did hire I would often get leads to another that I needed, from concrete companies to tiling guys. I slept with the confidence of knowing I had done my own due diligence on who was working on each and every aspect of my home.

You can do more yourself than you think

During the reno, we did things that surprised even us! I learned how to build an archway in a wall separating two rooms we wanted connected. I framed a wall where a wet bar once was. We even made demo a family affair, with in-laws and brothers over to help take out entire rooms!

Now, we of course had our fair share of delays – appliances that took months to get, a built-in fridge that broke on day six, a professional oven/range that was dropped and broken when delivered and had to be re-ordered, kitchen countertops that were cut short – more than once. You just go into these things knowing there will be challenges, and



Contributed photos

with patience and faith you'll come out feeling prouder of what you and your family have done than I can ever explain. So, take a leap of faith in yourself. Get inspired. Get started. And just do it! We did it, so can you.

Some highlights:

- **New flooring and paint** – We tore out the old carpet and dark wood floors and replaced them with light beach-like wood with oversized planks that run the entire first floor. This, along with a fresh coat of Sherwin Williams' Snowbound White paint throughout the house did wonders.

- **Kitchen** – An open approach replaced walls and a wraparound counter with a giant island that flows nicely into the living room. We also built a new pantry where a wet bar once was (I built the wall myself!)

- **Master bathroom** – We removed the sunken tub, raised the shower and left sans doors, and tiled into master closet and up the wall, framing out the new tub.

- **Living room and fireplace** – We removed the old step and built-ins, installed a new mantel and framed the fireplace with a soft white jagged rock-tile that really pops.

- **Family room /kitchenette** – We

I've been asked by several friends and neighbors to help them figure out the best path forward on projects they want to undertake. So now I'm available to help you, too!

- How to approach your project creatively
- Identify what kind of vendor you will need
- How to track down good vendors (i.e. plumbers, electricians, etc.)
- How to go about getting bids
- Review bids to determine what is missing
- Figure out realistic timelines
- Decide just who to hire

Email me at Frank@PVReno.com or call me at 310 365-3569 and we can help!

took down the wall separating rooms and opened it up with an archway, creating great flowthrough and light.

- **Kids' bathroom** – We removed the overhead sconce lighting and unnecessary doorway, opening it up with a half wall separating the new bathtub, updated shower and floor tiling and new fixtures.

- **Office** – We took out the old wood built-ins and replaced them with bright, light paint and white trim.

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New Realtors administration takes over

In a glittering evening event, the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors (NEFAR) welcomed a new administration Jan. 12 at the Jacksonville Marriott Hotel on Salisbury Road.

Nearly 300 members looked on as Dane Leslie of Ponte Vedra, who served as president in 2011 and 2012, presided over the ceremony, installing four new officers and several new directors to head the association, which is the voice of real estate in Florida in 2022.

Mark Rosener, regional vice president of Watson Realty Corp. was installed as president. Diana Galavis, a broker-associate in the Southside office of Watson Realty Corp., is president-elect. Rory Dubin, broker-support manager at EXIT Real Estate, was installed as treasurer. And Tia Vincent, broker/owner at Round-Table Realty Property Management, was installed as secretary.

Lisa Brannon of eXp Realty, Gonzalo Mejia of Watson Realty Corp., Scott Nyman of eXp Realty, Christian Oliva of Watson Realty Corp. in Ponte Vedra, and Lauren Rohman, a broker with Traditions Realty in Avondale, were installed to serve two-year terms as directors of the association.

They will join Andrew Bell, broker/owner of NextHome Assurance Realty;



Mark Rosener



Diana Galavis



Rory Dubin



Tia Vincent

Sonny Downey, president/broker of EXIT Real Estate Gallery; Mario Gonzalez, founder/broker of Navy to Navy Homes; Delmas “DeDee” Harper, broker/owner of Harper & Associates Real Estate; Samantha Heflin, vice president/managing broker at Watson Realty; Jeannette “Jan” Jenkins, broker/owner of Select Home Realty Group; Audrey Lackie, broker/owner of The Legends of Real Estate; Susan Severson, of eXp Realty; Cole Slate, broker/owner of Slate Real Estate; and Jennifer Tossavainen, chief financial officer of Coldwell Banker Vanguard Realty, on the NEFAR Board of Directors this year.

The installation ceremony included a special “passing of the gavel” ceremony

in which 22 Realtors who have served as past NEFAR presidents lined up to pass an engraved gavel to Rosener.

Included in the presidential line-up were William Watson Jr., founder and owner of Watson Realty Corp.; Sam Folds, owner/broker of Sam Folds Real Estate; Russell Grooms of Watson Realty Corp.; Martha Dickerson of Coldwell Banker Vanguard Realty; Cathy Whately owner/broker of Buck & Buck Real Estate; Dee Bumbarger of Buck & Buck Real Estate; Clare Berry broker/owner of Berry & Co. Real Estate in Ponte Vedra; Selby Kaiser of the Legends of Real Estate; Bonnie Siecker, broker/owner of Dames Point Realty Inc.; Jeanell Wilson of All South Realty in Jacksonville

Beach; Milagros “Millie” Kanyar of Watson Realty Corp.; Dane Leslie of Ponte Vedra; Carol Zingone of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices in Atlantic Beach; Linda McMorrow of The Legends of Real Estate; Sally Suslak of Traditions Realty; Terrell Newberry owner/broker of Century 21 First Coast Realty; Marc Jernigan, broker-associate for EXIT Real Estate Gallery; Jeanne Denton-Scheck of Davidson Realty; Ron Harris, founder and managing partner of Harris Realty Partners; Missi Howell of the Legends of Real Estate; Wendell Davis, owner/broker of PMI Davis Realty; and Beverly Garvin, vice president at Watson Realty Corp.

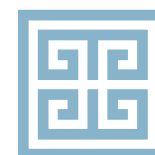
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St. Augustine Beach hotel, beachfront named to National Register of Historic Places

After efforts spanning two decades, a beachfront hotel has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The St. Johns Cultural Council has worked for more than 20 years to restore and preserve the historic St. Augustine Beach Hotel, which has now been recognized by the U.S. National Park Service for the property's national civil rights significance and local historical, architectural importance.

According to Christina Parrish Stone, St. Johns Cultural Council's executive director, the Cultural Council helped to save the structure from demolition and raised hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants and private donations to stabilize the building and restore the first floor, which now houses dance and art studios.

The council is currently working with the City of St. Augustine Beach to develop plans to complete the second floor, and a workshop to receive input from the community will be held in March.

On Jan. 14, the National Park Service released information that the St. Augustine Beach Hotel and Beachfront in the City of St. Augustine Beach has been added to the National Register of Historic Places for importance nationwide as part of the civil rights movement known as the St. Augustine Campaign. The hotel is located at 370 State Road A1A.

To establish the significance of the historic property and prepare the National

Register nomination, the St. Johns Cultural Council engaged consultant Leslee Keys Ph.D. and Keys and Associates of St. Augustine.

According to Keys, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. selected St. Augustine as the third of a trilogy of Southern cities for staged protests designed to generate attention when the U.S. Senate was debating and filibustering the much-delayed Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The St. Augustine Beach Hotel property and the beachfront from 16th Street northward to the hotel were the settings for multi-cultural wade-ins, which activists conducted continuously from June 17 until July 1, 1964, the day before President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law.

