

THE RECORDER



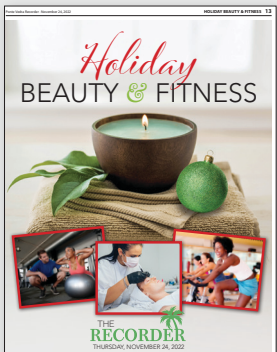
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Serving Ponte Vedra, St. Augustine, The Beaches and Greater St. Johns County

PonteVedraRecorder.com



First Coast Register
INSIDE



Holiday Beauty & Fitness
Page 13



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



Photo by Shaun Ryan

Entrepreneur Danish Sayed speaks to students from Ponte Vedra High School during the three-day celebration of entrepreneurship, EnterCircle Summit 2022, which was held at the link in Nocatee. For the article, turn to page 23.

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THE RECORDER
Covering Ponte Vedra, St. Augustine, and Greater St. Johns County

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



Visit our new website at www.pontevedrarecorder.com
Plus, find the Recorder on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ThePVRecorder

BRIEFS

Lightner Museum plans Holiday Market

Thirty-three vendors are signed up to participate in the Lightner Museum's Holiday Market 2022. Shoppers will see wares from a curated selection of artisans and small businesses in the historic Alcazar swimming pool area. There will be festive music by Raisin Cake Orchestra, drinks on the terrace and food from the Yamo food truck.

The market will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. Dec. 8. The museum is located at 75 King St., St. Augustine.

Beaches Town Center holiday clean-up set for Dec. 4

The public is invited to join Beaches Go Green for a Beaches Town Center holiday clean-up from 4 to 6 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 4. Look for the BGG tent at the Atlantic Boulevard beach access between One Ocean Hotel, Atlantic Beach, and Seahorse Oceanfront Inn, Neptune Beach. There will be snacks for volunteers and prizes for the strangest items found and the most cigarette butts collected.

Students can earn service hours.

Water shuttle service returns for 'Nights of Lights'

The water shuttle service has returned to St. Augustine just in time for the "Nights of Lights" celebration. In addition to the popular Scenic Nights of Lights Tours offered by Adventure Boat Tours and Red Boat Tours, both tour boat opera-

tions will add pickups and drop offs between Vilano and downtown to their nightly calendars.

Residents and guests can depart the Vilano Pier for drop off at the St. Augustine Municipal Marina. Later, they can return by water shuttle.

Reservations are highly recommended but limited walkups will be accommodated when seats are available. Price is \$15 each way per passenger. Full details and schedules can be found at StAugustineWaterShuttle.com.

First nightly pickup is 4:15 p.m. at the Vilano Beach Public Pier, 260 Vilano Road, St. Augustine. Last return pickup each night is 9:45 p.m., leaving from slip 91, St. Augustine Municipal Marina, 111 Avenida Menendez.

Campaign raises charitable donations for Catholic organizations

#iGiveCatholic is a giving day for the faithful across the nation (and the globe) to come together to raise as many charitable dollars as possible for Catholic parishes, schools and ministries. Last year, #iGiveCatholic raised more than \$16.5 million for 2,600-plus organizations across the United States. The advanced giving phase is now through Nov. 28 and leads up to #GivingTuesday on Nov. 29.

The Catholic Foundation is sponsoring the Diocese of St. Augustine's participation in this Catholic Giving Day for a second year. #iGiveCatholic takes place on #GivingTuesday, Nov. 29, from midnight to 11:59 p.m. for gifts given

BRIEFS continues on Page 3

Betty Griffin's Adopt-A-Family and food drive under way

As the 2022 holiday season approaches, the Betty Griffin Center has announced that its Adopt-A-Family Holiday Program is now under way to support those women, men and families who are staying at its domestic violence shelter.

Donors can adopt a family of any size, whether it is a single woman, a mom and child or multiple families.

"Each year, we have families in our shelter fill out a 'wish list' for the holidays that's provided to the donors, which includes their ages, genders, clothing and shoe sizes, along with three gift requests and special interests and hobbies," said Betty Griffin Center CEO Kelly Franklin. "For those looking for a way to help others, we hope they will help us make the holidays special for those staying in our shelter."

Those interested in adopting a family for the holidays can contact the agency's development director Kenlie Kubart at kenliek@bettygriffincenter.org or by phone at 904-808-8544 extension 207 to find out more.

Also, another giving option for companies and individuals is the Betty Griffin Center Holiday Food Drive.

Donations of any nonperishable food items or grocery store gift cards will be accepted and can be dropped off or mailed to the Betty Griffin Outreach office, located at 2450 Old Moultrie Road, Suite 202, in St. Augustine.

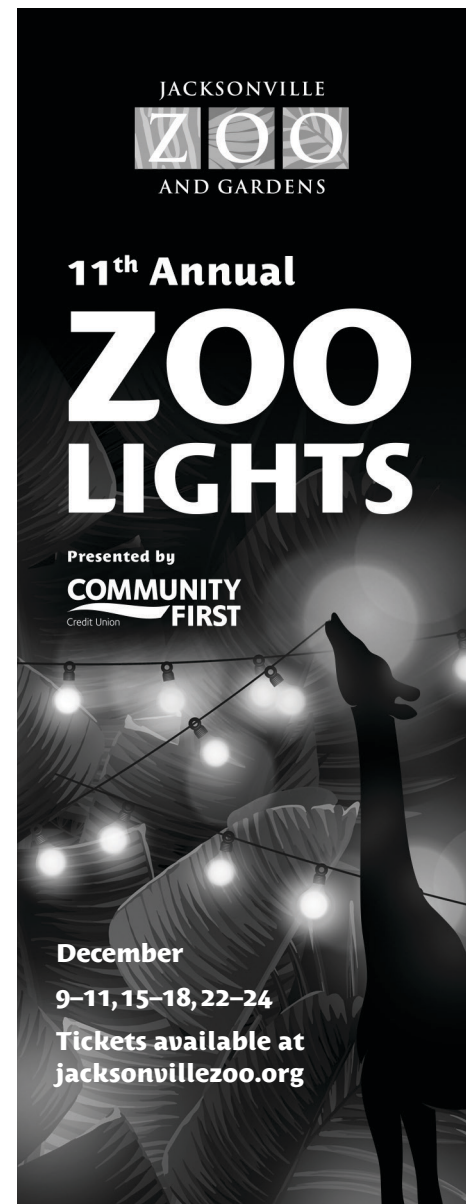
Food donations will be accepted through Tuesday, Nov. 29.

For more information about these and other holiday giving programs, go to bettygriffin-center.org/holiday-giving.

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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Coastal Friends plan holiday luncheon for Dec. 7

Christmas and all the trappings will come early this year as Coastal Friends (formerly known as Newcomers Alumnae) will hold its monthly Holiday Luncheon from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Dec. 7 at Marsh Landing Country Club, 25655 Marsh Landing Parkway, Ponte Vedra Beach.

Open to the community, members and guests of Coastal Friends will enjoy live holiday music while feasting on sunburst salad with mixed greens, chicken cordon bleu with mashed potatoes and seasonal vegetables, and the chef's special dessert.

To help ring in the New Year, many

prizes and gift certificates will be handed out, and there will be participation in a Secret Santa gift exchange.

Additionally, an unwrapped toy can be brought for the BEAM/St. Vincent DePaul Society Giving Tree to hand out to local children in the community.

The cost to attend this luncheon is \$25. Contact the luncheon chairman at bartshar@comcast.net as soon as possible since the deadline to sign up and get your check to her is Thursday afternoon, Dec. 1. Checks payable to "Newcomers Alumnae" must be received by Dec. 1 in order to reserve a seat.

Coastal Friends is a social group of women who live in Ponte Vedra Beach, Nocatee, Jacksonville, Jacksonville Beach, Neptune Beach, Atlantic Beach and St. Augustine. Formed in 1998, some of the activities offered are book club, bunco, canasta, happy hour, lunch out, lunch in, mah-jongg, adventures and outings, and wine socials. Luncheons are held the first Wednesday of every month, and they welcome new members throughout the year.

For more information on how to join, click on coastalfriends.wildapricot.org or contact brookemeister@msn.com.

Briefs

Continued from 2

online at staugustine.igivecatholic.org. There are more than 75 parishes, Catholic schools and ministries that appreciate the community's support.

In the month of November, there are days to give thanks and purchase gifts for loved ones: Thanksgiving, Black Friday and Cyber Monday. #GivingTuesday kicks off the charitable season when many focus on their holiday and end-of-year giving.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

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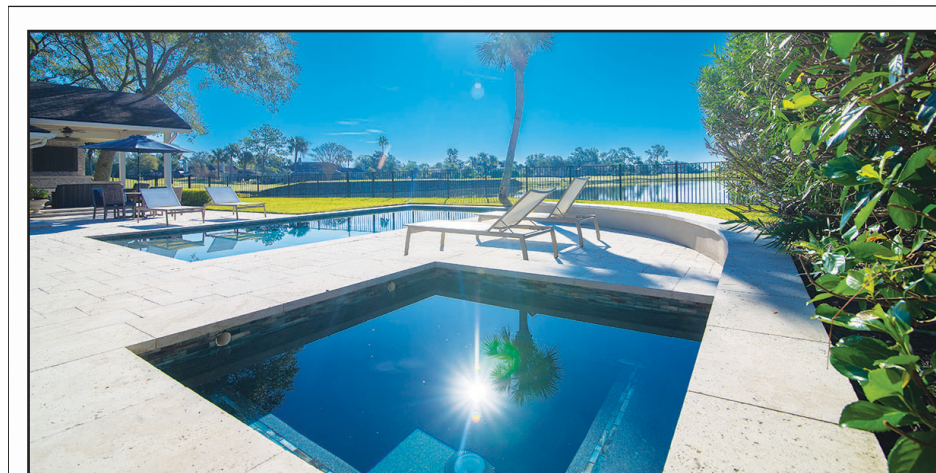
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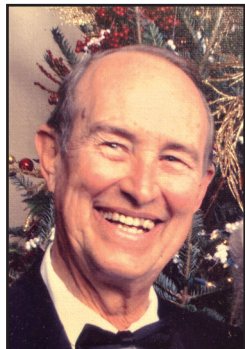
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OBITUARIES



David (Bill) William Brooks, Jr.

