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PONTE VEDRA



HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY

February 10, 2022

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75 cents

PonteVedraRecorder.com

Recorder

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Photo courtesy of Dawn Kroog

The Ponte Vedra High School Sharks Cheerleaders have made school history by winning their first state championship title. The Sharks scored an 87.60 in the Class 1A Medium Division, knocking out the 12-year winning streak of the reigning state champions by a 4.1 margin. Read about the school's district soccer champs, the girls basketball district champs and recent wins for the boys basketball team in Sports.



INSIDE: CHECK IT OUT!

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



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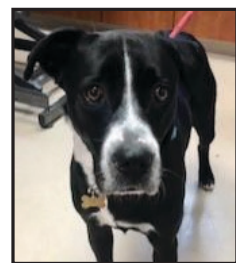
We welcome submissions of photos, stories, columns and letters to the editor. Let us know what's happening. If you have hard copies of photos you want us to feature, feel free to bring them to our office — we'll scan them and hand them right back. E-mail submissions to news@pontevedrarecorder.com or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



Prince

Hi, my name is Prince. I'm a one-year-old Lab/boxer mix. My previous pet parents had to move and could not take me with them, but I'm ready to start the next chapter of my life with a new "forever" family. My new home needs to be cat free;

I'm not overly fond of them. If you are looking for a friend that is good with kids and other dogs, and housetrained, then I'm your Prince in shining armor. Unfortunately, I have been at The Pet Center for some time now waiting for my new family. Please stop by and meet me. We might just be a perfect match. While I am HW+ the adoption fees will be waived, and the Pet Center will give my adopter a \$250 voucher towards my HW treatment.



Spot

Hi, I'm Spot. I'm a 4-year-old male terrier mix. I'm sweet, good with kids and love to go for walks. I am going to need some help with manners and potty training. My previous

owner was unable to care for me, and I've been at the Pet Center a long time looking for a new family. Could you please give me a 2nd chance at love? If you would like to meet me, give the Pet Center a call to schedule an appointment. While I am HW+ the adoption fees will be waived, and the Pet Center will give my adopter a \$250 voucher towards my HW treatment.

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

Friends of the Library to host BACKINTYME program

On Tuesday, Feb. 15, The Friends of the Ponte Vedra Beach Library will present Frank and Mary Lee Sweet in "BACKINTYME: Stories and Music about The People that Fill the Pages of Florida History."

Doors open at 6 p.m., and the program starts at 6:30 p.m. at the Ponte Vedra Beach Library, 101 Library Blvd, Ponte Vedra Beach.

The program, which is part of the FOL Speaker Series, is free to the public.

City to mark Don Pedro Menendez de Aviles birthday

The City of St. Augustine will mark Don Pedro Menendez de Aviles' 503rd birthday at 11 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 15, with a brief wreath-laying ceremony at the base of his statue in front of City Hall, located at 75 King St. The public is invited to attend.

The ceremony will include a processional and a reading of the proclamation in front of the statue by a group of reenactors from Historic Florida Militia, as well as remarks offered by Mayor Tracy Upchurch.

Menendez, who founded the city on Sept. 8, 1565, was born in Avilés, a port city in the Asturias region of Spain, on Feb. 15, 1519.

County to host American Rescue Plan Act workshop

St. Johns County will host an American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) workshop to allow an opportunity for the public to provide feedback on how the federal funds should be utilized. During the workshop, county staff will provide an overview of ARPA and solicit input to help prioritize impacted areas.

All feedback collected at the workshop and through an online survey will be aggregated and analyzed before the county considers more funding allocations.

The workshop is scheduled for 9 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 22, at the Health and Human Services Building, Muscovy Conference Room, 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine.

No action will be taken during the workshop.

For those who cannot attend the workshop, St. Johns County has established an online survey to garner additional community input. To find the survey and more information on ARPA, go to sjcfl.us/SJCARPA.

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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Hugh Osteen

COO/VP

hugh@osteenmediagroup.com

(904) 285-8831

Susan Griffin

Publisher

susan@pontevedrarecorder.com

(904) 686-3938

Shaun Ryan

Editor

shaun@pontevedrarecorder.com

(904) 285-8831, ext. 1202

Anthony Richards

Reporter

anthony@pontevedrarecorder.com

(904) 285-8831, ext. 1207

Don Coble

Contributor

don@claytodayonline.com

Kristin Flanagan

Account Executive

kristin@pontevedrarecorder.com

(904) 285-8831, ext. 1206

Adele McGraw

Account Executive

adele@pontevedrarecorder.com

(904) 285-8831, ext. 1208

April Snyder

Sales Assistant

april@pontevedrarecorder.com

(904) 285-8831, ext. 1204

Joe Wilhelm

Circulation Manager

joe@osteenmediagroup.com

(904) 300-5374

Amber Anderson

Page/Graphic Designer

amber@pontevedrarecorder.com

(352) 317-3311

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New K-8 school to be built within Shearwater

The St. Johns County School District has announced plans to construct its newest K-8 campus on land dedicated by Freehold Communities within Shearwater, a residential community in St. Augustine.

The school will be built on 26 acres previously transferred by Freehold to the district. Once open, it will be easily accessible from County Road 210 and County Road 16A. It will also be a short walk, bike or golf cart ride for families

living within Shearwater.

Freehold Communities is an affiliate of Freehold Capital Management, the Boston-based fully integrated real estate investment and development firm.

According to the district, the school is planned to open for the 2023-24 school year. It will accommodate about 1,500 students and is anticipated to relieve overcrowding at nearby Freedom Crossing Academy, Timberlin Creek Elementary School and Switzerland Point

Middle School.

“This new K-8 school will greatly benefit the current and future residents of Shearwater and the county as a whole,” said Andrew Smith, southeastern division president for Freehold Communities. “A big part of the tremendous growth we are seeing in the region is due to the quality of schools here. In fact, St. Johns County was recently rated the number-one school district in Florida. We are pleased to be able to provide the

land and incorporate the school site into our community.”

Shearwater encompasses more than 1,500 acres and is planned for a total of 2,778 homes. It includes 13-miles of walking trails through 600-acres of preserved habitat, parks, fields, lakes and canoe/kayak access to Trout Creek.

For more information on Shearwater, go to ShearwaterLiving.com.

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www.ElizabethHudgins.com



THE PLAYERS launches digital ticket program for military members and veterans

THE PLAYERS Championship announced Wednesday, Feb. 2, that the military and veteran ticket program for the 2022 Championship (March 8-13) will feature several enhancements.

New this year, the tickets will be presented by Optum, Morgan Stanley and Grant Thornton and will include a digital food voucher (details below).

All military and veteran tickets will be digital and must be secured in advance through an online verification system.

Military ticket offerings for THE PLAYERS 2022:

All active duty, retired, reserve and National Guard members verified through the new military identification system and one dependent are provided access to complimentary tickets on Tuesday, March 8, and Wednesday, March 9, as well as one competition day during Thursday, March 10, through Sunday, March 13, while supplies last.

Veteran ticket offerings for THE PLAYERS 2022:

Veterans verified through the military identification system and one dependent are provided access to discounted tickets on Tuesday, March 8, and Wednesday, March 9, as well as one competition day during Thursday, March 10, through Sunday, March 13, while supplies last.

To secure military and veteran tickets, follow these steps:

- Go to THEPLAYERS.com/tickets and click CLAIM TICKETS in the Military Admission section.
- Select your chosen tournament day(s).
- Verify your military designation using GovX by selecting the link on the checkout page.
- Once verified, complete the transaction and access your tickets on THE PLAYERS' digital portal.
- Add your ticket(s) to your mobile wallet prior to arrival.

Parking

Parking passes are not included in any ticket purchases. A separate parking pass is required each day of tournament week, Tuesday through Sunday, and must be purchased online in advance via THEPLAYERS.com/parking.

Tuesday and Wednesday parking will be \$15 per day, plus tax; Thursday through Sunday is \$40 per day, plus tax.

Parking will not be sold on site, and all parking passes will be digital. Rideshare is also available and will drop off and pick up at the Couples entry off ATP Boulevard, a short walk from the 15th hole.

Other military appreciation offerings and events include:

Military Job Fair — Saturday, March 5

THE PLAYERS, in partnership with the Jacksonville Military Veterans Coalition, will host its 11th annual Military Job Fair. The Military Job Fair is free and open to military personnel, veterans and military spouses and will take place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Patriots' Outpost presented by Optum, Morgan Stanley and Grant Thornton, located on the Stadium Course near the tee at No. 16.

Military Appreciation Day – Tuesday, March 8

The new ceremony start time is 4:30 p.m. on the Island Green 17th hole, immediately followed by a concert performance. Please note: A Tuesday ticket to THE PLAYERS includes access to the ceremony and concert.

Military & Veteran Hospitality – Patriots' Outpost presented by Optum, Morgan Stanley and Grant Thornton

Throughout tournament week, active duty, retired, reserve, National Guard members, veterans and one accompanied dependent (with valid I.D.) will have access to the Patriots' Outpost presented by Optum, Morgan Stanley and Grant Thornton. An open-air hospitality venue located near the tee at No. 16, the Outpost is reserved exclusively for the military and offers complimentary snacks and nonalcoholic beverages.

Please refer to the military information page on THE PLAYERS website (<https://www.theplayers.com/military.html>) for a full list of military appreciation offerings and programming at the 2022 championship.

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Conrad speaks to Coalition about COVID-19, county growth

By Anthony Richards

The Ponte Vedra Beaches Coalition has had a respectful working relationship with the St. Johns County Commission over the years and that continued as County Administrator Hunter Conrad was the guest speaker at the Ponte Vedra Beaches Coalition Feb. 7 meeting.

“In the past we’ve always worked closely with county commission, which is vital for an organization like ours,” Coalition President Lisa Johnson said.

Conrad assured those in attendance that the most important thing for them to understand is that with him they are getting someone who cares, because he has called St. Johns County his home since he was 10 years old.

He opened up talking about a topic that has been on the mind of many in recent years, COVID-19, in particular looking back at how the county handled it.

“The challenge with COVID-19 was that no one knew or could have predicted it,” Conrad said. “If they tell you that, they are lying to you.”

However, one of the things that he is confident about is that they are much better prepared to handle future emergencies like a pandemic having been through and learned from the experience.

“Every county has a different response that suits their situation,” Conrad said.

One of the developments that has remained, if not increased, during the pandemic was the growth the county is experiencing.

As a result, the county has begun a branding initiative within the past year to help have a more laid-out plan moving forward.

“We’ve had unbridled growth,” Conrad said. “It’s just been exploding.”

