



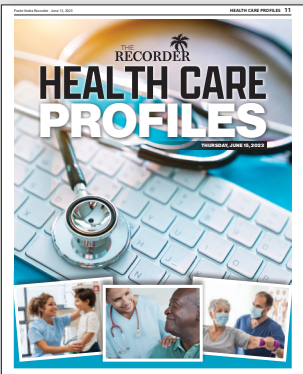
THE RECORDER



June 15, 2023
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Father's Day Gift Guide
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INSIDE: CHECK IT OUT!
The Recorder's Entertainment EXTRA featuring TV listings, streaming information, puzzles and more!

PASSION FOR GIRLS FLAG FOOTBALL GROWS



A flag football team was recently formed by a group of high school girls both new and familiar with the game, but all looking for the opportunity to play the game and feed their passion for it.

Read the story and see photos from the team's recent practice in "Sports" on page 29.

Photo by Anthony Richards

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Send us your news

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



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Voting is now open for Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra contest

The Recorder is holding its fifth annual Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra contest, covering ZIP codes **32082** and **32081**.

Readers currently have the chance to vote for their favorite businesses, professional services, organizations and more in multiple categories online. From best new business to best charity event, best real estate agent to best personal trainer and best seafood to best boutique, the categories run the gamut and are sure to include your favorite things.

Votes can be made on the website at pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2023.

Voting will take place until July 24, during which each person can vote once per day in as many categories as he or she wants. The nominees who receive the most votes will be named 2023 Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra. Nominations and voting are completely free and open to the public.

The Best Of platform on The Recorder's website will feature lists of nominees in an easy-to-use format.

Winners will receive a free certificate and a Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra window cling. Each winner will also be listed in our Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra special section and on the winner's website.

Winners will be notified by Recorder staff after votes are counted.

Nominees can participate in advertising packages that promote their entry by expanding their listing to feature additional details on the business. For more information or to find out how to get your nominated business or product involved in promotions that will be

going on throughout the contest cycle, email susan@pontevedrarecorder.com or call 904-686-3938.

Vote for your favorite business, service, person, restaurant or product now at www.pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2023.



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County must decide what to do with Hall of Fame, IMAX

By Shaun Ryan

Change is coming to World Golf Village. What that looks like will depend upon decisions by the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners, county staff recommendations and public input.

In July 2022, the World Golf Foundation announced that it intended to relocate the World Golf Hall of Fame this fall to the United States Golf Association's new Golf House Pinehurst campus in North Carolina. The Hall of Fame was actually founded in Pinehurst in 1974, but when

ownership was transferred to the PGA of America, it was moved to St. Johns County in 1998.

The foundation has informed the county that it intends to cease Hall of Fame operations on Sept. 30 and vacate 1 World Golf Place by Dec. 31. It will convey the 64,113-square-foot building to the county on Feb. 1.

At the same time, the foundation plans to discontinue operations at the IMAX Theater; it currently has a franchise with IMAX Corp. The large movie screen and audio-visual equipment will remain in

the building for now. The county could, if so desired, operate the theater itself. The theater is 17,865 square feet.

Another vacancy will take place by the end of 2024 when PGA Tour Productions vacates its own 32,329-square-foot building. Plans are to move those operations to the PGA Tour Global Headquarters in Ponte Vedra. That building has a just market value of \$3.24 million.

The 36.07-acre property surrounding the central hub will continue to be owned by the foundation, at least for now. This area includes parking lots, rights-of-way,

irrigation and submerged lands. Its just market value is \$5.13 million.

As the county works on a plan for the property, it will conduct town hall meetings and surveys to solicit public input.

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

Photos provided by Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery

KATHY'S GARDENING GUIDE

Landscaping with palm trees

"May you never be too busy to stop and breathe under a palm tree." — unknown author



By Kathy Esfahani

Palm trees dot the landscape in our Florida home. If you are missing out on this great addition to your yard, the warm rainy months of summer are a great time to

plant palm trees. Be sure to consider the space you have available, proximity to structures and the amount of sun and water in your desired area. Some palms remain small enough to be closer to a house while others will grow very large over time and need more space.