The wade-in that occurred at the beach on June 25, 1964, is best known for segregationists attacking protestors along the beach. Images of the Florida Highway Patrol breaking up the riot and standing fully uniformed in the ocean to protect the protestors were among the most circulated of the entire St. Augustine movement.



St. Augustine Beach hotel has been named to National Register of Historic Places.



Contributed photos

This postcard depicts the St. Augustine Beach Hotel in its heyday.

The historical and architectural significance of the building includes its design by local architect Francis A. Hollingsworth as a wood building with coquina block veneer, and additional period materials to support commercial use.

The hotel, which opened on Labor Day in 1940, is the only building remaining from a "St. Augustine Auxiliary Pier Project" by the federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) during the Great Depression. The Anastasia Island coquina quarry location was reopened for construction of WPA buildings, specifically the twin beach hotels.

"Historic sites and historic preservation are critically important to our community and to cultural tourism in St. Johns County," said Parrish Stone. "Raising awareness of these sites through recogni-

tion such as this and increasing access to funding for historic preservation are key components of our efforts to support, promote and enhance the arts, culture and heritage of the area. St. Johns Cultural Council and its supporters are thrilled by this recognition for a property that has been an important part of the work to sustain our vibrant cultural community."

The mission of the Cultural Council is to support local artists and arts organizations and to promote St. Johns County as a premiere destination for cultural travelers, ensuring that the lives of both residents and visitors are enriched through art, culture, history, and heritage.

For more information, contact Parrish Stone at 904-434-0959 or email christina@historicoastculture.com. The website is stjohnsculture.com.

Local fifth-grader performs in prestigious ensemble

Ponte Vedra resident and Jacksonville Country Day School fifth-grader Lynn Ibrahim performed in the Florida Music Education Association All-State Orff Ensemble on Jan. 13-14.

The All-State Orff Ensemble is an audition-based elite performance group for elementary school students that has been around for many years. This year, the Orff Ensemble was composed of 78 students from across the state of Florida.

The guest conductors were Michael Chandler and Ben Torress, who teaches elementary music in Tennessee. They also led workshops and teacher education courses in the Orff Schulwerk pedagogy.

Lynn and her peers prepared nine pieces of music for the concert. Students rotated parts between each piece.

Throughout the performance, Lynn played alto and xylophone and performed as a mover (someone who takes part in a creative dance movement) and sang on the risers.

Each piece included various elements of the Orff Schulwerk music pedagogy. There was singing, movement, xylo-

phones, ukulele and recorder woven throughout the concert. All solos and movement pieces were student-composed during rehearsals.

"It took several weeks to practice for the audition," said Lynn. "I was looking at videos and studying the music for hours."

Lynn first learned how to read music when she was 5 years old and began playing the piano and saxophone around that age, too. She soon branched out to singing, playing the xylophone and learning rhythmic movements to pair with musical pieces.

Jacksonville Country Day School music specialist Jessica Barker saw her playing the xylophone in class and encouraged her to audition for the ensemble.

"It was really fun and a unique experience," said Lynn. "It felt like I was doing something really important. Music is my passion. I still don't really know what I want to do when I grow up because there are so many options, but I do know I will always have music in my life."



Contributed photo

Jacksonville Country Day School music specialist Jessica Barker, left, and fifth-grader Lynn Ibrahim at the Florida Music Education Association All-State Orff Ensemble.

Lighthouse 5K Run/Walk & Fun Run set for Feb. 12

The Junior Service League of St. Augustine will hold the Lighthouse 5K Run/Walk & Fun Run on Saturday, Feb. 12. It had originally been scheduled for Sept. 18. The race begins at 4 p.m., and the Fun Run begins at 5 p.m. Registration is available at jslofstau-gustine.org.

In an effort to continue support for the St. Augustine Lighthouse, the League hosts the annual 5K & Fun Run. The inaugural race in 1983 was originally titled the “Bud Light Twilight Lighthouse Run.”

The Lighthouse 5K is a chipped race that serves as a qualifier for the famed Gate River Run. Proceeds from the Lighthouse 5K Run/Walk & Fun Run benefit numerous League service projects and provide financial support for local nonprofit organizations in St. Augustine and the St. Johns County community.

The Junior Service League of St. Augustine is an organization of women dedicated to volunteerism. Founded in 1935, the organization is committed to bettering the St. Augustine community through service, fundraising and charitable projects.

Each year, members donate nearly 5,000 hours of time to local nonprofits, including the lighthouse, Lightner Museum, the Children’s Museum, Kids Bridge, St. Augustine Youth Services, The Homeless Coalition, Pie in the Sky, The Betty Griffin House and many others.

For further information, go to jslofstaugustine.org.

The St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum is located at 81 Lighthouse Ave., St. Augustine.

For information about the 5K event, go to jslofstaugustine.org/about/events/lighthouse-5k.



Contributed photo

The Lighthouse 5K Run/Walk & Fun Run is planned for Feb. 12.

Walk to fight veteran suicide set for March 26

American Legion Post 129 has announced that the second-annual Challenge 22 Walk will take place on March 26.

On-site registration starts at 9 a.m. at the Jacksonville Beach Seawalk Pavilion, 75 First St. North, with the program and walk beginning at 10 a.m. The 2.2-mile walk will start at the pavilion lawn and will proceed south along the beach to Oceanfront Park, 429 First St. South, and back.

Walkers are encouraged to pre-register at give.floridalegion.org/challenge22jax. The cost is \$22 per walker and \$35 to register and receive an event t-shirt.

“Through Challenge 22, we’re not only raising funds to help prevent suicide among our veterans, but also to raise awareness about veteran suicide in our beaches communities,” said Post 129 Commander Joe Maichle. “A survey conducted by the United States Department of Veteran Affairs showed that roughly 22 veterans are dying by suicide each day in our country.”

Legion volunteers are contacting area businesses to solicit event sponsorships and vendors to take part in the event. For

sponsorship information, and to download a sponsor form for the event, go to give.floridalegion.org/challenge22jax or contact Legion Post 129 Treasurer Jim Wineland at jimwineland@att.net.

Post 129’s goal is to raise \$10,000 to be distributed among suicide-prevention groups, treatment providers and nonprofits that help veterans in need of mental health assistance, including The American Legion Department of Florida’s Project VetRelief.

Locally, American Legion 129 has 30 coalition partners and 10 strategic partners that receive funding to provide veteran prevention services in Northeast Florida.

The local event is one of many held throughout the U.S. as part of The 22 Project, which supports underserved war veterans who have traumatic brain injuries and are at risk for depression or suicide.

The 22 Project provides advanced medical treatments to reduce a veteran’s risk of depression or suicide, including care and evaluation by highly-trained, board-certified physicians. Treatments are at no cost to the veteran.

Challah Bake to support, honor women affected by breast cancer

In honor of the Donna Weekend, Chabad at the Beaches is hosting a Great Pink Challah Bake to support, honor and remember those affected by breast cancer in the community. This women’s event will take place at 7 p.m. Feb. 3 at Chabad at the Beaches, 521 A1A North, Ponte Vedra.

Participants will bake challah and listen to motivating speakers, enjoying a ladies’ night out filled with camaraderie and togetherness. Whether or not they are personally affected by breast cancer, women from the community can show their support by simply attending.