However, Conrad pointed to the branding initiative as a way to help balance the great resources the county with the continuing influx of people to the region.

“We have no definition of what we’re going to look like,” Conrad said. “This is just one component that will help us define who we are and what we want to be 20 years from now.”

Part of that branding process will include citizen surveys and a push for the gathering of community input expected to begin in March.

Another example of hearing from the community was the growth management workshop held Jan. 25.

“There has never been a countywide vision laid out,” Conrad said. “It’s not re-branding, but branding.”

According to Conrad, branding, sales tax and beach renourishment are the three big external projects he believes are facing the county right now.

The commission is set to have a discussion regarding sales tax during its Feb. 15 meeting. They are expected to vote whether there will be a referendum so that residents can vote on it.

In other news from the meeting, Sheldon Friedman, a board member on the Citizens Traffic Task Force, updated to the Coalition that the county and engineers are looking at the roundabout at the intersection of Mickler Road and Palm Valley Road.

According to Friedman, the Florida Department of Transportation predicts that the roundabout will no longer be a suitable option for traffic flow in about five years due to the increased traffic along those roads.

They are exploring whether a traffic light or other options would be more ideal for that intersection in the future.

The next Coalition meeting is scheduled for March 7 at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library located at 101 Library Blvd. in Ponte Vedra.



Photo by Anthony Richards
St. Johns County administrator Hunter Conrad was the guest speaker at the Ponte Vedra Beaches Coalition Feb. 7 meeting.

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Lauren Klose is the founder and owner of Artistic Aire, which she started in 2003 and has continued to grow it over the years. It allows her to do what she loves and showcase her creative side in a variety of artforms, including recently completing the Nocatee Town Center mural.

Lauren Klose

As told to Anthony Richards

Can you please tell us a little about your background?

I'm a Virginia girl and lived there for 26 years, going to college at James Madison (University) where I earned a fine art and graphic design degree.

I worked as an apprentice my first years out of college and learned a lot.

We moved down to Ponte Vedra right after my daughter was born because my parents live in Marsh Landing.

I really wanted to be closer to them. It was 10 years ago in October.

Have you always had a creative side and a passion for art?

I took my first piano lesson when I like 3 years old. I have just always naturally drawn to music and art from a young age.

I come up with images of my ideas in Photoshop so that my clients can see and get an idea what it would look like once I'm finished.

My husband does a lot of the renderings for me. He even helps me paint on the bigger projects. It's a group effort.

I thought at one point I would be more of a graphic designer than a painter, but the path led me to more of the fine art route.

How did the idea for Artistic Aire come about, and how long have you been involved with it?

I started Artistic Aire in 2003 and naturally named it as Aire with an "e." It's a musical reference because I'm also a pianist.

At first, Artistic Aire was a way for me to make money by teaching piano lessons as much as it was painting.

What are the most rewarding parts of the job?

It's a really amazing thing to do what you love doing every day.

I feel grounded and super blessed by the stream of clients I have had coming in. I had 50 clients last year and we're already booked through February of this year.

When I'm doing a big project outside in public there is more interaction that comes with it. People like to say hi or wave as they walk by.

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

I've only done two massive projects in a community space, but the larger the project, the more that goes into it.

One of the largest projects I've done is the Nocatee mural I completed in November. It is 22 feet high and another 30 feet wide.

I set up scaffolding but the height of a project can definitely come into play at times.

What are some of the neat projects you are working on?

I've started doing more watercolors this past year.

It's always so inspiring to see what other muralists are doing around the world or in the country.

I will pass projects on to other muralists if I don't think



Photo courtesy of Lauren Klose

Lauren Klose shares her creative passion as owner of Artistic Aire. She and her husband have two children, Abbey and Trevor. Together they enjoy being involved in the local community as a family.

I can properly execute it.

I try to tackle almost everything, but I don't do ceilings anymore. It just really puts a toll on your back over the years.

One of my goals this year is to become a spray artist as well as brush.

I've never done two of the same murals. I like that because it keeps it fresh and the creative juices flowing constantly.

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

I love that we're close to the beach and raising both our

kids in Nocatee. The neighboring community in Nocatee is pretty special.

I've slipped right into the Southern hospitality down here.

What do you like to do in your free time?

We'll take the kids to the beach and do a little surfing and we cook a lot together as a family. It's probably the most important life skill that everyone should know.

Abbey is 10 and plays the piano and surfs; Trevor is seven and plays the piano and tennis.

I gave my daughter her first piano lesson when she was five or six and my son got his first in March 2020.

Rotary Club celebrates heroes



Contributed photos

The Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra (Nocatee) recently presented medals of honor to St. Johns County's Firefighter of the Year Katrina Silvia and Sheriff's Office Deputy of the Year Cpl. Stacci Sastre.

The Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra (Nocatee) recently presented medals of honor for 2021 to St. Johns County Firefighter of the Year engineer Katrina Silvia from Station 18 in Nocatee and to St. Johns County Sheriff's Office Deputy of the Year Cpl. Stacci Sastre.

The club's inaugural Rotary Heroes event was also presented by the Ponte Vedra Rotary Foundation, the club's charitable arm. The awards were given in celebration of excellence in vocational service, which was Rotary's theme for January.

Silvia is an 18-year veteran of St. Johns County Fire Rescue. When asked what inspired her to be a firefighter, she said, "I wanted to be a firefighter after watching a film in fifth grade but had let my dream fall to the wayside. It was the events of Sept. 11, 2001, that reignited a spark in me to become a firefighter."

"Engineer Silvia has been example of empathy, caring and compassion to everyone she works with," said Capt.

Jason Sheider, who nominated her for the award. "She has dedicated herself to serving others and her coworkers. It reflects on every call for service we respond to and every interaction she has with community members."

Silvia is an avid endurance athlete and often runs marathons in her gear to raise funds for Code 3 For a Cure, a national nonprofit that assists firefighters with cancer.

Sastre has been a deputy with the St. Johns Sheriff's Office for more than six years. She was awarded the Detective Dave White Memorial Foundation Scholarship to attend the police academy. She is a field training officer for new hires, serves on the crisis negotiation team, is a member of the promotional review committee and serves on the peer-to-peer support committee.

She was nominated for the award by Capt. Tres Edenfield who said, "Stacci has proven herself to be a servant leader through her putting those in her stead

before herself and assuring their needs are met before her own. She is a teacher among her peers and is steadfast in assuring the new deputy sheriffs are mentored and taught the right way of doing things from the very beginning. Stacci has a servant's heart, as a mother to her babies, leader to her peers or servant of the citizenry, she exudes sacrifice and commitment as she strives to be the best she can be."

In addition to the Rotary International sanctioned medals presented to Sastre and Silvia, a donation was made to Code 3 for a Cure in honor of Silvia, and a donation was made to St. Jude Children's Hospital in honor of Sastre.

Sponsors for the event included Nocatee businesses: Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream, Publix, Starbucks, Jersey's Mike's Subs and Trasca & Co. Eatery.

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Budweiser Clydesdales make stop in Ponte Vedra

Hundreds of people turned out Sunday, Feb. 6, to see the famous Budweiser Clydesdales at the Winn-Dixie store in Ponte Vedra. Two members of the iconic team stood politely beneath canopies as people stepped up to pet their manes and have photos taken beside them. The horses also visited other area Winn-Dixie stores throughout the weekend.

Photo by Shaun Ryan



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THEME: Kings and Queens

ACROSS

1. Outback birds
5. Pilgrimage to Mecca
8. Well, to Sofia Loren
12. Impose a tax
13. No way!
14. Malicious burning
15. ____ over
16. Radiant light
17. Ran easily
18. *"The King of Staten Island" star Pete
20. Goyim, alt. sp.
21. Mork from Ork, e.g.
22. Common furniture wood
23. "Der Ring des Nibelungen" composer
26. Petroleum product (2 words)
30. Shakespearean fuss
31. Loan shark
34. Village People hit
35. City in France
37. Street, in Paris
38. Show in progress (2 words)
39. Tiny purse
40. Was almost out of gas, e.g. (2 words)
42. *First H in HRH
43. Type of bag
45. Unguarded
47. Brick and mortar carrier
48. Resize a dress, e.g.
50. "For ____ the Bell Tolls"
52. *Netflix royal drama (2 words)
55. Bridal veil fabric
56. One who hoes
57. Not far
59. Orderly arrangement
60. Drunkard, slangily
61. Stare
62. Country club pegs
63. Drivers' licenses, e.g.
64. *2019 movie "Queen & ____"

DOWN

1. Not Moose or Shriner
2. Fitting reward

3. Iris holder
4. Forest spirit
5. Gingerbread sculpture
6. Kitchen garb
7. *Billie ____ King
8. *Queens neighbor
9. ESPN trophy
10. Denials
11. December 31st, e.g.
13. Lowest points
14. Plural of alga
19. Intestinal obstruction
22. Opposite of their
23. *Prince Charles' domain
24. Temples' innermost sanctuaries
25. Not stay in (2 words)
26. Perceive by touch
27. *The NBA's Kansas City-____ Kings (1972-75)
28. More unfriendly
29. *Late "Live" King of CNN
32. Russia's mountain range
33. Seek a seat
36. *The last "king" of Russia
38. Proprietor
40. *The ____ Queen, regal chess character in "Through the Looking Glass"
41. Public disapproval
44. Cozy and comfortable
46. Two of these do not make a right
48. Near the wind
49. Potato soup partner, pl.
50. "She ____ a Yellow Ribbon"
51. Add to payroll
52. Native of Thailand
53. Lash mark
54. Member of National Socialist German Workers' Party
55. Giant pot
58. "Shiny Happy People" band

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

PLAYERS shaping up as the big week approaches

By Shaun Ryan

THE PLAYERS Championship is back. "We're 30 days away, and things are shaping up really, really well," said Jared Rice, executive director for THE PLAYERS, adding that the course looks "fantastic."

It's been a difficult couple of years with the arrival of the pandemic and all of the accommodations that it necessitated. The tournament was cut off mid play in 2020. Play resumed in 2021, but crowd capacity was restricted.

But this year, the tournament, like so many other areas of society, has turned the corner.

"Our big focus has been getting back to the things that we've really come to be known for," said Rice. "That means ease of entry, diverse offerings for fans, great programming on Tuesday and Wednesday to make practice-round days really fun."

At this point, THE PLAYERS is expected to be held with no capacity restrictions, though Rice said the tournament would continue to take guidance from the CDC and local health authorities.

"So, if we're in a position where we have to make some adjustment, we've got a playbook," said Rice.

One of the lessons organizers learned after COVID has been the value of establishing a contactless environment.