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of our beloved David (Bill) William Brooks, Jr., MD on November 11, 2022. No matter what name he is called, Bill-Dad-Pop he will always be Our Love, Our Life and our North Star.

He was born on August 6, 1933, in Atlanta, Georgia to loving parents, D.W. and Ruth McMurray Brooks.

He graduated from North Fulton High School, Harvard University (1955), and Duke University School of Medicine (1959), and served in the U.S. Army before becoming a founding partner of Mori, Bean and Brooks Radiology PA.

He is survived by his loving wife of 65 years, Janet Vaughan Brooks, children David W. Brooks III (Beverlye), James M. Brooks (Lourdes), Jeanette Brooks, and Suzanne Brooks Bolotte (Mark), grandchildren, David W. Brooks IV (Ashley), Brad Brooks, Conner Brooks (Nicole), Britton Nasby, Brooke Nasby, Zachary Bolotte and Katie Bolotte, great-grandchildren Cora Beth, David V, Preston, Caroline and Henry Brooks, sister Nancy Brooks Jones, nieces Margie, Rachel and nephew Brooks Jones.

A memorial website will be available on Legacy.com in the coming weeks. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests a donation be made to the charity of your choice. Please visit his online Tribute at www.quinn-shalz.com.

Arrangements by



Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre
3600 Third Street South, Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250
Phone: 904.249.1100 Fax: 904.241.7554

Murle Harold Wester

Murle Harold Wester, long-time resident of Jacksonville and Ponte Vedra, Florida, passed away on November 5, 2022 at the age of 89.

Murle was born March 15, 1934 in Wellborn, Florida and moved to Jacksonville after marrying Mary Gem McLeran. He worked at Massey Business College for many years and then became a real estate agent until he retired.

Murle is survived by his wife, Mary Gem Wester, his three daughters, Terri Rodish, Karen Sharko and Donna Hazouri, along

with his grandchildren Sarah Wilson, John (Jake) Mordecai, Jr., Nikki Hazouri, Kristin Sharko, Caroline Sharko and Jack Rodish, and great grand-children, Emma Wilson and Gabriel Wilson.

Murle was devoted to his family and was a great neighbor and friend to all who knew him. He loved helping others with household projects and often did things for others when he saw a need without being asked. He enjoyed working on the board of his community taking care of the lighting. He enjoyed boating, fishing and spending time with family. He

and his wife enjoyed many years being active in their church and developed many strong friendships. He was a simple man who just enjoyed being with others and simple pleasures and will be deeply missed by his family and friends.

A memorial service will be held at St. Francis in the Field Episcopal Church, 895 Palm Valley Road, Ponte Vedra, Florida 32081 on Saturday, December 10th at 1:30 p.m.

St. Johns Family Funeral and Crematory is in charge of arrangements.

DEATH NOTICES

Robert "BJ" Atkins

Robert "BJ" Atkins, 72, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Nov. 11, 2022. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedra-valley.com

Joan Chappell Branyon

Joan Chappell Branyon, 86, of Jacksonville Beach, Florida, died Nov. 12, 2022. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery

– 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedra-valley.com

Joseph "Joe" DeBellis

Joseph "Joe" DeBellis, 73, of Ponte Vedra, Florida, died Nov. 14, 2022. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedra-valley.com

Kathleen K. Gillespie

Kathleen K. Gillespie, 72, of Atlan-

tic Beach, Florida, died Nov. 14, 2022. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

Francis Pavao

Francis Pavao, 92, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Nov. 15, 2022. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedra-valley.com

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Deeply Rooted Grounds transforms children's lives in Nicaragua

St. Augustine-based nonprofit seeks child sponsors, funds for new facility

Six years ago, local boat captain Nathan Pendleton packed a couple of duffel bags and set off for Nicaragua armed only with \$600 and a desire to “help poor people.”

Today, the St. Augustine-based charity Pendleton founded provides nutritious food to 9,000 children each day, along with access to clean water, afterschool programs, therapy for special needs children and more. The charity — Deeply Rooted Grounds — became a reality after Pendleton visited a friend who was adopting two children in Nicaragua, the Western Hemisphere’s second-poorest nation.

“I saw how these children were living — tin shacks with dirt floors, no food, no running water — and God just overwhelmed my heart,” said Pendleton, a U.S. Army veteran of the 82nd Airborne Division. “I stayed for six months as a volunteer, then came back to St. Augustine and set up the nonprofit.”

While in Nicaragua, Pendleton met and married his wife, Maria Celeste. He soon learned that Maria and her mother were sharing what little food they had with three local children, who would come by each evening for a spoonful of rice, beans and tortillas. He resolved to do more.

“Those three children turned into seven, and then seven became 15 and so we bought a shack to use as a base,” he said. “We called it a ‘Dream Center,’ because when we asked the kids what they



Photo courtesy of Nathan Pendleton
Nathan Pendleton and wife, Maria, feed 9,000 children a day in Nicaragua through their St. Augustine-based nonprofit, Deeply Rooted Grounds.

NONPROFIT continues on Page 11

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Edwards & Ragatz, P.A.

Dana L. Rector has been a hair stylist for more than 30 years, most of that time in Stamford, Connecticut. Six years ago, she moved to Ponte Vedra where she could be near family. When Covid-19 forced many salons to close, leaving people no way to access their services, Rector launched her business to do hair styling in people's homes. Even as life has returned to normal, customers have found her service to be a time saver. And mobile hair styling continues to be convenient for those who cannot get out.

Dana L. Rector

As told to Shaun Ryan

Tell me about your business.

My one-woman hair-styling business is called Hair & There. I've been taking my "traveling salon" to people's homes since the pandemic, because most salons were closed. After covid, I have continued with Hair & There.

For women, I do haircuts, color, styles and simple updos. For men, teens and children, I do haircuts and styles. I do clipper cuts, too.

How do customers come to you?

They see me on Instagram or Facebook or NextDoor. NextDoor is my business page. They call me or text me. The service is very flexible. It's not tied to any specific hours or times. During the pandemic, it was a little more scheduled.

My phone number is 904-874-6697. My email is d.rector11@aol.com.

Before coming to Florida, you worked at salons in Stamford, Connecticut. Tell me about that.

The first salon that I worked at was in a mall. The name of that one was Sweeney Todd's. I worked there for 15 years.

The next 10 years, I worked at a family-owned salon. It was mostly older clientele. Some younger people, some kids.

How did you get your business started here after working in Connecticut?

I moved to Florida in 2016. Pretty much right away I was looking around at salons. Most salons asked me, "Do you have clientele?" But I had just moved here!

Then, after about 10 months this salon called me. That was Regis at the Avenues Mall. They said they liked that I had only worked at two salons — 15 years at one and 10 at the other.

So, I worked for them for almost two years. Then, they closed. They said everybody could transfer to the other Regis salon in St. Johns Town Center, so I did. And then, after a year, they closed on New Year's Eve. That was just before the pandemic started.

What did you do then?

I said, "Wait a minute. I like working for myself. I like being my own boss." I figured I would try going to people's homes, even though people were nervous with the pandemic and everything. I worked on their lanai, wearing a mask.

What do you like best about what you do?

I like helping people and making them feel good. It's nice because I can make my own hours and it's more personal. When they want to have it done they tell me, and I'll be like, OK. Even on Sunday sometimes.

Tell me about your mobile salon.

I said, "What can I do to carry my stuff around?" I went to Home Depot and got a men's briefcase-type thing. It was mostly supposed to be used for tools.



Photo by Shaun Ryan

Dana L. Rector is seen with her mobile salon. After more than 30 years of hair-styling experience, she now brings her services directly to the customer.

Then, I had a gym bag. But those two things didn't work.

I just happened to see this unit when I went to the beauty supply store. I've used other ones like this. I was like, let me see if everything can fit in here.

What do you like best about living in Northeast Florida?

I like it because I don't have to worry about driving in the snow. And it's easy to get around.

How far will you travel to a client's home?

The farthest I've gone is the Kernan and Hodges area and the World Golf Village.

How do you like to spend your free time?

I do a lot of church activities, and we try to go three times a week to the Y. And I like to take walks. If I walk from my house to our pastor's house and back, that's a half hour.

The Recorder's garden columnist Kathy Esfahani of Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery shares her tips for growing gorgeous gardens in Northeast Florida.

KATHY'S GARDENING GUIDE

Flowers of Gratitude and Friendship

"Gratitude is the fairest blossom which springs from the soul!" — Henry Ward Beecher



By Kathy Esfahani

As we celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday, we reflect on the many blessings in our lives.

Our friends are often not only an important part of the celebration, but they are also one of our greatest blessings. Flowers are a wonderful way to celebrate the holiday and our friends. Keep these flowers in mind when looking for the perfect bloom!

A gift of flowers is a popular way to express gratitude, particularly when the following varieties are included:

- Hydrangeas: In Japanese society, the hydrangea flower means "thank you for understanding." Specifically, blue hydrangeas are most often considered a flower of gratitude while pink hydrangeas represent sincere feelings.
- Lilies: Yellow lilies are especially

suitable for expressing appreciation. These blooms naturally evoke happiness with their large, brightly colored petals.

- Roses: Although roses are often considered a romantic flower, blooms in a peach color are traditionally thought of as a way to say "thank you." It is also acceptable to express appreciation and/or admiration with a dark pink rose.

• Maranta ("prayer plant"): Maranta is commonly known as the "prayer plant" because of the way its leaves fold up at night as if in prayer. As prayer often shows gratitude, this plant represents appreciation and thankfulness. Maranta is an ideal choice for saying "thank you" because it can thrive as a low maintenance houseplant and features leaves with unique colors and patterns.

- Sweet Pea: These plants are perfectly suited to show appreciation for an invitation, but sweet pea flowers can also be used in bouquets for any expression of

Flower of the Week



Geraniums

gratitude.

Flowers are also a beautiful expression of friendship. Consider the following blooms when showing a friend how much they mean to you:

- Geranium: Available in red, pink, purple, white and lilac, geraniums represent the positive feelings of friendship, happiness and good health. These plants are the perfect gift to celebrate close friends,

but they are also ideal as an offer of friendship, such as a housewarming gift for a new neighbor.