Featuring engaging stories from breast cancer survivors and those with breast cancer in their lives, the challah bake will combine the mitzvah of challah with education and awareness for women of all ages.

Part of this engagement will be dedicated to understanding proactive health options for women of all risk factors.

Leah Kurinsky, co-director of Chabad at the Beaches, wants this event to show the community that no one should feel isolated while fighting breast cancer.

With profits from the event and a team of dedicated volunteers, she hopes to form a support and resource group for families in the Beaches community affected by cancer, with such offerings as social visits and care packages. She envisions that this group would fill a gap in community and health care support by providing a personalized, human connection.

Kurinsky notes that in traditional Jewish thought, the gates of heaven open at certain times — one of these times is when a woman makes the blessing on the challah. This makes a challah bake an opportune time to pray for those who need help or healing, and everyone will be invited to put forth a name of someone who needs the prayer for healing.

In addition, challah is a mitzvah designated for women, and a way to come together to fight a disease that primarily affects women.

Register at chabadbeaches.com/pinkchallah. For further information, call Dafne at 904-770-0502. Note that COVID protocols will be updated closer to the event.

Grant kicks off another year of historic presentations



Scott Grant

Local historian and speaker Scott Grant gave his first presentation of 2022 on Wednesday, Jan. 12, at Nocatee Hall.

In “The Beatles Come to Florida,” Grant tells the story of John, Paul, George and Ringo on their

first U.S. tour. The Beatles made two trips to Florida as a group, both in 1964.

That year, the Fab Four frolicked in Miami enjoying the beach, Florida girls

and yachts. On the cusp of worldwide celebrity, the band members met a young Muhammad Ali (then Cassius Clay), unknowingly creating an iconic photoshoot.

The second trip, this one to Jacksonville, tells a more serious story. The Beatles struck a blow for civil rights insisting that the Jacksonville Gator Bowl be de-segregated for the first time.

Going forward, Grant is scheduled to speak on the following topics:

- “The Night Nazis Invaded The First Coast” — 11:30 a.m. Jan. 20 for members of guests of The Sons of the American Revolution at Ramada Inn, 3130

Hartley Road, Jacksonville.

- “Memorial Ceremony for the S.S. Gulfamerica” — 11 a.m. April 10 at Oceanfront Park, 429 1st St. S., Jacksonville Beach.

- “The Beatles Come to Florida” — 6 p.m. April 28 at 984 Old Mill Run, The Villages, Florida.

- “The Night Nazis Invaded The First Coast” — 11 a.m. May 4 for the Newcomers Alumnae Group at 25655 Marsh Landing Parkway, Ponte Vedra Beach.

- “The Beatles Come to Florida.” Date to be announced. At the Florida Keys History & Discovery Center in Islamo-

rada, Florida.

Other topics Grant speaks on include “From Molly Hatchet to Burning Bras — 150 years of Women’s Empowerment,” “The Summer of ’64,” “How to Invest like a Millionaire” and more.

For further information, see The Scott Grant Show at www.youtube.com/watch?v=FptOxApo860.

Grant owns Standfast Asset Management, where he handles \$100 million in private investments.

For scheduling, contact Grant’s publicist, Jennifer Price, at 904-285-2130 or jprice@standfastic.com.

Ponte Vedra Writers’ topic is self-publishing



Brad Kuhn

Nearly 2 million books are self-published each year, and anyone can be a published author thanks to digital printing and do-it-yourself online services such as Kindle Direct Publishing.

But there’s a lot to learn before jumping into those waters, and Brad Kuhn will

teach local writers about “Self-Publishing: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly.” Kuhn delivers his message at the Florida Writers Association Ponte Vedra Writers meeting at 10 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 22, at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library.

Kuhn will provide real-world insights from more than three decades of experience as a writer, publisher and publicist. He is an award-winning author, reporter, author coach and multi-media producer based in Jacksonville. He has been a staff

writer for The Wall Street Journal, The Orlando Sentinel and Orlando Business Journal. He is a founding director of the Jack Kerouac Writers In Residence Project of Orlando. He and his wife, writer Darlyn Finch Kuhn, run the JaxbyJax Literary Arts Festival, now in its ninth year.

Kuhn has co-written three books and ghostwritten several more. His most recent offering is “Dirty Work: The Untold Story of My Secret Mission to Steal Back TWA Flight 847 From Hezbollah,” an

Amazon nonfiction bestseller co-written with the late TWA Capt. Richard Vaux.

The Ponte Vedra Writers group is part of the Florida Writers Association, a statewide, nonprofit organization with nearly 1,500 members dedicated to the support of both aspiring and published writers in any genre.

The Jan. 22 meeting is free and open to members and nonmembers alike.

For information on FWA, go to floridawriters.org.



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The St. Augustine Lions Club's Seafood Festival — now the Spring Festival — has featured a variety of entertainment.



Photography by Madi Mack

Tasty seafood has always been a part of the St. Augustine Lions Club's Seafood Festival — now the Spring Festival.

Lions rebrand major St. Augustine festival

St. Augustine Lions Spring Festival set for March 26-27

The St. Augustine Lions Club has announced the dates for the 39th Annual St. Augustine Lions Spring Festival, which will be held at Francis Field on March 26-27.

Previously known as the Seafood Festival, the St. Augustine Lions Foundation has rebranded the popular event with a fresh look and expanded options.

The new theme will help the festival grow and prosper after the 2020 and 2021 festivals being canceled due to the pandemic. The event is the primary fund-

raising event for the St. Augustine Lions Foundation each year since 1981 — generating funds for charitable needs and services to the community, with a focus on youth, the deaf and the blind, disaster relief, veterans and more.

With more than 28,000 people expected to attend in 2022, the St. Augustine Lions Spring Festival is currently the largest festival held in St. Augustine.

The primary draw of the festival is its abundance of great food and live music. There will be seafood offered, of course, with the addition of more cuisines and county fair dishes.

Other fun activities include kids' rides, family shows and arts & crafts vendors.

"We're very excited to announce the dates for 2022," said Dominic Mercurio, festival chairman. "This is truly a com-

munity event, and Lions, whose motto is 'We Serve,' are able to raise the funds needed to fulfill our claim that 'Where there is a need, there is a Lion.' We invite everyone out to Francis Field to join us in giving back to the community. After two years of cancellations, we can't wait to all be together again and shout, 'Hey, we're havin' fun now!'"

Festival hours are 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. March 26 and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. March 27. The arts & crafts village closes at sundown.

Francis Field is located at 25 W. Castillo Drive in downtown St. Augustine. No pets will be allowed except for service animals.

There will be free parking and shuttle service, with shuttles picking up and dropping off visitors at locations to be



The St. Augustine Lions Club's Seafood Festival — now the Spring Festival — has been a favorite for almost four decades.

announced.

More information on parking and shuttles will be posted at lionsfestival.com and Facebook @staugustinelionsfestival.

For further information on the St. Augustine Lions Club, go to staugustinelions.com

Early Learning Coalition recognizes Teachers of the Year

The Early Learning Coalition (ELC) of North Florida has announced its 2021 Preschool and Infant/Toddler Teachers of the Year.

On Jan. 6, the ELC of North Florida surprised its 2021 preschool and infant/toddler teachers of the year with a prize patrol. The teachers were gifted with balloons, flowers, candy and a visit by special guest Pete the Cat.