To that end, the tournament has gone exclusively to digital access, which includes purchases on site, tickets and parking. So, fans may want to ensure they

have everything organized before going. "We're asking fans: Be prepared in advance. Know when you're coming out. Make the right plans for transportation logistics," said Rice. "And have your parking pass and your tickets ready in your mobile wallet."

Tournament week will kick off with Military Appreciation Day on Tuesday, March 8. There will be a concert featuring country music star Kelsea Ballerini and the ceremony at the 17th hole.

This week, three players with star power committed to play: No. 1 ranked Jon Rahm, Brooks Koepka and Hideki Matsuyama.

"By and large, we expect any player who is eligible and healthy to play," Rice said. "From an eligibility perspective, these are the top 144 players in the world based on their performance over the last year. I think our field will be as strong as it's ever been."

He said he's heard from fans and corporate partners who are enthusiastic to be back. In addition, the tournament is seeing more partners getting involved this year than in 2021.

So, the central theme of the 2022 PLAYERS Championship may just be getting back to normal with local residents planning for the big week, purchasing tickets for the tournament, maybe planning parties around it.

"We are getting back to that tournament week that we've all come to expect," Rice said.

Senior LIVING

PAGES 9-24

CYPRESS VILLAGE OPENS CLINIC IN ASSISTED LIVING, MEMORY CARE PAGE 10

STARLING RESIDENT ENJOYS SHARING KNOWLEDGE OF CIVIL WAR PAGE 12

VICAR'S LANDING AT OAK BRIDGE CONTINUES ON SCHEDULE PAGE 15

NEW GLAUCOMA TREATMENT OPTIONS ARE SAFER, FASTER, MORE EFFECTIVE PAGE 18

BEACH HOUSE A 'HIDDEN GEM' IN JACKSONVILLE BEACH PAGE 22



Your Community Voice for 50 Years
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Recorder

Not your average newspaper, not your average reader

February 10, 2022

Cypress Village opens clinic for residents in assisted living, memory care

By Shaun Ryan

Cypress Village, a continuing care retirement care community in Jacksonville, has earned the highest ranking in customer satisfaction with independent senior living communities for the third consecutive year. The ranking was reported in the J.D. Power 2021 Senior Living Satisfaction Study.

It achieved the highest score in resident activities, community staff, price paid for services received, resident apartment/living unit, community building and grounds and dining.

No doubt, one of the community's newest additions will only add to resident satisfaction, at least for one sector of residents: a wellness clinic in the assisted living and memory care neighborhood that opened just after Christmas.

Cypress Village already had a wellness center, but it was located on the first floor – easily accessible to most of the 900 people living in the homes and apartments on the 120-acre campus, but a bit of a walk for those in the assisted living and memory care neighborhood.

The new clinic changes that.



Wellness clinic examination room.

Residents have complimented the clinic, which allows visiting physicians to treat patients in a number of specialties, such as podiatry, cardiology and dermatology.

Though some residents might prefer that physicians visit their individual apartments, others want a clinic setting to separate medical care from their home. This is especially desirable for those who live with spouses but want a degree of privacy.

"It's been working out really, really well," said Victory Sloan, director of assisted living at Cypress Village.



Contributed photos

William Grieco, director of health and wellness at Cypress Village, is seen with a resident.

CYPRESS continues on Page 13

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Starling resident enjoys sharing knowledge of Civil War

By Shaun Ryan

“Were you aware that Abraham Lincoln had seven brothers-in-law who fought for the Confederacy?”

It’s a unique way to start a conversation, and not unusual for the speaker, Guy DiCarlo, a resident of Starling at Nocatee assisted living community. To speak with DiCarlo is to learn something.

That’s because he has devoted most of his life to learning everything he could about the Civil War. And thanks to the Starling Scholars Series – monthly presentations by experts in a variety of fields – DiCarlo has established himself as a popular lecturer at the Nocatee community. In fact he has his own series now and says he will continue to speak as long as people want to listen.

Given DiCarlo’s knowledge and focus on the people of the Civil War rather than the dry statistics and dates, that should be a long time indeed.

His decades of research have turned up a number of interesting anecdotes – stories you’re not likely to encounter in a classroom. Like this one about Gen. George Armstrong Custer and his one-time West Point roommate:

“His roommate, who was a Confederate then, sent a note to Custer during the

battle saying, ‘I’m going to get married. Would you please be my best man?’

Custer stopped the war, went over, was his roommate’s best man, stayed for the party, came back that night, started the battle the next day.”

DiCarlo’s interest began when he was a boy and his mother gave him a book about Abraham Lincoln. Soon, he was an avid reader of everything Civil War, and as a young man, joined roundtable groups in Cleveland and New York. At one point, his personal library grew to about 3,000 books.

DiCarlo moved to Ponte Vedra in 1996 and got involved with the Friends of the Ponte Vedra Library. His knowledge of the value of books that the Friends sold to fund library projects led to establishment of the only used book store on the beach, Seymour’s Bookstore. That enterprise has generated about \$1.3 million to date, with the funds all benefitting the library and its programs.

In November, DiCarlo became a resident of Starling, which he praises for its friendly environment and, especially, the dining.

Starling is a stand-alone, 55-plus, independent-living community. It is on the luxury end with a restaurant, pool, art studio, bocce ball court, pickle ball court,




Photo by Shaun Ryan

Guy DiCarlo sits in his apartment at Starling where an antique radio can be seen in the background.


shuffleboard court, billiards room and a full-service bar, where happy hour – with bingo, live music, trivia and other activities – is held six days a week.

But perhaps one of Starling’s real treasures is residents like DiCarlo – people who bring their diverse life lessons to share.

“We have a lot of really incredible people here,” says Kerri Dufour, Starling at Nocatee Independent Living executive director. “They love to talk about history and learn new things. They’re constantly doing their own educational development and then participating in what we offer here, as well.”


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Contributed photo

Victory Sloan, director of assisted living at Cypress Village, and her staff celebrate the opening of the new wellness clinic.

Cypress

Continued from 10

The clinic has also proven its worth as a meeting place to plan resident care.

“It’s kind of a nice area to sit with families and go over any concerns that they have with their loved ones,” said Sloan. “Even if we’re signing a resident up for hospice, hospice can come out and meet the family in our waiting room as long as a physician isn’t using it at that time.”

“There is a big need in the senior

community for residents to be able to see their physicians in-house,” said one of the visiting physicians, Dr. Luis Anez. “It enhances their quality of life, solves problems in a shorter amount of time, saving money and time.”

The new clinic bridges the gap between seniors and access to services, a need that especially came to light during the pandemic.

“We offer safety and convenience of care at the wellness clinic,” said Sloan, “and that makes all the difference.”

Grocer’s customers encouraged to support American Heart Association

In celebration of American Heart Month, Southeastern Grocers Inc., parent company and home of Fresco y Más, Harveys Supermarket and Winn-Dixie grocery stores, has announced its continued partnership with the American Heart Association through Life is Why, the organization’s fundraising campaign, to inspire customers to honor their reasons to live healthier, longer lives.

The grocer’s in-store community donation program will aid in the organization’s research for new treatments, programs and services for survivors and their families, and encourage customers to develop healthy habits.

Now through Feb. 2, Fresco y Más, Harveys Supermarket and Winn-Dixie customers can simply round up their purchase to the nearest dollar or make a contact-free donation in the amount of their choice at the register while grocery shopping.

Each cent raised during the program will help save and improve the lives of individuals in their local communities and support the organization’s priority issues which impact heart disease and stroke risk factors including tobacco use and vaping, high blood pressure and

nutrition insecurity, as well as mental resilience and effects of COVID-19.

Raymond Rhee, chief people officer for Southeastern Grocers, said, “As the wake of the pandemic continues to impact our daily lives, our long-standing collaboration with the American Heart Association gives us the opportunity to invigorate our customers and associates to adopt healthier habits in their daily routines and reclaim their physical health and emotional well-being. We also encourage customers to pump up their support for American Heart Month by rounding up their grocery bills at checkout to help fund vital education, research and programs to strengthen the heart health of their families, friends and neighbors.”

According to the AHA, close to half of American adults have high blood pressure. Of those, about 75% don’t have it controlled and many don’t even know they have it. High blood pressure is a leading cause and controllable risk factor for heart disease and stroke and can contribute to worse outcomes for those who contract COVID-19.

To learn more about the Life Is Why campaign, go to heart.org/lifeiswhycampaign.



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Scott Grant is a fiduciary with Standfast Asset Management, but he also a popular speaker. Here he is with Lori Gibaldi, president of the Ponte Vedra Woman's Club.



Scott Grant is a fiduciary with Standfast Asset Management, but he also a popular speaker. Here he is with Charles, Robert and Judy Delmar.

Photos provided by Scott Grant

What Warren Buffett teaches senior investors

By Scott A. Grant

They say that Warren Buffet made 80% of his money after turning 65. That fact shocks the senses. It seems outrageous. You're supposed to make your money while you are working, not after you reach retirement age.

Here is another startling fact. If you travel due south from Chicago, you will eventually run into the Galapagos Islands off the west coast of South America. That doesn't seem right either. But it is.

Let's get back to Warren Buffett. His late-life wealth accumulation is not all that surprising either. It is the natural result of compounding. Compounding is a

powerful force. Stock market compounding can sometimes seem like magic.

Let's say that a schoolteacher named Judy invests \$500 per month into the stock market over the course of 30 years and reaches age 65 with an investment portfolio of \$1 million. Judy is determined not to spend the money, but rather to allow it to accumulate and donate it all to Wolfson's Children's Hospital in her will.

It took 30 years to accumulate that first million. The second million will come much faster. Assuming an 8% rate of return on her investments, Judy will double her money every nine years.

The trick to figuring out how quickly money doubles is called the "Rule of 72." You divide 72 by the interest rate to determine the number of years needed to double. In this case, 72 divided by 8% equals nine years.

So, if Judy, the retired schoolteacher, lives off her pension and her social security and allows the investment portfolio to grow, she will have two million at age 74, four million at 83, and eight million at 92. In this example, Judy accumulates 88% of her estate after age 65.

The idea of living to 92 may seem far-fetched, but not as far-fetched as Chicago being due north of the Galapagos Islands.

After all, life expectancy in the United States is only 77-years. (It recently went down for the first time in decades due to Covid.). But, as you age, your life expectancy increases. At age 65, a woman has a life expectancy of 87.

A lot gets written about life expectancy these days. Youth culture exaggerates the shortness of life to justify a wide variety of hedonistic behavior. This is nothing new. Every 20-30 years we become obsessed with the hubris of youth.

