

# PONTE VEDRA RECORDER



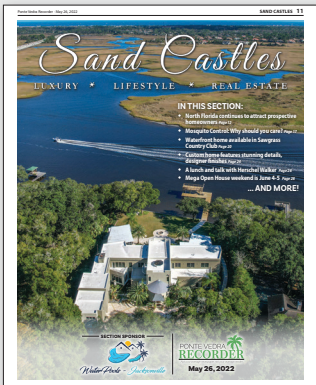
May 26, 2022  
Volume 53, No. 30  
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"Best Of" nominations  
under way



Sand Castles  
Page 11



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



Photo by Shaun Ryan

Olympic Gold Medalist Phil Dalhausser speaks to a youth volleyball class in Nocatee Community Park. He was a guest of Volleyball1on1, which conducts the class. See page 36 for the story.

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## BRIEFS



Ken Pelham

### Learn how to craft satisfying story endings

Award-winning author Ken Pelham will explain the importance of delivering a strong ending in his presentation "Big Finish! Writing the Story Climax" at the Saturday, May 28, meeting of the FWA Ponte Vedra Writers group, 10 a.m. at the Ponte Vedra Branch Library.

Pelham, a Central Florida author, will share his secrets for crafting the best and most effective ending for the story the writer is telling, sharing strategies of great storytellers and how to put them to work for today's writers.

The Ponte Vedra Writers group is part of the Florida Writers Association, a state-wide, nonprofit organization with nearly 1,500 members dedicated to the support of both aspiring and published writers in any genre. The May 28 meeting is free and open to members and nonmembers alike.

For information on FWA go to [floridawriters.org](http://floridawriters.org).

### 'Fashion For Action' to benefit Betty Griffin Center



Betty Griffin Center

Local models and influential men, women and their children will model fashion from the Betty Griffin Thrift Shoppes during the second-annual 'Fashion for Action' fundraising event from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday, June 3, at Crosswater Hall at Nocatee, 245 Nocatee Center Parkway in Ponte Vedra Beach.

All proceeds will benefit the Betty Griffin Center, which provides shelter and support for survivors of domestic and sexual abuse in St. Johns County.

Tickets for the event are \$30 per person and can be purchased through Eventbrite.com at <https://bit.ly/FashionForAction2022>.

For more information, see the special event page at [bettygriffincenter.org](http://bettygriffincenter.org) or email Betty Griffin Center Development Director Kenlie Kubart at [kenliek@bettygriffincenter.org](mailto:kenliek@bettygriffincenter.org).

### Health screenings coming to Ponte Vedra

Area residents can learn about their risk for cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, diabetes and other chronic, serious conditions with screenings by Life Line Screening. Ponte Vedra Presbyterian Church will host this event on June 3 at 4510 Palm Valley Road, Ponte Vedra Beach. Six times are offered.

Screenings can check for:

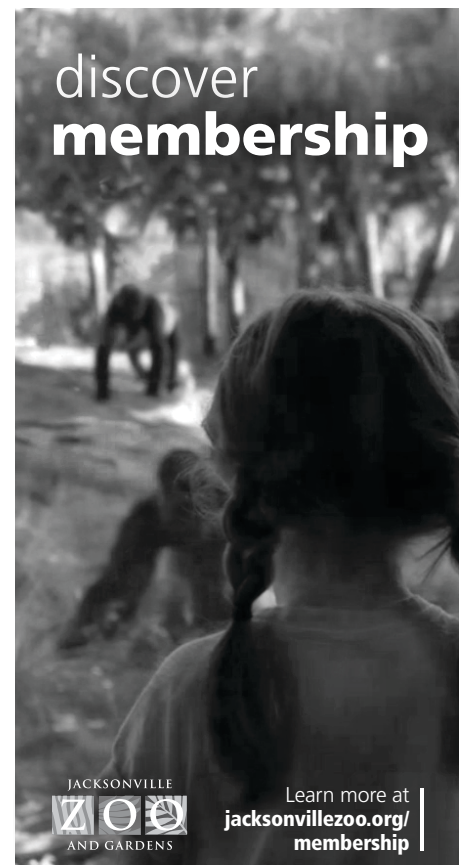
- The level of plaque buildup in arteries, related to risk for cardiovascular disease,

## PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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# Briefs

Continued from 2

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## Supervisor of elections launches new website ahead of election season

The St. Johns County Supervisor of Elections launched a new website May 16 with a focus on transparency, streamlined navigation and efficient service delivery. Located at [votesjc.gov](http://votesjc.gov), the site is designed to assist residents, voters, candidates and elected officials in quickly accessing relevant and timely information regarding a variety of election-related topics.

Key data-driven navigation streams are outlined to provide the essential informational points those visiting the website have historically accessed. Primary drop down links, including Elections, Voters, Voter Education, Current Elected Officials and Candidates, were designed to provide convenient access to frequently searched information and documents within just a few clicks.

## Newcomers Alumnae to unveil its new name

Newcomers Alumnae, a women's social club that accepts new members

throughout the year, will install new officers at the next monthly luncheon, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. June 1 at Marsh Landing Country Club. Newcomers Alumnae will also unveil its new name, which was unanimously voted on at the May luncheon.

Marsh Landing Country Club is located at 25655 Marsh Landing Parkway, Ponte Vedra Beach.

The cost to attend the luncheon is \$23 and reservations must be made by contacting [bartshar@comcast.net](mailto:bartshar@comcast.net) as soon as possible to reserve a seat.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

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# Floating to victory: Annual rubber duck race raises about \$20k



The event raised about \$20,000, with \$12,000 of that donated to Learn to Read of St. Johns County.



The Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra and Learn to Read partnered to dump nearly 3,000 rubber ducks into the Intracoastal from the County Road 210 bridge as part of the annual Rubber Duck Race May 22.



Photos courtesy of Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra  
Local high school students volunteered at the event.

## By Anthony Richards

Rubber ducks took center stage as the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra partnered with Learn to Read of St. Johns County to hold its annual Rubber Duck Race May 22.

The event raised about \$20,000, with \$12,000 of that donated to Learn to Read of St. Johns County, while the remaining amount goes toward benefiting other local charitable organizations the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra is associated with.

Roughly 3,000 rubber ducks were dumped from a frontend loader off of the

County Road 210 bridge near Palm Valley Outdoors Bar & Grill.

“As the ducks were being dumped, I was looking around and every person from the restaurant was out on the deck watching it take place,” said Joe Cinney, executive director at Learn to Read of St. Johns County.

Although the event has been going on for eight years, it was only the second year to be held at that location, after previously taking place on the lazy river at Nocatee Splash Waterpark.

Cinney thanked Palm Valley Outdoors

for supporting the event, along with the other local businesses that helped by presenting prizes that were awarded to the public.

“The whole thing takes about nine months of planning and logistics that have to be in place,” said Gary Smith, the club’s event chair for the race.

According to Smith, it was quite a sight to see thousands of rubber ducks cascading off the 85-foot-tall bridge into the intracoastal.

“That was my vision for this event when we started thinking about the move

three years ago,” Smith said. “Rotary began helping Learn to Read put on the event four years ago.”

After hitting the water, the ducks floated down the Intracoastal with help from the current toward the finish line.

According to Cinney, the top 30 finishers received prizes, with this year’s top prize being a pair of roundtrip tickets to anywhere Southwest Airlines flies to.

Although it rained some as setup for the event was taking place, the rain held off and the weather conditions became ideal for the drop and the race.



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# COA centenarian luncheons return after two-year hiatus

By Anthony Richards

The St. Johns County Council on Aging hosted a centenarian luncheon at THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center May 19 for the first time in two years.

The room was full of wisdom and interesting stories, as the COA honored residents 100 years of age, as well as a large contingent of attendees 90 years of age or older.

“The idea behind it is that we want to honor and celebrate the oldest residents in our community,” COA Executive Director Becky Yanni said. “We honor them, because they are the generation that really fought, defended and built this great nation that we get to enjoy today. We owe them gratitude and respect.”

A total of 24 residents were honored during the event, which made its return

after a two-year hiatus due to concerns with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Six of those were in the centenarian club, with the oldest being Charlotte Pichotta at 102 years old.

“These centenarians are so inspiring, and they have such good spirits,” Yanni said. “They’re an example that gives us hope for our own lives. It’s like each individual is a walking library.”

Pichotta and all the other centenarians were asked “What is your secret to a long life?”

According to Pichotta, remembering to be good and kind to each other has made a huge difference in her life.

Howard Renforth credited his 30 years of military service for giving him the mindset needed to live so long.

“I said, ‘If I made it through World War II, I’d make it through anything,’” Renforth said.

However, staying active throughout the years was Josephine Trinca’s secret offered to the crowd for a long and healthy life.

There was a definite feeling of excitement by everyone who attended and an overall joy and thankfulness to have the opportunity to be together and share in each other’s company once again.

“Sadly, we were not able to do it for a couple of years due to the vulnerability of



Photos by Anthony Richards

**Charlotte Pichotta gets asked a question by Bruce Barber during the COA’s centenarian luncheon at THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center May 19. Pichotta was the oldest attendee at 102 years old.**

this current population,” Yanni said. “We are delighted to bring it back.”

Yanni is anxious for the lunches to once again become an annual event that people in the community can look forward to and mark on their calendar each year.

“At the Council on Aging, our mission

is to help people age well so that they can live their best possible lives for as long as possible,” Yanni said. “We provide our services to support that.”

The pandemic had an impact on people of all ages, and that includes the commu-

**CENTENARIAN** continues on Page 10



**St. Johns County Sheriff Robert Hardwick and his wife have a conversation with attendees during the centenarian luncheon.**

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*Molly Austin is a local businesswoman and the go-to person for anyone wanting to know about Jeeps. She also has a deep appreciation for wildlife and is very involved in mission trips.*

## Molly Austin

### As told to Shaun Ryan

#### Tell me about Happy Trails 4x4. What kinds of services and products does it offer?

Happy Trails 4x4 started out as a Jeep specialty shop focusing on restorations, custom builds for the local Jeep dealerships as well as retail customers. We do everything from your basic maintenance needs to extreme modifications. We have recently added education and hands-on training to our lineup. We help educate our customers and others that want to learn about taking their 4x4 vehicles on offroad adventures.

#### Tell me about your background. How did you develop an interest in this type of work? What kind of education did you need to become a Jeep specialist?

I have always had a passion for the automotive industry! When I was in high school, I worked for an automotive shop that focused on sports cars (not Jeeps). Back then I learned about Ford Panteras, and today I am teaching about the relationship between tire size and gear ratios. My educational background was hands-on for the automotive side of things. As for the business I graduated from Georgia Southern University with a bachelor's in business management and finance. For me, the business side of things just comes naturally, and I love it.

#### I see you are a board member for the Wildlife Rescue of Northeast Florida. Can you tell me about your role and your interest in this cause?

My love for animals runs very deep! I have been on the board of directors for the Wildlife Rescue Coalition of Northeast Florida for 13 years. We support the local wildlife in our area. Our goal is to ensure respect for all wildlife through education and conservation while providing orphaned, injured and displaced animals with a second chance at life. I have played several roles throughout the years, but mostly I have fostered orphans, released the rehabilitated and attend board meetings. Our local animal control relies on us to help release captured wildlife since they cannot even bring them inside. I have picked up many racoons and opossum sitting in the summer heat in a cage outside of animal control offices in our area. We make sure they are released to a safe open environment where they have room to be wild. This organization is so important to our community, yet most people never know until they need us.

#### I also learned that you were a lead sponsor of the Run with a Mission race in February. What can you tell me about Faithful Servant Mission and this event in particular?

Happy Trails 4x4, one of my companies, is the title sponsor each year for Run with a Mission. This is a race held each year now for the last nine years to support Faithful Servant Missions, a locally based mission. I personally fell in love with this mission in 2014 when I was blessed to be a part of a women's focused team. The driving mission here is to improve the spiritual, educational and physical health of those we serve. Breaking the cycle of poverty through education and growing relationships with Jesus Christ. I have seen firsthand that it truly works!