- Roses: Yellow roses feature a bright, sunny hue that brings out happiness and positivity. They are, therefore, a cheerful, warm expression of friendship.

• Daisies: In any color, daisies symbolize happiness. Specifically, however, yellow daisies represent a positive connection to another person. They are the perfect flower to demonstrate the happiness that a true friendship brings.

- Alstroemeria ("Peruvian lily"): The most prevalent meaning of alstroemeria,

Photos provided by Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery



Geranium blooms

or Peruvian lily, relates to friendship and companionship. The blooms have six petals that are thought to represent the values of a true friendship — empathy, patience, humor, respect, commitment and understanding. Remember Alstroemeria when selecting a flower to celebrate a friend.

- Zinnia: Available in many colors, zinnia blooms are a wonderful gift of friendship. Yellow flowers recognize a newer friend, magenta blooms symbolize a deeper friendship and white zinnias represent a pure relationship.

We hope you enjoy a very special Thanksgiving with your family and friends!

Flower of the Week: Geraniums

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40 compete in croquet competition

On Nov. 3-6, 40 croquet players from throughout the country played a four-day event in Ponte Vedra. Players came from as far away as Baton Rouge; Chesapeake Bay, Virginia; the highlands in North Carolina; and all over Florida.

They were divided by their "D" grade (which is similar to a golf handicap) into two divisions: the Champion Division and the First Flight Division. They played nine other people in their blocks and then were seeded for the final competition rounds. The overall champion was James Creasey from the Denver Croquet Club.

The Ponte Vedra Croquet Club is

centrally located behind the Ponte Vedra/ Palm Valley elementary school. It is a membership club that welcomes new croquet players. Free introduction to the game is held Wednesday and Saturday mornings beginning at 9 a.m. For further information, go to Pontevedracroquet-club.com.

Croquet is a sport that all ages can play and involves a lot of skill and strategy. It is a sport where women can be as successful as men, and in fact, croquet was the first sport that allowed female participants in the Olympics.

Contributed photos



Pictured from left: tournament manager Marc Stearns, runner-up Jim Jamison, winner James Creasey and the tournament manager Macey White.



All of the participants of the recent competition are shown.



Ponte Vedra members who entered the tournament were, from left, Cathy Harding, Bobby Greene, Sue Emond, John Curington, Judy Carlton, Paulette Blackmer, Lynn McCann, Phil Emond, Bill Simmons, Debbie Davidoff and Earle Mauldin

Yes, you can buy a goat from a vending machine for Christmas

Light The World Giving Machine is coming to St. Augustine on Thanksgiving weekend

After visits to New York’s Rockefeller Plaza and London’s Hyde Park in seasons past, the world-famous Light the World Mobile Giving Machine is coming to Florida this Christmas season.

These bright red vending machines work in reverse by giving people an opportunity to buy much-needed items for local and global charities. However, in-

stead of buying the usual junk food that drops down to the bottom of the vending machine, people can insert money into these special vending machines and donate a goat for a needy family in Africa or even an acre of sweet potatoes for another family in Asia.

In St. Augustine, people will be able to use the Light the World Mobile Giving Machine to buy a stroller to ease the burden of a mother, healthy snacks for the hungry, children’s socks and pajamas or even a new outfit for a teenager in need of clean clothes and a little dignity. The local partners for the Light the World Mobile Giving Machine here in Florida are St. Gerard Campus and Miriam’s Basket.



Contributed image

An artist’s rendering of the Light the World Mobile Giving Machine that will be at the St. Augustine Visitor Center on Nov. 25-29. It is a reverse-vending machine that provides items for those in need.

The Light the World Mobile Giving Machine will be at the St. Augustine Visitor Center on Castillo Drive from Black Friday, Nov. 25, to Giving Tuesday, Nov. 29, during the annual Nights of Lights.

Since 2017, these Giving Machines have been placed in select cities throughout the world, raising more than \$15.1 million dollars for charitable organizations. To support more local nonprofits, a Mobile Giving Machine was launched this year and will be traveling to five Southern cities from Thanks-

giving through Christmas: St. Augustine; Birmingham, Alabama; Atlanta, Georgia; Charlotte, North Carolina; and Charleston, South Carolina.

The Light the World Mobile Giving Machine is sponsored by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and provide an instant act of service for people looking to help those in their community and around the world. One hundred percent of all donations go directly to the participating charities. For more information, go to mobilegivingmachine.org

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Annual Pearl Harbor Remembrance Luncheon
And Presentation Honoring World War II Veterans

Sunday December 4, 2022

VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena - 300 A. Philip Randolph Blvd., Jacksonville
Meet-and-Greet 11:15 a.m.; Luncheon 12pm-1pm followed by Presentation

The keynote speaker will be Capt. James Ransom III, Ret. USN, presenting unforgettable stories of the attack on Pearl Harbor and World War II. Ransom is a 1980 graduate of the U. S. Naval Academy. He holds a B.S. in history and an M.A. in national security and strategic studies from the Naval War College. He served as a submarine officer following a career that included commanding U.S.S. Miami during strike operations against Iraq and Serbia.

He was awarded the Bronze Star, and his crew was recognized with the 1999 Battenberg Cup, awarded to the best ship in the Atlantic Fleet. 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, Atlantic Coast Young Marines and local nominees for Community Unsung Heroes.

Early Bird Tickets \$28 / 8-Person Table \$196
Veterans and Gold Star Families receive 10% Discount

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

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Keynote Speaker



Capt. James Ransom III, USN Ret. D-Day Heroes Presentation

Flagler Hospital gets safety grade of 'A' from Leapfrog Group

Flagler Hospital received an "A" Hospital Safety Grade from The Leapfrog Group. This national distinction celebrates Flagler Hospital's achievements in protecting hospital patients from preventable harm and errors.

"Providing quality — and safe — patient care is our highest priority," said Carlton DeVoght, president and CEO of Flagler Health+. "Thanks to our hard-working and dedicated staff, we are consistently reaching that goal. The standards for patient safety throughout Flagler Health+ are high because it is what our patients deserve. Only through our team's unwavering commitment can we deliver what is recognized to be some of the nation's safest health care standards."

The Leapfrog Group is an independent national watchdog organization with a 10-year history of assigning letter grades to general hospitals throughout the United States, based on a hospital's ability to prevent medical errors and harm to patients. The grading system is peer-reviewed, fully transparent, and free to the public. Hospital Safety Grade results are based on more than 30 national performance measures



Contributed photo

Flagler Hospital has received an "A" grade in hospital safety from The Leapfrog Group, an independent national watchdog organization.

and are updated each fall and spring. "I applaud the hospital leadership and workforce for their strong commitment to safety and transparency," said Leah Binder, president and CEO of The Leapfrog Group. "An 'A' Safety Grade is a sign that hospitals are continuously evaluating their performance so that they can best protect patients. Your hospital team should be extremely proud of their dedication and achievement."

To see Flagler Hospital's full grade details and to access patient tips for staying safe in the hospital, go to HospitalSafetyGrade.org.

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[HTTPS://bidpal.net/2022festivaloftrees](https://bidpal.net/2022festivaloftrees)
 For more information, contact Joy Burton at joy.burton@stfrancisshelter.org

Last day to purchase tree/wreath is Nov. 11th




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Nonprofit

Continued from 5

dreamed of doing with their lives, they didn't know what we were talking about. For them, their 'dream' was having something to eat today."

Today, Deeply Rooted Grounds' Dream Centers operate six days a week, providing nutritious food and clean water to 300 children a day. The nonprofit has expanded its reach to thousands more by forming a network of 44 local pastors, who come to the centers, pick up food and distribute it in their remote mountain villages. The organization also operates a thriving afterschool education program, a maternal health program for pregnant women and new mothers and has even built new houses for villagers for as little as \$6,000.

"Studies show that we can increase the overall health of a family by 70% simply by getting them up out of the dirt," Pendleton said.

But the project closest to Pendleton's heart, he said, is Deeply Rooted Grounds' new "Miracle House," which provides rehabilitation and therapy services to children like his 4-year-old son Isaac, who was born prematurely and has cerebral palsy.

"We have three full-time staff who are helping these children," he said. "Isaac is doing so much better, and it's amazing to

see how his life is helping so many other children."

Supported by a volunteer board of directors based in St. Augustine, Deeply Rooted Grounds initially raised funds by selling locally grown coffee through individual "coffee subscriptions." After political unrest in Nicaragua resulted in the United Nations imposing sanctions on the country, however, the nonprofit is now only able to distribute its coffee in bulk, primarily through churches.

To support its services, the nonprofit offers mission trips as well as child sponsorships beginning at \$20 a month, whereby donors can support a child's nutrition, education and/or therapy services. Pendleton is currently traveling across the United States seeking support for Deeply Rooted Grounds' most ambitious project to date: the purchase of an existing open-air conference center the organization hopes to transform into its base of operations, providing nutrition, education, health and therapy services as well as a spiritual center, all at one location.

"We've experienced very organic growth," said Pendleton, who plans to call the new center Centro Cristiano el Rio, or The River Christian Center. "God is just doing amazing things."

For more information on Deeply Rooted Grounds, to make a donation or to sponsor a child, go to deeplyrootedgrounds.org.



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Foundation presents Gratitude Proclamation Banner to law enforcement

By Shaun Ryan

On Monday, Nov. 21, the We Can Be Heroes Foundation presented a large Gratitude Proclamation Banner signed by citizens of St. Johns County to members of the local law enforcement community. The presentation was made at the Sheriff's Office.

The banner was created to express the gratitude of the citizens for law enforcement in the county.

Bill Dudley, Veterans Council of St. Johns County chair, said he took the banner to various organizations and churches and people lined up to sign it. But the 128 signature spots quickly filled.

"I ran out of slots," Dudley said Monday during the presentation. He said, at a time when some communities are seeing calls to defund the police, St. Johns County and the state of Florida support law enforcement.

"We are proud of the service of all of our officers and respect them for their contribution to the safety of our community," he said.

The We Can Be Heroes Foundation is

a national, all-volunteer nonprofit headquartered in Jacksonville.