The reality is that people are living longer. The longer you live, the more opportunities you have to double the value of your assets. That is why Dracula is always rich. He lives forever. Many seniors accumulate significant wealth in their golden years.

That wealth typically comes from compounding the value of stock and real estate holdings. For many suddenly faced with the responsibility of maintaining and growing the largest pool of assets they have seen in their lifetime, managing these investments can seem daunting. If you seek help, be wary of the help you seek.

Scott A. Grant is a local author and columnist. By day he is a Fiduciary with Standfast Asset Management.



Scott Grant is a fiduciary with Standfast Asset Management, but he also a popular speaker. Here he is with Tom Giusto.

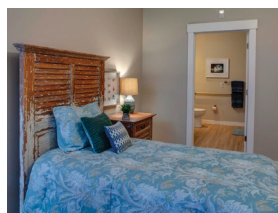
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Photos courtesy of Vicar's Landing at Oak Bridge

Construction of Vicar's Landing at Oak Bridge is progressing with windows and roofs nearly finished on the clubhouse and completion of the building scheduled for June 2.

Vicar's Landing at Oak Bridge continues on schedule

By Anthony Richards

Construction of Vicar's Landing at Oak Bridge, a proposed senior living community on State Road A1A, is moving along as scheduled with phase one of the project.

According to chief operations officer Dale Pirkle, the roughly seven-acre lake required by St. Johns River Management for the property has been created, and it is slowly filling up with water as time passes.

The lake is necessary because it will hold all the runoff water for the community.

Construction of buildings is also progressing with windows and roofs nearly finished on the clubhouse and completion of the building is scheduled for June 2.

Eight of the 43 proposed cottages, which will be duplexes and triplexes, are currently under construction with the first ones set to be finished in March and all of them completed by early November.

Cement podiums have been poured



Eight of the 43 proposed cottages, which will be duplexes and triplexes, are currently under construction with the first ones set to be finished in March and all of them completed by early November.

for one of two flats, which will consist of four-story apartment buildings over a parking garage.

Work is being done to put up steel-and-metal siding for the other flat.

One flat is scheduled to be completed in late November, while the other will not be far behind with a late December projection.

The community will have a gated entrance off State Road A1A, which is expected to be in place about the same time as the clubhouse completion in June.

“By mid to late July people should be able to start moving into the cottages,” Pirkle said. “It will be staggered, because

we have to have things in place for our residents.”

Once the cottages and flats are finished, the final project will have 109 independent living units on the property.

“The units will be sound-proof, have big windows and be very spacious,” Pirkle said.

RLPS Architects based out of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, is helping oversee the project, and the company's expertise is reflexed in the project.

“They know how to design what senior living is all about today,” Pirkle said.

According to Pirkle, he has continued to feel excitement from the community

about the project and the interest is picking up as they get closer to officially opening to residents.

“We're all getting older, unfortunately,” Pirkle chuckled. “It's an exciting time thinking about all the people who are going to benefit from this project.”

The project's second phase will entail building two more flats as well as a memory-care facility and assisted-living building.

“As soon as we hit occupancy on the first phase, we'd like to start looking ahead to phase two as soon as possible,” Pirkle said.

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COA Center in Nocatee begins memory enhancement program

The St. Johns County Council on Aging will be offering their groundbreaking Integrative Memory Enhancement Program on Thursdays at the COA Center at Flagler Health+ Village at Nocatee beginning Feb. 10.

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

“We are all very conscious of the importance of keeping our bodies in shape,” IMEP manager Catherine Tupper said. “It is just as important that we keep our brains fit, especially as we age.”

The COA’s groundbreaking IMEP program is an original, research-based program developed to stimulate brain health and minimize the progression of memory loss and/or dementia.

The program offers a structured curriculum of fun, engaging group activities designed to boost cognitive reserve and provide crucial opportunities for stimulation and socialization.

IMEP serves those who are beginning to notice memory changes, or who are experiencing memory loss or symptoms of early dementia, Alzheimer’s, or other forms of brain trauma.

According to the county COA’s website, there are several factors that can

contribute to the effects of memory loss, such as medications, stress, a vitamin deficiency and even dehydration.

The program is designed to morph the approach of care based on the specific needs a patient has.

A comprehensive list of memory care options exists as part of the program, including memory-loss diagnosis screenings, early memory care and presenting plans that have both the patients and caregivers in mind.

The array of options covers every stage and is not just about what to do once memory loss begins, but also preventive measures that can be taken against it.

The program includes two-hour and five-hour classes with lunch being part of the five-hour sessions.

Social interaction and dialogue are encouraged in the classroom setting and are seen as ways to help in the memory strengthening process. The classes also serve as a valuable respite for caregivers.

IMEP classes will be offered on Thursdays from 10 a.m. to noon, with class sizes being limited to 12 and registration being required.

The center is a lifelong learning facility serving adults ages 18 and older. It is presented by the COA thanks to a partnership with Flagler Health+ and additional



File photo

The St. Johns County Council on Aging will be offering their groundbreaking Integrative Memory Enhancement Program on Thursdays at the COA Center at Flagler Health+ Village at Nocatee beginning Feb. 10.

support from Republic Services.

For additional information or to register for a class, contact Tupper by calling 904-729-9535 or via email at ctupper@stjohnscoa.com.

The program is offered at COA locations throughout St. Johns County,

including Ponte Vedra Beach, Fruit Cove, Anastasia Island and St. Augustine Shores. For more information, go to www.coasjc.org/imepsjc.

Establishing the program at the Nocatee location is just the latest. The COA also plans to implement one at the St. Augustine Shores Riverview Club starting March 3.

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Ponte Vedra Gardens residents pack food for children in need

By Shaun Ryan

Helping others can give one a sense of purpose, a sense of vitality. It's something we all need, regardless of what stage in life we find ourselves.

But sometimes it's difficult to find opportunities where we can contribute to the world around us.

Thanks to Christ Episcopal Church's Blessings in a Backpack ministry, that's not a problem for the residents of Ponte Vedra Gardens Alzheimer's Special Care Center.

Once a month, Sharon Kehoe and a few others bring food and supplies to the center so that residents can pack bags for local children in the free and reduced lunch program who might not otherwise have anything to eat on weekends when there's no access to the school cafeteria.

Everyone sits at a table and works, assembly-line style, to fill the bags.

"It gives our residents a way to give back to the community and feel purposeful," said Jennifer McCormick, programming director at Ponte Vedra Gardens. She said residents gain a sense of accomplishment and know they are really helping someone.

"Sometimes, it just brings tears to my eyes," she said. "It's just so beautiful."

"They're just so happy to be doing that to help children," said Kehoe. "What a bridge between the generations!"

After the work is completed, the residents pray over the bags for the children who will receive them.

"It's God's work in action," said Kehoe. "I truly believe that."

The need is ongoing.

On weeks between these monthly visits to the center, ministry volunteers continue to gather and pack about 85 bags with food. These are dropped off at area schools so that school officials can distribute them to the children.

Julie Davidson, community resource director for Ponte Vedra Gardens, described how the work is compatible with the center's Meaningful Moments program. That initiative is an approach to caring for those with dementia that goes beyond simply making residents feel safe and comfortable. By getting to know everything they can about the residents, staff members are able to develop an individualized plan of care.

"Meaningful Moments is the foundation of everything we do here," Davidson said.

Another initiative employed by the center is the "memory café." On the second Tuesday of every month, members of the community are invited to visit with residents. They might have a snack or sit and do some crafts together.

"It's a fun time, where they can have a few laughs," said Davidson.

Regarding Blessings in a Backpack, McCormick pointed out that Kehoe could easily choose to pack all the bags herself at home but instead opts to include Ponte Vedra Gardens residents.

And it pays off.

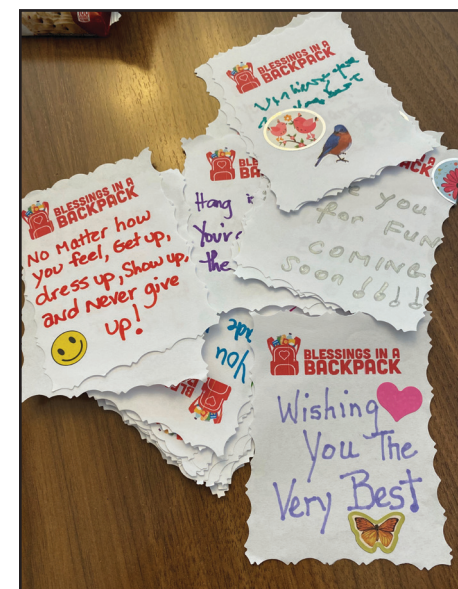
"They tend to have a great day, because they did something good," said Davidson.

Ponte Vedra Gardens Alzheimer's Special Care Center is located at 5125 Palm Valley Road, Ponte Vedra Beach.

Photos provided by Ponte Vedra Gardens Alzheimer's Special Care Center



Sharon and Ken Kehoe prepare to pack food for hungry children.



Special notes by Ponte Vedra Gardens residents and staff, written to the children who will receive the bags of food.



A resident of Ponte Vedra Gardens and a program assistant fill bags with food to be given to children who might otherwise go hungry on weekends.



Sharon Kehoe talks to residents of Ponte Vedra Gardens.

Riverkeeper invites locals to 'get their feet wet'

St. Johns Riverkeeper has announced its 2022 Get Your Feet Wet campaign, an initiative to provide resources and opportunities for the public to learn about and explore the St. Johns River and its watershed.

The campaign is being launched to introduce people to the many beautiful and special places along the St. Johns, foster a deeper appreciation for the river, and demonstrate what will be lost if it isn't protected.

Riverkeeper is partnering with other nonprofits, agencies and businesses to offer a variety of unique outdoor experiences and opportunities to learn about the St. Johns River.

Offerings include:

- Paddles: Explore the river and enjoy its beauty up close from a kayak on one of the guided tours.

- Guided hikes.
 - The inaugural Source to Sea Celebration in Palatka on March 12 will celebrate those who have paddled all 310 miles of the St. Johns River.
 - Speakers Series: On the fourth Thursday of each month, travel on the St. Johns River Taxi to learn from experts about the history, ecology and issues related to the river and its tributaries.
 - Tiny Dock Concert Series: Enjoy music while on board a boat, kayak or paddle board or the St. Johns River Taxi. This year's concerts feature local renowned artists from a variety of genres, including Jacksonville resident and finalist from NBC's "The Voice," Paris Winningham.
- For more information about Get Your Feet Wet 2022, go to stjohnsriverkeeper.org/events.



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New glaucoma treatment options are safer, faster, more effective

By **Rajesh K. Shetty M.D.**,
Florida Eye Specialists



Rajesh K. Shetty M.D.