Photo provided by Molly Austin

**Molly Austin of Happy Trails 4x4 is seen with a special Jeep she's restoring and two ducks that recently joined her family.**

#### You have also led mission trips to Costa Rica with Faithful Servant Mission, and you even provide a weather tracker Jeep. How did you get involved in this effort, and what can you tell readers about your experiences with it?

Yes, I have led several mission teams to Costa Rica over the past eight years. I have also joined other teams there to keep the momentum going with the community we serve.

This weather tracker Jeep was here in Jacksonville. We built this Jeep initially for one of our local dealerships then the news team purchased it to be upgraded for the weather tracker. Over the years of its service in our local community we have done lots of upgrades to accommodate all the equipment that is required. Our staff at Happy Trails 4x4 loved seeing all the technology on board!

#### What do you like most about living in Northeast Florida?

I love Northeast Florida because of its Southern charm!

#### How do you like to spend your free time?

Free time for me is so precious and limited so I try to make the most out of it. That usually means packing it full! I am a member at the Jacksonville Clay Target Sports and love to go shoot with my husband and recently the Belles with Shells, a ladies' group that meets each month to shoot and network. I really enjoy spending time at home with my family and animals the most! We are growing our animal family a little at a time. We recently added two precious baby ducks that are growing very fast.



# D-Day remembrance brunch set for June 4

The We Can Be Heroes Foundation is planning a D-Day remembrance brunch for 11 a.m. Saturday, June 4, with a presentation honoring World War II veterans to follow. A meet-and-greet precedes the brunch at 10:30 a.m. The event takes place at the Salem Centre Auditorium, 7235 Bentley Road in Jacksonville.

Guest of honor will be D-Day Purple Heart veteran Frank Purpura. The keynote speaker will be Capt. James Ransom III, Ret. USN, historian and nominee for Unsung Hero recognition.

On the evening of June 5, 1944, Purpura was aboard LST 356 while his ship and many others loaded men, supplies and ammunition and began their deployment to France's beaches in terrible stormy weather for the invasion on June 6, 1944. Omaha Beach was their first stop.

Purpura, then just 18, was a Higgins boat driver that unloaded soldiers on the beaches. While en route to the beach on his first trip he was struck above his right eye with shrapnel from flying debris. He was patched up and quickly returned to his duty. He then made more than 50 trips between Utah, Sword and the other beaches delivering the men, ammunition

and supplies.

LST 356 participated in several different actions, earning three battle stars.

Today, Purpura actively serves as the oldest Patriot of the Military Order of the Purple Heart Chapter 524, marching in Veteran's Day parades, leading and helping with fundraising and holding chapter meetings in his home when the current facility was under repair.

Ransom is an adjunct professor for the Naval War College's College of Distance Education, teaching the Strategy & War Fleet Seminar in Mayport.

Among those in attendance will be veterans, Unsung Heroes, Atlantic Coast Young Marines and the Let Freedom Sing Choir.

Tickets are \$25, or a six-person table for \$135, an eight-person table for \$175. Veterans and Gold Star families will receive a 10% discount.

Seating for this event is limited. Go to Events at WeCanBeHeroesFoundation.org, or mail check to: We Can Be Heroes Foundation, 14286-19 Beach Blvd. #120, Jacksonville, FL 32250.

For further information, call 904-373-8817.

# New York Butcher Shoppe joins Chamber

The New York Butcher Shoppe officially joined the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division with a grand re-opening ribbon cutting ceremony as the business is under new ownership. New York Butcher Shoppe is located at 240 A1A N., Unit 4 in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Photo by Susan Griffin



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# Program helps seniors when emergencies arise

By Anthony Richards

The St. Johns County Council on Aging can help senior citizens dealing with emergency situations thanks to the Emergency Food and Shelter Program in place.

According to COA Program Director Sharon Gesek, the program has been around for a long time and has been very effective for the county.

Although the program is under the guidance of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, it is categorized as the “emergency” portion handled by the agency, which is separate from the “disaster” classification that FEMA is often associated with when natural disasters occur.

“We are governed by FEMA, but our local board is the United Way,” Gesek said. “They’ve been a great partnership.”

There are about 11 nonprofits in the county that take advantage of the program, with each focusing on various segments of the population, such as teens, veterans or families.

For COA, the concentration is on helping residents 60 years of age and older.

However, Gesek stated that the COA still works closely with the other non-

profits to ensure that no resident is being overlooked.

“People may find themselves in an emergency situation for a variety of reasons, but the need for help remains the same,” Gesek said.

One of the things she likes most about the program is how simple it can make it for people to find the help they need at a quicker rate.

“It is definitely a quick turnaround,” Gesek said. “We can approve them that day, if they have all the proper paperwork completed.”

The program is in place to help older adults who are having trouble paying their bills and may be in danger of losing their house or having the electricity cut off. Up to \$500 can be paid on their current or past due utility bills and rent or mortgage.

To qualify for the program, the person must be a resident of St Johns County and 60 years of age or older, and currently earning less than:

- \$25,520 per year for a single individual
- \$34,480 per year for a household of 2
- Add \$8,960 for each additional household member

“We want to get the word out and



make sure seniors in St. Johns County know about the EFSP program,” said Michael Large, who coordinates the program through the Care Connection division of COA. “If they find themselves in this emergency situation, they should

contact us.”

Large can be contacted by calling 904-209-3649 between 9 a.m. and noon weekdays or via email at [mlarge@coasjc.org](mailto:mlarge@coasjc.org).

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4.01ct	Round	GIA & AGS	0 Ideal	G	VS <sub>2</sub>	\$ 125,000	\$ 89,000
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# Pageant winner finds purpose in disability

*Speaker inspires others with her keys to resilience*

**By Shaun Ryan**

Sara Gaver has proven everybody wrong.

Born with a rare disability called arthrogryposis multiplex congenital, she has not had the use of her arms, hands, legs or feet.

From the start, naysayers predicted that there were many things she would never be able to do. But Gaver has not allowed those people to define her. Today, the young woman drives, lives independently in her own home, has earned a degree from the University of North Florida, has a fulltime job with a software company, cooks, paints and is the current reigning Ms. Wheelchair Florida USA.

“My favorite part is to turn back around to those people and say, ‘I proved you wrong. Thank you very much. Now, let’s not do this to the next person,’” she said.

Gaver shared the keys to her resilience Tuesday, May 17, during a program at the link in Nocatee titled “The Heart of

Inspiration.” She shared the stage with licensed therapist Dr. Cheralyn Leeby. The women had met through a shared interest – both are writing books.

Leeby praised Gaver’s “grit and resilience.”

“The more I learn about everything that you do and all your struggles through social media and other avenues, I’m just like: Wow, you’re really educating us on how to be resilient,” Leeby said.

Gaver said pageants she’s been involved with helped her discover her confidence and hopes her success will inspire others.

“I just want the next little girl and next little boy to say, ‘You know what? She did it. I can do it,’” she said. “When I was a little girl, there was no role model for me.”

This ties in to one of six steps she has followed to becoming self-resilient: finding a sense of purpose.

“I’m a very faith-based woman,” she explained. “I love my church. And I absolutely believe that God made us the way that we’re supposed to be. I don’t ever pray to be healed, because it’s how I’m supposed to be. If I wasn’t who I am, I can’t give you the message I’m giving you today because I wouldn’t live the same life.”



Photo by Shaun Ryan

**Sara Gaver, left, shares her story during a presentation at the link. At right is Dr. Cheralyn Leeby.**

That Gaver embraces her condition as a gift to be used for good resonated with Leeby, who called that “a really big key to resilience.”

Other steps in Gaver’s process include: surrounding yourself with people who support you, believing in your abilities, nurturing yourself, embracing change and establishing goals. In this final step, she recommended establishing small goals on the way to bigger goals; this allows a person to see the progress.

Gaver’s children’s book, yet to be published, is about a princess who shares her disability, her mother’s guidance and how she deals with a community that tells her what she can’t do. Gaver hopes it will inspire Disney to introduce its first

princess in a wheelchair.

She will compete for Ms. Wheelchair USA on July 10-18 at the pageant in Stow, Ohio.

Also Tuesday, Leeby discussed three books to which she has contributed, “The Courageous Heart,” “The Grateful Soul” and “Everyday Hope.” She and Amy Maughan also lead a regular program at the link called A Writer’s Journey. They are currently collaborating on a book titled “Artichoke Alchemy: A Journey to the Heart,” which focuses on self-discovery and therapy.

Gaver can be found @wheellifeconnections on Instagram and Facebook and on YouTube.

## Nominations Now Open!



The Ponte Vedra Recorder, celebrating 53 years of community news excellence, will launch our fourth annual **BEST OF THE BEST of Ponte Vedra, 32081 & 32082.**

**YOU**, our valued readers, now have the chance to nominate your favorite businesses in various categories online. Online voting begins June 13th after nominations are complete. **HURRY, last day to nominate is June 12th!**

[www.pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2022](http://www.pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2022)

## Centenarian

Continued from 5

nity’s older population, which Yanni saw firsthand.

“It was very challenging, because we spend a lot of time talking to people about avoiding social isolation, because loneliness and depression can really harm a senior’s health and start a real downward spiral,” Yanni said.

According to Yanni, the COA came up with creative ways to keep local seniors feeling connected while isolating, but it is hard to beat physically going somewhere and interacting with others in-person.

“There’s nothing better than that,” Yanni said.

Each honored centenarian was presented with a rose, certificate and a procla-



Photos by Anthony Richards

**Howard Renforth credited his 30 years of military service for giving him the mindset needed to live so long.**

mation from the office of Senator Marco Rubio.

State representative Cyndi Stevenson was in attendance, as well as several county officials, including Sheriff Robert Hardwick.



# Sand Castles

LUXURY \* LIFESTYLE \* REAL ESTATE

## IN THIS SECTION:

- ◆ North Florida continues to attract prospective homeowners *Page 12*
- ◆ Mosquito Control: Why should you care? *Page 17*
- ◆ Waterfront home available in Sawgrass Country Club *Page 20*
- ◆ Custom home features stunning details, designer finishes *Page 24*
- ◆ A lunch and talk with Herschel Walker *Page 26*
- ◆ Mega Open House weekend is June 4-5 *Page 28*

...AND MORE!

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**May 26, 2022**



# Welcome to Sand Castles

By Janet Westling

As we get ready to celebrate Memorial Day with all the festivities that surround this holiday, it is important to remember why we honor this day. Founded in 1971 as an official holiday, Memorial Day was designated to honor the heroes that have died serving our great nation. In this Memorial Day weekend issue, which unofficially marks the beginning of the summer season, we take a look at some fantastic properties currently on the market. They are represented by Ponte Vedra Beach's most reputable firms and outstanding agents in our community.

Our market watch, written by Peter Sherril, team leader, Keller Williams Realty Atlantic Partners, shares his insight and evaluation of the current market. According to Sherril, "The housing market has always been cyclical and remains one of the safest places to invest our money."

Brian Sexton, Jaguars' senior correspondent, is a regular contributor to Sand

Castles. In his story, titled "It's Never Easy," Sexton fills us in on our favorite team, the Jacksonville Jaguars, with his look at the upcoming schedule. I recently hosted football legend and Heisman Trophy winner Herschel Walker with a luncheon at our home in Sawgrass Country Club. Mr. Walker is running for the Senate seat in Georgia, and he was joined by his wife Julia, who is his greatest supporter!

Locally, we have an election for Mosquito Control in the fall and Martha Gleason fills us in on what we need to know about the role of the board who use our funds to get things done. It is a non-partisan position and this look into the workings of the board will be enlightening and hopefully educational!