"It's our plan to present a banner to each county in the free state of Florida to show our appreciation for law enforcement," explained foundation President Beth Heath. "We want to stand with them as they stand with us."

The organization's mission is to publicize nominations from across the nation of heroes, many unsung heroes, including first responders, community volunteers, veterans and heroic youths.

"We also help veterans in need," said Heath. "We sponsor the Clara White Mission program in Jacksonville. We also sponsor the Atlantic Coast Young Marines and the Asian American Pacific Islanders chapter."

Sheriff Robert Hardwick praised all the people who make up his department working in a variety of capacities.

"It's easy to police a community in a state where you're appreciated," Hardwick said. "We have a governor who supports us, an attorney general, a legislature that supports law enforcement in the state of Florida. So, we're



Photo by Shaun Ryan

Pictured with the banner from left: We Can Be Heroes Foundation President Beth Heath, Veterans Council of St. Johns County Chair Bill Dudley, St. Johns County Sheriff Robert Hardwick, St. Augustine Police Chief Jennifer Michaux, St. Augustine Beach Police Chief Daniel Carswell, foundation officer Ron Birchall.

truly blessed."

St. Augustine Police Chief Jennifer Michaux and St. Augustine Beach Police Chief Daniel Carswell joined Hardwick

in expressing their appreciation to the foundation.

For further information on the foundation, go to wecanbeheroesfoundation.org.

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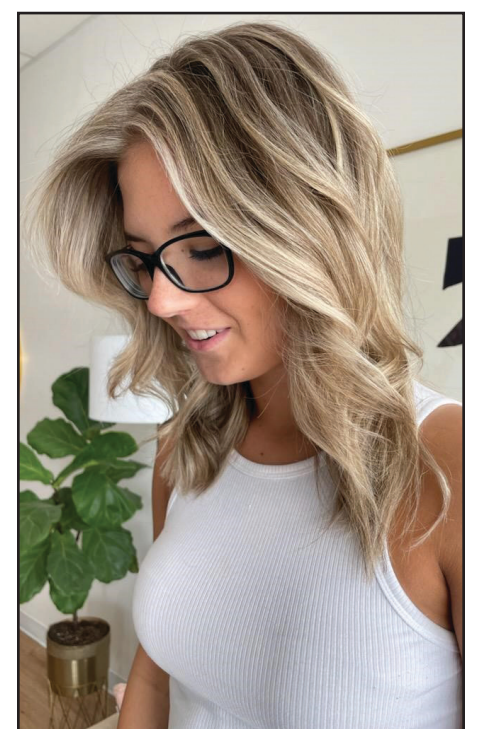
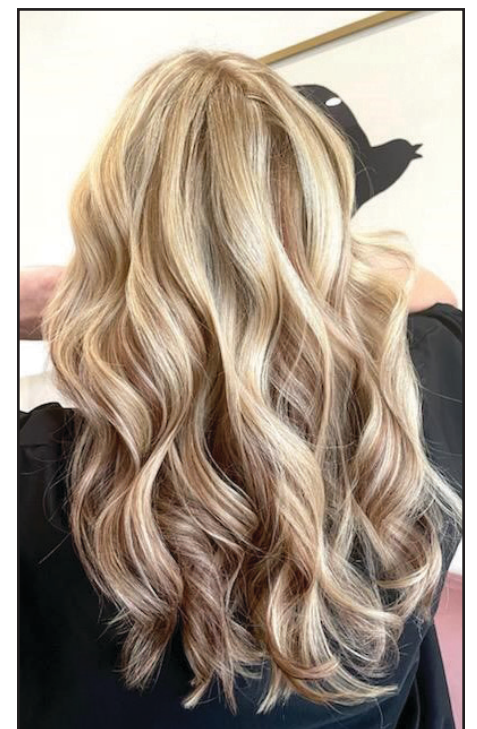
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Fall, winter months bring out 'darker' hairstyles



Photos courtesy of Sparrow Salon

By Anthony Richards

There are many changes that take place with the introduction of a new season, and as the leaves change color and the temperatures begin to cool off the variety of hairstyles also take on a new look.

In many ways a new season is seen as an opportunity to “change up” the hair style they have had throughout the summer as they enter the next phase the year.

According to Lacy McEvoy, owner of

Sparrow Salon in Ponte Vedra Beach, there are certain times of the year where people search for something different, and the fall and winter months bring that out.

“When fall comes along we start to see a lot of our clients wanting to go ‘darker,’” McEvoy said.

“Darker” can be a broad term, but one that is the popular thought among people regardless of their hair color.

“Our blondes want greater dimension with warmer and soft tones instead of the typical platinum, summer blondes,”

McEvoy said.

The popular trends do change over time, and McEvoy has seen cooler red tones be a very trendy selection of late.

“For both blondes and brunettes, it creates an overall deeper and more rich color, which is really popular this time of year,” McEvoy said. “Going darker is always what trends this time of year, but the pops of red in our blonde clients has been very popular this year.”

Even after a decade-plus in the business, she still finds herself amazed by the creative looks that continue to develop over the years.

As a hair stylist, she always enjoys seeing firsthand the shifts that are made in the style that people prefer that season of that year.

That creativity is one of the reasons she fell in love with hair styling in the first place and helping customers discover the look they are searching for is always a special feeling.

“The pops of red have been a fun makeover on clients that have typically been super blonde,” McEvoy said.

So, if you are thinking about making a change to your hairstyle for an upcoming holiday party, remember that the trends just like the days in the winter tend to be darker.

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Photos courtesy of Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery



The new treatment will be a no pain or downtime approach and will be able to be performed on all skin types.



Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery will launch bio rejuvenation treatment and collagen stimulator in January 2023.

Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery to welcome new year with new treatment

By Anthony Richards

The new year will mean more than just changing to a new calendar this year at Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery, as the office is preparing to introduce a new treatment for clients.

Beginning in January 2023, Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery will begin offering bio rejuvenation treatment and collagen stimulator.

According to Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery staff, the purpose of the treatment

is to help tighten and brighten a person's skin.

The treatment is the latest in the long list of offerings that Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery has available for clients to choose from to help them in their various appearance and health needs.

Unlike some of the other procedures the office offers, one of the expected advantages that the staff believes clients will appreciate is the fact that the bio rejuvenation treatment results in no pain or

downtime compared to other approaches to skin treatment.

The treatment is estimated to take 30 minutes to complete and will be able to be performed on all skin types.

Being able to be performed on any skin type is something that will make the procedure an option for any person that walks into the office.

The treatment will consist of a series of four sessions and will include all post skincare regimens.

Further details about the treatment will be posted to the Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery website in the middle of December, which is also when the entire staff is expected to be completed with training and ready to go for its implementation at the start of 2023.

For more information about the procedure and whether it is the right approach, call the Ponte Vedra Plastic Surgery office at 904-664-1552 or leave your name and a message at pvps.com/contact.

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Gifts to excite the family athlete this holiday season

Holiday shoppers know that few things can match the joy of finding the perfect gift for a loved one. Whether that loved one is a tiny tot who can't wait to unwrap this year's must-have toy or an adult hoping to find the latest gadget under the tree on Christmas morning, the thrill of giving a great gift is part of what makes the holiday season so enjoyable.

Friends and family members may fall into certain categories, and that can make holiday shopping a little easier. For example, loved ones who can't wait to sit down with a good book would no doubt appreciate a new e-reader or the latest best-seller. When it comes to gifting the family athlete, the following ideas can provide the inspiration shoppers need to put a smile on the face of fitness-minded friends and family members.

• Weighted vest

Weighted vests have gained popularity in recent years. Available from a variety of manufacturers and for athletes of varying skill levels, weighted vests can be ideal for athletes who want to burn more calories and build strength during their workouts. This can be an especially useful gift for endurance athletes who want their training sessions to mimic the challenges posed by nature or difficult competitive terrains.

• Noise-canceling headphones or earbuds

Many athletes relish their workouts not only as opportunities to zero in on their fitness goals, but also as chances to block out distractions and clear



Home gym equipment can make for a great gift this holiday season.

their heads for an hour or two each day. Noise-canceling headphones or earbuds effectively block out external noises, allowing athletes to direct all of their focus on their workouts and training sessions.

• Energy drinks

Though it might not seem like the most exciting gift to unwrap on Christmas morning, energy drinks are vital to many fitness enthusiasts' athletic endeavors. For example, endurance athletes may appreciate a tub of Osmo Active Hydration Performance Drink Mix, which contains an optimal ratio of sucrose, glucose and electrolytes, helping athletes improve their endurance and power while reducing instances of cramping and fatigue. Energy drinks make for a perfect stocking stuffer.

• Home gym equipment

Pandemic-related gym closures turned athletes into their own personal trainers, and some may not want to return to local fitness facilities even now that they've safely reopened. Home gym equipment can help athletes continue to build their own private home gyms, making items like kettle bells, dumbbells, weight benches, and resistance bands great items to put under the tree this holiday season.

It's never been easier to shop for the family athlete during the holiday season. A heightened focus on fitness ensures there's something for every type of athlete on your holiday shopping list.

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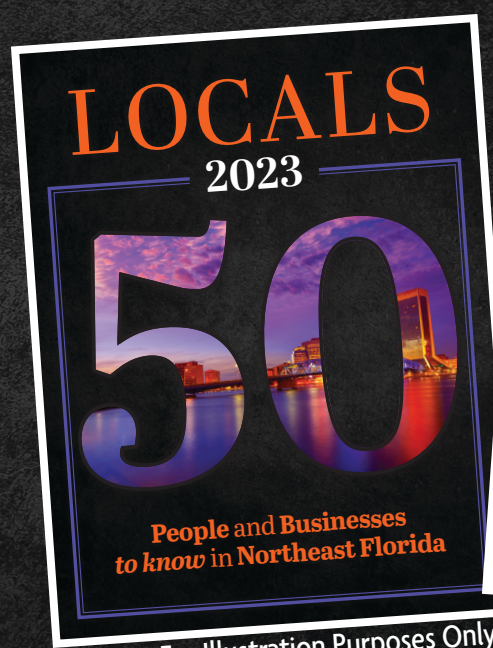
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The Seventh Annual Psych Ed Connections Nocatee Turkey Trot will be held Thanksgiving Day.