Nearly 3 million Americans have glaucoma. The prevalence of the disease has been on the rise for the last two decades, a rise that will continue in our aging population. As a glaucoma specialist, I feel fortunate to be practicing during a time when our treatment options have advanced tremendously. The days of having to delay invasive surgery while patients suffer from

discomfort are moving behind us.

Most recently, the FDA recently approved an exciting new usage for a device called the XEN Gel Stent to treat glaucoma patients. The XEN Gel Stent is a small implant, the size of an eyelash. Soft and easy to insert, it is injected right beneath the surface of the eye, shunting fluid directly to the subconjunctival space and ultimately relieving pressure. Read on to learn more about this latest advancement in glaucoma treatment.

Advancements in Glaucoma Treatment Options

Primary open-angle glaucoma is the most common

form of glaucoma, which is technically a group of eye conditions that damage the optic nerve. When pressure is too high, usually due to a backup of fluids inside the eye, the nerve cannot continue to be healthy, which can lead to vision problems. Unfortunately, once vision loss progresses, the damage is irreversible.

In the past, we've had to put off surgery and try to control intraocular pressure (IOP) with eye drops and multiple oral medications and treatments. Our treatment options advanced with the advent of micro invasive glaucoma surgeries (MIGS), which allow intervention for patients in earlier stages of glaucoma. However, the newest treatment for glaucoma, the XEN Gel Stent, allows us to treat patients with moderate to severe glaucoma, with less risk and much faster recovery time than the traditional trabeculectomy or tube shunt. This has led to improved results for our patients.

How the XEN Gel Stent Benefits Glaucoma Treatment

The eyes are incredibly delicate and intricate organs — this is one of the many reasons I became an ophthalmologist. That's why treating them, and diseases such as glaucoma, must be done with equal care and intricacy. Previously, we treated glaucoma by creating a drainage system for fluid to be redirected from inside to outside of the eye. At that time, we used a sophisticated network of flaps and stitches that could take weeks to heal properly.

With the XEN Gel Stent, the procedure takes only 10 to 15 minutes. It's minimally invasive with the injection of a tiny tube, and is self-healing, so it doesn't require any stitches. This dramatically reduces recovery time for patients, with many patients returning to normal activity

the next day.

This innovative technique of implanting the XEN Gel Stent has resulted in low pressures similar to traditional trabeculectomies, but with drastically improved postoperative results. Visual recovery is faster, outcomes are predictable, and post-operative visits and medications are reduced.

Is the XEN Gel Stent Right for My Glaucoma Surgery?

Performing surgery with the XEN Gel Stent is a huge advancement for glaucoma specialists and our patients. The XEN Gel Stent is designed to stay in the eye permanently. After the procedure, the stent should start working to help reduce your eye pressure.

If you have open-angle glaucoma and previous medications or surgery have not worked to help lower your eye pressure, this could be the right option to help preserve your sight. Your eye doctor will listen to your symptoms and discuss all your options for glaucoma treatment.

Remember, it's critical for all patients 60 and over to receive regular, comprehensive eye exams, so we can detect glaucoma and begin treatment right away. If you're overdue for your latest exam, don't wait any longer. Talk to your eye doctor today.

Rajesh K. Shetty M.D. is a board-certified, double fellowship-trained ophthalmologist specializing in cataract and glaucoma surgeries. To learn more about Dr. Shetty, go to FloridaEyeSpecialists.com.



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Vietnam veteran and Nocatee resident Larry Michalove and members of his family were presented with a yard sign honoring him as an “unsung hero” by the We Can Be Heroes Foundation.



Photos by Anthony Richards

St. Johns County Sheriff Rob Hardwick thanks retired United States Air Force Lt. Col. Larry Michalove for his service during the Vietnam War.

Vietnam vet honored for service, love of family

By Anthony Richards

War can be hard not just on those serving but also on their families back home who are forced to go through life without them and worried that they will not return.

Writing letters to home has been a common way to communicate and allow soldiers and their families a chance to stay in touch.

However, years ago while serving during the Vietnam War, retired United States Air Force Lt. Col. Larry Michalove chose to take sending letters home to the next level.

Instead, he sent fictional stories in his letters for his children to enjoy. What made the letters even more personal was the fact that the main characters in his stories were always four children that he modeled after his four children at home.

“Every night before we went to bed, he would tell us stories, so he just wanted to keep that going,” Lisa said. “It was the way he stayed connected to us.”

Together the four children, Lisa, David, Stacy and Karen, encountered magical adventures in the tales but always found a way to complete their quest and be home in time for dinner.

One of his stories even involved the children as dogs who saved a school from burning down.

“I wrote him letters too, but I didn’t have any good stories,” his wife Sybil Michalove chuckled.

Throughout all the stories he sent, he always remained focused on the children’s adventure at hand and never hinted at his real-world environment to his own children.

It was an environment that included being stationed in Thailand and the success-

es and close calls he encountered during the 114 combat missions he flew.

“We flew all of our combat missions across the Mekong River, and we were stopping the truck traffic coming down the Ho Chi Minh Trail to keep our GI’s safe,” Michalove said.

His goal was to protect his children from the chaos of war and just enjoy their childhoods.

“When we were young, we had no idea that he was flying every night,” Lisa said. “I thought he was doing a desk job and writing a book.”

The combination of Michalove’s love for his children and his country led to him being honored as an “unsung hero” by the We Can Be Heroes Foundation during the St. Johns County Veterans Council meeting Jan. 27.

“He’s a military hero, but also an unsung hero for all that he did for his family,” said Beth Heath, president of We Can Be Heroes Foundation, prior to awarding Michalove and his family on hand with a yard sign that he can proudly display recognizing him as an “unsung hero.”

Michalove and his wife Sybil recently moved to Nocatee from Birmingham, Alabama.

“Our children are the key to the maintaining of our future,” Michalove said.

Sheriff Rob Hardwick also attended the meeting and thanked Michalove for his service.

“I wouldn’t be free today without your sacrifice,” Hardwick said.

By the time Michalove returned from the war he had a notebook full of stories, which 15 years later were gathered and published as a book.

During his service, Michalove received

two Distinguished Flying Cross medals and nine air medals, but although those are great to many people, it is the stories he wrote years ago that will always be held in high regard by his children.

“The most important thing is not how many people read it, but that now my kids can read it and see the connection between us and their grandfather,” Lisa said.



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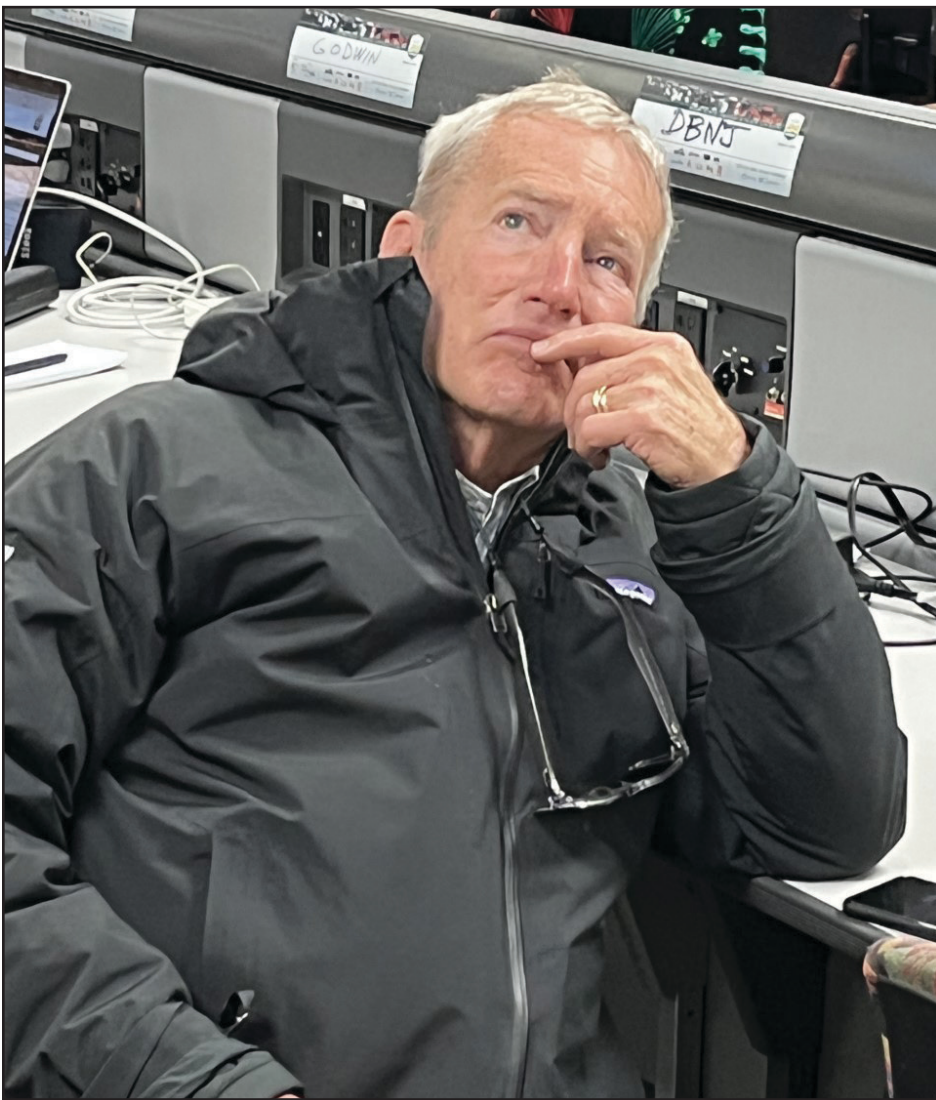
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St. Augustine resident Hurley Haywood helped to steer the IMSA sports car series toward a road of rebirth and growth.

24-hour race proves sports car racing back on fast track to prominence

By Don Coble

DAYTONA BEACH – Hurley Haywood still remembers being overwhelmed by the enormity and importance the first time he came to the Daytona International Speedway.

That was in 1973.

“I remember the first time I came through the tunnel, it took my breath away,” Haywood said.

His emotions haven’t changed.

Now 73, the legendary racer from St. Augustine is still overwhelmed by the sound of a purring sports car and the daunting challenge of racing non-stop for 24 hours on the 3.54-mile road course.

Haywood returned to Daytona for the Rolex 24 at Daytona on Jan. 29-30. Although he’s no longer behind the wheel of the iconic red, white and blue colors of Brumos Racing, he forever will be remembered as one of endurance racing’s pioneers. More importantly, he knows he helped steer the IMSA sports car series toward a road of rebirth and growth.