If you are planning to travel out of our country on a holiday vacation, you will enjoy reading the story Jim Leland shares about he and his wife Kelly's adventure during COVID when they bought an apartment in Portugal online and through great contacts completely

renovated and designed the perfect vacation home from afar.

Maria Wilkes from Berkshire Hathaway recently visited Cabo, Mexico, with her family and writes about a property and resort that she not only owns but represents to potential buyers looking for an amazing retreat to play golf and enjoy the beautiful beaches in Diamanti, west of Cabo! When it comes to new ventures, I can't think of anything more fun than exploring new recipes that Lettuce Do Dinner owner Alice Hickox shares with a new focus are our health and ability to improve it through nutrition. Our home is our castle, and at the beaches it is our castle in the sand. From palm trees to sand dunes, golf courses to resort living, Jacksonville, Ponte Vedra Beach and the beaches communities offer the most desirable living in Northeast Florida!

**Janet Westling, Realtor, PA, GRI, CIPS**  
**Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices**  
**Florida Network Realty**  
**Sand Castles creator and contributing editor**  
[www.sandcastles.com](http://www.sandcastles.com)



**Janet Westling**  
 Contributing Editor

## MARKET WATCH

# North Florida continues to attract prospective homeowners

As we progress through the second quarter of 2022, the U.S. housing market continues to report record home prices and low inventory. While these trends continue, there is a sense that the massive home price growth rate may slow in the near future.

According to Lawrence Yun, chief economist for the National Association of Realtors, "Prices throughout the country have surged for the better part of two years, including in the first part of 2022. Given the extremely low rate of inventory, we are unlikely to see prices decline, but appreciation should slow in the coming months."

Inflation concerns and recent rises in interest rates have the potential to curtail demand. As of early May, the average rate of a 30-year fixed mortgage has risen more than 2% to 5.42%. These rising rates limit the borrowing power of potential buyers, which could result in a reduction in home demand.

This March, pending home sales dropped 8.2% when compared to the prior March. Despite these factors, home prices continue to rise. The median

national home price in March rose 16.8% compared to March of 2021. The key mantra for real estate, of course, is "location, location, location," and we all know that North Florida is the greatest place to live in the country.

Our combination of favorable tax structure, excellent business economy, job and wage growth, sandy beaches and sunny skies make us an extremely desirable place to live and work. In 2021, the Jacksonville area saw the second highest "Net Migration In" figure of all large cities in the U.S., behind only Austin, Texas. This measures the number of new people moving into an area, minus the number of people moving out of the area. These new inhabitants to our area, along with our local population that is changing homes, continues to drive demand for our limited inventory of houses.

This is particularly true of the Ponte Vedra/Nocatee area and is reflected in our local statistics. The median home price in March for a home in the Ponte Vedra/Nocatee area rose to \$722,500, up more than \$87,000 from \$635,000 in March of 2021.

Other key statistics that impact the Ponte Vedra/Nocatee include:

- 41.5% of homes closed in March received over the actual list price
- 118 homes closed in March, down 29.8% from March of 2021.
- 117 homes moved into pending status, down from 23.5% from March 2021
- 131 new listings hit the market in March, down 17.1% from the prior March
- At the end of March, there were 140 active homes on the market, a reduction of 22.7% from the prior year.

Our area continues to exhibit a strong seller's market. The current home supply gives the area 1.2 months of inventory, vastly below the six-month supply that is considered a balanced market.

However, this monthly supply is up 10.2% from the same time last year. (Source: Northeast Florida Association of Realtors).

The housing market has always been cyclical and remains one of the safest places for anyone to invest their money. In addition to the pride of owning one's own home and the savings in rent,



coupled with the growth in equity, make home ownership advantageous for most people.

While there are no guarantees, historically a home grows in value by roughly 4% per year. Whether you are considering buying or selling a home, this is a wonderful time to do it; and there is no better location than North Florida and the Ponte Vedra/Nocatee area.

— Pete Sherrill, Team Leader, Keller Williams Realty Atlantic Partners



**DESIGN & TRAVEL**

# Navigating the real estate market overseas

By Jim Leland

Buying a home abroad sight unseen during a pandemic?

Yes, you read that correctly (well not totally unseen thanks to WhatsApp)! My wife Kelly and I did just this in 2020, in the midst of the pandemic, including remodeling the space. Some may think we had lost our mind doing this, but with the right tools, and mostly the right people, you can reach your real estate dreams!

Going back to 2017, we began traveling fairly extensively in southern Europe, always with a mindful eye to find a place that we may want to call a second home. We began to narrow our search after a trip we made to Spain and Portugal, returning to Albufeira, Portugal, the following year for a months-long stay. It was during this month we learned to live like a local and get the feel for a place after all the short-term visitors go back home.



Contributed photo

**OVERSEAS** continues on Page 16 **Jim and Kelly Leland bought and renovated a home in Portugal.**



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# Seasons of Change

By Alice Hickox,

Lettuce Do Dinner, Personal chef/ wellness and nutrition coach



**Alice Hickox**  
Lettuce Do Dinner

Spring is my favorite season, but then again, I love them all. For now I'm embracing all things spring, the lively season that brings with it telltale notes of all things fresh and new; a beautiful reminder to celebrate all of the good things that are bestowed to us in this life.

Having fought and beat cancer last year, finding the cleanest foods and supplements for my diet became almost an obsession.

I would spend hours and hours researching and tweaking recipes to taste amazing, while also being a powerhouse to healing not only my own body, but those of my clients as well. Sneaking in power foods all day long!

After health struggles coupled with my love as a personal chef led me to dig deep and learn as much about the latest research in the nutrition field — not only to help my own body heal, but to utilize my research in nutrition along with my passion for cooking, and go for all that I love and know in this new season.

So here's what I'm up to now: health and wellness coaching!

This Includes:

- Customized nutrition plans for optimal health and disease prevention
- The pros and cons with trending fad diets
- Grocery store tours to learn the best swaps and healthy picks
- Nutrition to support type 2 diabetes wellness and prevention
- Changing your relationship with food
- Weight loss in a healthy way that works for you
- Culinary inspirations that keep you motivated
- Grab-and-go fresh seasonal soups and salads
- Convenient location in Sawgrass Shopping Center

Stay tuned for special package offers and weekly grab-and-go soups and salads. Please see my ad for contact information or visit my website at [Lettucedodinner.com](http://Lettucedodinner.com).

One of the key takeaways I have learned is this: Life is not about living on a diet. It's about learning a new way of eating and living that becomes a lifestyle. It includes good sleep, stressing less and loving more. It's not about focusing on what we can't have, but on all that we can have! Our bodies are designed to save our lives, so let's help it out and get back to real food in 2022!

Here is a delicious and super easy recipe that is healthy, light and perfectly elegant for a beautiful spring evening.



## OVEN-ROASTED SEA BASS WITH GINGER LIME SAUCE AND ROASTED ASPARAGUS

(Prep: 10 min. Cook: 12 min. 2 servings)

- 2 Tbsp fresh-squeezed lime juice
- 2 Tbsp Bragg's Liquid Aminos or Coconut Aminos
- 1 Tbsp chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 Tbsp chopped, peeled fresh ginger root
- 1 Tbsp minced shallot
- 5 Tbsp olive oil
- 2, 6-ounce sea bass filets (each about ¾ inch thick)
- 1 bunch fresh asparagus, tough ends removed
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1-2 tsp Garlic and Herb Mrs. Dash

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 450 F. Mix the first 5 ingredients and 4 teaspoons of oil in a small bowl.

Brush a 9-inch diameter glass pie dish (or rimmed baking sheet) with remaining 2 teaspoons of oil. If using a baking sheet, line with parchment paper or foil. Arrange fish in prepared dish; turn to coat. Sprinkle fish with salt and pepper; spoon 1 Tbsp sauce over each filet.

Toss asparagus in a little olive oil, salt, pepper and Mrs. Dash. On a small, separate baking sheet (or can add asparagus to same pan as sea bass), arrange asparagus so they do not overlap, and roast with the sea bass for the remaining 6 minutes for perfectly crisp-tender.

Roast fish until just opaque in center, about 12 minutes. Top fish with remaining sauce and serve.



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# Selling Ponte Vedra Beach - 32082 Florida's Best Kept Secret



**JUST LISTED**

Step inside 213 Sea Island Drive and come home to a spacious and completely updated Sawgrass CC pool home east of A1A with beach access. This spectacular home sits on a large lot on a quiet street in gated community. This home is convenient to the beach, golf course & Sawgrass Village for shopping & dining. Offered for \$2,395,000.



**JUST LISTED**

719 Spinnakers Reach - Spectacular 1st floor condo has the only elevator in Spinnakers 1 from the garage to the first floor! Completely renovated with stunning details & designer finishes. Oceanfront views from every room. 2523sf, 3 BR, 3BA with the upstairs master & ocean views! Spectacular kitchen overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. Offered for \$3,200,000.



**JUST LISTED**

826 Ponte Vedra Blvd. - French colonial beauty in PVB with deeded beach access on the Boulevard! Designed to capture the ocean breezes with French doors in every room that open to the ocean in the front & Guana preserve & Sawgrass Golf course in the back. 4260sf, the kitchen, living areas & master suite upstairs all open to verandas. Sold for \$3,600,000.



**JUST SOLD**

2375 Ponte Vedra Blvd - This oceanfront beauty could grace the cover of Coastal Living magazine! Perfectly located along the shores of the Atlantic Ocean this 4BR/3.5BA coastal contemporary features two sweeping oceanfront porches, private beach walkover and a 21' x 21' rooftop deck with panoramic water and preserve views. Sold for \$3,600,000



**JUST SOLD**

188 Sea Hammock Way - Stunning oceanfront condo located in the gated seaside community of Sea Hammock in Ponte Vedra Beach. This 2 bedroom, 2 bath condo is completely updated and furnished with designer finishes and details. Sold for \$1,404,000.



**JUST SOLD**

962 Ponte Vedra Blvd. - Exquisite estate home located on a waterfront lot that measures greater than a half-acre. This 6 bedroom, 5 full and one-half bath home offers stunning sunset and nature views as well as private, deeded beach access across the street. Sold for \$2,400,000.



**JUST SOLD**

405 Ponte Vedra Blvd. - 100 ft' lot is situated on sought-after oceanfront of Ponte Vedra Blvd. just 2 blocks south of the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club and 2 blocks from The Lodge & Club. Offering 4 BR's, and 4 BA's, this charming seaside home is perfectly laid out in over 2800sf & offers the best of Ponte Vedra Beach living. Sold for \$6,500,000



**JUST SOLD**

262 Pioneer Village Way - 2-story with a Farmhouse elevation and 4BR/3BA, 2299sf. Gourmet kitchen with Quartz counters, beveled glass backsplash, 30" gas range, ss appliances & a breakfast nook. Separate dining. Large 3-panel slider doors take you out to the covered patio with fenced yard that backs to the Preserve. Sold for \$720,000



**JUST SOLD**

220 Sea Island Dr. - Sawgrass CC! 3BR/2BA, 1965sf house sits on a very private lot with Preserve views. Formal living & dining have high ceilings & look out at the big backyard. Open kitchen & family room create an intimate family space. Large owners suite & bath with soaking tub & walk-in shower. Covered patio adds add'l living space. Sold for \$926,000.



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# Overseas

Continued from 13

Albufeira is in the Algarve region of Portugal and it checked many of the boxes (and created some new, unknown boxes) we wanted to check in finding a second home. For starters the weather is ideal for our lifestyle, 60-degree mornings and 80-degree afternoons, no humidity, no cloud — and no bugs! The natural beauty of the landscape is postcard like. The beaches are world famous, and there are 87 Blue Flag beaches in the Algarve alone.

The people are warm and welcoming; we felt right at home immediately. The lifestyle is simple and absurdly affordable. We literally walk everywhere and don't have a car. A fantastic dinner out including a bottle of wine may cost \$35-\$40. I'd go on but I'm afraid more people will want to move here and spoil our secret!