Awards will be handed out to age group winners following the race.

Runners prepare to take their mark Thanksgiving morning

By Anthony Richards

Thanksgiving is a holiday associated with families sitting around a table sharing in fellowship and a home-cooked meal.

However, for some there is a Thanksgiving tradition that involves a running a 5k to kickoff their Thanksgiving Day festivities.



Photos courtesy of Michael Greenberger

The Nocatee Turkey Trot is a festive Thanksgiving tradition for many.

Dr. Abigail Levrini is one of those and it was the idea when she created the Psych Ed Connections Nocatee Turkey Trot seven years ago.

“I’m a lifelong runner and grew up doing turkey runs with my family and it was always a great tradition,” Levrini said. “But when I moved to the area, I couldn’t find any around here, so I decided to do something about it.”

This year’s run will be the seventh annual event, which used to have both 10k and 5k races, but now has just the 5k.

According to Levrini, it has been crazy

to look back and see how much it has grown since she first turned her idea into a reality.

The course goes through the greenway trails, which interconnect Nocatee with greenway and preserve recreational options. Levrini believes the course makes for a fun and convenient route for families.

“We have a good relationship with Nocatee,” Levrini said. “There are also a lot of local businesses that get involved in the community by helping out.”

Because a family atmosphere is highly encouraged, strollers are welcome for families with smaller children and some even chose to roller blade the course last year.

Festive costumes and attire are popular sights worn by those in the race.

“It’s not your super competitive sanctioned race,” Levrini said. “We’re all about getting outside and having fun and doing so as a family.”

The event will help raise money for St. Johns Cares, which is an organization that helps spread out donations to a variety of partnered nonprofits within St. Johns County. St. Johns CARES will also organize the volunteers for the event.

“It’s great because they have connections with many local charities in the county, so you know it’s helping support a good cause and people who need the help,” Levrini said.

According to Levrini, an estimated 500 people took part last year and she expects similar numbers this year, if not more due to being yet another year removed from the pandemic and people’s former traditions almost fully restored.

The event will go on rain or shine, and packets can be picked up for those

already registered at Orange Theory in Nocatee Nov. 23.

Same day registration will be accepted beginning at 6:30 a.m. at 400 Nocatee

Center Way in Ponte Vedra Beach. The race itself will begin at 8 a.m. and awards for age group winners will be announced afterwards.

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New Meridian Fitness continues to grow, plans expansion

By Shaun Ryan

The holidays are here and with them overindulgence, followed by the inevitable vow to get back in shape — a vow that all too often falls by the wayside.

So, John DiPatre, owner of The New Meridian Fitness, has some advice.

“Consistency is the key,” he said. “And it has to be a lifelong commitment.”

And don’t try to tackle too much all at once. DiPatre suggests starting with something you are comfortable doing.

“A lot of times, people say, ‘I’m going to come to the gym every day. I’m going to stop smoking. I’m going to stop drinking. I’m going on a diet.’ And it lasts two weeks,” he said. “I think finding that level of consistency and making it a part of your life and trying to make it fun is really important.”

DiPatre knows his stuff. A former quarterback who played professional football in Europe, he went on to work as a personal trainer for years, including a stint at Meridian, which has been in the Ponte Vedra community since 2001.

DiPatre bought the facility in August 2021, remodeled, painted and revamped it and added new equipment.

The facility is chock full of state-of-the-art cardio equipment, selectorized machines, free weights, a Smith machine and

more. Early in December, New Meridian Fitness will expand to include an adjoining space where AstroTurf will be installed, making it the perfect place for athletic training and yoga.

In addition, the facility offers massage, acupuncture, needling and cupping.

Trainers with years of experience offer both one-on-one and group training, and DiPatre himself offers unlimited personal training. Joining him are Caroline Jenney, Matt Hendrick, Lindsey Hendrick, Bruce Jackson and Angela Richmond.

The facility is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. And there’s a shower for those needing to tidy up after their workout.

But what DiPatre enjoys most about Meridian is the opportunity to interact with people and watching them develop relationships, both business and personal. Now that life is getting back to normal after the pandemic, people are walking away from the Pelotons at home and returning to places like Meridian.

“We’ve created more of a neighborhood-friendly environment here,” DiPatre said.

“When we have our groups and we’re busy, everybody knows everybody. So, it’s a great place, I think, to get to know people and have fun and get a good workout.”

Another thing he says he enjoys is seeing people grow in confidence and undergo



Contributed photo

New Meridian Fitness owner John DiPatre offers clients a variety of options for getting into shape, something people may be seeking once the holidays are over.

a positive change in their demeanor as they work toward their goals.

“This is a place where you just get a firm, challenging workout, and the sky’s the limit of what you can do,” he said. “It’s a very affordable opportunity for people if they do the unlimited training or just the membership.”

And the expanded space will be open just in time for those seeking post-holiday restoration.

The New Meridian Fitness is located at 820 State Road A1A North, suite W21, Ponte Vedra Beach. That’s at the end of the courtyard inside The Veranda office complex.

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Isabelle Renault, Sherry Jeffords, Dr. Melissa Withers, Dr. Travis Jeffords, Carlie Quinn and Kathleen Floryan.



There were many smiles and laughs shared during the networking event.



Chamber board member Kathleen Floryan shares a conversation with Dr. Travis Jeffords.



Hydro Infusions hosted a St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce "before hours" event.



Chamber members and the Hydro Infusions partnered to host a "before hours" event.

Hydro Infusions hosts Chamber 'before hours' event

Hydro Infusions recently partnered with the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce to host a "before hours" event. A variety of Chamber members were on hand and shared smiles and laughs during the networking event.

Photos provided by Hydro Infusions



Hydro Infusions founder and CEO Dr. Travis Jeffords speaks to those in attendance.

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PAGE 21 THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2022

www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

Engel & Volkers opens Ponte Vedra Beach location

By Anthony Richards

After years of eyeing the Ponte Vedra Beach area, Engel & Volkers Real Estate now has a location that calls the era home after the company opened its fifth location on the First Coast with a ribbon cutting ceremony Nov. 17.

Its newest location will be at 190 A1A N., Suite 1, and will give the world-renowned company a convenient option in a market it was already very active in.

“We’ve been trying to come to Ponte Vedra for years, ever since opening our first location in Jacksonville Beach in 2018 and then our second location in St. Johns,” said Corey Hasting, with Engel & Volker First Coast.

After searching around for the past couple of years, everything finally came together, and it did so very quickly.

“Ponte Vedra is really built for this brand, and the demographic is exactly what we sell to on a global level,” Hasting said. “To finally be here and cutting



Photo by Anthony Richards

Corey Hasting cuts the ribbon during a ceremony to christen Engel & Volkers’ new Ponte Vedra Beach location Nov. 17.

the ribbon is just a lot of emotions and excitement going on. There’s a lot of relief that we are finally here, but at the end of all it’s just a true blessing.”

Hasting is originally from Cincinnati and played college football at the University of Ohio and even spent some time in the NFL with the Cincinnati Bengals.

At first, his dive into the real estate

world was mainly because it was a job that could work with his schedule while also trying out for other teams as he attempted to extend his playing career.

“I wanted to be able to go work out in the morning, but then show properties in the afternoon, and this was in 2014, before it was really cool to be young in real estate,” Hasting chuckled. “I was 23 years old and the youngest person in my office by 15 years.”

A couple of years later, his dive into real estate had grown to the point, where he had the opportunity to buy Engel & Volkers in the region and they wound up opening that first location in 2018.

It has been quite the ride and one

that has seemed to come at such a fast progression in recent years.

“If you would have told me that we would be having this much success now, back then, a little over four years ago, I don’t know if I would have believed you,” Hasting said. “We’re a top-five brokerage in the entire Northeast Florida region out of 1,700 brokerages, and we should probably do close to about \$1 billion in sales going into this year. Sometimes I have to pinch myself to make sure that it’s real.”

At the moment, the Ponte Vedra Beach office has about 10 to 15 agents that call it there “home office,” but it’s a number that Hasting hopes to grow down the road.



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Excitement swirls around Christmas at the Village's first year

By Anthony Richards

This year will mark the inaugural event of Christmas at the Village, which is scheduled to be held on Small Business Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at World Golf Village.

"We're trying to make it into something of an annual tradition," said Lisette Perdomo, owner of Sunshine Play + Learn and the one overseeing the event.

According to Perdomo, the indoor playground space and party venue located at World Golf Village created a "moms business network group," and the discussions with that group led to the eventual idea and creation for Christmas at the Village.

The hope was that it would provide an outlet for moms to sell the creations they make at home to the public, and it has done just that, with Perdomo stating that all but two of the 75 vendors signed up are mom-driven businesses.

In fact, the 75 vendors exceeded the interest Perdomo expected to get the first year, which already has her excited for the future.

A variety of items will be for sale at the array of vendors, from homemade crafts to homemade desserts.

"We really wanted to make sure that it was not all the same thing," Perdomo said. "Clothing and jewelry will even be on display."

One of the great things about the event, is that it does not only present an opportunity for mothers to make some money with their creations, but they also get experience selling their products in a show setting.

"A lot of these women have never done a vendor show before," Perdomo said.



Photo by Anthony Richards

The World Golf Village will be the site of the Inaugural Christmas at the Village event from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Nov. 26.

"It's really nice to see them super excited about their business."

There is much planning that goes into putting an event like Christmas at the Village on, and so many small details that must be considered in the lead up. But at the end of the day, Perdomo understands that it is all worth it.

"When I'm going to bed at 2 a.m., I'll know that I'm doing my part to help those other moms and their amazing works get

seen," Perdomo said.

Santa Claus, Elsa and Olaf will be some of the many characters that will make appearances and interact with the children in attendance.

According to Perdomo, it was important to have something for the whole family, because they truly want it to be an activity families can do during the holiday weekend.

The event will take place along the

pathway around the lake at World Golf Village.

Perdomo sees the families that use Sunshine Play + Learn, as a community, and this initiative is just another extension of that, as it is another way for the community to come together and interact as one.

"I would love to make it where every year, we know it's that time and people know Christmas at the Village is right around the corner," Perdomo said.