“It’s great to see the speedway for the 24-hour endurance program filled with spectators,” he said minutes after a field of 61 cars took the green flag to start the around-the-clock marathon. “The infield, there’s not a blade of grass available. I think it’s a record crowd. I’ve never seen a crowd here in the 24 years I’ve been racing here, the amount of people who were out there (before the race). It’s really cool. And this shows you IMSA’s on the right track. Great cars. Great drivers. A really international platform. It seems to be working.”

Sports car racing has been looking for more-secure footing for years. Dwindling fields, rising costs, the lack of manufacturer support and constantly-changing rules forced several teams – including Brumos – to the sidelines.

If the recent race is any indication, the work done behind the scenes by IMSA officials and the work done by the race teams in the garage area has paid off.

“It wasn’t something that happened overnight. It’s been evolving for a period of time,” Haywood said.

The endurance race got off to a fast start a week earlier with a three-day Roar Before the 24 practice session. Fans were allowed to walk through the busy garage area, often within inches of \$500,000 race cars, to create impressions that last a

lifetime.

The track also opened its gates to Scouts for free. Nearly half of the thousands of fans at the test were children.

“IMSA and the NASCAR folks know how to attract fans and keep fans with that sort of personalized way where the kids and the grownups can get close to the drivers and the team owners, and they remember that,” Haywood said. “I remember when I was starting out, Darrell Waltrip was sitting next to me at an autograph session and he said if you want to have a fan for life, you have a direct conversation with them, looking them in the eyes, shake his hand and start a conversation about anything and he’ll be a fan forever.”

Despite the threat of the coldest overnight temperatures in nearly 50 years, every spot in the infield was taken by fans who were willing to brave the cold to watch prototypes powered by Cadillac, Oreca and Acura, along with a host of luxury cars like Lexus, Mercedes, Ferrari, BMW, Porsche, Ligier, McLaren, Chevrolet Corvette, Lamborghini and Aston Martin weaving through the flat infield and around the high banks of the superspeedway.

“Now you’ve got a field of 61 cars – all class cars; all really good cars, all with really good, experienced drivers,” Haywood said. “The chances of those cars breaking are very slim. They’re bulletproof. Now it all comes down to the drivers and the ones who make the least amount of mistakes are the ones that are going to do well.”

By Sunday afternoon, Jan. 30, an Acura-powered prototype driven by defending Indianapolis 500 winner Helio Castroneves, Oliver Jarvis, Tom Blomqvist and Simon Pagenaud had the fastest car and fewest mistakes to outlast everyone else.

And in the process, they traveled 2,693.94 miles – the distance to Omaha, Nebraska, and back in a single day.

More impressive – and fan-appealing – was the fact there were 76 lead changes among seven different space-aged sports cars.

The real winners, however, are a series that’s back on the fast track to racing prominence and the thousands of new fans it made on the last weekend of January.



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Jacksonville doctor recognized as leading acupuncturist

Dr. Julee Miller, founder, owner and clinical director of Health Pointe Jacksonville Acupuncture & Wellness Clinic, has been recognized as one of three 2022 leading acupuncturists in Jacksonville by Three Best Rated. She was also a recognized recipient in 2021.

The World Health Organization recommends acupuncture for more than 100 conditions. This centuries-old practice of traditional Chinese medicine is a treatment modality involving thin needles placed in the body to treat pain.

Treatment by a licensed and professionally trained acupuncture physician, such as Miller, is a proven and effective way to treat pain, numbness and loss of balance associated with neuropathies. Miller stimulates the damaged peripheral nerves to regenerate and repair by increasing blood flow and decreasing pain, so that the healing can begin.

“Acupuncture is highly beneficial in treating many neurological disorders, including peripheral neuropathy, trigeminal neuralgia, postherpetic neuralgia, shingles, migraine headaches, Bell’s palsy, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson’s,

sciatica and disc herniation,” said Miller.

She specializes in solutions to chronic pain conditions, chronic illness and infertility to increase a patients’ quality of life. She is also an expert in integrative fertility and women’s health and treats infertility and hormone imbalances.

Miller has provided more than 135,000 treatments in her career. In 2021, she treated the highest number of patients ever, resulting in a doubling of staff.

“Depending on the severity of nerve damage, we typically see tremendous progress within a few weeks of treatment with innovative medical solutions to achieve measurable, long-lasting results,” Miller said.

She is a board-certified and licensed acupuncture physician. She has more than 30 years of combined experience in sports medicine and acupuncture, including an undergraduate degree in sports science with a concentration in athletic training and experience as a former member of the 2004 Olympic Sports Rehabilitation Team in Athens, Greece. A large part of her practice is treating sports injuries and chronic pain conditions.

Share the Love Auction helps meet pets’ dental needs

February is National Pet Dental Health Month, and the Share the Love Auction benefits the St. Augustine Humane Society’s dental health program.

But those who want to help pets in need while getting something special for themselves or a loved one will need to act quickly. Bidding ends Feb. 10

Pet dental health is just as important as people’s dental health. In fact, 80% of dogs and 70% of cats have some form of periodontal disease by the age of 3. Regular exams throughout a pet’s life can help detect problems early, before they cause damage to the pet’s teeth, tooth roots, bone or mouth.

Not only does dental disease affect a pet’s mouth, it can actually shorten the pet’s life, as the disease in the mouth can pass throughout the body, causing damage to vital organs, such as the heart and kidneys.

Despite the importance of pet dental health, not everyone can afford the lifesaving dental care that is needed for their pets.

“Right now, we are experiencing a surge in pets who need critical dental care, and all proceeds made in this fundraiser will directly benefit pets in the



Contributed photo

Pet dental health is essential to overall health.

most need who require extensive dental surgery,” said Carolyn Smith, executive director.

To learn more about the online auction or make a bid, go to SAHSAuction.org.



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Beach House a 'hidden gem' in Jacksonville Beach

By Shaun Ryan

Beach House Assisted Living & Memory Care is located next to a park in a peaceful residential neighborhood, away from all the hustle and bustle that go with major thoroughfares.

“Our neighbors across the street are cutting the grass and washing their cars,” said Beach House Sales and Marketing Director Dave Roberts, “so it’s more of a ‘home’ feel.”

But the surrounding environment is only one of the senior community’s benefits.

Having been open only since December 2014, it is still quite new – and looks it. It has a spacious dining room and private dining rooms, as well. There is a large common area where residents like to gather for socializing and special events. In addition, there is a library, chapel, theater room, internet café, a salon and spa, a fitness center and cozy living rooms throughout.

“We are one of the hidden gems of Jax Beach,” said Roberts.

Beach House, located at 1315 2nd St. North, has 64 assisted living and 20 memory care apartments. The facility puts a high priority on resident health and safety. It has a licensed nurse on site at



Walking into Beach House is a calming experience.



An example of one of the apartments at Beach House.

all times, emergency call systems in each suite and common area, transportation and accompaniment to scheduled medical visits and a secured Memory Care Center and courtyard.

Physicians, including specialists, visit the facility and medications can be delivered there.

“My goal is to have Beach House be a one-stop shop for medical needs,”



Photos provided by Foster Senior Living

Beach House Assisted Living & Memory Care opened in 2014.

Roberts said.

Beach House has a special appreciation for veterans and offers a 10% monthly discount on their base rent.

Nearly everything is included in residents’ rent: meals, housekeeping, laundry, transportation, activities and all utilities – cable, internet, electricity, water, sewer, trash collection. Only residents’ phone service is not included.

When caring for a loved one begins to get too difficult to sustain, people begin to wonder what is available in senior living arrangements. It’s useful to see one’s options firsthand. To that end, Beach House offers tours daily.

“We want to be that helping hand for families, adult children and the seniors themselves that are in need,” said Roberts.



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Beach Boys to return to The Amp on March 5



Contributed photo

The Beach Boys will perform March 5 at the St. Augustine Amphitheatre.

On Saturday, March 5, iconic group The Beach Boys will perform live at The St. Augustine Amphitheatre.

As The Beach Boys mark more than a half century of making music, the group continues to ride the crest of a wave unequalled in America's musical history. The Beach Boys have become synonymous with the California lifestyle and have become an American icon to fans around the world.

Since the band's co-founder, lead-singer and chief lyricist Mike Love penned the lyrics to The Beach Boys' first hit, "Surfin'" (1961), dozens of the band's chart toppers have become eternal anthems of American youth: "Surfin' USA," "Surfer Girl," "Fun, Fun, Fun," "I Get Around," "California Girls," "Help Me Rhonda," "Barbara Ann," "Good Vibrations," "Wouldn't It Be Nice," "Rock and Roll Music" and "Kokomo."

The Beach Boys have sold more than 100 million records worldwide and have received more than 33 RIAA Platinum and Gold record awards. The Rock and Roll Hall of Famers were also honored at the 2001 Grammy Awards with the Lifetime Achievement Award.

With more than five decades of touring under their belts, The Beach Boys have performed more concerts than any major rock band in history.

"Sounds Of Summer: The Very Best Of The Beach Boys," Capitol/EMI's 30-track collection of the band's biggest hits, has achieved triple-platinum success with sales of more than 3 million copies in the United States since its release.

The Beach Boys are led by Mike Love, who, along with longtime member Bruce Johnston, musical director Scott Totten, Brian Eichenberger, Christian Love, Tim Bonhomme, John Cowsill, Keith Hubacher and Randy Leago continue the legacy of the iconic band.

Note: This concert will not feature Brian Wilson, Al Jardine or David Marks.

Doors open at 7 p.m. with the show starting at 8 p.m.

Tickets can be purchased at the St. Augustine Amphitheatre Box Office, which is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays and 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturdays. Payment will be taken via credit and debit cards only.

For further information, go to theamp.com/events/detail/the-beach-boys-1.

Classic rock and roll at the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall

On March 11, The Drifters, The Platters and Cornell Gunter Coasters will perform at the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall.

It's not so much a concert as a party. Spend a nostalgic evening with three of the world's most beloved musical groups who were instrumental in creating the rock and roll and the doo wop sound: Cornell Gunter Coasters ("Charlie Brown," "Yakety Yak"), The Platters featuring four of America's premier singers performing their greatest hits ("Only You," "The Great Pretender") and The Drifters, one of rock and roll's founding vocal groups with their 50-year catalog of hits ("Under The Boardwalk," "This Magic Moment").

This show has songs to please every palate, delivered just the way you first heard them on the radio.

Doors open at 4 p.m. for the 5 p.m. show and 7:30 p.m. for the 8 p.m. show.