Although an established palm requires little attention, it is often necessary to trim these trees as the weather warms up (not during the dormant months of late fall through winter). It is important to properly remove any fronds that are entirely brown and dry. They are weighing down the tree and should be cut at the base of the branch close to the trunk or the soil, depending on the type of palm. Be careful not to pull on



Robellini palm

branches, as this can damage healthy parts of the tree.

We have several varieties of palms currently available at the nursery:

- **Sylvester palms (Phoenix Sylvestris):** The Sylvester Palm will be a large tree and, therefore, needs space to grow. They grow approximately 1.5 feet per year and can reach a maximum height of 40-50 feet. These palms are cold hardy, drought tolerant and moderately salt tolerant. Sylvester Palms are one of the most popular palms in this area and easily recognizable by their diamond-cut trunk.

- **Queen palms:** Queen palms have cascading fronds that blow beautifully in the wind. They can reach a height of 50 feet but fit in somewhat tight spaces because they grow tall and skinny.

These palms feature bright glossy leaves and clusters of orange dates. Queen palms create a tropical feeling and are, therefore, popular around patios, pools and other relaxing areas.

- **Robellini palms (pygmy date palms):** Because of its size, this miniature palm tree is well suited to be planted closer to your home. Robellini palms are slow growers with a maximum height of only 10-11 feet. They are popular at the end of driveways, outside front doors or as the centerpiece to a garden bed.

- **Majestic palms:** This palm loves the humidity of our Floridian climate. The fronds of a majestic palm can fan out to 15 feet wide. They are slow growers that tolerate some shade and thrive in naturally wet areas.

- **European fan palms:** These palms are slow growing trees that can reach 8-15 feet tall. European fan palms are hardier than most palm trees and can handle partial shade, colder temperatures, and dry periods. They have finely textured fronds with colors ranging from green to silver.

- **Bismarck palms:** These silvery blue-green palms can serve as a centerpiece for your landscape. Bismarck palms have a thick trunk and fronds that can reach a span up to 16 feet wide. Although this palm only grows 1-2 feet per year, it has

Flower of the Week



Lantana

the potential to eventually reach 60 feet tall.

- **Sago palms:** These wide trunk palms are dark green and lush, remaining relatively close to the ground even after several years. It would take 50 years for a Sago Palm to reach 10 feet tall! They have a large cone of seeds growing out of the middle of the tree. Because these seeds are poisonous to pets, we tend to avoid using them in fur-friendly yards.

Flower of the Week: Lantana

Please email Kathy at kcg.pvr@gmail.com for any questions or gardening tips you would like to see in the future. For more information & ideas, visit Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery, 196 N. Roscoe Blvd. The phone number is 904-655-7373.

Flag dream comes true



Before he retired from St. Johns County School District after 23 years of service, Retired Major Nick Athanaseas wanted Ponte Vedra High School to erect a flagpole in the school's courtyard. He envisioned an area for students, faculty and community members to gather and honor the American flag.

Athanaseas wanted to dedicate the flag to the men and women of St. Johns County who served as first responders and active or retired military. After serving as the director of maintenance at PVHS for 10 years, his dream of this special flag came true, but with a twist.

In addition to the original dedication, PVHS also dedicated the flag to Athanaseas for his service in the U.S. Army National Guard Medical Service and his dedication to keeping PVHS a beautiful and vibrant campus.

A ceremony was held on May 24 and was attended by both St. Johns County Sheriff's Office and St. Johns County Fire Rescue department.



Retired Major Nick Athanaseas' dream of erecting a special flagpole on the PVHS campus came true May 24 in a ceremony that included members of the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office.

Contributed photos

Drone classes launched at the link

By Shaun Ryan

The latest buzz at the link is coming from its newest class: “Ready, Set, Drones.”

All summer long, Ivan Ramirez, the instructor behind the link’s LEGO robotics and tennis classes, is offering kids instruction on coding and flying drones.

These STEAM-based classes are on Saturdays through July 22, and interested kids can attend as many sessions as they want. Any given class will be held if by the preceding Thursday at least six children indicate they will attend.

Students just starting out will learn the basics, including safety techniques, and work up to coding a flight path to make a delivery or conduct a search-and-rescue mission. There will also be drone races.

But these are not the remote-control drones many are familiar with. These classes teach coding skills, using the Scratch programming language. The Tello brand drones perform the tasks that participants program them to do.

In fact, it was this coding element that inspired Ramirez to offer the class.