ELC's 2021 Infant/Toddler Teacher of the Year is Amy Finkley. She has been teaching at Deerwood Academy in St. Johns for 10 years and has been an infant/toddler teacher for almost 30 years.

Finkley was nominated by Lucinda Chapin and Sheri Jenkins, the chief operating officers for Deerwood Academy. She also recently received their in-house Teacher of the Year award.

The Preschool Teacher of the Year winner is Marisol Buitrago. She teaches

at Green Cove Springs Head Start Center. She has been teaching preschool for 25 years. She is also the center manager for the Green Cove Springs Head Start.

Since the beginning of the year, she has worked as the lead teacher for the VPK Head Start classroom due to the center being short-staffed from COVID-19.

Both of these teachers will be honored in person at the ELC of North Florida Early Educators Conference on Jan. 29 at the Thrasher Home Conference Center in Orange Park. They will receive a \$500 cash prize thanks to Kaplan Early Learning Co. and the Clay Electric Foundation.

"These two teachers are clearly leaders and are so deserving of this award and recognition," said Joan Whitson, ELC of North Florida's outreach manager.

To learn more about the Early Learning Coalition of North Florida, go to elcnorthflorida.org.

Photos provided by the Early Learning Coalition of North Florida



The Early Learning Coalition of North Florida surprises Amy Finkley, 2021 Infant/Toddler Teacher of the Year.



Marisol Buitrago, was named 2021 Preschool Teacher of the Year.

Tournament to benefit Betty Griffin Center

The Betty Griffin Center has announced its first pro-am golf tournament to raise money for the organization. The Women's Care Peace at Home Pro-Am Golf Tournament is set for Oct. 23-24 at The Plantation at Ponte Vedra Beach.

"We are honored that Women's Care has partnered with us as our title sponsor," said Betty Griffin Center CEO Kelly Franklin. "Just like Women's Care, our organization's mission and values are aligned with caring for the health and well-being of women."

Women's Care CEO Alistair Madle agreed, noting that his organization understands the urgent need for the comprehensive services that the Betty Griffin Center provides to hundreds of adults and children each year.

"Our specialty women's health physician group has more than 100 outpatient locations throughout Florida, and we're aware that one in four women have, are, or will experience domestic violence in their lifetime," Madle said. "We're excited to take part in this event to provide more funding for the nonprofit agency to help victims of domestic and sexual violence."

Betty Griffin Center Board members Dr. Tim Baird and Jayne Evans are co-chairs for the event.

"Our goal for the tournament is to establish a first-tier pro-am that will help fund the critical ongoing work of the Betty Griffin Center," Baird said.

Evans added that with the continued growth of St. Johns County, the need is increasing for emergency safe shelter and comprehensive services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

"In addition to Women's Care as our title sponsor, we are grateful to Brittany and Billy Horschel are the tournament's Healing and Hope sponsor," Baird said. "We are also excited that Billy Horschel, ranked number 30 in the world, is working



to accommodate our tournament in his schedule and lead our tournament day clinic."

Other sponsors include Douglas Elliman Real Estate of Ponte Vedra Beach, Pearmid Property LLC and Preddy Law Firm. Currently, eight high-level sponsorships remain, ranging from \$1,200 to \$10,000, and other sponsorships, including hole sponsorships, which offer participation for a wide range of companies and individuals.

To learn more about sponsorship opportunities, contact info@bettygriffincenter.org. Tournament details are available at bettygriffincenter.org/2022golfproam.

The tournament kicks off at 5:30 p.m. Oct. 23, with a welcome cocktail reception, dinner, live auction and the announcement of pairings of the foursomes with the professionals.

On tournament day, Oct. 24, will include registration and a light breakfast at 8 a.m., followed by a clinic conducted by professional players. Tee off is 10:15 a.m. The tournament will be followed by a champions reception from 3 to 5 p.m. All events occur at The Plantation at Ponte Vedra Beach, 101 Plantation Drive.

The field is limited to 80 players, not including the 20 professionals.

Golfer registration will begin on Feb. 1 at bettygriffin.org.

Area students named to academic lists

Several area students have been named to lists at their respective colleges and universities noting their academic success.

- Dominic Muraco of St. Augustine was named to Montclair State University's fall 2021 dean's list. He is a psychology major.

- Daniel Ritchie of St. Augustine has been named to the director's list at the University of Alabama's Early College during the fall 2021 term. He currently attends Florida Virtual School.

- Alex Whitehead of Ponte Vedra Beach, Macy Dykes of St. Augustine and William Brothers of St. Augustine Beach have been named to the dean's list at Belmont University for the fall 2021 semester.

- Natalie Hanberry, sophomore, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Glenn Mandel, junior, College of Health Professions; and Bailey Pattison, senior, School of Business, all of Ponte Vedra; and Kathryn Vanderlinde, senior, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, of Jacksonville have been named to the dean's list for the fall 2021 semester at Mercer University.

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Nease NJROTC qualifies for air rifle national championships

Nease High School's NJROTC program reached a new level in program history this past weekend as its air rifle team placed second at the NJROTC Area-12 Air Rifle Championships in Anniston, Alabama, where the top two schools move on to national championships.

This achievement marks the first time the air rifle team has made it to the national championships. Nease's vaunted drill team – third at the 2021 national championships; brain brawl team – third at the 2021 national championships; and orienteering team – competing in March at the 2022 national championships, have all qualified multiple times for making it to nationals.

"I could not be more proud of the cadets," said naval science instructor and air rifle coach Gunnery Sergeant Duane Hanson. "This group put the time and effort in beginning in August and stayed the course for the past five months."

The four cadets making up the team are senior Nick Bohanon and sophomores Hailey Pitches (team captain), Gabriel Mitchell and Chloe Westerlind. Westerlind was the team high shooter and placed sixth overall in the championship sporter



Nease NJROTC's air rifle team receives their second-place trophy at the Area-12 Championships, Jan. 22 in Anniston, Alabama. Pictured from left are Area-12 Manager Johnathan Shaw, Chloe Westerlind, team captain Hailey Pitches, Gunnery Sergeant Duane Hanson, Gabriel Mitchell and Nicholas Bohanon.

division.

Air rifle is an authorized NJROTC activity that develops strong discipline, attention to detail and unwavering commitment in cadets. The Area-12 Air Rifle Championship brought together the best



Contributed photos

Nease cadets Nicholas Bohanon, Gabriel Mitchell, Chloe Westerlind and Hailey Pitches fire downrange from the kneeling position at the Area-12 Air Rifle Championships.

teams across the state of Georgia and northern Florida to the competition. During competition, cadets shoot from three positions: standing, kneeling and prone.

Bohanon said, "Qualifying for nationals always seemed out of reach. But the

underclassmen delivered big time in the clutch."

Nease will travel to the Civilian Marksmanship Program Headquarters in Alabama, Feb. 9-12, and compete against the top programs from across the country.

Grace Conservatory expanding in Nocatee Town Center

After six years of serving more than 3,000 Nocatee dancers, Grace Conservatory of Dance will expand to a state-of-the-art 6,000-square-foot facility in the heart of Nocatee Town Center.

Grace offers instruction to dancers ages 2 to 18 in all dance genres, including preprofessional ballet, hip hop, tap, jazz, contemporary, acro, performance company and more.