OK, so for these reasons, in some type of COVID insanity, we began exploring homes through an app that allowed us visibility to any properties for sale within our search parameters. We kept an open mind about the current home layout as we remodel homes for a living and figured we could do the same

on any place we might buy. We did hear some horror stories about remodeling in a foreign country even when you were physically there, so doing this remotely would seem slightly insane, but undeterred we plowed on.

We spoke to 10-plus different realtors and saw a few properties via virtual tour on WhatsApp. The buying experience was a learning one. For instance, there is no real equivalent of Multiple Listings in Portugal. Also, appraisals and inspections are not always part of the formalized process. And contractors don't need to have a license or pass any certifications!

These are reasons why you need a top-notch real estate agent, and boy did we find one in Matthew Theunis with Divine Home. Not only did he go to the property for WhatsApp video calls anytime we needed, he connected us to a local attorney (to handle the documents and closing), a remodeling contractor and a property manager to look after the place when we were not there. With all this now in place we closed on our flat and began the next phase — remodeling remotely!

Open floor plans are not the norm in the Algarve. Galley kitchens, large tile floors, big wooden built-in wardrobes and smaller showers are. Having the

vision to see past these minor obstacles and focus on the desired end game, we started to think more about location.

Having spent a month in Albufeira prior to our search was a huge advantage. Our contractor spoke minimal English (but he could email some!), but with Matthew's help on WhatsApp video calls we were able to get specs and measurements for the flat. Kelly was able to do 2D floor plans, and we were off and running.

Down came the wall isolating the kitchen from the dining and living areas. Same for all the entry way series of doors ... gone. We wanted to soften the tile floors in the flat, so we installed luxury vinyl floors throughout. We also increased the size of the master shower by 50% and painted the entire place to brighten it up.

Since Kelly Canada Design + Build + Interiors has its roots in interior design, the real signature touches came when Matthew was able to connect Kelly with Simple Taste, a furnishings company in Albufeira. Kelly was able to do the 2D layouts and choose all-new furniture, lighting, window coverings and accessories. The associates at Simple Taste even took fabric samples over to our flat, to show via WhatsApp how they would look with the flooring

and drapes! If that wasn't enough, the team actually installed all the furniture, window coverings and even the lighting fixtures without an added expense. Not something you experience in the states for sure.

There are some language differences we needed to solve for in remodeling jargon, but one of the biggest differences is the need to convert all your thinking to the metric system, even for the size of a bed, which are not standard U.S. sizes.

We did also bring over four large suitcases of items not readily available in the E.U., like down-based pillows and mattress toppers. These work exceptionally well when you utilize the electric shutters that essentially black out the bedroom at night!

All included, our remodeling investment was about 50% of what it would have taken in the U.S., we now have an amazing, open flat, which is our Happy Place, and also is ideally situated as a launching pad to all of western Europe. Some called us crazy for investing overseas, many more thought this when we did it remotely and over a cell phone, but with the right vision and team around us it worked our perfectly!

Saude!



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# Mosquito Control: Why should you care?

**By Martha Gleason,**  
Candidate for Anastasia Mosquito Control District

As most know, 2022 is an election year, and we citizens are called to vote on everything from who is going to represent us in Congress and in the Senate to which individuals will represent us in seemingly obscure and often misunderstood local elections.

One of the most obscure and least understood races will be the Anastasia Mosquito Control District (AMCD) Board of Commissioners elections. On the ballot this year, there will be two countywide races for commissioners to serve of the AMCD Board. With that in mind, I decided to pen this piece to help you understand why you should care about mosquito control and how it impacts you as a citizen.

If I have done my job right, at the end of this article you will have developed some interest in this obscure government agency and in researching the candidates that will be running for the two seats that are up for election.

## What is the Anastasia Mosquito Control District (AMCD)?

AMCD was chartered in 1948 to serve Anastasia Island. In the beginning, AMCD controlled mosquitoes only on a small portion of Anastasia Island (17 square miles), and now AMCD services the entire 609 square miles of St. Johns County.

From 1989 to 2005, AMCD worked out of four stations spaced throughout the county. In 2005, the decision was made to centralize operations. AMCD bought a large plot of land (25 acres) off Agricultural Center Drive, located in the center of the county with easy access to I-95. Construction of the new facil-

ity off Agricultural Center Drive started in 2013. In 2016, all operations moved to the current facility on EOC Drive off Agricultural Center Drive.

In 2018, the AMCD Board unanimously approved the building of a "Mosquito Museum," later changed to "Education Center," to teach people about mosquito control and vector-borne diseases. The budget for the project was initially \$3 million but has escalated since then without much information shared with county citizens about the decision to build the facility or the cost



overruns.

## Who governs the AMCD?

The AMCD, a special district, was established under the authority of Florida statutes (Florida Statute 388.0101). Under the statute the legislative intent for the district reads:

"It is declared to be the public policy of this state to achieve and maintain such levels of arthropod control as will protect human health and safety and foster the quality of life of the people, promote the economic development of the state, and facilitate the enjoyment



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# JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

# It's never easy

By Brian Sexton



Photo provided by Brian Sexton

The 2022 NFL schedule is out and it's always fascinating to see what the folks who make the schedule think about a particular team.

It might sound conspiratorial, but when a team has a three-game road trip in November or faces defending Divisional Champions in four games of a five-game stretch or they give a team a Monday Night Football game followed by Sunday Night Football less than a week later, it's essentially a challenge to a team the NFL schedule makers want to see prove itself.

They also can lighten the load of some teams with a three-game home stand or a well-placed bye week, somewhere around Week Eight. They can't play with the teams on the schedule, those are set

by a formula, but how they stack them and when they play them and how many prime-time games they play is always on the table and always fun to try and interpret.

So, what to make of the Jaguars fall slate? It's tough to say what the folks in the NFL's Park Avenue offices were thinking when they put together a schedule that on the surface looks brutal for a team with four wins in their last 33 regular season games.

The Jags open the 2022 campaign with three games away from Jacksonville in the first four weeks of the season, thanks for nothing! It begins in Washington on Opening Day and the first bit of drama arrives with the Colts in Week 2 in Jacksonville where they were humiliated on the final Sunday of the 2021 regular season ... think they'll remember who sent them home for the season instead of laying down and letting them walk over the Jags for a trip to the playoffs?

Trips to Los Angeles to face a loaded Chargers team in a stadium where the Jaguars are 0-2 and in a state where



they've only ever won in Oakland followed by a trip to Philadelphia where new head coach Doug Pederson returns home to face a hostile Eagles crowd that once backed him sort of give you a sense of how challenging this season might be.

October gets into full swing with the Texans at TIAA Bank Field and a trip to Indianapolis making three of the first six games important AFC South matchups. It's unusual that the Jaguars would be finished with the Colts by Week 6 but that's the way the schedule falls this fall, and the Colts are followed by the Giants at home and the Russell Wilson-led Broncos at Wembley Stadium in London.

Then, the schedule turns downright ugly. Most folks expect the Raiders — who arrive for a home game in Week 10 — will push for a playoff spot now that quarterback Derek Carr has been reunited with college buddy and All Pro receiver Davante Adams, and a trip to Kansas City in Week 11 will test a young team against one of the very best quarterbacks in professional football, even if Tyreek Hill is now playing in Miami.

The Week 12 bye should be welcome after Arrowhead Stadium, but hold on because the Ravens arrive for a Thanksgiv-

**JAGUARS** continues on **Page 26**

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Maria Wilkes and her husband enjoyed their trip to the beautiful region of Baja California Sur.



The region is beautiful, both inside and out.



Photos provided by Maria Wilkes  
The Baja California Sur region has much natural beauty.

# Cabo voyage full of wondrous experiences

By Maria Wilkes

I had the wonderful opportunity to experience Cabo in January with dear friends and couldn't wait to share it with my husband. April was our return trip, and it was even more special than before, as I could share some of my experiences with him whilst creating our own exploration in this vastly diverse and beautiful region of Baja California Sur.

From desert corridors to tropical deciduous forests dotted with exquisite resorts nestled in the coastline along the Pacific Ocean, the region is a feast for

the soul.

Day tripping from our home base in Diamanté, just west of Cabo, beach towns and stunning countryside, to find art galleries, restaurants and amazingly skilled artisans sharing their passions around the square in Todos Santos; then back to Playa Los Cerritos to see surfer pilgrimages dotting the shoreline as we walked the beach enjoying our freshly squeezed margaritas.

One important thing to realize, the people of Baja Sur are wonderful, welcoming and eager to share their wonderful country with us. We so much enjoyed

their hospitality and couldn't wait to return.

Happily knowing that the next three days were filled with challenging and breathtaking golf vistas on the myriad courses we were to play during our stay, we realized only two things we needed to keep on schedule for: our tee times and dinner reservations.

Diamante, boasting two amazingly diverse courses, The Dunes, Davis Love III's design, and El Cardonal, Tiger Woods' design, were exceptional and challenging, leaving you wanting to play again and again. The courses are mag-

nificent and the several "cantinas" along the course kept us well hydrated and satisfied with their handcrafted libations and local fare.

Enjoying the crisp cool air as the sun begins its final decent of the day, the waves seem to recognize this and present us with their most beautiful display of sea spray leaping off the translucent blue arch until its thunderous finish on shore leaving us with anticipation of the next wave ...

My husband and I kick back and smile, as tomorrow, we get to do it all again.

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There is a seamless flow from the kitchen to the dining room to the living room.



12 Spy Glass Lane is located in an enclave of Sawgrass Country Club.



The serene backyard features majestic trees and lakeview.

Contributed photos

# Waterfront home available in Sawgrass Country Club

By Jennifer White

Ponte Vedra Beach, located in Northeast Florida, is a seaside haven known for its pristine beaches, Intracoastal Waterway and famous resorts with championship golf. Ponte Vedra is home to the PGA Tour, the ATP, The Player's Championship and several famed private beach clubs and is within close proximity to the renowned Mayo Clinic and downtown Jacksonville, home of The Jacksonville Jaguars.

Ponte Vedra is in one of the wealthiest counties in Florida, St. Johns County,

which boasts A-rated schools that are ranked top in the state.

Now imagine living in the exclusive Spy Glass enclave of Sawgrass Country Club! 12 Spy Glass Lane is a breathtaking three-bedroom, three-bath, pool home located within the prestigious Sawgrass Country Club. This home is a 10-plus, a little slice of Heaven.

Beautifully renovated by local award-winning designers at Nesting Place Interiors, this home boasts bright light, soaring ceilings with accented beams, brick wall accent, shiplap bar and wood-burning fire-

place, custom bookcase in the sunroom, jasmine garden and more.

Walls were thoughtfully removed to open the spacious kitchen and allow a seamless flow from the kitchen to the dining room and the living room. Sit and relax poolside overlooking the serene backyard with the majestic trees and lakeview.

Some of the upgrades and features are: new roof in 2019, two new HVACs in 2020, new light switches and sockets (inside and out) in 2021, and a full remodel in 2015 with all-new slider doors, front

door and some windows, new plumbing in the kitchen and baths, electrical, appliances, exterior paint, custom closets throughout, porcelain and marble floors throughout and water heater.

All three bathrooms are spa-like and are ensuite. Don't miss the outdoor shower as well! The square footage varies from the tax roll and includes the enclosed sitting room.

12 Spy Glass Lane, Ponte Vedra Beach, is offered for \$1,595,000. Represented by Re/Max Specialists PV. Submitted by Jennifer White, 904-446-0495.



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The home at 57 Bent Trail is on an estate-sized lot.



The perfect place to relax after a long day.

Contributed photos

# Bent Trail home: where history meets today

By Jennifer Sexton

There exists a unique opportunity in Ponte Vedra, where everything only seems new, but where a fabulous home in a spectacular setting touches the excitement of progress with a slice of the history of Old Palm Valley.