Though these are “drop-in” classes for the summer, Ramirez plans to offer eight-week programs during the school year. Students will learn more about manipulating the drones and complete their course with a recreational drone piloting certificate from the FAA.

The summer classes are for students in grades four and up. Some third graders may participate, but they must be self-disciplined enough to take a lot of direction.

Meanwhile, kids wanting to sign up for Ramirez’s popular LEGO robotics summer camps will need to hurry. Two of the three sessions are full. Still open: the July 24-28 camp.

LEGO Robotics is a platform centered around building robots and other vehicles and programming them to move around and perform specific tasks. Participants develop skills such as spatial reasoning, problem-solving, creativity and critical thinking.

Ramirez, who is self-taught, actually started teaching LEGO robotics 13 years ago while living in his home country of Venezuela. The popularity of the class was immediately obvious. He started with 18 kids, but after word got around, enrollment rose to 554 in six months.

He later launched LEGO Robotics classes out of his garage once his family had relocated to Northeast Florida

in 2016. Then, when the link opened in 2021, Ramirez began offering classes there at the invitation of the facility’s co-founder, Raghu Misra.

On Dec. 16, local kids will compete in the First LEGO League competition. There are different levels of participation for different age groups, with fourth and fifth graders at the most advanced. They will build and program their own robots, create banners, do a special project and, of course, run their robots through specific objectives.

In addition, Ramirez offers a special all-girls version of his robotics and drone classes, GEMS, which stands for Girls in Engineering, Math and Science.

To learn more about the classes and camps, go to thelink.zone/getactive or consult the link’s app.

The link, located at 425 Town Plaza Ave., is an award-winning smart building at the forefront of embracing technology for smart workspaces, event spaces and experiences.



Photo by Shaun Ryan

Instructor Ivan Ramirez is seen with some of the Tello drones used in his new classes at the link and a robot from the First LEGO League competition.

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 The logo features a circular emblem with a blue and green swirl design. The words "BEACHES" are written in a semi-circle above the emblem, and "GO GREEN" is written in a semi-circle below it. The entire graphic is set against a background of yellow and pink flowers.

 The advertisement shows three gold chains with different pendants: a black tag, a gold leaf-shaped pendant, and a green tag. The background is a textured, light brown surface.

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Laura Orta started her business *Bella Pop*, which specializes in balloon décor, about a year and a half ago. The Ponte Vedra resident started the venture after discovering the limited options out there after trying to plan decor for a party she was having. Next thing she knew, she was blowing up balloons and creating archways and columns for parties across the area.

Laura Orta

As told to Anthony Richards

Tell us a little about yourself and your background.

My dad's in the military, so we moved to Jacksonville probably in like 1999, so I grew up in this area and then I went to UF and graduated in 2015.

I moved around for a little bit but came back to this area and St. Johns County within the last three years.

What led you to the creation of Bella Pop?

I was pregnant with my daughter last year, and we were trying to find a way to do a baby shower that was creative and still colorful.

So, I started looking on Pinterest and stuff because I've always been into decorating and stuff like that.

I found some kits online, but they didn't really work out that well, so I started investigating what professionals do, and that's pretty much how the business came about.

It's called Bella Pop because my daughter's name is Arabella. She's 10 months old now, but whenever we're blowing up the balloons she is just blown away by it.

I started doing it for family and friends about a year and a half ago, and I normally work in insurance, so owning your own business is a whole new realm for me.

What type of celebrations do you specialize in?

Believe it or not we get a lot of corporate events asking for columns or big archways, and we've also had a lot of retirements lately.

Graduations, birthdays are definitely something we always get a lot of as well.

A lot of our materials come from wholesalers from across the country, so it's not your typical balloons that people think of.

It takes maybe two weeks just for the ordering process and then to actually make the installations, it really depends.

If we're doing like a 20-foot arch, that could take about four hours to prepare at home and an additional two hours to set up at the location.

The goal is to make as much as we can at home and then just set it up at the location, because a lot of vendors don't give you a lot of time to set up.

It also allows for less of a mistake to take place, because we are dealing with balloons in Florida so they could pop at any moment because the heat can make them explode.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

What's great about this little business we've got going on, is that it allows me to express my creativity in a way that most people probably don't really realize you can. You can really make some amazing art and really express yourself in different ways using balloons.