Opening in early 2023, this facility will feature a dance store, dancer dressing room, parent lounge and four bespoke dance studios.

Kristina Robison, owner and director of Grace, said, "We are thrilled to be able to further invest in spreading the arts in this wonderful community, and we are building a world-class facility that will rival those in NYC and LA in size and professional specifications."

To register for classes, go to GraceConservatory.com. To view the building progress, follow Grace Conservatory on Facebook and Instagram.

DEATH NOTICES

Beverly Allphin

Beverly Allphin, 93, of Ponte Vedra, Florida, died Jan. 17, 2022. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravally.com

Lian Ying Chen

Lian Ying Chen, 51, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Jan. 20, 2022. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

Ronny Covert

Ronny Covert, 86, of Ponte Vedra, Florida, died Jan. 21, 2022. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravally.com

Dorothy Coy

Dorothy Coy, 102, of Ponte Vedra, Florida, died Jan. 21, 2022. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravally.com

Eugene Patrick Dagg

Eugene Patrick Dagg, 92, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Jan. 20, 2022. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

Wanda Lee Griffin

Wanda Lee Griffin, 78, of Jacksonville,

Florida, died Jan. 20, 2022. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

Edith Rosalie Helmich

Edith Rosalie Helmich, 82, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Jan. 14, 2022. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

Harriet Howe

Harriet Howe, 86, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Jan. 21, 2022. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravally.com

Dolores C. Kelley

Dolores C. Kelley, 94, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Jan. 14, 2022. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

Juan Carlos Argumedo Madrid

Juan Carlos Argumedo Madrid, 64, of Santa Ana, El Salvador, died Jan. 11, 2022. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

Emma Miller

Emma Miller, 83, of Pinehurst, North Carolina, died Jan. 21, 2022. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center

& Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravally.com

Harry Ouludsen

Harry Ouludsen, 71, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Jan. 20, 2022. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

Norma Iris Parrilla

Norma Iris Parrilla, 78, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Jan. 9, 2022. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

Glenda Peters

Glenda Peters, 82, of Ponte Vedra, Florida, died Jan. 20, 2022. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravally.com

James Daniel Taylor

James Daniel Taylor, 80, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Jan. 11, 2022. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

Jerome Carol Wedergren

Jerome Carol Wedergren, 91, of Ponte Vedra, Florida, died Jan. 20, 2022. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

Business Weekly

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Photos by Anthony Richards



Dr. Sarah Ferrer-Bruker is surrounded by her Bold City Dermatology staff.



There are three exam rooms at Bold City Dermatology's location at 316 Paseo Reyes Drive in St. Augustine.



Dr. Sarah Ferrer-Bruker and her business partner Dr. Bishr Al-Dabagh are both board certified in their fields.

Offering friendly expertise

Bold City Dermatology mixes experience, patient-first approach

By Anthony Richards

It has been less than a year since Bold City Dermatology in St. Augustine opened its doors, and Dr. Sarah Ferrer-Bruker is reminded every day of the relief and confidence she is providing her patients.

She took the leap of faith to start her own practice in April 2021 after much consideration and having the full support from her family.

"It was a very big change to go and open my own practice with a partner, plus in the middle of COVID," Ferrer-Bruker said. "I had been practicing for over five years and had become proficient in what works, and I knew what I wanted to do and saw the things that I wanted to improve. I think in any professional's life, there is a point where you have to decide: 'Do I double-down and do the best where I'm at now, or do I try something completely new and build something for myself?' It was really scary, actually."

According to Ferrer-Bruker, her goal is to have a place that patients understand is modern and up to date with the current advancements in the field, while offering a warm and friendly atmosphere.

"Everything we do is completely patient-centered," Ferrer-Bruker said. "I think that the patients can tell when a practice is owned by a physician versus being owned by a big corporation. I think that's what sets us apart."

She is double board certified in both internal medicine and dermatology, which is not something that comes lightly and without years of work and preparation.

The process includes going through four years of college, four years of medical school, and a four-year residency period.

"Somebody who is a board-certified physician in a specific specialty means that they have sacrificed a lot in order to be able to take care of you," Ferrer-Bruker said.

Her business partner, Dr. Bishr Al-Dabagh, is also a board-certified dermatologist and fellowship-trained dermatologic surgeon specializing Mohs micrographic surgery, which is a procedure designed to remove cancerous skin tissue.

"He provides just another level of trusted expertise," Ferrer-Bruker said.

Throughout her years in the field, she has seen the importance of surrounding oneself with the right hardworking and dedicated people, as well as having the support from the home front.

"I do not know how I lucked out," Ferrer Bruker said with a big smile. "We have an entire team of people that make it possible."

Bold City Dermatology is located at 316 Paseo Reyes Drive in St. Augustine and currently has three exam rooms. The staff consists of three medical assistants, two front desk staff, an office manager

and an off-site director of operations.

In less than a year, the practice already has more than 2,500 patients and continues an upward trajectory.

However, with growth also comes the need for office space to manage that increasing number.

"We are busting at the seams, and I would really like to have a bigger space," Ferrer-Bruker said. "My goal is to continue growing my patient base and eventually get into a larger office."

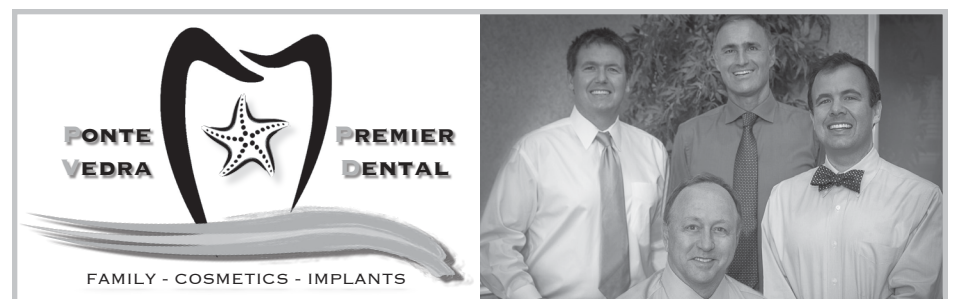
Ferrer-Bruker also likes to give back to the career path she has chosen by training dermatology residents from Orange Park

Medical Center six months a year.

Some of the services provided include total body skin checks, treatment of skin cancer cells, whether it requires a non-invasive approach or surgery, and cosmetics.

She takes pride that her practice welcomes patients of any age or skin type, which Ferrer-Bruker stated is not always the case with some outfits.

"I call it clan medicine, because I'll take care of you, your kids and their grandparents," Ferrer-Bruker said.



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Groover promoted to Baptist Health senior vice president, system chief medical officer



Timothy G. Groover MD

Bringing extensive clinical and leadership experience, Timothy G. Groover MD has been promoted to senior vice president and system chief medical officer

of Baptist Health in Northeast Florida.

In this senior-most physician role, Groover will lead the Baptist Health system medical staff, overseeing the full scope of physician practice across the health system.

Reporting to Michael A. Mayo, Baptist Health president and chief executive officer, Groover will use data-driven best practices to enhance clinical, operational and service excellence, as well as identify and eliminate health care disparities.