Tickets are on sale now and range in price from \$59.50 to \$69.50.

The Ponte Vedra Concert Hall box office is currently closed. Tickets for Ponte Vedra Concert Hall may be purchased at The Amp box office. Payment must be made by either credit or debit card.

The Amp box office is open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays, and 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturdays.

To purchase tickets online, go to Tickmaster.com.



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Romantic picnics are company's specialty



Contributed photos

The Luxe Sweetheart box is a great way to celebrate Valentine's Day

By Shaun Ryan

Romantic fun is the order of the day for a unique business that serves Northeast Florida and South-east Georgia.

"We celebrate Valentine's 365 days a year," says Leslie Diaz, owner of Luxe Picnics by Les.

Diaz and her team specialize in pop-up luxury picnic packages for small intimate gatherings, grazing services for any occasion, pop-up charcuterie board workshops and parties and private wine/whiskey pairing events.

Picnics featuring flowers, candles, grazing boards and platters can be set up indoors or outdoors at a favorite place on the beach, at the park, in the backyard or the livingroom.

Themed packages are available. In some cases, special themes or colors can be accommodated. Depending on location, a number of add-ons are possible, such as sunset horseback rides, mini photo sessions, wine, tents and more.

These picnics are especially appropriate for date nights, propos-

als, elopements and anniversaries. For Valentine's Day, Luxe Picnics offers a two-tier, limited edition Valentine box, which includes charcuterie, chocolate, strawberries and French macarons.

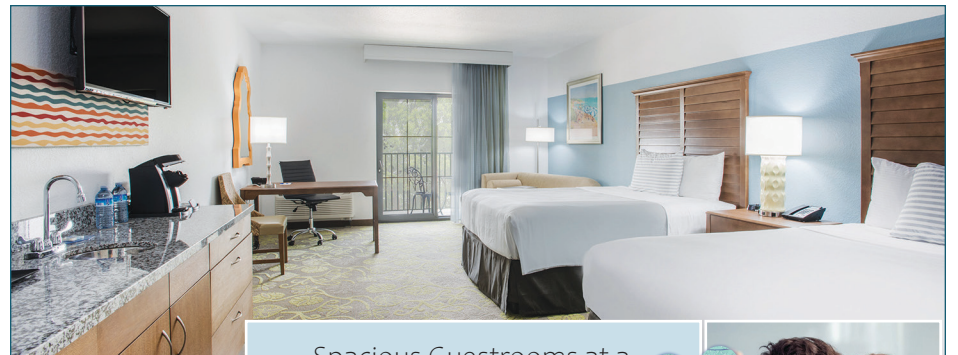
Headquartered in Nassau County, Luxe Picnics by Les can provide memorable romantic events to customers from St. Augustine to Jekyll Island. The team handles all set up and clean up so that customers can focus on enjoying the experience.

Luxe Picnics is a very different way of

celebrating.

"We are very unique," says Diaz. "We are one of a kind."

To learn more about the many experiences offered by Luxe Picnics by Les, go to luxepicnicsbyles.com or phone 904-430-3928.



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www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

Merger creates expansion of resources

First Coast Sotheby's joins forces with One Sotheby's International

By Anthony Richards

First Coast Sotheby's International Realty has merged with One Sotheby's International Realty and the partnership will create resources up and down the East Coast.

According to Vice President and Northeast Florida Managing Broker Jeffrey Chefan, the merger took place Feb. 2 and is the next step for First Coast Sotheby's, which has been representing clients in North Florida since 1975.

"At heart, we are a company that treasures the uniquely beautiful and the simple joy of presenting to clients not just a house, but the perfect home," Chefan said. "This is what the local area needed, especially with the growth that's happening."

He believes everything that has taken place over the years has been building to this point, including when he and his wife Jane bought the franchise in late 2009 to the partnership now created with One

Sotheby's under the leadership of Mayi and Daniel de la Vega.

"They are known for the use of innovative technology," Chefan said. "In order to fulfill our promise to you (clients), we knew we needed additional support with partners that shared our beliefs and desire."

When the Chefans first purchased the business, they had one office in Jacksonville, and over the years growth has led to them now having five offices and 95 agents across the First Coast located in Ponte Vedra, Amelia Island, San Marco, St. Augustine and Palm Coast.

"We made \$770 million in total sales

MERGER continues on **Page 27**



Photo courtesy of One Sotheby's International Realty
The team at First Coast Sotheby's International Realty has merged with One Sotheby's International Realty.

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The scent of love is in the air

Burning Bush Candle Co. offers organic aromas for Valentine's Day

By Anthony Richards

Scented candles can fill the air with various aromas, but this Valentine's Day, if love is in the air, Burning Bush Candle Company may have the scent you are looking for.

Kasey Bushman is the owner of Burning Bush and a Nocatee resident. She has been making candles since 2008.

"I was an at-home military wife that needed something to do, and I've always been creative," she said. "It arose out of wine glasses and boredom."

What began as a hobby that she just sold to friends quickly grew into something much larger as word of her candles spread.

"Within the next six months, I had been asked to put my candle company and all my little things in a store at Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas," Bushman said.

One of the items she has made from the start is putting a candle in a wine glass, which she said would be an excellent item on Valentine's Day.

"I make small batches and do custom designs for homes," Bushman said. It has morphed over the years as design likes and dislikes in homes change. I try and go with what is modern and what people are really liking."

She makes the products in her home and has some on display for sale at her salon located at suite 117 in the Total Salon Studios building at 1520 Longleaf Pine Parkway.

Looking back, Bushman never thought it would get to this point where she would be making candles for the public.

"I did it because I liked it," Bushman said. "Making candles is very cathartic and very soothing with the melting and blending processes. I'm a hair stylist for my bread and butter (job), and it can get

very chaotic, so when I need down time, my candles do that for me."

"There's actually science involved in it," Bushman said. "If you want a very pretty product, you have to be patient."

Over the years she has expanded her products beyond just candles, including artisan soaps, bath bombs and other body products.

A popular comment she hears about her products is that her customers love the fact that they know what ingredients are in them and that she has the customer's skin in mind with everything she makes.

"I grow the herbs and botanicals I put in them and infuse the oils myself," Bushman said. "I got diagnosed with lupus 12 years ago and I can't use store-bought products because my skin reacts. People who get to know me know that they can come in my backyard and see a lot of the stuff that I use in my products."

For the past six years, she has held an annual event in Nocatee called "Fallapalooza" designed to showcase other local creators in the area, such as bakers and crafters.

"I love this world of creation," Bushman said.

According to Bushman, the event in the fall has gotten so big that she is planning on having a "Springapalooza" as well in April.

"People special order and I make stuff for that event that I don't the rest of the year because it's not necessarily related to a holiday," Bushman said.

She has thought about every aspect of her products, even the wicks inserted in her candles.

"Mine are made from soybean and pure cotton core wick, so they help the small independent farmer, and they are environmentally friendly, because there are no added chemicals or metal in the wick



Photos by Anthony Richards

Kasey Bushman of Nocatee owns Burning Bush Candle Company.



A variety of organic products are sold by Burning Bush Candle Company, including candles, artisan soaps, bath bombs and other body products.

to help them burn stronger or longer," Bushman said.

There was much trial and error for Bushman in the beginning as she fine-tuned her skills as a candle and soap maker, but over time she was able to find perfect mix needed.

"For the candles, the science is all about temperature and gauging what you're trying to do," Bushman said. "There are different fragrances that melt at different heat points, so you've got to know what you're working with chemical wise on that front. If you pour too hot, they'll (candles) bubble and create crevasses and if you pour too cold, you

will get lots of clumps and bumps."

She usually picks an entire day to focus on making her products and when she does, her kitchen suddenly becomes her work area, as she makes roughly 60 candles and four or five blocks of soap, all of which go into a room that is solely designated for the hardening and curing process.

"I break down my entire kitchen and put everything personal away," Bushman said. "I completely disinfect my kitchen; wear gloves and put my hair back. It's like a factory in there, but my kids and husband don't mind it because at least the house smells nice."

Merger

Continued from 26

last year," Chefan said.

Chefan expects that growth to continue now that they have the extra resources at their disposal, which he believes is the most positive take away from the merger.

"It's all about giving our clients, both buyer and seller, a stronger support team than what we've had," Chefan said.

Those added resources can be used as

helpful tools for their realtors in the selling and buying process.

Sotheby's International Realty's network includes more than 1,000 offices in 72 different countries around the world.

"It is truly a global luxury brand," Chefan said.

However, although their resources have exponentially grown with the merger, Chefan has strived to keep the goal and the culture of his business the same.

"We wanted to create a boutique office with a culture that truly cared for our

customers and agents," Chefan said. "We wanted you to believe that we had your back no matter what and that this is not just a business to make money but to help you reach your goals. There is no better satisfaction than seeing others become successful."

He thanked the team of employees that has made up the business over the years, some of which have been there since the early days.

"This transition could not have happened without the tireless effort and

dedication of our First Coast team," Chefan said.

The merger has Chefan thinking big picture and the image of where he wants to be is pretty clear to him.

"We would like to be the leader in luxury real estate, while continuing to focus on our culture and family environment," Chefan said. "It's not just about growing to be larger; it's about giving our clients the best that's out there. We believe we've done that."

In the Arts



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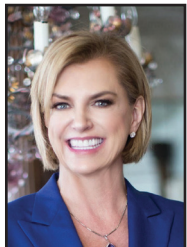
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Cultural Council names ROWITA Award winners

Each year the St. Johns Cultural Council recognizes women who have profoundly influenced the artistic environment of St. Johns County with the Dr. Gail Pflaster ROWITA (“Recognizing Outstanding Women in the Arts”) Awards.



Donna Guzzo



Teresa Radzinski



Jane Sims

Nominations were received from the community about numerous women who have made significant contributions to the arts in St. Johns County through their work, leadership and philanthropic support.

This year, three local women have been named as ROWITA recipients: Donna Guzzo, executive director and CEO of First Coast Cultural Council, arts philanthropist, women’s professional empowerment leader and mentor; Teresa Radzinski, trustee for the Lightner Museum, philanthropist and supporter of the arts and renowned museums and managing director with Bank of America; and Jane Sims, Tale Tellers of St. Augustine founding member and professional storyteller, educator and fine arts promoter.

According to Christina Parrish Stone, the Cultural Council’s executive director, this year’s nominees have all positively impacted the cultural community.

“Our final selections are women in the visual, literary and performance arts and are educators, presenters and philanthropic supporters as core leaders in our regional arts community,” said Parrish Stone. “They were eligible for the award as were past nominees who have not been selected.”