You can turn a simple area into something extravagant and memorable.

What has the feedback been like since opening up Bella Pop?

There is really not that many companies like this in this area, and we've been received really well within the community.

We're really grateful that we live in such a great community where people are just open to different things.

Even though it's balloons, I really take it as art, so



Photo courtesy of Laura Orta

Laura Orta showcases her creativity with her balloon décor as owner of Bella Pop.

when someone says, "I really like this," it means a lot because you go in really nervous wondering if they're going to like it or the color choices.

You are never sure how people will receive it until you put it out there. It's a little nerve-racking but we take any feedback because that's what helps us grow.

Do you have goals for the business down the road?

We're trying to get involved with the universities to perhaps be their main balloon vendor, so pray for us with that. There's also so many sports teams around to get involved with.

I would love to eventually get involved planning full parties, but I'm also just really happy just focusing on balloons at this point.

What do you love most about living in Ponte Vedra Beach?

Honestly, what isn't there to love! When my husband and I got the opportunity to move back to Florida, it was a no-brainer.

We knew we wanted to start a family and this area is just so great for that.

Sidewalks on San Juan continue to gain support

By Anthony Richards

The path to getting sidewalks on San Juan Drive took another step forward, as Ponte Vedra Municipal Service District trustee Brad Wester informed the board that the town hall meeting May 23 went

well during the June 12 MSD meeting.

According to Wester, leaving the meeting, it was apparent to commissioner Krista Joseph how much the project needed to be taken care of and continued on its current course.

Although the MSD is expected to be stewards of the project once it is approved, the county appears on board to help fund the project, including the possibility of funding the construction portion of the project entirely, while the MSD pays for the design aspects and perhaps the initial contracting.

“The county is committed to helping fund the project,” Wester said. “We will continue to lobby them to fund the whole thing. We’ve got a commissioner that’s really looking out for us, which is fortunate because I think they’ve paid enough.”

According to Wester, residents have had to chip in to help pay for sidewalk projects in the past, such as the one that took place on Ponte Vedra Boulevard, where the residents covered a portion of the cost along with the MSD and the county.

In other news from the meeting, trustee Charles Callaghan informed the board that he is in the midst of doing a survey of the light poles in the district to

see which ones need to be painted.

He is also working with the school system to confirm the bus route schedule for Landrum Middle School to make sure the areas designated for bus pickup are well lit to ensure extra lighting is added if needed to improve visibility and safety as it is still dark during the early morning hours in the fall and winter.

Trustee Mickey White is continuing to push for answers and an eventual solution to the drainage and flooding issues encountered by residents, especially on Ponte Vedra Boulevard San Juan Drive.

He has reached out to county engineer Duane Kent in his search for answers, while another one of his searches will include creating a map of certain narrow roads in the MSD that could benefit from “no parking” signs.

White hopes to have his findings at the next meeting, which is Jul 10 at 5:30 p.m. at the Ponte Vedra Beach Public Library.



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Please go to [https://pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2023/index.html#//](https://pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2023/index.html#/) to vote daily through late July for me in all categories, and for your other favorites!

I am grateful for your support again this year!




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 PERSONAL INJURY LITIGATION - PLAINFIELD - YEAR 1 JACKSONVILLE 2023



Personal Injury and Medical Malpractice Specialists

Event to give parents tools to manage children's behaviors

By Shaun Ryan

Parenting is no easy task, especially when a child resists authority, even throwing the occasional tantrum. And parents of children with disabilities face additional challenges. Sometimes, you just want to ask someone: "What am I supposed to do?"

Fortunately, a local expert is planning an event where parents, grandparents, caregivers and others can get some answers. Board certified behavior analyst and founder of North Florida Behavior Consultants Arthur Hairston will conduct a parent training session Saturday, June 17, at the link in Nocatee.

He will offer tips and tricks for parents, whether or not their children have disabilities, to increase wanted behaviors at home. He will be joined by an analyst who will address potty training and a speech pathologist who will share suggestions to promote better communication, as well as information about devices that can be of use and are covered by insurance.

Hairston will also have his children's book there. "Chloe Has a Tantrum" tells the story of a momma bear who must address her cub's behavior. The book is also a step-by-step parents' guide.