“Dr. Groover brings a unique type of leadership, which I feel is essential to develop our medical staff, accelerate our drive for clinical quality and innovation, and promote health care equity,” said Mayo. “He has ably served as interim chief medical officer and his depth and breadth of experience makes him the natural choice for this important role.”

Since joining Baptist Health as an anesthesiologist 26 years ago, Groover

has held numerous leadership positions and was named a Baptist Health board member in 2014.

Most recently, he served as the president of physician alignment. Prior to that he was senior vice president and chief medical officer of the Baptist Physician Partners clinically integrated network. He also previously served as chief of staff of Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville.

“I am thrilled to take on this role at such a pivotal time, and I look forward to soon naming chief medical officers for our two largest hospitals and coordinating a new physician leadership structure,” said Groover. “Physicians are the key to the advancement of our strategies as a

health system.”

Groover is a certified physician executive, diplomate of the American Board of Anesthesiology, a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives and a member of the Physician Executives Forum.

He currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Duval County Medical Society, The KIPP School, Coastal Community Health and the Greater Refuge Temple. He holds a master’s degree in business administration from the University of Tennessee and his medical degree from the Miller School of Medicine at the University of Miami.

O-Ku restaurant to open in Jacksonville Beach

The Indigo Road Hospitality Group, an award-winning hospitality team based in Charleston, South Carolina, has announced its newest restaurant location set to open in Jacksonville Beach in early 2022. This will be the first restaurant by the group to open in Florida and the seventh O-Ku location.

The menu will provide a fresh and innovative take on traditional Japanese sushi and cuisine. The modern O-Ku restaurants offer rare and unique dining options with sashimi and specialty rolls, sourcing seafood from the finest fish markets in Tokyo and Hawaii, alongside well-known local fisheries and local purveyors.

O-Ku Jacksonville Beach, located at 502 First St. North, is across from the pier and is among a few select restaurants at the Beaches to offer ocean views, and the especially coveted rooftop dining and bar.

“Once we visited Jax Beach, it immediately felt like home for O-Ku,” said Steve Palmer, Indigo Road Hospitality Group founder. “We are always looking for

vibrant coastal communities to plant roots in, and what could be better than fresh sushi among a beautiful beach view? This is a wonderful community with welcoming neighbors, and we are looking forward to joining the growing culinary scene here.”

Palmer is not new to the Florida hospitality scene. Prior to forming The Indigo Road in 2009, Palmer served as vice president of food and beverage for the Ginn Clubs and Resorts, where he managed 11 properties in the Southeast and the Caribbean. Much of his time was spent at the varied properties, where he grew an appreciation for Florida living and hospitality.

The Indigo Road was welcomed to the area by Trevato Development Group, owner of the prime 502 First Street location.

“This stretch of First Street North is home to our headquarters located in the former J. Johnson Gallery,” said Katelyn Taylor, head of operations of Trevato Development Group. “We are excited to have O-Ku, a restaurant with a strong reputation throughout the Southeast, as a



Contributed photo

O-Ku Jacksonville Beach’s menu will offer a fresh and innovative take on traditional Japanese sushi and cuisine.

neighbor. Their opening coinciding with the completion of The Gallery’s rooftop event space will make this block of Jacksonville Beach a destination.”

The O-Ku space will be open for dinner and cocktails initially, with lunch

hours to follow in early spring. The restaurant is about 4,400 square feet and can seat up to 165 guests.

The menu will feature traditional O-Ku signature items with a balance of locally inspired chef specials.

Southern Grounds franchise program to include 125 Locations

With three successful independently owned locations already established in Northeast Florida, Southern Grounds has announced plans to offer franchise opportunities in 12 Southern states beginning in February.

Initial territory for franchises will be in Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Texas, Louisiana, Maryland, Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, Mississippi and select markets in Florida.

Recent expansion of the popular coffee house also includes a licensing agreement

with HMSHOST, the world’s largest concessionaire and the Jacksonville Aviation Authority.

“We are looking for experienced multi-unit franchise partners with a track record of success and proven independents who want to diversify their portfolio with a successful concept,” said Mark Janasik, Southern Grounds & Co. CEO. “We want to open 125 units in the Southeast in the next 10 years but still ensure each location feels like a collection of curated coffee houses with individuality,

neighborhood feel and unparalleled guest experience.”

With a belief that restaurants are key to a community’s vibrancy, economic development and social infrastructure, “We feel there is no better time than now to launch our new modern coffee house as a franchise and community model to other aspiring restaurateurs,” Janasik said. “Each Southern Grounds location will be a unique reflection of the neighborhood in which it is located.”

Underlying the success of Southern

Grounds is the belief that a great cup of coffee can connect people, start conversations and create a community hub by providing a relaxing environment to gather together and enjoy great food.

More than just a coffee shop, Southern Grounds believes it is a lifestyle brand committed to providing guests a home away from home with a seasonal approach to food and drink offerings.

Southern Grounds will be opening its first airport location at Jacksonville International Airport Jan. 28.

In the Arts

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REVIEW

Alhambra debuts Broadway favorite 'Guys and Dolls'



"Guys and Dolls" runs at The Alhambra Theatre & Dining through Feb. 13.



Photos courtesy of The Alhambra

Husband-and-wife actors John and Katie Nettle star in The Alhambra's production of "Guys and Dolls." John Nettle is the drama teacher at Ponte Vedra High School.

By Jennifer Logue

The new year was off to a fun and memorable start at The Alhambra Theatre and Dining, as the Jacksonville dinner theater debuted its production of "Guys and Dolls" last week.

Perhaps it's no surprise that the musical is one of Broadway's most beloved and enduring hits since the show itself is a musical love letter to Broadway – or the Broadway of the 1930s and '40s immortalized in Damon Runyon's short stories populated by two-bit gangsters and colorful chorus girls. And with equally colorful sets and a talented cast, The Alhambra production brings Runyon's world to life.

With a score by Frank Loesser and a book by Jo Swerling and Abe Burrows, "Guys and Dolls" centers on two improb-

able love stories. Small-time gambler Nathan Detroit is trying to find a location for his floating crap game while fending off heavy-handed hints from his long-suffering fiancée, Adelaide, that after 14 years of being engaged, it's time to tie the knot. Enter Sky Masterson, a high-stakes gambler looking for action. Sky could easily provide Nathan the \$1,000 he needs to secure a location for the crap game – but agrees to do so only if Nathan wins a bet. The wager: Ladies man Sky has 24 hours to take a "doll" of Nathan's choosing to Havana.

What Sky doesn't count on is Nathan selecting Sarah Brown, a sergeant in the Salvation Army's Save-a-Soul Broadway mission. What transpires is a madcap mix-up as Sky does romantic and spiritual battle with Sarah, who is tempted

by the opportunity to save sinners, the mission and her calling.

"Guys and Dolls" is one of those rare Broadway musicals where virtually every song is a hit, and The Alhambra cast does a wonderful job of delivering on the superb score. As Sky Masterson, Melvin Nash brings just the right combination of suave sophistication and vocal talent to deliver on such classics as "Luck Be a Lady" and "I've Never Been in Love Before." And he enjoys strong chemistry with Hailey Hendrickson as Sarah Brown. A late replacement in the lead role due to illness, Hendrickson's lilting soprano and youthful exuberance are a breath of fresh air in a part that too often is played as stern and unforgiving. As Nicely-Nicely Johnson, Travis Young is a standout on numbers such as "Fugue

for Tinhorns," "Guys and Dolls" and the showstopping "Sit Down You're Rockin' the Boat."