The Ranch at Twenty Mile sits along the old County Road 210, which was once constructed of bricks but was dismantled when the new bridge was opened and Nocatee began to rise just west of the Intracoastal Waterway nearly 20 years ago. Those bricks that once carried residents by horse and buggy to the beach now welcome you home as part of this spectacular neighborhood.

An easy drive from Nocatee or from Ponte Vedra Beach, a winding and paved road carries you in 2022 to 57 Bent Trail where an amazing waterfront home is move-in ready. From the driveway you're just minutes to Crosswater Parkway and the heart of Nocatee to the west or 10 minutes to the gorgeous beaches, incred-

ible dining and shopping of Ponte Vedra.

57 Bent Trail was built on an estate-size lot with beautiful water views that will make even the most hectic commute or difficult day fade away as you walk in the front door. You will enjoy relaxing with a great glass of wine after dinner or sunning on the extended lanai or perhaps stargazing while soaking in the luxury spa/hot tub long after the sun has set.

The home boasts five oversized bedrooms, five-and-a-half bathrooms, an exercise room, an office, a drop zone and a second-story bonus room.

If the kitchen is the heartbeat of a home, then get ready for yours to race as your family gathers in an incredible custom white kitchen. Stacked ceiling height cabinetry makes nearly everything accessible and the under-mount lighting shimmers off the beautiful quartz countertops. A wraparound butler's area and an enormous walk-in pantry are just a few of the features of this kitchen that will make cooking and entertaining a pleasure for your family or the neighbors!

Soaring ceiling heights on the first level enhance all of the spaces, and the abundance of windows and stacked sliding glass patio doors open the home to the outdoors and flood the home with the Florida sun, the best natural light.

The expansive first level master bedroom is breathtaking and boasts a spa bathroom with his-and-her vanities, soaking tub, separate shower and a very large custom master closet.

The first floor has an additional ensuite first-floor bedroom, an office, an exercise room, a drop zone and large laundry.

Upstairs, three more generously sized bedrooms await plus a large bonus room and a second floor covered front porch. The home has extensive storage with large walk-in closets in each bedroom, a three-car side-entry garage and additional garage storage with built-in shelving, including a surfboard rack, drink cooler and mini refrigerator/freezer.

Why wait a year or more to build an elegant, custom home right in the middle of North Florida's most dynamic commu-



The bricks that once brought people by horse and buggy to the beach now greet today's Twenty Mile residents.

nity? Discover where the best of today in Ponte Vedra meets a touch of the past and come home to 57 Bent Trail.

57 Bent Trail, Ponte Vedra, is priced at \$1,749,000. Submitted by Jennifer Sexton of Compass Real Estate.

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## Mosquito

Continued from 17

of its natural attractions by reducing the number of pestiferous and disease-carrying arthropods. It is further declared to be the policy of the state to conduct arthropod control in a manner consistent with protection of the environmental and ecological integrity of all lands and

waters throughout the state.”

AMCD is an independent agency governed by a board comprised of commissioners, elected by their constituents to govern the district operations and who operate independently of the St. Johns County Board of Commissioners. This independence from other local governing bodies provides the AMCD board members with a high degree of autonomy to fulfill the mission of the district.

While this independence allows AMCD to operate without the interest, influence and authority of other local governmental bodies, it is such independence that makes it vital for St. Johns County citizens to understand the key role they play in ensuring that the district remains true to its mission, and that it does not expand beyond their mission without citizen approval.

## Funding

AMCD largely operates on property taxes levied on St. Johns County property owners. They are to develop financial reserves to ensure continuity of vital quality of life services during economic down-turns and/or disaster.

In the 2014-2015 fiscal year, AMCD approved an increase in the millage from 0.1312 to 0.2450 to help fund a new “Mosquito Museum” and Sterile Insect Technique (SIT) building. The ball started to roll on this in 2020 but was restarted in earnest in 2021 post-pandemic. The museum with its giant mosquito metal sculpture is slated to open in the summer of 2022.

## Top 3 things to demand of AMCD Commissioners

• **Fiscally Responsibility:** As a special district, AMCD’s Board of Commissioners is to be fiscally responsible and committed to being good stewards of taxpayer dollars through responsible and lean budget decision-making. AMCD should be spending less on general and administrative expenses than do their counterparts, cities and counties.

• **Accountability:** AMCD commissioners are elected by voters in St. Johns County. Therefore, their performance or lack thereof will be assessed by voters when these officials come forth for reelection.

• **Transparency:** The AMCD is limited in how they can spend taxpayer dollars and is required to be transparent in its financial processes. AMCD is also subject to Florida’s Sunshine, public records, financial disclosure and ethics laws. Citizens should demand that proper notice (not just on their little-known website) is provided to citizens about the proposed annual budget and all projects that will involve significant expenditures by the district. Additionally, projects such as the “Mosquito Museum” should have received sufficient public notice and debate and consideration should have been given to making this a referendum item, instead of leaving it only to board approval.

(Resources: [amcdsjc.org](http://amcdsjc.org) and [leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&URL=0300-0399/0388/0388.html](http://leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0300-0399/0388/0388.html).)



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Contributed photos

This home at 1098 Ponte Vedra Blvd., Ponte Vedra Beach, offers the ideal coastal lifestyle.

# Ponte Vedra Boulevard estate offers ideal coastal lifestyle

By Tina Webster

Are you dreaming of a stunning home across the street from the Atlantic Ocean nestled among amazing old oak trees on Ponte Vedra Boulevard? If so, this may be the home you have been waiting for.

This stunning two-story home sits on a large private lot on desirable Ponte Vedra Boulevard and is just steps from the ocean. Enjoy impeccable finishes, from marble counters, hardwood floors throughout, tongue and groove ceilings to custom built-ins.

We all love living in Florida due to the year-round outdoor living, and boy does this home have outdoor space one dreams

of. This is your own private outdoor oasis complete with summer kitchen, stone wood burning fireplace, pool and spa and tons of living space.

What also makes this home a true gem is the detached separate living area/pool house. Escape to read a book, exercise or hang out with friends in the separate pool house with a full bathroom. This could also be used as an in-law suite or a fantastic private home office. On the cool fall nights enjoy a wood-burning fire pit as you watch the sun set on this amazing lot.

Once inside the home you have a private office, beautiful living and dining room, and a wonderful kitchen that is

open to the family room. Sit back and relax and grab a pool cue in the great room with a wall of sliding glass doors to enjoy every angle of your outdoor space.

Head upstairs to your spacious tranquil primary bedroom overlooking the private backyard. Three more spacious bedrooms upstairs make this the perfect home. This home is an entertainer's delight.

If you ever want to leave this magnificent estate, Ponte Vedra Beach has everything you dream of in a fantastic beach life setting.

It is the home of THE PLAYERS Championship and many other well-known golf courses are just minutes away, making this location a golfer's

dream. Don't forget your tennis rackets, as there are also world-class tennis facilities in the area.

Ponte Vedra Beach has many great dining spots and shops. For all of you boaters out there, the Intercoastal Waterway is just a few miles away and the St. John's River is close by in Jacksonville.

If you are looking for the ideal coastal lifestyle in this fantastic private Ponte Vedra Boulevard estate, please give me a call today for your private showing.

1098 Ponte Vedra Blvd., Ponte Vedra Beach, is offered for \$3,400,000. It is represented by Berkshire Hathaway HSFNR and listed by Tina Webster. 904-982-7330



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Even the kitchen has great views of the ocean.



The home features balconies with spectacular ocean views.

# Custom home features stunning details, designer finishes

By Janet Westling

A rare find on the ocean in Sawgrass, this spectacular first-floor condo has the only elevator in Spinnakers 1 from the garage to the first floor. This once-in-a-lifetime, unique custom home is completely renovated with stunning details and designer finishes. Interior designer Kelly Canada and her husband Jim helped oversee the renovations, which are simply stunning.

Step inside 719 Spinnakers Reach 1 and experience a spacious, sophisticated and beautifully designed condo and one of only eight Spinnakers Reach condos

directly fronting the beach in the heart of Ponte Vedra Beach. This first-floor condo is warm and inviting with 2,523 square feet, three bedrooms, three bathrooms and an abundance of ocean views. A spacious, open floor plan with kitchen, dining, breakfast and living room includes oceanfront balconies with spectacular ocean views.

Savor your morning cup of coffee in your spectacular kitchen overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. The kitchen was remodeled by local craftsman Stan Dukeman with a weathered grey finish and quartz countertops. The custom bathrooms fea-

ture beautiful ocean-inspired iridescent glass tiles and quartz countertops. The master bath with custom cabinetry has an unpolished marble countertop with a chiseled edge.

Magnificent oceanfront views await you from every room. The Sawgrass experience offers oceanfront dining, championship golf, a world-class racquet club with 13 tennis courts, fitness center and oceanfront pools.

The unique neighborhood of Spinnakers Reach with its security guard gate, convenient beach access and private pool is just a short walk to the Sawgrass



Contributed photos

This aerial view shows how the condo is placed proximate to the ocean.

Country Club and Beach Club. Sawgrass Country Club is an internationally recognized resort community.



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#### 88 COLON AVE., ST. AUGUSTINE

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Breathtaking sunset views are the backdrop for this beautiful 6BR/5BA home. Hardwood floors flow throughout the downstairs. 6,849 sq ft, 2 offices, 2 family rooms, billiard room & best of all is the massive master suite, bath & generous closet space. Master on first floor with floor to ceiling library stacks reaching to 2nd floor. Bulkheaded, dock & covered boat lift add to the riverfront lifestyle. Offered for \$2,750,000



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# A lunch and talk with Herschel Walker



Contributed photos

Herschel Walker and Michael Rutherford are among the guests at the home of Janet and Dale Westling.

By Janet Westling

On March 1, 2022, my husband Dale and I hosted a lunch reception and talk with Herschel Walker at our home in Sawgrass Country Club to a sold-out audience.

Walker announced his run for the U.S. Senate from Georgia on Aug. 24, 2021.

Considered by many to be the greatest college football player of all time, Walker helped the Bulldogs win the 1980 National Championship in his freshman year. This amazing athlete finished his college career by winning the 1982 Heisman Trophy. In 1999, he was selected as the greatest player in college football in the last half-century and was voted into the College Football Hall Of Fame.

Walker gave a wonderful talk on a beautiful Florida day in a perfect outdoor setting. The former Georgia football hero was joined by his wife Julie who has joined him on the campaign trail. This engaging candidate spoke about his faith, his run for the U.S. Senate and why he is in the contest to represent the people of Georgia.

“I am running because it is time for me to get out and fight for our country,” he said. “I have lived the American dream; it is time for me to help someone else. We are all Americans. We need to come together.”



The McClungs pose for a photo with Herschel Walker.



Dr. Alice Reed, Bill Haft and Herschel Walker at the Westling residence.



Local residents welcome football great Herschel Walker to Northeast Florida.



Julie Walker and Monica Jacoby



Herschel Walker shakes hands with Pam Shore.

## Jaguars

Continued from 18

ing weekend showdown — which means Lamar Jackson, annually an MVP candidate. December and January feature four road games in the final six of the season, including a trip to face Derrick Henry in Nashville, that rarely ends well for the Jags and a game in Jacksonville against

America’s Team on Dec. 18, followed by a quick turnaround since they play on the following Thursday evening, the 22nd, in New York just before Christmas.

It all ends in Jacksonville against Derrick Henry and the defending AFC South Champions on either Jan. 7 or 8 thanks to the flexible Week 18 scheduling.

I say the fun ends because, as I see this schedule, the folks who wrote it don’t see the Jaguars as a playoff team in Doug

Pederson’s first season. This is the kind of schedule that on the surface seems like they still see the Jaguars as fodder for the powerful AFC teams on the calendar in November and December with the beginning and end of the season away from home so often. Let’s face it, if they were Green Bay, they’d have home games in December, and Aaron Rogers has earned that over his long career.