This free wine-and-cheese event, "How to Get Your Child From Whining to Smiling," will be held from 10 a.m. to noon. It's open to the public, and there is no need to RSVP. Just show up.

The venue

Hairston said he selected the link because it's a central location for many of the parents he meets but also because the facility is inspiring.

"I come here at least once a month," he said. "Every time I come here, just looking at the building, it's just so inspi-



Photo by Shaun Ryan

Arthur Hairston, founder of North Florida Behavior Consultants, will hold a parent training session June 17 at the link.

... I want more people to know about this place."

He praised the people he encounters at the facility, as well.

"The people I meet here, everybody does something," he said. "And everybody's so helpful, too. When you talk to them, they're not trying to sell you on what they do. They always ask: How can I help you?"

The link, located at 425 Town Plaza Ave., is an award-winning smart building at the forefront of embracing technology for smart workspaces, event spaces and experiences. Many professionals have desks or offices at the link and, because

it's open around the clock, they can conduct business at any hour — even according to whatever time zone applies to business partners overseas.

Hairston also praised the facility's proximity to restaurants, a supermarket and other establishments.

"I don't know any other place around this area that matches this," he said.

Launching his business

Hairston previously worked as a special education instructor, and then as dean of students at Fletcher Middle School. He was studying for the administrative test to become a school principal when he real-

ized that he missed working one-on-one with the students.

At the suggestion of a friend, he bowed out of the school system for a year and a half to take coursework toward becoming a board-certified behavior analyst. Eventually, he found himself working for a company that offered applied behavior analysis services to underserved populations, particularly kids in foster care.

When he decided to launch his own business, he modeled it after that company. North Florida Behavior Consultants opened its doors in March 2020 — a tough time for any new business due to the impact of COVID.

At the beginning, business was slow, but it has grown over the past few years. The need for providers is great; parents sometimes face a two-year wait list. And that's especially true if these families rely on Medicaid, which is accepted by few providers. But Medicaid is among the insurances that Hairston accepts.

He now has a staff of 14, which includes three board certified behavior analysts and a board-certified assistant behavior analyst. His office at 6817 Southpoint Pkwy., suite 1604, Jacksonville, has also added a sensory gym, which has proven convenient for families.

Another session

Hairston is also planning a disability expo from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. July 22 at the Community First Igloo, 3605 Philips Hwy., Jacksonville. Popular for its ice rinks and as the home of the Jacksonville Icemen, the Igloo also has a restaurant, bar and more.

As with the parent training session, there is no need to RSVP to attend the disability expo.

For information about North Florida Behavior Consultants, go to northflbc.com or call 904-374-4720.

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OBITUARIES

Anna Curley Herbert

Anna Curley Herbert, a long-time resident of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, passed away on June 8, 2023, at Starling at Nocatee in the Memory Care Unit. She was 94 years old. Anna was born in Millinocket, Maine, on November 26, 1928, to Camilla T. Curley and John J. Curley. She graduated from Garrett Schenck Jr. High School in East Millinocket, Maine, and Husson College in Bangor, Maine.

Anna was a wonderful wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother who loved spending time with her family.

Anna was predeceased by her loving husband of 57 years Cdr. Thomas J. Herbert and her eldest daughter, Patricia Herbert. She is survived by two sons and two daughters: James P. Herbert (Valerie) of Ellsworth, Maine; Peter Herbert (Tracie) of Vernon, Florida; Tracy McKinley (Gary) and Nancy Erickson (Charlie)

both of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida; 10 grandchildren and four great grandchildren. Anna is also survived by one sister, Noreen Smedy of Ellington, Connecticut.

The family would like to thank the staff at Starling at Nocatee for their wonderful care of Anna in her later years as well as Haven Hospice for their support in Anna's final days. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Haven Hospice.

There will be a visitation at Quinn-Shalz Funeral Home on June 15 from 5 to 7 p.m. Anna will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery with her husband at a later date. Please visit her online Tribute at www.quinn-shalz.com.

Arrangements by



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3600 Third Street South, Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250
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George (Ron)ald Gentry

George (Ron)ald Gentry, 71, passed away June 8, 2023. He was born May 23, 1952, in Charleston, SC. He grew up in Charleston and retired in Jacksonville, FL in 2014.