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Photos by Shaun Ryan



Raghu Misra, co-founder of the link and the Sapna Foundation, welcomes students to the EnterCircle Summit 2022.



Steven Hertzberg speaks to students from Pedro Menendez High School about cryptocurrency on day two of the EnterCircle Summit 2022 at the link.

EnterCircle celebrates entrepreneurship, inspires students

By Shaun Ryan

Entrepreneurs, business leaders, successful professionals in a variety of fields and people who wanted to learn gathered Nov. 16-18 at the link for the EnterCircle Summit 2022.

In its second year, the event brought together a range of inspirational and thought-provoking speakers and presented special events for the benefit of attendees. It was a celebration of entrepreneurship, but it was also a place where anyone considering a future in business could gain wisdom from those who had already succeeded.

Day one was a youth symposium for participants ages 17-25. Attendees had an opportunity to gain knowledge from successful business people and take part in discussions that would help them gain insights into the many professional possibilities in today's world.

Day two was start-ups/small business day featuring a number of speakers and activities, including a structured business pitch event and a business expo, an opportunity for entrepreneurs to interact with other professionals and the public.

Day three was Women in Business Day, a special event where women could learn, create, generate ideas, network and celebrate resiliency. Of the many presenters was keynote speaker author, TV host and business coach Snowden McFall.

The range of topics included politics, architecture, construction, engineering, sports and small business.

One of the primary educational components was the inclusion of International Business and Marketing Academy students from Ponte Vedra High School and VyStar Academy of Business students from Pedro Menendez High School in the activities on day two.

"This is a big day for us to really celebrate a huge growth in entrepreneurship education that we're really trying to put into the different programs here in St. Johns County," Katie Maltby, career and technical education program specialist for the St. Johns County School District, told those in attendance.

The students took part in the pitch competition and heard from keynote speakers Miss Florida Outstanding Teen 2022 Aashna Shah and business and life strategist Rob Swymer.

The day began with brief, inspirational presentations by successful professionals.

Steven Hertzberg, founder of Outcome Trading, spoke about cryptocurrency, which he called "the future of finance."

Danish Sayed, who founded the financial technology startup BlackHedge, told the students that it's OK to fail.

"It's needed sometimes," he said. "You learn from your mistakes, and it makes you a better founder, a better person."

Andrew DiFeo, managing partner of Hyundai and Volkswagen of St. Augustine, said his message to the students was to be authentic and to realize that there is a wealth of free knowledge on the internet. He pointed out that they can start their own companies even while they are still in school.

Scott Maynard, vice president of economic development for the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce, said the Chamber was excited to be a sponsor of the EnterCircle Summit. He was pleased to see the students in attendance.

"It is so important for them to see firsthand at an early age the opportunities that exist for them, and to see models and mentors, people who have been successful," he said.

The summit was a project of the non-

profit Sapna Foundation.

The link is a state-of-the-art space where entrepreneurs and business professionals collaborate. It's a business incubator and community center that hosts

events, classes and camps. It is located at 425 Town Plaza Ave., Ponte Vedra.

For an expanded version of this article, go to pontevedrarecorder.com.

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Pink Ribbon Jax raises \$400K for mammograms

This year's Pink Ribbon Jax campaign raised \$400,000. The total was announced during a special ceremony at longtime supporter Underwood Jeweler's Ponte Vedra Beach location Nov. 9. The money raised will go toward helping local women in need pay for their mammogram screenings.

Photos by Susan Griffin



Christy Bromberg, Marica Pendjer and Clayton Bromberg



Guests look at the selection of jewelry during the Pink Ribbon Jax event.



Pink Ribbon Jax presented a donation of \$400,000 donation to Baptist Health and Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville for mammograms during a special event at Underwood Jewelers Nov. 9.



Robin Skliris and Rebecca Mason



Connie Bones and Dawn Rodriguez



Otelia Teate, Kim Fletcher, Betty Anne Robison, Terry Rich and Vicki Lynn Marra



Marica Pendjer (center) speaks to those in attendance.

Shop small businesses to improve the holiday experience

It's the time of year when newspapers thicken with sales circulars and holiday advertisements. Consumers looking to beat the hustle and bustle and steer clear of the crowds this year may want to pay attention to local businesses in lieu of trekking to nearby shopping malls.

Every time consumers visit local coffee shops to grab a latte, pick up a dress at a nearby boutique or patronize a farmer's market down the street, they are supporting a small business. The Friday and Saturday

after Thanksgiving are some of the busiest shopping days of the season, and they also can be some of the friendliest to small businesses.

Plaid Friday was conceptualized in Oakland. It may have been born in the Golden State, but the movement soon spread across the country. Plaid Friday is an alternative to big box stores' Black Friday bonanzas. It is designed to promote both local and independently-owned businesses during the holiday season. The name Plaid Friday was

used to help people visualize the various threads of small businesses coming together to create a strong community fabric that was diverse and creativity.

Shoppers can continue their small business patronage with Small Business Saturday. This, too, is a counterpart to Black Friday and Cyber Monday. The first event was created by American Express in conjunction with the nonprofit National Trust for Historic Preservation. Since its inception, many small business groups, merchants and

politicians have touted the event and the "Shop Small" mantra. The idea is that when small businesses thrive, communities and individuals thrive along with them.

The Small Business Administration says that, since 1995, small businesses have generated 66 percent of all new jobs in the United States. There are a number of big reasons to shop small. One can start around the holidays and then continue all year long.

- Shopping small businesses helps give back to the community directly. According to Civic Economics, a strategic planning business, on average 48 percent of each purchase made at independent businesses is recirculated locally through tax money and other support.

- Small business owners often strive to provide personalized, hands-on customer service. Repeat business is key to their survival, so they want to ensure shoppers are happy.

- Small businesses, since they are not beholden to corporate oversight in terms of what they sell, have greater flexibility. That allows them to offer a diverse product selection.

- Small business owners often live nearby, and they're the people you see in town, schools and elsewhere in the local community. Many consumers are comforted to know they're supporting their neighbors, especially during the holiday season.

Supporting local businesses is easy. And shoppers who like what they see can share the good news with others on social media.

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How to shop thoughtfully this holiday season

By Benji Rust

Miriam's Jewelry

'Tis the season for giving! Gift shopping as the holidays near can feel tricky, especially for your loved one who seems to have it all. This year, avoid the latest fads from big box stores and consider meaningful presents that can't be found just anywhere. Celebrate that special someone with a meaningful and unique gift to show them just how cherished they are.

Give From the Heart

Consider choosing a sentimental gift that can be treasured for years. Presents that remind people of their loved ones or favorite memories are often the most meaningful. Touch their heart with a personalized photo book, custom artwork or an invaluable family heirloom.

Classic family heirlooms such as rings, brooches or memorial diamonds can keep an individual's legacy alive for generations to come. This irreplaceable gift option is a great way to provide your loved one with an item they will hold dear to their heart forever.

At Miriam's Jewelry, we offer personalized services for heirloom jewelry that allow customers to transform a cherished family piece into a custom gift.

Keep in Mind Their Hobbies and Style

Look for clues based on what you know about your loved one. Do they prefer gold or silver jewelry? Do they wear more classic or statement pieces? If you can't find clues in their jewelry choices, consider their wardrobe. Do they spend more time in leggings, or do they love formal dinners out?

These details can help you choose the perfect piece to match their style and preferences. For the lover of casual wear, consider an everyday piece like a watch or stud earring pair. If your loved one is the type to make a statement, try jewelry like radiant rope chain necklaces or diamond earrings.

Ask for Their Wishlist

Sometimes the most thoughtful gift is the one someone really wishes for. To preserve the element of surprise, ask for their "likes" and "dislikes," such as types of jewelry or watch styles. This way, you can ensure that they will love the gift that they unwrap on Christmas morning.

A gift card to their favorite local store is another great option that allows them to pick out exactly what they're hoping for.

At Miriam's Jewelry, our in-store wishlist feature gives customers the chance to choose the pieces they love without spoiling the fun of a holiday surprise.

Choose Gifts With a Story

Gifts accompanied by stories are the perfect way to show your special someone just how much they mean to you. Choose an elegant antique piece that can't be found elsewhere or a family heirloom to give them a gift that can never be replaced. You might also consider gifts with a social cause to add extra meaning to their holiday joy.

Make New Memories With the Perfect Holiday Gift

This holiday season don't let the stress of choosing the perfect gift get in your way. Show your loved ones what they mean to you with personalized and unique gifts they will cherish forever.



Photo courtesy of Miriam's Jewelry

At Miriam's, we have hundreds of options for the perfect piece to complete that special someone's holiday.

Benji Rust is a co-owner of Miriam's Jewelry, a family-owned jewelry store in the Sawgrass Village Shopping Center in Ponte Vedra Beach. To learn more about Miriam's and their specialty in custom, heirloom jewelry, go to MiriamsJewelry.com.

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www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

Christ Church Nutcracker, a family tradition 26 years and counting



The Christ Church Nutcracker Ballet is scheduled for Dec. 10 at 6 p.m. at the University of North Florida's Lazzara Performance Hall.

By Anthony Richards

For 26 years, Christ Church Nutcracker Ballet has been put on by the dance ministry at Christ's Church in Ponte Vedra Beach, and during that time it has grown into a tradition cherished by generations.

The 27th version of the play is scheduled for Dec. 10 at 6 p.m. at the University of North Florida's Lazzara Performance Hall.

The money raised from this year's showing will go to four charities, with St. Jude Children's Hospital added as a recipient of this year's generosity, along with Dreams Come True, pediatric hospice and an orphanage in Bolivia.

"We offer our help by dancing for those who can't," said Felicia Rhoden, who began the dance ministry decades ago and continues to have a major role in the production of the play.

Even during the Covid-19 pandemic, instead of going virtual, the play showed incredible "the show must go on" spirit and pushed back the showcase from December to May just so that it could still be held in front of a crowd, even if it was limited capacity.

"Some in the play have been in it all the way through the years, and they deserved to have the proper sendoff," Rhoden said. "It just means so much to everyone involved, because they have so much love in their hearts, and we never forget why we're doing this."

At the end of the day, it is about raising money, and having fun while putting on an exhilarating show while doing it.