A special hometown highlight of this production are husband-and-wife actors Jason and Katie Nettle in the central roles of Nathan and Adelaide. A former Alhambra stage manager and current drama teacher at Ponte Vedra High School, Jason humorously conveys Nathan's inner battle between his love for Adelaide and his fear of settling down. As Adelaide, Katie delivers on such comic musical numbers as "Take Back Your Mink" while conveying sincere disappointment at her state of perpetual engagement on "Adelaide's Lament."

"Guys and Dolls" runs through Feb. 13 at The Alhambra Theatre and Dining.

Local author tells story of woman's struggle to escape abusive marriage

Novel takes readers to Paris, Switzerland, St. Augustine

By Shaun Ryan

After years of traveling around the world and observing people in a variety of cultures, Tammy L. Harrow had accumulated material aplenty before penning her first novel, a work of contemporary fiction titled "All the Salt in the Sea."

The book, published Jan. 11, is the story of Abby West who discovers that her powerful, well-connected husband has been keeping a secret. Abby flees to Europe, where she meets a former American soldier-turned-photographer and begins to dream of a new life. But first, she must return to St. Augustine to settle with her husband. And, according to the novel's blurb, "what awaits may very well destroy her."

Though Harrow had extensive experience as a blogger, journalist and writer of nonfiction, this foray into the world of fiction proved to be no small challenge.

Without a plan, she began by simply jotting stuff down. Soon, she realized she needed some structure, and she began a

laborious process of daily writing and revising.

It took about 10 years for her to complete the novel, though she would set it aside at various times during that period. The most intensive period of writing lasted about a year. In the end, the book ran 306 pages.

Her hard work paid off when she signed a contract with Red Adept Publishing.

Reviews have been good, though Harrow admits that she tries – unsuccessfully, as it turns out – not to read them.

Amazon calls "All the Salt in the Sea" a "sweeping novel that takes the reader from a malfunctioning coach on an Italian mountain top to Paris to Switzerland and to Saint Augustine, Florida. Full of heartbreak and longing, and romance, but also tinged with the distressing truth of how difficult it is to leave a relationship after abuse."

The settings may have been the easy part for Harrow. She had her travel journals to draw from for the European sequences, and as a resident of St. Augustine, she was able to incorporate familiar local surroundings into the American portions.

But how does one go from collecting experiences to fitting them into a story?

"I've always been drawn to stories

of women that are kind of trapped in marriages for different reasons," she explained. "And so many of my friends and people I know on social media would love to be able to solo travel. So I just kind of put the two ideas together. I thought, you know, what if a woman that has a controlling husband really wanted to get out of there? That's kind of how it was born."

The characters in her novel are products of the little quirks of people she has observed.

"You know, you sit and you people-watch, but you can also sit and people-listen," she said. "The antagonist was the best person to write. He's just this terrible human, controlling and wealthy and just a little bit psycho."

Harrow lives on St. George Street, and it's not hard to see how life in the quaint, historic center of the Nation's Oldest City, where horse-drawn carriages occasionally clip-clop past the front door, would inspire a writer.

Though she has visited so many exciting and exotic locals around the world, she called St. Augustine "the best place on Earth."

"There's still no place I'd rather live," she said.

She and her husband make their home with "two freeloading cats and one disobedient dog." Her three children have all



Contributed photo

Tammy L. Harrow of St. Augustine has published her first novel, "All the Salt in the Sea."

grown and gone on to their own lives.

Harrow has two more books in the works: a second novel and a travel memoir. She hasn't scheduled any book-signings yet, though she's working on that.

She would like to speak to book clubs, either in person or via Zoom. Clubs that would like to book her can inquire by email at tammyharrow@gmail.com.

"All the Salt in the Sea" is available at all the places books are sold online. In addition, brick-and-mortar bookstores can order it for customers. Harrow also mentioned bookshop.org, which can send books to local bookstores when ordered.

For further information, go to tammyharrow.com.

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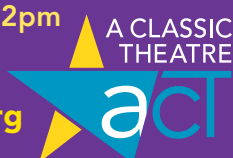
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Painters invited to apply for solo exhibitions Lightner Museum

With support from the Benjamin and Jean Troemel Arts Foundation, the Lightner Museum announces the second year of Lightner Local. Created to showcase the talents of artists who live in the Northeast and Central Florida regions, four artists will be awarded solo exhibitions at the museum.

Painters in Northeast and Central Florida are invited to apply for the exhibitions to be displayed in the museum's East Room Gallery. The gallery space includes approximately 90 feet of linear wall space for hanging artwork.

The Lightner will host four separate exhibitions, one each in April, July, August and October. Each exhibition will be on display for approximately six weeks.

Selected artists will receive the following:

- In-person solo exhibition at the Lightner Museum in the East Room Gallery
- Promotion via the museum's website, lightnermuseum.org
- Press outreach
- Social media outreach
- Exhibition opening during First Friday Art Walk
- \$1,000 honorarium

Lightner Museum staff will work directly with the selected artists to produce the exhibitions 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

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
- Contact details

Do not send actual artwork.

Applications should be emailed to: lightnerlocal@lightnermuseum.org

The Lightner Museum is located at 75 King St, St. Augustine.

Sports



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Commanding victory

Panthers crush Senators by 58 points

By Anthony Richards

The Nease girls basketball squad has had several convincing victories this season, but nothing quite like its 65-7 win over visiting Fletcher Jan. 20.

The 58-point difference was the Panthers' largest margin of victory on the year, and the seventh time they have won by 30 points or more, including their last three contests.

It is safe to say that the Panthers are clicking in all phases of the game, and it could not be coming at a better time here at the end of the season.

"It's a really great environment to be playing in right now," Nease junior guard Cami Robinson said. "To have everyone on the bench being super hyped and having almost everyone score really helps bring it all together."

All the reserve players saw extensive minutes during the game because of the blowout.

As a result, every player for Nease scored a point on the night, which shows the depth that the Panthers have on their roster.

"It's great to see because they've improved so much since the beginning of the year," Robinson said. "They have so much more confidence."

That playing time may prove to be

valuable for them in the future, especially if they are called upon to contribute in the postseason.

When the reserve players would score it brought the starters to their feet over on the bench as they continually let out roars and cheered on the effort.

"I think our team chemistry has really improved," Robinson said. "We obviously know our plays, but even when we're just freestyling out there, we're more about each other than we did early in the season, which makes it a lot easier."

Watching the Panthers play can bring a smile to your face, because they truly look like they are having fun on the court while maintaining a level of intensity.

One of the trademarks of the Panthers is to start the game playing full-court pressure defense, which helped Nease jump out to a 24-2 lead at the end of the first quarter and 41-4 at halftime.

"We like to come out fast," Robinson said. "Our offense definitely feeds off of our defense."

Sydney Gomes led the way with 14 points, while Robinson and Alli Fifield were not far behind with 13 and 11 points, respectively.

Sophomore Ella Harrison had a productive night as well with eight points.



Photos by Anthony Richards

Alli Fifield and Sydney Gomes work together to trap Fletcher guard Lavin Savage as part of the Panthers' full-court press.



Cami Robinson of Nease drives to the basket against Fletcher Jan. 20.