George served his country in the U.S. Army as a Staff Sargent for 3 years and then went to work for the Department of Defense Navy as a Ship Surveyor at Charleston Naval Shipyards before

relocating to Jacksonville and working for Mayport Naval Base. He enjoyed his volunteer work as Youth Baseball Director in Charleston for a number of years. He also enjoyed his time playing golf with friends and family.

George is survived by his wife of 47 years, Mary Frances Crenshaw Gentry, and his son, Derek James Gentry. He is also survived by his sister, Patsy Lottie Brazel (Wallace) and his brother, Jasper Milton Gentry, Jr. (Michele). Both are from the Charleston area. He was predeceased by two brothers, John Thorton Gentry and Don Herman Gentry. Both from Holly Hill, SC. Also 5 nephews and 1 niece.

A Memorial Service will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, June 17, 2023, at Quinn-Shalz Funeral Home, 3600 Third Street South, Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250. There will not be a graveside service. Please visit his online Tribute at www.quinn-shalz.com.

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Voting is Now Open!

The Ponte Vedra Recorder, celebrating 54 years of community news excellence, launched our fifth annual **BEST OF THE BEST of Ponte Vedra, 32081 & 32082.**

Readers have nominated their favorite businesses, organizations, professionals and more in over 250 categories online. **Online voting begins June 12.** Readers can vote for their favorite business in each category once per day.

Help your favorites win and VOTE!



[www.pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2023/index.html#//](http://www.pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2023/index.html#/)

Top Dog makes clean grills a priority

By Shaun Ryan

Is your grill clean and ready to use this grilling season?

Sadly, many people overlook the importance of maintaining a clean grill. But a particle-encrusted grill could prove unhealthy.

“Some people say, ‘I’ll just cook it off,’” said Tony Marsico, who with his wife owns Top Dog Grill Cleaning and Restorations. “Well, you’re burning it into the metal. So, now, you’re going to have to scrape it off.”

In addition, those particles are carcinogens, and the heat can actually encourage the generation of harmful bacteria.

And there’s another reason to keep that grill clean: Failure to do so will cause it to degrade.

But for the past four years, local residents have counted on Top Dog Grill Cleaning and Restorations to keep their

grills in tiptop condition.

Top Dog offers a number of services in addition to cleaning: repairs, installations, inspections and more.

In cleaning, they don’t use wire brushes that could scratch the metal. Instead, they use stainless steel pads — which are not steel wool — and make their own cleaning solutions from citrus ingredients. They take the grill apart and clean each component. The typical cleaning takes three-and-a-half and four hours. And when it’s done, the customer’s reaction is priceless.

“It’s heartwarming to hear what they say, the astonishment in their voices and their eyes,” said Marsico. “They’ll say, ‘That’s not the same grill!’”

To learn more, call 904-481-6685 or email topdogrestorations@yahoo.com. See the Facebook page @TopDogGrill-Cleaning, where before-and-after photos reveal the true value of getting a grill properly cleaned.

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Gift ideas for dad

Father’s Day is June 18 and below are some gift ideas that will show dad just how much you love him.

Contributed photos



Mind Full Creations has an assortment of gifts for dad, from key chains to bottle openers and coasters with a variety of catchy phrases. Go to Mind Full Creations’ Facebook page for more gift ideas.



The Dolly Llama will be offering a weekend full of Father’s Day specials, as guests can buy two desserts and get the third free. Dads can enjoy their Father’s Day and satisfy their sweet tooth at the same time. The Dolly Llama is located at 830 A1A N., Suite 16 in Ponte Vedra Beach.



Coastal Elements has koozies to help dads keep their drinks cold this Father’s Day. The koozies have an authentic Ponte Vedra Beach flair, along with many of the other gift options. Coastal Elements is located at 832 A1A N., Suite 10 in the Tournament Plaza Shopping Center in Ponte Vedra Beach and their website is coastalelementspv.com to search the full selection.

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HEALTH CARE PROFILES

THURSDAY, JUNE 15, 2023





Photo by Shaun Ryan

University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences staff members shovel dirt in a ceremonial groundbreaking for the school's new campus.

University of St. Augustine breaks ground on new campus

By Shaun Ryan

In the fall of 2024, the local campus of the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences will have a new address: 1 News Place, at the intersection of state roads 207 and 312.