Helping out those in need is at the forefront of every performer's mind when they are first introduced to the



Photos by Anthony Richards

This year will be the 27th Christ Church Nutcracker Ballet.

production, and it remains there even after they've continued to come back years later.

According to Rhoden, it is something that will never get old. It is what she believes at the end of the day makes the ministry's version of the Nutcracker so unique from that of other adaptations that take place during the holiday season.

"The performers feel the love and the joy that comes from being on stage," Rhoden said. "There's nothing quite like it. I always stand on stage right and when the curtains go up all the colors and everything just comes to life."

Rhoden has had the continued support of her children and family over the years. Her daughter Claire Duffy runs the show backstage and makes sure everything is in order throughout the entire production.

"It's a hard job, but she does such an amazing job with juggling it all and making sure all the moving pieces line up perfectly," Rhoden said.

Seventeen children took part in the play's first year, which is such a vast difference from the hundreds that will take to the stage this year.

One of the play's traditions includes Rhoden being a member of the cast as takes part in one scene and is the oldest member at 84 years old. The youngest in this year's production will be three years old.

Performing has always been a passion of Rhoden's and she also spent time as a professional ballet dancer, which makes the traditional Nutcracker close to her heart.

However, she has also realized that as the next generations come through the program there are certain modifications that she makes to each year's production to make it its own, including adding Hip Hop jesters to this year's play.

"It's different and exciting, while still sticking to the same storyline," Rhoden said. "This Nutcracker is for everyone and anyone, and none of it would be possible without the best teachers and volunteers around. I'm so grateful for everything."

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Images provided by First Coast Cultural Center

Candice Sirak, Sound Connections music therapy manager and music therapist, works with students in the program in St. Johns County public schools.

First Coast Cultural Center gets \$45K matching gift challenge for program

First Coast Cultural Center was recently awarded \$45,000 matching gift challenge from the Persbacker-Wyman Family Foundation in support of the Sound Connections music therapy program. Sound Connections is an outreach program offered by the Cultural Center that provides music therapy to children with special needs in St. Johns County elementary schools.

From now until Dec. 1, every contri-

bution will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$45,000 to help the center reach its \$90,000 goal.

According to Donna Guzzo, president and executive director, the nonprofit organization asks the community to help raise the needed funds to sustain the outreach program for the 2022-23 school year at Ocean Palms Elementary School, PVPV/Rawlings Elementary School and Valley Ridge Academy. The

Webster School, First Coast Technical College Early Childhood Education and Osceola Elementary have recently been added to the program as Title 1 schools to serve disadvantaged students.

"I am so grateful for the generosity of the Persbacker-Wyman Foundation," said Candice Sirak, Sound Connections music therapy manager and music therapist. "Music therapy is invaluable for the students in St. Johns County, and

with this help, we hope to continue providing important educational benefits for many years to come."

For further information, call Candice Sirak at 904-280-0614 ext.1206 or email Candice.sirak@stjohns.k12.fl.us.

For more information about the First Coast Cultural Center, go to firstcoastculturalcenter.org.

CANVAS, STAGE AND MORE

A look at what's happening in the arts locally.

Ulysses Owens to perform at free jazz event

The third concert in the Jazz on the River series will feature Ulysses Owens Jr. and Friends from 4:30 to 8 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 27, at Riverfront Park, 100 Memorial Pkwy., Palatka. Admission is free and a VIP wine tasting experience is optional for \$10 in advance per event or \$15 day-of. There will also be food trucks and vendors on-site.

Tickets are available at eventbrite.com/e/jazz-on-the-river-palatka-tickets-407128601607?aff=ebdssbdestsearch.

Owens is a performer, producer and educator who has released eight successful albums of his own as well as having performed on several Grammy Award-winning albums.

Blues artist to perform at Café Eleven Club

Grammy and two-time Blues Music Award winning saxophonist/singer/songwriter Jimmy Carpenter and his band are coming to St. Augustine Beach to play Café Eleven Club on

Dec. 2. Carpenter, who has also been nominated for a Blues Blast Magazine award for best horn player recently released his new CD, "The Louisiana Record" on Gulf Coast Records.

While Carpenter did live in New Orleans for many years, he currently hangs his hat in Las Vegas where he also serves as president of the Las Vegas Blues Society and is the music director/talent buyer for the Big Blues Bender festival.

The performance will be held at 7 p.m. Café Eleven Club is located at 501 A1A Beach Blvd., St. Augustine Beach. Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$25 the day of the show.

For more information, go to originalcafe11.com.

Christ Church Nutcracker Ballet is Dec. 10

Miss Felicia's Dance will present the 27th annual Christ Church Nutcracker Ballet at 6 p.m. Dec. 10 at UNF's Lazzara Performance Hall, 1 University of North Florida Drive, Jacksonville. Doors open at 5 p.m. Tickets are available now. Go to missfeliciasdance.com.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

'Christmas Fantastique': 'The Nutcracker' like you have never seen it before

"Christmas Fantastique" will be presented at 2 and 7 p.m. Dec. 22 at Lewis Auditorium in downtown St. Augustine during the Nights of Lights festival.

The original production by Zoika's Dance reimagines the classic holiday story of "The Nutcracker" and features contemporary dance styles including hip hop, tap, jazz, acro and modern dance, as well as classical ballet. A choir of young vocalists will perform before each show with signing provided by deaf interpreter Amanda Villalobos.

Audiences are invited to join in young Clara's Christmas Eve dream as her toys come to life and she travels with a young prince to the Land of Sweets. They will see the Sugar Plum Fairy dancing ballet en pointe with her Cavalier. The show will feature Tchaikovsky's famous "Nutcracker" holiday musical score.

Director and choreographer Zoika Garcia is a former professional ballet dancer and owner of Zoika's Dance school in St.

Augustine.

"I feel very strongly that dancers of contemporary genres deserve a 'Nutcracker' of their own," Garcia said. "Our production is inclusive of many exhilarating contemporary dance forms."

Garcia has called upon the talents of professional dancers to join the cast of young dancers on stage. Professional dancers Jenne Vermes (tap, contemporary), Sean Mansfield (tap, hip hop), Amaani Grant (hip hop, tap, contemporary) and Katie DeAcutis (hip hop, contemporary) are featured in the production.

Young St. Augustine dancers Sophia Budd and Emmett Kelly will dance the roles of Clara and the Prince. Claudia Mueckay and Jake Karger will dance the roles of Sugar Plum Fairy and Cavalier.

Garcia and the cast of 65 performers are also looking forward to sharing the magic of "Christmas Fantastique" with local foster children, children from the Betty Griffin House and students from



Pictured from left are Emmett Kelly (the Prince), Sophia Budd (Clara), Claudia Mueckay (Sugar Plum Fairy) and Jake Karger (the Cavalier).

the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind. Thanks to the support of local sponsors, Zoika's Dance is providing complimentary tickets for these children with the help of partners including non-profit Fostering Connections.

"Sharing dance with the community gives us so much joy," Garcia explained. "And sharing this holiday experience with children who might not otherwise be



Photos by Julie Abella Photography
Claudia Mueckay and Jake Karger dance the roles of Sugar Plum Fairy and Cavalier.

able to attend makes it so much sweeter."

Many sponsorship and marketing opportunities are available to support the production and its community outreach. For more information on becoming a sponsor, go to zoikadance.com/sponsors.

Performances will be held at Lewis Auditorium, 14 Granada St., St. Augustine. Tickets are \$20 and \$30, and may be purchased online at zoikadance.com.

Stacy Cushman Studio Gallery to open for multi-artist exhibit

During the holidays, Americans produce an ADDITIONAL 5 MILLION TONS OF WASTE.

4 of 5 million tons of it is gift wrapping & shopping bags.
(Rubicon)

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- Consider gifting experiences instead of things!

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By Shaun Ryan

Stacy Cushman Studio Gallery, located in the courtyard of The Veranda office complex, is normally a working space, not open to the public. Here, Cushman creates tremendous paintings in watercolor or oil, much of it inspired by nature, as well as the ceramic works for which she is most known.

But during the entire month of December, she will open the gallery up and exhibit a diverse array of pieces by young artists expressing themselves in their own unique ways. In addition to her own art, guests will see one-of-a-kind woodwork, sculpture, crochet creations and much more. There is nothing ordinary about this exhibition, as evidenced by the inclusion of a horticulturist who elevates the growing of crops to an art form.

The pieces displayed here are bound to surprise visitors, who will have seen nothing like them before.

Cushman is as unique as her art. From age 2 to 6, she lived with her family aboard a Columbia 52 sailboat based out of Fort Lauderdale, traveling up and down the coast on the race circuit. After that, she lived in California until she was 10 and then the family resided aboard a Swan 57, sailing it from Finland to the Mediterranean where they remained for the next 15 years.

"There's no school that can give you the education that I got," she said.

Cushman's schooling on the island of



Photo by Shaun Ryan

Stacy Cushman's entire condominium is an art gallery. Even the floor is a work of art. The lamp and candle holder are her own creations, while pieces collected from all over the world fill every available space.

Majorca gave her exposure to a variety of cultures.

"All artists feed off of nature and their surroundings," she said.

In fact, she credits the Alhambra with inspiring her ceramics, particularly the implications of the iznik tiles, which, she said, really have no end.

"You can tile the entire universe," she said.

The concept dovetails with her under-

standing of the Fibonacci Sequence, which influences the aesthetics of a work of art.

Stacy Cushman Studio Gallery is located at 820 State Road A1A North, Suite W10, Ponte Vedra Beach.

The exhibit will be open noon to 8 p.m. daily, seven days a week, Dec. 1-31.

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

Sports

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2022 · PAGE 29

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Rosendahl, Gavazzi fuel Sharks offense to open season

By Anthony Richards

A new high school basketball season is underway, as the Ponte Vedra girls basketball team got things kicked off in the area with a split of their first two games.

The Sharks opened the season with a 49-46 loss to Orange Park on the road and responded following the narrow defeat with a convincing 55-44 victory at home against county rival Creekside.

Morgan Gavazzi and Kennedy Rosendahl were the primary scorers for the Sharks in the opening games, with Gavazzi showing the definition of consistency with 18 points in each of the first two games.