You never know how it’s all going to

shake out, who is going to stay healthy or who might be missing their starting quarterback, but they certainly didn’t do the Jaguars any favors with this one.

My read on this schedule is the NFL wants to see if they’re ready to turn the corner with Trevor Lawrence and Pederson, and if they can come through this somewhere in the neighborhood of eight wins they might find themselves with a much different kind of schedule in 2023.





This private 4.24-acre waterfront estate is at the end of a winding drive.



The home is positioned for expansive eastern views of the Intracoastal Waterway.



The home has a 25,000-gallon, salt-chlorinated pool.

Contributed photos

# Waterfront estate offers unrivaled privacy, serenity

By Elizabeth Hudgins and Sarah Alexander

You'll leave the world behind as you drive down the winding drive to this private 4.24-acre waterfront estate that you get to call home. The Old Florida-style, natural landscape draws you in upon arrival, where you may often spot a wild deer foraging on the land.

This dwelling, unmatched in design and tucked away on a private road of estate homes, is an absolute retreat and unlike any other you'll find in North Florida. The contemporary design is by Dan Owen of Miami, and the home was built in 2003 by the current owner. It prioritizes privacy, serenity, security and sustainability, making this truly a work of

art with impeccable attention to detail. Encompassing 10,956 square feet, the residence was built with ICF construction for security and energy efficiency and features meticulously crafted architectural and interior design elements, the custom-made onyx and stainless-steel front door, the 54 solid mahogany, 2.5-inch-thick interior doors custom made for this home in Peru, the custom Macassar ebony cabinets in the owner's bathroom, just to name a few.

The spacious entry with soaring two-story ceilings in the formal area make for an elegant setting for entertaining.

Carry the party outside for stunning and expansive eastern views of the Intracoastal Waterway with 160 feet of water frontage. Wake up to spectacular sunrises,

as you sip your morning coffee and have breakfast on one of the large, screened porches.

It's perfectly appointed for the year-round outdoor living we are known for here in Florida, fully equipped with a 25,000-gallon, salt-chlorinated pool with hot tub and dock and boat lift so you can travel with ease to St. Augustine or make your way north to the Atlantic Ocean — the choice is yours.

Additional interior features include his-and-her offices, a home gym off the owner's suite, a media/theater room and an elevator access to both floors. Imagine grabbing a bottle of your favorite vintage from the 1,500-bottle wine cellar and heading to the sunken wet bar in the formal living room with floor-to-ceiling

windows overlooking the pool and Intracoastal!

The home is fully automated with a Crestron Home System providing customizable security, audio/visual and climate controls with remote monitoring and control from your smartphone.

There are so many options that you just may choose to live, work and entertain without ever leaving the property. Come enjoy this truly unique private estate just minutes away from the world-renowned Mayo Clinic, the St. Johns Town Center and the Atlantic Ocean.

5147 Dixie Landing Drive, Jacksonville, is priced at \$8,995,000. Submitted by Elizabeth Hudgins and Sarah Alexander of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty.



2359 S. Ponte Vedra Blvd. | \$6,950,000

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



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The "spool" features jets and a waterfall.



A look inside 116 Yellow Bill Lane.

# Yellow Bill Lane home offers great coastal living

Located only 11 miles south of Ponte Vedra Beach, midway between Jacksonville and St. Augustine, lies a treasure unlike any in our area, 116 Yellow Bill Lane in South Ponte Vedra Beach!

Serenata North, a quaint gated community with only 26 homes, presents a chance to live next to, and with nature in the heart of Guana Preserve State Park.

Enjoy being surrounded by tropical

scenery, dazzling views of the Intracoastal Waterway and only a short stroll to the shores of the sparkling Atlantic Ocean with beach access just across the street. This lightly lived-in home was built in 2019, situated on a corner lot with beautiful ocean and marsh views.

Easy coastal maintenance was kept in mind with every detail, including maintenance-free decking, railings, light fixtures and more.

You'll enjoy relaxing in your own backyard oasis while listening to ocean waves on the cool-touch travertine deck with a lovely "spool" that can heat to 102 degrees, featuring jets and a waterfall, an outdoor fire pit and maintenance-free Brazilian IPE wood fencing, and custom outdoor shower.

The first-floor living area is pre-plumbed for a wet bar, and the lanai is pre-plumbed for a propane grill, making this home perfect for entertaining. This home also includes a pre-installed elevator pit, Kinetico water softener, paver driveway and walkway, full irrigation and so much more you have to see in person.

The location of this home provides easy access to the recreation, fine dining and shopping in Ponte Vedra Beach. Or venture south and visit the country's oldest city, St. Augustine, which is home to fabulous concerts, dining, shopping, adventure and fun.

The home offers four bedrooms, three full baths, two half baths, and 3,447 square feet of living space in a well-laid-out floor plan.



Contributed photos

The home is located within the Guana Preserve.

116 Yellow Bill Lane, Ponte Vedra Beach, is priced at \$2,250,000. It is presented by Debi Kopp and Keely Kopp of The Kopp Group with RE/MAX Unlimited.

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## Mega Open House weekend is June 4-5

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty is planning its next Mega Open House Weekend for Saturday and Sunday, June 4-5.

The Mega Open House Weekend features dozens of open house viewings of the company's listings of available homes. The listings encompass homes in a wide range of prices, styles and neighborhoods throughout Northeast Florida.

In May, the company's Mega Open House event hosted 20 in-person open houses with virtual open houses on social media to ensure maximum reach and engagement. The company's virtual open houses create tremendous interest and help bring prospective buyers to the in-person open houses. The company's web performance analytics show more than 23,000 visits on social media and more than 4,600 visits on the company's website.

"Many are attracted to our Mega Open House events because the Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices brand is respected for its trust, integrity, stability and the highest work standards," said Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty President Ann King. "In our



Contributed photo

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty's Mega Open House Weekend returns June 4-5.

competitive market, our Forever Agents are constantly rewarded for their exceptional service by receiving referrals from both buyers and sellers."

Go to [OpenHouseNEFlorida.com](http://OpenHouseNEFlorida.com) for a list of open houses or the company's Facebook page, ([facebook.com/FloridaNetworkRealty](https://facebook.com/FloridaNetworkRealty)) and Instagram

([instagram.com/FloridaNetworkRealty](https://instagram.com/FloridaNetworkRealty)) to view the homes virtually during the event.

For more information about Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty, go to [FloridaNetworkRealty.com](http://FloridaNetworkRealty.com).



# Custom home a luxury retreat

By Charles Sears

This “Splendor on Sea Glass Way” custom home is situated on a .70-acre corner lot with preserve views and is in Ponte Vedra Beach’s last new luxury coastal communities of custom homes. Location is everything as EvenTide is a short walk to the beach and a 5- to 10-minute trip by car to Sawgrass Country Club and the five-diamond Ponte Vedra Inn & Club. The world-renowned Mayo Clinic, TPC Golf, tennis, fine dining, art galleries and so much more are close by.

The builder for this fine home was longtime luxury builder Arther Ruttenburg. Built in 2020 this coastal-inspired luxury retreat boasts a contemporary open-living floorplan with high ceilings and gracious upgrades throughout. Multiple floor-to-ceiling glass sliders extend your living and dining room into a large outdoor entertaining area with pool, spa, cabana and summer kitchen. Its masterfully designed 4,510-square-foot floor plan includes four bedrooms, four-and-a-half baths, a great room, a dining room, an office, an expansive bonus room on the second floor and a three-car garage.

The great room displays a floor-to-ceiling gas fireplace.

Your dream kitchen with hidden pantry offers a large island with seating and features gas appliances and upgrades galore. Beautiful white counter-to-ceiling contemporary cabinets

adorn this kitchen along with a GE Monogram refrigerator, gas range, two ovens, microwave, dishwasher and farmhouse sink. The kitchen will be everyone’s favorite place to gather as the beauty of lavish quartz countertops throughout the kitchen and the main island continues with an extended seating area with 360-degree views of the chef, television, fireplace and pool.

The first floor boasts a very large owners’ suite with tray ceilings and French doors to the pool/spa area. A lavish spa-like designer bathroom includes a contiguous duo-basin vanity, walk-in spacious shower, garden tub and two large walk-in closets.

The custom stairwell leading to the second floor provides a glimpse of the architectural magnificence of this home and natural light with two stories of windows and a beautiful chandelier gracing your entrance to the next level of elegant living.

This floor includes a large bonus room (16-by-22 feet) that showcases large windows of the coastal scenery surrounding your home and provides you with options of creating your own entertainment area. A private bedroom with spectacular views, and separate full bath and large storage area with closets complete your home.

156 Sea Glass Way, Ponte Vedra Beach, is priced at \$3,495,000. This fine home is offered by Suzanne Cash and Wally Sears, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty.



Contributed photos

This custom home is located on a .70-acre corner lot.

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# Business Weekly

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## Campione Law looks to expand with downtown office

By Anthony Richards

Ponte Vedra Beach resident Chris Campione has seen his law firm, Campione Law, continue to grow over the years, which is a good problem to have.

However, with the growth comes a point when more workspace is needed, which prompted Campione to purchase a new office space at 501 W. Bay St. in downtown Jacksonville.

“We had just outgrown our current space,” Campione said. “There was no more room to put any more people.”

Campione Law currently has an office at 3200 Emerson St. in Jacksonville. The first day in the Bay Street location is scheduled to be July 1.

The firm has a 14-member staff, with seven of those positions being attorneys.

According to Campione, he expects to hire more staff not long after moving into the new location.

“There’s a lot of good things happening downtown, and we’re happy to be a part of the revitalization of downtown that’s taking place,” Campione said.

Not only will the new office be centrally located to the courthouse, which can be important for a law firm, but the building has a lot of history, as it is the oldest building to have withstood the Great Fire of 1901 that ravaged downtown Jacksonville at the time.

The structure is a federally registered historic building. It is three stories tall and 23,000 square-feet. Campione Law’s office will occupy the ground floor, while



Chris Campione began Campione Law on his own in 2016.



The building that will house Campione Law’s new office has a lot of history associated with it, as it withstood the Great Fire of 1901.

the top two floors will be leased out.

According to Campione, the inside of the building has been completely redesigned over the years, and the brick facade remains the only original aspect of the original structure.

He started the law firm by himself in 2016 after graduating from law school.

“I always knew that I had the urge to work for myself one day,” Campione said.

Looking back, he did not imagine the firm would get to where it is at today when he first started.

“I had never planned on having my own law firm,” Campione said. “I went to law school because my wife went, and



Photos courtesy of Campione Law

Campione Law is looking to expand its staff once it moves into its new office at 501 W. Bay St. in downtown Jacksonville.

I thought there was no limit to what you could do with a law degree, so I went as well.”

As Campione began to work closer with law firms as part of his schooling, he discovered that he had a passion for it.

“I found that I enjoyed helping people in need win their fight,” Campione said.

The law firm deals mostly with personal injury cases, but does handle other avenues, such as property damage claims, real estate law, small business and criminal defense.

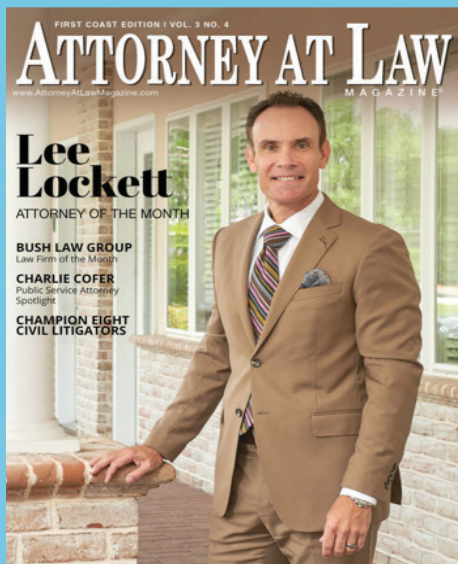
Campione also recently opened an office in Fort Lauderdale, as he hopes

to branch out and provide the law firm’s services in other areas across the state of Florida.