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First Coast Amateur regular finally claims top prize

Ty Gingerich has played in the Jacksonville Area Golf Association's First Coast Amateur every year since its inaugural event in 2017 and will finally have his name etched on the trophy as the 2022 champion.

He made it a point to return every year, since he first showed up to compete as a 16-year-old.

Now, 21, the Indiana native's persistence paid off with a two-shot victory at the Tom Watson-designed Conservatory course at Hammock Beach Golf Resort and Spa in Palm Coast Jan. 18.

Going into the final round, Gingerich (69-74) found himself tied for fifth, six shots back of leader Troy Vannucci (66-71) of Marlton, New Jersey.

However, Gingerich closed by shooting 69, which proved to be the best score on a very windy and brisk day in Flagler County.

The University of Cincinnati redshirt sophomore finished with a 4-under-par 212 total to outlast Florida Southern's Sam Rogers, who also closed with a 69.

Rogers' performance allowed him to move 11 spots up the leaderboard and take runner-up honors at 214.

Vannucci was cruising through two rounds (66-71) and held a four-shot advantage as the final round began. But the tables turned on the 29-year-old, as he recorded a 79 over the 7,081-yard layout, dropping him to fourth place.



Photo provided by Jacksonville Area Golf Association
First Coast Amateur.jpg: Ty Gingerich of Indiana won the 2022 JAGA First Coast Amateur Championship Jan. 18.

His downfall came during a seven-hole stretch in the middle of the round which he played 8-over par.

With Vannucci going backwards, the eventual champion carded a 33 on the front side to take command.

Two groups ahead of Gingerich was Rogers, who matched his outward 33. Bogeys by Rogers on Nos. 13 and 14 proved to be the difference.

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THEME: SUPER BOWL

- ACROSS**
- Shout from a ship?
 - Shout from the bleachers
 - ___ and don'ts
 - Infamous Henry's number
 - One with COVID, e.g.
 - Fighter jet button
 - Resting stops
 - Not guilty, e.g.
 - One of Singapore's official languages
 - *Home of last year's Super Bowl winners
 - Armor chest plate
 - *Given name of 2011 Super Bowl MVP
 - African grazer
 - Greek woodland deities
 - Ramones' hit "I Wanna Be ___"
 - Big fuss
 - Like certain Chili Peppers (2 words)
 - Cattle call goal
 - Scatterbrained
 - Bonehead
 - In a different direction
 - Jeté in ballet
 - More so than eggy
 - Conducted
 - Christmas firewood (2 words)
 - Annotator and commentator
 - Soda-pop container
 - Unpleasant and offensive
 - SWAT attack, e.g.
 - *Super Bowl I and II winning coach
 - Pertaining to a pope
 - Cain's unfortunate brother
 - Gives a hand
 - Anoint
 - Bébé's mother
 - Season to be jolly
 - *Most Super Bowl wins by one team
 - Snoop

- DOWN**
- Roman number of this year's Super Bowl
 - "___ Misbehavin'"
 - Santa Maria's traveling partner
 - Despair in the face of obstacles
 - "The Hobbit" hobbit
 - "Caribbean Queen" singer
 - Colloquial approval
 - Cold cuts counter
 - South American tubers
 - Pig's digs
 - Not dense
 - Make corrections
 - *Florida team with no Super Bowl appearances
 - Return punch
 - Come and ___ it
 - Lamentably
 - Bye, to Edith Piaf
 - Bottom line

- *2022 Super Bowl stadium
- Upholstery choice
- *Archie to Super Bowl MVPs Peyton and Eli
- Exploits
- *Super Bowl Halftime show Snoops's "last name"
- Hardly a beauty
- *Like some teams
- Oenophile's concern
- Many, many moons
- Empower
- Big Dipper's visible shape
- Oppressive ruler
- On the wagon
- Nail salon board
- Feminine of raja
- Mt. Everest to Earth
- Aladdin's light
- Christian of fashion
- Result of a brainstorm
- Rudolf Nureyev's step
- Stallone's nickname

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American Golf Industry Coalition to address sport's collective priorities

The organization formerly known as "We Are Golf" announced Jan. 24 that it has rebranded as the American Golf Industry Coalition.

The coalition will represent a partnership among golf's leading organizations and is committed to addressing the collective interests of the industry.

A primary area of focus centers around helping to facilitate the industry's diversity, equity and inclusion initiative, known as "Make Golf Your Thing."

Through those efforts, the coalition also will provide support to the six cross-industry work groups dedicated to making golf accessible to all (education and skill development, talent acquisition, procurement, human resources, youth and adult player development and marketing/communications).

Additionally, the coalition contributes to advocacy efforts for legislative and regulatory issues of importance to the industry.

"The golf industry is comprised of more than two million people who wake up every day giving their all to a game that is growing and evolving," said Rhett Evans, Chairman of the American Golf Industry

Coalition Executive Leadership Committee and CEO of Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. "I am proud of the platform and vision the newly-branded coalition provides for addressing golf's collective issues on behalf of the industry it represents."

For more than a dozen years since its founding, the American Golf Industry Coalition has become a banner under which golf's collective priorities can be addressed.

The coalition assembles industry representatives annually in Washington, D.C., to meet with elected officials and advocate on behalf of golf's \$84 billion economy, \$4 billion charitable impact and two million jobs throughout the U.S.

The group also works to amplify tangible examples of key initiatives at both the grassroots and industry workforce level and advocate in support of issues that impact the industry at the state and federal levels.

The American Golf Industry Coalition is a division of the World Golf Foundation. To learn more, go to www.golfcoalition.org.

EMPLOYMENT
Help Wanted Full Time

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT
 Osteen Media Group in Jacksonville, Florida, is seeking a Senior Accountant to work out of our Fleming Island office. Pay range: \$50,000 to \$65,000 based on experience. Osteen Media Group owns and operates three established weekly newspapers, web sites and their numerous associated publications and promotions (monthly, quarterly and annual magazines, special sections, contests, events, etc) in Fleming Island, Fla.; Ponte Vedra, Fla., and Las Cruces, New Mexico. This position is based in the Jacksonville area, with occasional travel to New Mexico. We are a small, privately owned media company that specializes in producing trusted, reliable, award-winning community journalism and advertising/marketing solutions for our wide range of readers and advertisers, both in print and online. We are a team-oriented company (35 employees) with highly experienced publishers and experienced, versatile personnel at each of our three locations. Experience Required:
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 - Ability to solve problems, analyze data, produce reports & implement change
 - Communicate & explain accounting, cost control & evolving financial guidance to the management team.
 - Perform complex accounting duties, including month-end close, G/L maintenance, variance analysis, journal entries, payroll and account reconciliations.

- Strong Excel skills
 - Ability to work independently, prioritize, organize, and coordinate assignments and responsibilities of self and staff
 The position is office-based in Fleming Island, but allows for flexible hybrid work solutions after successful 6 months. *Employment with Osteen Media Group is at-will and nothing in this Job Description should be interpreted or construed to alter the at-will employment relationship. This Job Description includes the essential job functions required to perform the job described above, as well as additional duties and responsibilities. This Job Description is not an exhaustive list of all functions that the employee performing this job may be required to perform. The Company reserves the right to revise the Job Description at any time, and to require the employee to perform functions in addition to those listed above.*
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