On Monday, June 12, university staff joined representatives of Stevens Construction, ESJ Capital Partners and Gensler Architects for a ceremonial groundbreaking at the former site of The St. Augustine Record. That 22-year-old, 40,000-square-foot building will be renovated, and an 80,000-square-foot expansion will be added. The facility will sit on a 14-acre property.

“We’re really excited about being able to have this building, because it is kind of iconic for the area,” said Stephanie Furlough-Morris, chief financial officer and senior vice president of campus operations. “We wanted to make a strong

commitment to the St. Augustine community. It is our flagship. ... and I think this building makes a strong statement.”

According to an announcement on the university’s website, the cost of the project has been estimated at about \$74 million.

Once complete, the facility will include the university’s signature Center for Innovative Clinical Practice with 14 beds, six assessment rooms, two simulated hospital rooms, observation rooms, an “activities of daily living” lab that simulates a home environment, cadaver and Anatomage anatomy labs and more.

The state-of-the-art campus will offer increased immersive learning opportunities for students and the latest technology and facilities to increase student experiences. There will be larger student lounges and library facilities, as well as outdoor spaces. In addition, the expansion is expected to include 490 parking

spaces.

When complete, all operations will move from the current campus, which for 40 years has been located at 1 University Blvd., St. Augustine.

“One of the core reasons we wanted another location was ... we wanted to move a bit more westward so that we would be a little further away from the water,” Furlough-Morris said. “And our lease was up in that [the current] location.”

The move will allow for an increase in enrollment, which currently stands at about 1,000 students. Across the university’s five campuses, enrollment stands at about 6,000.

“One of the reasons this is one of our bigger campuses is because of the need in the area,” said Furlough-Morris.

She told those assembled for the ceremony that the university would continue to offer its current professional graduate

degrees in occupational therapy, physical therapy and nursing.

“This new campus will also allow us to grow our programs and embrace new student experiences,” she added.

The University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences offers degrees in occupational therapy, physician assistant studies, health administration, physical therapy, speech-language pathology, nursing and more. The goal is to develop professional health care practitioners through innovative, individualized and quality classroom, clinical and distance education.

According to the American Journal of Medical Quality, a nationwide shortage of registered nurses is expected by 2030. Other medical field careers are likewise expected to see a decline.

The University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences was founded in 1979 and currently has more than 15,000 alumni.



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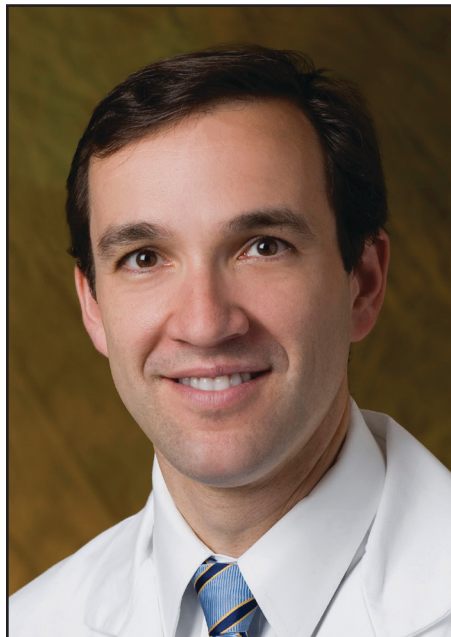
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GUEST COLUMN

Heart flutter? How AFib is diagnosed



By Anthony Magnano MD,
Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside

When your heart experiences an arrhythmia, it may feel like it's fluttering or jumping out of rhythm, or it may have no obvious symptoms at all. This is a common occurrence in the condition known as atrial fibrillation (AFib), which can have serious consequences. The CDC reports that AFib can increase the risk of stroke by up to five times and put patients at risk for heart failure. However, up to half of patients with this common heart condition may not be diagnosed. That makes awareness and screening key.

Signs and Symptoms of AFib

Symptoms of AFib can include an irregular heartbeat, palpitations, lightheadedness or dizziness, shortness of breath, faintness or confusion, extreme fatigue, and/or chest discomfort. Although millions of Americans experience AFib, many don't notice any overt symptoms. In these cases, AFib can only be detected through an electrical recording of the heart's rhythm.

Who Is At Risk

The risk of developing AFib gradually increases with age. According to research published by the Journal of the American Heart Association, people over age 40 have a 1-in-4 lifetime risk of developing AFib. After age 60, about one percent of people will be diagnosed with AFib each year.