However, despite continuing talks of expansion, he does not want to forget that it was Jacksonville that allowed him to have the success he has today.

“My goals are always to continue focusing on our Jacksonville practice,” Campione said. “I’d like it to always be our home office.”

He and his family live on Roscoe Road and have called the area their home since he and his wife were in law school together.



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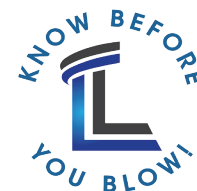
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# What to do if you want to leave your children unequal inheritances

By Dan Armstrong

Parents usually want to leave their children equal shares of their estate, but equal isn't always fair. If you plan to provide more (or less) for one child in your estate plan, preparation is important.

It is natural for parents to want to treat their children equally in their estate plan,

but there are some circumstances in which a parent might want to leave children unequal shares. If one child is providing all the caregiving, the parent might want to reward that child. If one child is substantially better off than another child, then the parent might want to provide more for the child who has a greater need

for the funds.

Other factors that can influence how much to give each child is if one child has special needs or if there is a family business that only one child wants to run. It's also possible that the parents have already provided more for one child during their lifetime, maybe by paying for graduate school or helping them buy a house.

Whatever the reason for leaving your children unequal shares, the important thing is to discuss your reasoning with the children. Sit down with them and explain your decision-making process. If you feel like the conversation could be difficult and contentious, you could hire a mediator to help facilitate the discussion.

Your children may be understanding of your decision, but if you are worried about one child challenging your will after you die, you may want to take additional steps:

- Draft your will and estate plan with the assistance of an attorney and make sure it is properly executed. To find an attorney near you, go to [elderlawanswers.com/elder-law-attorneys](http://elderlawanswers.com/elder-law-attorneys). To avoid accusations of undue influence, do not involve any of your children in the process.

- Explain in detail your reasoning in your estate planning document and make it clear that it is your decision and not the influence of the child who is receiving more.

- Include a no-contest clause (also called an "in terrorem clause") in your will. A no-contest clause provides that if an heir challenges the will and loses, then he or she will get nothing. You must leave the heir enough so that a challenge is not worth the risk of losing the inheritance.

**Dan Armstrong is an attorney in Jacksonville Beach.**



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## Builders announced for neighborhoods in Nocatee

Builders have been announced for two new neighborhoods in Nocatee, Palmetto Cove and Palm Crest at Seabrook.

Palmetto Cove will be an intimate neighborhood located on the northeastern corner of Crosswater Parkway and Nocatee Landing Trail. It will feature 61 homesites with homes between 2,850 and 4,200 square feet. Builders in Palmetto Cove include Dostie Homes and Toll Brothers.

Sales will begin late this summer and will start in the \$900,000s.

Palm Crest at Seabrook will be approximately 100 homesites similar in size to Crosswater's Heritage Trace neighbor-

hood. The homes will be between 2,500 and 3,200 square feet. Builders in Palm Crest include Dostie Homes, ICI Homes and Providence Homes.

Palm Crest will be within walking distance of the newest Nocatee amenity center, Seabrook Park. Opening 2023 in the heart of the Seabrook Village neighborhood, Seabrook Park will feature a pool, dog park and playground.

New homes in Palm Crest start in the \$800,000s. Sales are anticipated to begin in the fall.

For further information, go to [Nocatee.com](http://Nocatee.com).



# Naturalist touts therapeutic benefits of the outdoors

By Shaun Ryan

In our fast-paced world, with so many voices vying for our attention via social media, the immediacy of 21st century technology and its impact on our privacy, the demands on our time from every quarter, it's natural to want to escape.

And, according to the former park naturalist for the St. Johns County Department of Recreation and Parks, people are finding that escape in the outdoors.

"Now that we're so far away from nature, we're realizing that coming back to the natural world is beneficial health- and mental-wise," says AyoLane Halusky, owner of and lead guide for Earth Kinship.

According to Halusky, spending even 10 minutes in nature can greatly reduce cortisol levels and improve creativity.

Halusky has witnessed the positive effects of exploring nature his whole life. When he was young, his father started the Earth Stewardship Conference where people gathered to talk about healing the Earth. The name was later changed to Earth Kinship, which participants felt better reflected the conference's focus.

Halusky would return to that name when he launched his current ecotourism business.

After earning his bachelor of arts degree from the Savannah College of Art and Design, he went to work in outdoor settings, leading youths in Outward Bound on wilderness trips. Later, he spent a decade teaching at the University of Florida's IFAS Extension where he grew its eco adventures to new levels. He added kayak trips, rock climbing and whitewater rafting. By the time Halusky left that job, the number of students served each semester grew from 100 to about 5,000.

That's when he came to St. Johns County and took the park naturalist job. Ten years later, he has started a new chapter: Earth Kinship.

Halusky, who is American Canoe Association-certified and a Florida Mas-

ter Naturalist, offers several different experiences in nature, which can be found at his website, earthkinship.us. There are kayak and hiking tours, naturalist training and paddle training, and forest bathing, which for the uninitiated is not bathing but, rather, guided meditation in the woods.

"I have some certified forest bathers who work with me," Halusky said.

He would like to add some tipi talks or chats around the fire and bring in some local historians to discuss important historical figures who don't always get the attention they deserve: Stetson Kennedy, William Bartram and Denys Rolle, to name a few.

"There's so much out there that, without a naturalist and an historian point of view coming together as one, you're not getting the full story," he said.

One element he has added to several of his kayak trips involves everyone finding a spot out of sight of everyone else and sitting quietly for 10 minutes. At first, participants won't hear any birds or other animals around them.

"When you put a human in the woods, it's like throwing a stone in a pond," Halusky said. A person's very presence silences nature.

But after about 10 minutes, the birds and other animals, no longer sensing a threat, make their presence known again.

When the kayakers return, Halusky asks them to describe their experiences.

"The majority of the time I hear, 'relaxed' or 'my awareness is heightened,'" he said. "Sometimes people laugh and say, 'Wow, I didn't realize how loud cars were.'"

While he recognizes the value of other kayak tour companies in the St. Augustine area, Halusky offers something different; he takes people to "secret spots" that only the locals know about.

"We go to many, many locations," he said, "and we dive deep, deep, deep into the natural world."

To learn more, go to earthkinship.us.



Contributed photo

AyoLane Halusky has recognized the benefits of interacting with nature from a young age. Today, he runs Earth Kinship, which helps others better appreciate the outdoors.

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# In the Arts



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Contributed photos

Charlotte Chastain was recently recognized as the First Coast Cultural Center's Volunteer of the Year.

## Artist develops talent along the road less traveled

By Shaun Ryan

If there's a well-worn path that artists typically take to develop their talents, Charlotte S. Chastain didn't follow it.

Her background is varied and surprising, and perhaps therein lies the secret to her unique works. If art imitates life, her paintings have rich source material.

Though painting seriously since she was about 20 years old, the roots of her art go back much further.

"It's a passion of mine that I've had ever since I was a child," she said.

As a young woman in the 1970s, she earned an associate's degree at a school in Virginia and then went on to become a business major at the University of Georgia.

However, she got married her senior year and left college. She had two children and later moved to Atlanta, where she worked as a legal secretary for major law firms.

The work was "very, very, very, very hard," but it taught her some key skills in grammar and punctuation that would prove beneficial years later when, as a volunteer for the First Coast Cultural Center, she would be tasked with editing all of the nonprofit's communications.

Throughout it all, she continued to paint and had one-woman shows while living in Atlanta.

In 2000, her life took a new direction. As an empty nester, she moved to Ponte Vedra. Four years later, she finished her education, graduating magna cum laude from the University of North Florida. She



Among Charlotte Chastain's favorite subjects is botanicals.

also studied painting and art history in Rome with the Rhode Island School of Design.

After that, she went a whole new direction.

"I decided after I got my degree I didn't want to go back and be a legal secretary or administrative assistant," she said. "I decided I would become a merchant marine."

She attended The Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, which is affiliated with the Seafarers Interna-

ARTIST continues on Page 35

**Kids' Night Out, May 20**  
6-9pm, ages 4-11

First Coast Cultural Center

**Wine and Watercolors class**  
with Teresa Cook, May 28,  
10:30am-12:30pm

**Weekly Summer Camps in Jacksonville Beach, Ponte Vedra Beach, and Nocatee: May 31-August 12**  
"Explore Your First Coast" themed art and projects

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Contact Toni Thomas: [tthomas@firstcoastculturalcenter.org](mailto:tthomas@firstcoastculturalcenter.org) or 904-280-0614 ext. 1206  
Visit us! 3972 3rd Street S, Jacksonville Beach, M-F 10am-4pm



# Florida Chamber Music Project concert is June 5

The Florida Chamber Music Project will present the final concert of its ninth season at 3 p.m. Sunday, June 5, at the Beaches Museum Chapel in Jacksonville Beach. The concert is in memory of Earl Barker, a co-founder and former president of the Florida Chamber Music Project.

The musicians will perform Mendelssohn's String Quartet in E-Flat Major,

Op. 12 and Ravel's String Quartet in F Major.

The Mendelssohn piece is an early work of the composer that was completed in 1823 but not published until 1879. It was his first published quartet and is known for its dramatic scope.

Ravel's quartet was completed in 1903 when he was just 28. It premiered in Paris in 1904. Debussy was a great influence

on Ravel during this period, and this work is considered to be Ravel's first masterpiece.

Following the concert, there will be a reception with the musicians.

Beaches Museum Chapel has free parking along Pablo Avenue near 4th Street North off of Beach Boulevard. Guests are encouraged to wear masks. Feel free to bring a seat cushion for additional

comfort.

For tickets and details, go to [flchambermusic.org](http://flchambermusic.org).

The Florida Chamber Music Project is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Performances at the Beaches Museum Chapel are wheelchair-accessible, and a limited number of accessible parking spaces is available.

# St. Augustine's Concerts in the Plaza line-up announced

St. Augustine's free summer music series, Concerts in the Plaza, will return to the Plaza de la Constitución with many returning favorite bands and several new ones.

The series includes 14 weeks of two-hour concerts held at 7 p.m. every Thursday starting June 2 and continuing through Sept. 1. For complete information go to [CityStAug.com/Concerts](http://CityStAug.com/Concerts).

On-street parking is available near the Plaza and is free in all city-managed lots and on-street parking after 5 p.m.

Parking is also available in the Historic Downtown Parking Facility, 10 S. Castillo Drive, located at the St. Augustine Visitors Information Center, a 10-minute walk from the Plaza. The cost for parking there is \$15 per entry or \$3 with a ParkNow card.

Concerts may be canceled or postponed due to weather. A cancellation or postponement will likely be a last-minute decision, due to the unpredictability of Florida's summer rain showers. If a concert is canceled, the public will be

notified on the city website at [CityStAug.com/Concerts](http://CityStAug.com/Concerts) and on Facebook at [Facebook.com/CityStAug](https://www.facebook.com/CityStAug).

Here is the schedule, subject to change:

- **June 2:** The Driftwoods
- **June 9:** Morrow Family Band
- **June 16:** Ancient City Slickers
- **June 23:** Billy Buchanan
- **June 30:** I-Vibes
- **July 7:** City Duo
- **July 14:** Grapes of Roth
- **July 21:** The Committee
- **July 28:** Str8up

- **Aug 4:** Gypsy Stars
- **Aug 11:** Dewey Via Band
- **Aug 18:** Lonesome Bert & Thick & Thin Band
- **Aug 25:** Big Pineapple
- **Sept 1:** Sauce Boss

Concerts in the Plaza is produced by the City of St. Augustine as a free cultural enhancement for residents and visitors. For more information, call 904-825-1004 during weekday office hours or email [events@citystaug.com](mailto:events@citystaug.com).