Honorees were selected by a panel of

community members in January. The annual ROWITA celebration will take place 2-4 p.m. March 26 at the Lightner Museum, 75 King St., St. Augustine. The event is open to the public.

For more information, email sjcc@historicoastculture.com.

Former honorees will also be recognized at the March event, including St. Johns County arts professionals Roxanne Horvath, a preservation architect and artist, arts advocate and current member of the City of St. Augustine City Commission; Dr. Leslee Keys, assistant professor of humanities, director of historic preservation at Flagler College and a leader in the conservation of historical and architectural resources; Carole Prior, an award winning drama instructor, Teacher of the Year, artist, writer and director; Leslie Robison, a Kenan Distinguished Associated Professor of Liberal Education in Art at Flagler College, arts advocate and artist; and Karla Wagner, film aficionado, former proprietor of the Corazon Cinema and Café, and film and entertainment festival producer.

Additionally, the March 26 event will feature Junior ROWITA scholarship recipients.

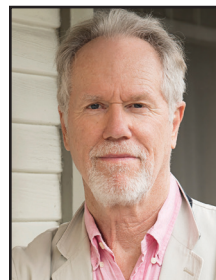
Free concert, art exhibit planned

The Beaches Fine Arts Series will present the Grammy Award-winning Parker Quartet in a free concert on Friday, Feb. 11, at St. Paul’s by-the-Sea Episcopal Church at 465 11th Ave. N., Jacksonville Beach. The concert begins at 7:30 p.m. and doors open at 6:45 p.m. Seating is first come, first served. A champagne reception follows the concert, with art exhibit by Caitlyn Flynn. Masks are required in the concert venue. For more information, go to beachesfinearts.org.



Contributed photo

Singer, Songwriter Wainwright to perform at Ponte Vedra Concert Hall



Contributed photo
Loudon Wainwright will be performing at Ponte Vedra Concert Hall March 18.

Ponte Vedra Concert Hall will welcome American songwriter, folk singer, humorist and actor Loudon Wainwright to the stage March 18, 2022.

Reserved seating is on sale online at Ticketmaster.com and at The St. Augustine Amphitheatre Box Office, due to the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall box office remaining closed at this time.

Wainwright came to fame when “Dead Skunk” became a Top 20 hit in 1972.

He had studied acting at Carnegie-Mellon University, but dropped out to partake in the “Summer of Love” in San Francisco, and wrote his first song “Edgar” in 1968 about a lobsterman in Rhode Island.

He was soon signed to Atlantic Records by Nesuhi Ertegun and was lured by Clive Davis to Columbia Records, which released “Dead Skunk.”

His songs have since been recorded by Bonnie Raitt, Johnny Cash, Earl Scruggs, Kate & Anna McGarrigle, his son Rufus Wainwright and Mose Allison among others.

Wainwright has recorded 27 albums including his 2010 Grammy Award-winning “High, Wide & Handsome.”

In October 2020 Wainwright unveiled the album “I’d Rather Lead A Band,” in which he is featured as a vocalist with Vince Giordano and The Nighthawks. The 14-song collection of classic songs from the 1920s and ‘30s was widely acclaimed.

During the pandemic, Wainwright has produced several virtual shows, including “The Special Relationship” (presented by the Royal Albert Hall) and “The Great Unknown,” a musical tribute to his friend, the late George Gerdes.

Also featured in that show were Richard Thompson, Suzanne Vega, Steve Forbert and the members of Spinal Tap.

The St. Augustine Amphitheater box Office is open Thursdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Credit and debit cards are the only payment forms accepted.

EVENT DETAILS

SHOW: Loudon Wainwright
VENUE: Ponte Vedra Concert Hall
DATE: Friday, March 18, 2022
TIME: Doors open at 7 p.m. and show starts at 8 p.m.
TICKET PRICE: \$32–\$46

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Sports



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Two days, two district titles for Sharks soccer

By Anthony Richards

Make it a clean sweep for Ponte Vedra High and soccer district titles this season, as both the boys and girls teams won their respective District 3-6A championships on back-to-back days.

“Now we have all eyes on a state championship, and we’re looking forward to it,” Ponte Vedra junior Andres Villasana said.

The Sharks first claimed the girls district title following a 2-1 victory over Fletcher Feb. 1 on their home field in front of their faithful fans.

It was the second straight 2-1 win for the Sharks after they defeated rival Nease by that score in the district semifinal.

The squad outscored its opponents 15-2 during the tournament en route to maintaining its current run of five consecutive district championships.

However, the fun did not end there as the Sharks’ boys soccer team continued the success with a commanding 3-0 win over Fleming Island the very next night Feb. 2.

A large crowd of supporters made the trip to tournament host Fletcher High School and watched the Sharks play some of their best soccer of the year both offensively and on defense.

“I think we’ve grown a lot,” Ponte Vedra boys head coach Daniel Villarreal said. “Obviously, we’ve got 15 seniors, which is the most we’ve ever had in the 14 years I’ve been here, so that really helps. They laid the groundwork at the beginning of the season and the underclassmen have followed.”

One of those seniors is Cade Greenwald, who scored a pair of goals in the first half to give the Sharks a 2-0 halftime lead.

“Anytime I score, I just feel so excited, but in this game, it was at another level,” Greenwald said.

He scored his first goal in the 28th minute on a header after making a perfectly timed run in the box on a corner kick by Jonathan Luce.

“That was my first header of my entire life, because I’m a little shorter than most,” Greenwald chuckled.

Five minutes later, that same combination proved to be dangerous once again as Luce sent a shot across that deflected off the gloves of the Fleming Island goalie and Greenwald buried the rebound in the back of the net to put the Sharks up by two.

Will Sheehan stood tall in the net for the Sharks all game long and made several saves, including a couple where he had to dive to his right or left and make sprawling saves.

The defense was also on point for the Sharks throughout the night, especially senior Michael Hilbert, who seemed to be everywhere on the field and did a nice job of cancelling potential runs past midfield by the Senators.

“We call them ‘the platoon,’ because they don’t let up ever,” Greenwald said. “They’re always there when we need them.”

The shutout is just the latest stellar performance from the defense, which has not allowed more than two goals in a contest all season.

“We preach to them that it doesn’t matter how many goals you score, you have to defend,” Villarreal said. “This time of year, when you get into the playoffs, you’ve got to be able to do the things that you need to do to keep the score sheet at zero, and they take pride in it.”

Villasana increased the Sharks lead for good with a goal in the 55th minute after he made a beautiful run into the box and headed in a precision pass from senior Jake McGowan.

It was an emotional night for the Sharks, especially for the 15 seniors on the team, after falling short in the district title game last year.

“It means a lot to do it for all these seniors,” Villasana said.



Photo by Anthony Richards

The Ponte Vedra High boys soccer team defeated Fleming Island 3-0 to win the district 3-6A championship Feb. 2.



Photo courtesy of Ponte Vedra High Athletics

The Sharks won their fifth consecutive girls soccer district title with a 2-1 victory over Fletcher Feb. 1.

Ponte Vedra girls win district in overtime thriller

The Ponte Vedra girls basketball team won the District 4-6A championship following a 47-44 overtime victory over St. Augustine, who entered the contest undefeated, Feb. 4. The Sharks defeated rival and tournament host Nease High 53-46 in a semifinal matchup the night before.

Photo courtesy of Gwen Richards



Beachside High logo, mascot released

The logo for Beachside High School was recently released by the St. Johns County School District. The school's mascot will be the Barracudas and its colors are blue and green. Beachside High is scheduled to open this summer and will be ready for the start of the 2022-23 school year. It will be located at 1070 Beachwalk Blvd. in Saint Johns.

Photo courtesy of the St. Johns County School District



Sharks end regular season on three-game winning streak

Submitted by Jim Moyes

Big second quarter propels Ponte Vedra past Nease

A sellout crowd at Nease High saw the Ponte Vedra Sharks notch their 20th victory of the season in a hard fought 62-52 win over the rival Panthers.

It was the second victory on the season over the host Panthers who still possess an excellent 18-6 record.

After the first quarter saw both teams deadlocked at 12-all, the Sharks enjoyed an 18-8 edge over Nease in the second quarter to take a commanding 30-20 lead at halftime.

The Panthers pulled within seven as the third quarter came to a close, 38-31, but that would be as close as Nease would get to the Sharks.

Ponte Vedra's athletic junior point guard Nathan Bunkosky went to work in the final quarter with all 10 of his points coming during the game's final four minutes.

Ross Candelino continued his hot streak of late with 19 points on the evening to lead the Sharks. Luke Pirris was close behind with 18 points as the three-year veteran filled up the stat sheet. Pirris notched a double-double as he pulled down 10 rebounds and was stellar on defense with four steals.

Nease senior sharpshooter Logan Ryan paced all scorers with 21 points, while his senior teammate Matt Guzzie added 15.

The Panthers were feeling it from beyond the arc and drained nine three-pointers on the night, including four by Logan and three from Guzzie.

Sharks honor seniors with victory over Bears

Ponte Vedra closed out their regular season in robust style with a 71-58 victory over Bartram Trail High on senior night.

The final score was not indicative of how intense the game was played as Bears' head coach Jeremiah Teuscher had his team ready to play.

The Sharks started the game with a 15-5 lead, with Candelino leading the way with 11 quick points.

It appeared early on that the Sharks would have an easy time against a Bartram Trail team who entered the contest with a modest 10-11 record.

That was not the case however, as the Bears came storming back to go on an 8-0 run of their own and trailed by only four points at the end of the first quarter.

The pace slowed down in the second quarter with the Sharks leading at halftime 34-29, before they tallied 20 points in the third quarter to take a seemingly comfortable 54-44 lead into the game's final eight minutes.

With about four minutes to go in the game a huge roar went up from the Shark faithful in attendance when the PVHS girls district championship basketball team arrived back home after winning earlier against what was an undefeated St. Augustine High team.

Candelino continued his blazing scoring to lead the Sharks with 21 points. The transfer from Bishop Kenny is now only 10 points shy of scoring 1,000 points in his career.

Luke Pirris was relentless throughout the entire game and netted 19 points, while J.T. Kelly was also in double figures with 11.

Candelino connected on four shots from long range and Kelly found his groove en route to knocking down three of his own.

All five seniors were honored prior to the tip off. The group included Candelino, Pirris, Kelly, Gus Jordheim and Charles Hynes.

The win surely gives the Sharks bragging rights in St. Johns County as they have now defeated, without a loss, every team in the county except for first-year school Toco Creek who was not on their schedule.

With an overall record of 21-3, if the Sharks can survive this week's very tough district tournament, it will not be the final game they will play at the Shark Tank.



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