In the season opener, Gavazzi's 18 led the team, which included knocking down four three-pointers, two that came in the fourth quarter as part of a 10-point final period. She also made a pair of three-pointers against Creekside.

Joining Gavazzi as a weapon from beyond the arc was Rosendahl, who's entire 12 points against Orange Park came by way of knocking down four three-pointers on the night.

However, it was a slightly different story in the win over Creekside, as Rosendahl proved that she is a threat to score in multiple ways as not only did she knock down a trio from long-range, but she accompanied that with a willingness to attack the basket en route to a team-high 23 points.

By attacking the basket, she earned several trips to the free-throw line,



Photo by Anthony Richards

Morgan Gavazzi helps at the Ponte Vedra youth basketball camp prior to the season. She has started the season with 18 points in each the first two games.

where she converted 12 of 16 attempts, including draining all six free-throw attempts she had in the fourth quarter, as the Sharks put away the game down the stretch.

Maya Richards has tallied 14 points

through the first two games for the Sharks, with six and eight points respectively.

Defensively, the Sharks have yet to allow an opponent to score more than 50 points, which is something that can be

key to follow throughout the season to see how that side of the ball continues to develop.

Richards is one that offers the Sharks tenacious defense to go with her production on the offensive end of the court.

Palencia captures club team title for first time

Palencia Golf Club won its first JAGA/NFPGA club team championship on Nov. 7 by three shots, besting a field of 24 other teams at the King and Bear Course at The World Golf Village in the two best balls of four, net format.

This year's tournament was the 25th playing of the championship, which is conducted by the Jacksonville Area Golf Association and the Northern Chapter of the North Florida PGA Section.

The winning team from Palencia posted an 18-under-par score of 126. Team members included Northern Chapter PGA member and Flagler College men's and women's golf coach Santiago Cavanagh and amateurs Larry Baker, Tom Cassidy and Dannie Wilson.

Three strokes back at 129 was the Deerwood Country Club team of pro Mitchell Haley, Sal Randisi, Melissa Heaton and Mat Nemeth.

A trio of teams shared third place at 130. They were



Photo courtesy of the Jacksonville Area Golf Association

Tom Cassidy, Santiago Cavanagh, Larry Baker and Dannie Wilson of Palencia Golf Club won the team championship with a score of 126.

Palatka Golf Club – Andy Hartz (pro), Jeff Elledge, Ron Jerin and Ron Mullis; Sawgrass Country Club – Leonard Thompson (pro), John Caden, Bob Long and Chuck Smith; and World Golf Village/Slammer and Squire – Jake Ether-ton (pro), Rich Regan, Henry Chambliss and Max Norgart.

Deerwood Country Club assistant professional Mitchell Haley took home low professional honors firing a 6-under-par 66 on his own ball.

World Golf Village host professional Ether-ton recorded a 69 to finish runner-up, with Jennifer Borocz of the North Florida Section claiming third with a 70. Also posting sub-par scores were Sean McGauley (71) of the Golf Club at Fleming Island and Stephanie Connelly-Eiswerth (71) of San Jose Country Club.

The tournament featured 25 four-player teams from JAGA member clubs comprised of one PGA member and three amateurs representing the club.

CROSSWORD

	1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11	12	
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60			61		62				63				64	
65		66						67				68		
	69							70						

ACROSS

1. India's "City of Lakes"
7. Large marine mammals
13. Used to carry belongings when traveling
14. Rechristens
16. Equally
17. Heavy plant-eating mammals
19. Millihenry
20. Japanese immigrant to N. America
22. Deep, red-brown sea bream
23. Norse gods
25. Peppermint and pekoe are two
26. Auguste __, founder of positivism
28. Self-immolation by fire ritual
29. High-resolution microscope (abbr.)
30. Wide metal vessel used in cooking
31. V-shaped open trough
33. People of southern Benin
34. People of southern Ghana
36. It's a significant creed
38. Period between eclipses
40. Furies
41. Emerged
43. Philippine Island
44. Where wrestlers battle
45. Unhappy
47. Central European river
48. Language
51. Semitransparent gemstone
53. Forming in a bottom layer
55. Distinct region
56. Broad blades
58. Leavened bread
59. Influential cosmetics exec
60. Exclamation of surprise
61. Era free of war
64. One who helps professors
65. Idealistic
67. Ornamental plants
69. Grouped
70. Kids love this street

2. Equal to 100 grams
3. S-shaped moldings
4. Hawaiian cliff
5. Everyone has one
6. Subatomic particle
7. Ghost
8. Adult female bird
9. Greek temple pillars
10. Emits coherent radiation
11. Measures the width of printed matter
12. Musical interval
13. Tantalizes
15. Places of worship
18. An unskilled actor who overacts
21. One who volunteers to help
24. Precaution
26. Beverage holder
27. Very long period of time
30. Bullfighting maneuvers
32. More critical
35. Sends packing in a boxing match
37. Taxi
38. Decorative Russian tea urn
39. North American Great Plains natives
42. Seize
43. A passage with access only at one end
46. Cut a rug
47. Devil rays
49. Bubble up
50. Veranda
52. Outcast
54. Car mechanics group
55. Realm
57. A place to get off your feet
59. Popular music awards show
62. Consumed
63. A way to make cooler
66. Thus
68. Indicates it's been registered

SUDOKU

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

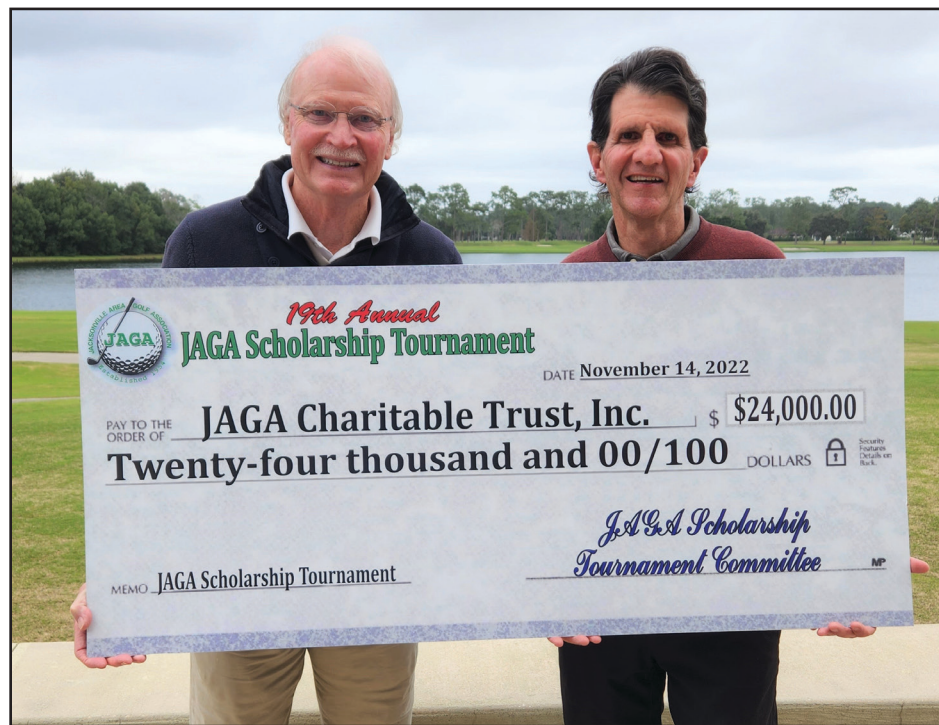
Level: Intermediate

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. Beloved hound



Contributed photo

JAGA Scholarship Golf Classic chairman Michael McKenny, left, and JAGA president Jeff Adams unveil a check in the amount of \$24,000 to benefit the JAGA scholarship program.

19th JAGA Scholarship Golf Classic raises \$24K for college scholarships

The Jacksonville Area Golf Association recently hosted its 19th JAGA Scholarship Golf Classic at Deerwood Country Club and raised \$24,000.

The proceeds will support JAGA's 2022-23 Charitable Trust program, which annually awards scholarship support to Northeast Florida students seeking to attend college. JAGA currently supports 40 students with \$2,000 renewable yearly grants.

The current recipients represent 21 JAGA-member clubs and attend 26 different colleges in and outside the state of Florida. Since the trust was formed in 1974, JAGA has awarded approximately \$1.8 million to more than 375 students.

The event's success was assured by the renewed commitment of title sponsors Nader's Pest Raiders and the Karl G. Estes Foundation, with a number of other companies and individuals providing critical support through various levels of sponsorship. Last year's Classic raised \$20,500.

Deerwood Country Club was host to 88 golfers in a four-person scramble. Prizes were awarded to teams based on both gross and net scores.

JAGA director Michael McKenny (Timuquana Country Club) took over chairmanship of the Classic this year from former JAGA president Adair Roberts of Ponte Vedra Inn & Club.

McKenny was assisted in chairing the event by Steve Booma of The Plantation at Ponte Vedra Beach. Wayne St. Clair of Jacksonville Golf and Country Club is chairman of the JAGA Charitable Trust.

The event was first played in 2003 through the leadership of another former JAGA president the late Bill Black (1993-94), and carries on in his memory today.

"JAGA knows there are many worthy charitable entities to support in the greater Jacksonville area," said McKenny. "We can't thank the companies and individuals enough who saw fit to get behind this year's JAGA Scholarship Golf Classic. Your commitment was responsible for raising \$24,000, which will pay for a number of scholarships in the coming year. I'm sure our current group of scholars will smile when we share this news with them."

The following sponsors are the ones McKenny was referring to:

- Gold sponsors: Julie and Michael McKenny, Sharon and Steve Booma, David Tucker
- Silver sponsors: Patricia and John Tancredi, David Atwater, Hyde Park Golf Club, Perry-McCall Construction
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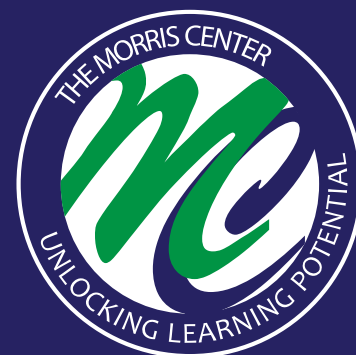
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