## Artist

Continued from 34

tional Union, in Piney Point, Maryland. It took her a year to get all of her Coast Guard endorsements, but then she set sail with the U.S. Merchant Marine for the next decade. She traveled all over the world, cooking aboard ship.

But that didn't mean giving up her art. "I would paint from different sites around the world," she said.

When her world tour ended, Chastain returned to Ponte Vedra where she enjoys painting and gardening. In fact, a Master Gardener, one of her favorite subjects is flowers, and she likes to sit in her garden and paint.

But her talents don't stop there. She also does needlepoint and chair caning, a skill she learned from a master craftsman in 1976 as a young woman back in her hometown of Thomasville, Georgia.

She also enjoys playing her great-grandmother's baby grand piano and

volunteering at the First Coast Cultural Center. At this year's Beaches, A Celebration of the Arts, she was recognized as the nonprofit's Volunteer of the Year.

"She comes in the studio every Thursday to edit our outgoing communications," said Cultural Center Executive Director Donna Guzzo. "She is a student of master artist Ellen Diamond here at the First Coast Cultural Center."

This week, Chastain's work is the subject of an exhibit at the center.

"Charlotte is a fabulous artist who we are delighted to showcase on May 26 with an opening exhibit," said Guzzo.

The show features some of Chastain's earliest paintings and work she's done all the way up through today.

"I wanted to show my progression and my love of watercolors," she said.

She also hopes to include one of her unfinished chair caning projects to reveal that part of her skillset.

The exhibit went up on Tuesday, May 24, and will be on display through Friday, May 27. The opening is 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, May 26. It is free and open to the public.

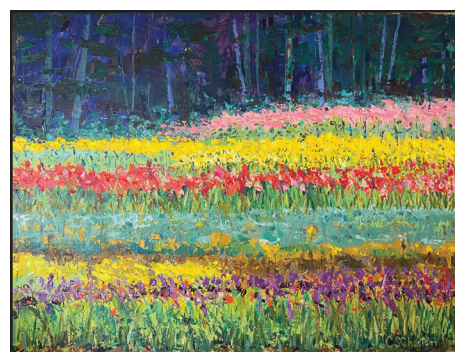
The First Coast Cultural Center is located at 3972 3rd St. South, Jacksonville

Beach.

For further information, go to [firstcoastculturalcenter.org/exhibitions/current-exhibitions](http://firstcoastculturalcenter.org/exhibitions/current-exhibitions).



Charlotte Chastain enjoys painting landscapes, seascapes and flowers.



Contributed photos

Among Charlotte Chastain's favorite subjects is botanicals.

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# Sports



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Photo by Shaun Ryan

Olympic gold medalist Phil Dalhausser demonstrates the right way to spike the ball during a youth volleyball class at Nocatee Community Park.



Photo by Jennie Flinn

High-fiving 6-foot 9-inch Olympic gold medalist Phil Dalhausser is no easy task, as Veda Gyulai finds out.

## Olympic gold medalist visits young volleyball players

By Shaun Ryan

When learning to play a sport, it's always helpful to have advice from an expert. And on Thursday, May 19, a group of young volleyball players from the Ponte Vedra area got advice from the best.

Olympic gold medalist Phil Dalhausser visited with the youths, who were enrolled in a series of classes offered by Volleyball1on1 at Nocatee Community Park. He taught them spiking techniques and how to put more power into their game and spoke to them about how mistakes can be used to improve.

The day was divided into two sessions: one for students in grades 4-7 and the other for students in grades 8-12. That evening, Dalhausser joined Volleyball1on1 founders Andor Gyulai and Vanessa Summers-Gyulai for a presentation at the link for parents titled "Better Parenting Through Sports."

Dalhausser, teamed with Todd Rogers, won his gold medal in beach volleyball at the Beijing 2008 Summer Olympics. At Thursday's gathering, he showed the youths his medal, the back side of which was inlaid with rare white jade.

He described winning a gold medal as "pretty sweet."

"It's the best feeling times 100," he said.

Though many Olympians start to hone their skills early in life, Dalhausser didn't get involved in volleyball until he was a high school senior at Mainland High School in Daytona Beach. The coach had been asking him for years to try out, but it wasn't until Dalhausser grew tired of playing baseball that he agreed.

And he found that everything just came naturally.

"I became obsessed," he said.

He went on to the University of Central Florida, where he earned a business degree, but upon graduation, he told his parents he'd like to pursue a career in volleyball. They were cool to the idea but agreed to give him until he was 25 before he would have to turn his attention to a career more compatible with his degree.

As it turned out, he won his first professional tournament at 25.

In addition to his victory in Beijing, Dalhausser has competed in three other Olympic Games and won several beach volleyball championships around the world.

Dalhausser's visit to Nocatee was at the invitation of the Gyulais, who met him earlier this year at a private trial in Orlando.

Before founding Volleyball1on1, Andor Gyulai and Vanessa Summers-Gyulai had careers in financial services in Los

Angeles.

Andor Gyulai was an experienced volleyball player and world-renowned coach, and in 2009, the Gyulais began to post videos — 3,000 in all — on YouTube featuring the best players and coaches in the world. That evolved into a franchise volleyball coaching system for high school coaches and clubs. Their business, Volleyball1on1, runs volleyball camps around the country.

"We actually want to raise some volleyball Olympians," said Andor Gyulai.

In fact, they may already be doing so. Their son, Thor, 14, has demonstrated an interest and talent in the sport. He was recently scouted to be a part of the elite Volleyball U-16 team.

In addition to volleyball skills, the Gyulais — who moved to Ponte Vedra in January — incorporate life skills into each lesson. It's something Vanessa Summers-Gyulai said was her favorite part of what they do.

"We like to say it's bigger than volleyball," said her husband.

"We like to teach things like: how to communicate, how to ask questions, how to work successfully, how to set goals," said Andor Gyulai. "We like to say that when we teach these things we develop excellent goal-setting, communicative, self-directed, critical-thinking, lifelong



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# Sharks begin journey with spring practice

The Ponte Vedra High School football team has been taking part in spring practice the past couple of weeks. The Sharks go on the road to face Clay High School in a spring game May 26 at 6:30 p.m.

Photos by Anthony Richards



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**ACROSS**

- 1. English river
- 5. Particular part of something
- 11. Cool!
- 14. Welsh for John
- 15. Given name meaning "great spirit"
- 16. Wrath
- 17. Social occasion
- 19. Mechanical belt
- 20. \_\_\_ de la \_\_\_
- 21. Commands
- 22. Body part
- 23. Caught sight of
- 25. Funeral car
- 27. Skin infection
- 31. Sometimes they "burn"
- 34. Russian river
- 35. Famed soap opera character Kane
- 38. Pie \_\_\_ mode
- 39. Endangered
- 41. Socially inept person
- 42. Romanian river
- 44. Swerve
- 45. Monetary unit of Samoa
- 46. A type of approach to please
- 49. Form of Hebrew name for God
- 51. "Carry On My Wayward Son" rockers
- 55. A team's best pitcher
- 56. A woody climbing plant
- 60. Long, edible marine fish
- 61. Human rights group in Africa (abbr.)
- 62. Data
- 64. Corporate bigwig
- 65. Climbs
- 66. Relating to the ear
- 67. Commercials
- 68. You need it to eat
- 69. Political extremists

- dried orchid tubers
- 4. Foes
- 5. Rheumatoid arthritis score
- 6. Ruler of Iran
- 7. The top of the head
- 8. Lilly and Manning are two
- 9. Purchase attire for
- 10. Glittering with gold or silver
- 11. The bank of a body of water
- 12. Regions
- 13. Makes tractors
- 18. Adult beverage
- 24. Force unit
- 26. Swiss river
- 28. Cater to
- 29. Woody climbing plants
- 30. Seems less impressive
- 31. Consume
- 32. Boxing's GOAT

- 33. Southwestern farmers
- 36. Beverage holder
- 37. A way to deteriorate
- 39. Judge
- 40. Norse explorer \_\_\_ the Red
- 43. Farm resident
- 45. One who helps to govern
- 47. Plant-eating ground bug
- 48. History Finnish county
- 49. Conifer native to Jamaica
- 50. Longed
- 52. Small Japanese city
- 53. Arum family plant
- 54. Puts together in time
- 57. From a distance
- 58. \_\_\_ contendere: no contest plea
- 59. Region
- 63. Mountain Standard Time

**SUDOKU**

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

Level: Intermediate

**Here's How It Works:**

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

**DOWN**

- 1. Reconnaissance (Brit. military)
- 2. Asserts to be the case
- 3. Starchy food made of



Photo courtesy of Jane Rollinson

Josh Mariano, Josh Scobee, Margaret O'Meara, Jane Rollinson and Michael Aubin share a moment with Tom Coughlin (middle) after their team won the event with a score of 15-under.

# Golfing for a good cause

The Tom Coughlin Jay Fund held its annual celebrity golf classic at TPC Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra Beach May 16. This year's event raised a record \$849,000, which will be used to help families battling childhood cancer.



Photos by Jennie Flinn

Phil Dalhausser tells David Lovett about the gold medal he won at the Beijing 2008 Summer Olympics. Dalhausser was the guest during a recent youth volleyball class presented by Volleyball1on1 in Nocatee Community Park.

## Medalist

Continued from 36

learners who thrive in competition and under pressure, who know how to work as a member or a leader of a team while being fair and considering others."

At Thursday's gathering, Dalhausser helped the Gyulais reinforce these positive ideas with the students.

Later, during the presentation at the link, they sought to establish a partnership with parents so that the lessons they taught on the field would be reinforced at home.

As for Dalhausser, he said he wants to help grow the sport that has been so good to him in Florida.

The bi-weekly volleyball classes offered in Nocatee Community Park (collectively called NocVolleyball) are about to wrap up. But they will be restarted in August.



Olympic gold medalist Phil Dalhausser autographs a volleyball for Lauren Boots during a recent youth volleyball class presented by Volleyball1on1 in Nocatee Community Park.

For more information on Volleyball1on1, go to volleyball1on1.com. For information on NocVolleyball, go to NocVolleyball.com.



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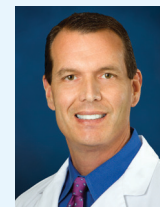
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# Inspiring restful sleep

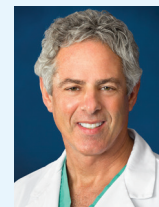
A good night's sleep can make all the difference in your day, your mindset and your overall health. But if you have obstructive sleep apnea, a peaceful slumber can feel like chasing a dream.

A device called Inspire® may be an option if you have moderate to severe sleep apnea and can't tolerate using a CPAP machine.

Smaller than the palm of your hand, the implanted device uses a gentle pulse to keep the airway open. And it usually stops snoring, too.



Peter Nassar, MD



Don Lerner, MD

 [baptistjax.com/inspire](http://baptistjax.com/inspire)

 904.202.0202

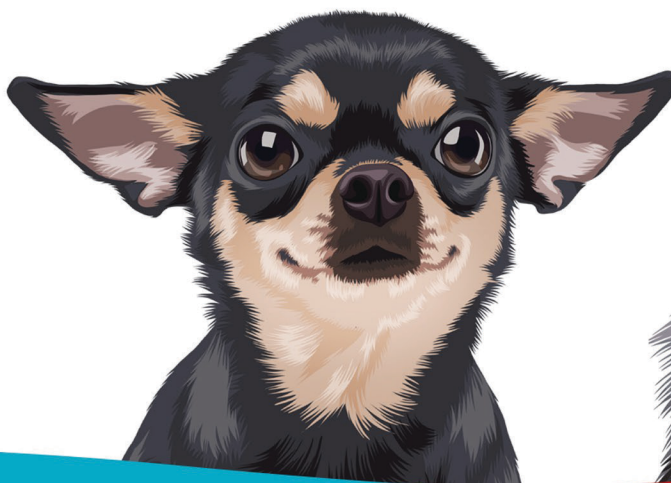


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