In addition to age, other risk factors include obesity, high blood pressure, sleep apnea, coronary artery disease, congestive heart failure, valvular heart disease, rheumatic heart disease, diabetes

or metabolic syndrome, lung disease and kidney disease. Lifestyle concerns such as smoking and alcohol abuse can also dramatically increase the risk of developing AFib. High stress levels and mental health may play a role as well.

How Atrial Fibrillation Is Diagnosed

Early diagnosis and management of AFib is crucial to prevent life-threatening complications. Your cardiologist will perform a medical history assessment, physical examination and various tests such as electrocardiogram (ECG), echocardiogram and Holter monitor. In some cases, additional cardiac imaging or electrophysiological studies may be ordered to help guide your treatment.

Using Wearable Tech to Monitor Heart Health

Many of our patients use personal technology, like portable medical-grade EKG devices, to help monitor their hearts from home. These devices can help doctors detect heart rhythm irregularities sooner, which can sometimes help make a diagnosis or even prevent a stroke. But not all technology is created equal. For example, a less-complex heart rate monitor and one that is built to be an EKG-grade device may show differing results.

Self-screening with these apps can help you become more aware of your heart health. One important point is to be perfectly still, preferably with arms supported on a table or desk when making recordings. This technique minimizes movement artifacts and yields a much higher-quality tracing. Another important point is to have your doctor review any tracings of concern, especially if you are seeing irregularities, as the automatic interpretations are not always correct.

See Your Doctor for Annual Screening

AFib can manifest subtle symptoms, which is why annual screening is critical. This is especially true for individuals aged 65 years or above. If you or a family member display symptoms of an irregular heart rhythm, consult your primary care physician or cardiologist today.

Dr. Anthony Magnano is a Ponte Vedra resident and chief of cardiology at Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside in Jacksonville. For more information on Dr. Magnano and his specialty in treating atrial fibrillation, go to ascension.org/JaxHeart or call 904-388-1820.



Dr. Jennifer Matthesen

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GUEST COLUMN

How to protect your eyes this summer



By **Donald A. Barnhorst, Jr., M.D.**,
Florida Eye Specialists

Summer is heating up, and while we all know to wear our sunscreen and protect our skin, we often forget to protect another vital organ: our eyes. As temperatures rise, the sun's UV rays grow stronger, making it more important than ever to take proactive measures to keep our delicate eyes safe. With the help of these tips, you can enjoy the warm weather without sacrificing your eye health.

UV Rays and Your Eyes

UVA and UVB radiation are known to damage nearly all body parts, but they can be especially harmful to your vision. Ocular damage from UV rays is irreversible and can result in conditions like macular degeneration, cataracts, corneal damage and more.

In fact, according to the World Health Organization, up to 20% of cataracts worldwide may be caused by overexposure to UV radiation. Cataracts are the leading cause of vision loss in the United States and consist of a clouding of the normally clear lens of the eye. They may make it harder to see or drive at night or cause symptoms like blurry vision, double vision or extreme sensitivity to glare and light.

Tips to Protect Your Vision This Summer

The first step to lowering risk is wearing UV-blocking sunglasses and brimmed hats. Consider wrap-around sunglasses to protect your peripheral vision and prevent possible glare as well. Make sure to check that your sunglasses are rated with UVA/UVB protection.

The sun's strongest points of the day are from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., so avoid prolonged exposure to UV rays during this time. Always wear sunscreen and reapply regularly, especially around your eyes and eyelids, but be careful to avoid your eyes. Your sunglasses will protect the areas you can't reach.

Be sure to practice these tips no matter the time of year, as UV damage to the eyes can occur outside of the summer months — especially here in Florida, where the sun is always shining.

Eye-Friendly Summer Activities

During the summer months, we all want to get outside away from screens and mobile devices and enjoy our beautiful summer weather. Luckily, you can enjoy all your favorite activities while protecting your eyes with a few simple steps.

When spending time outdoors, take advantage of natural shade provided by trees, umbrellas or canopies to reduce direct exposure to the sun's harmful UV rays. Not only will this protect your eyes, but it will also help keep you cool during hot summer days.

When enjoying water sports like swimming or surfing, minimize infections or injuries by wearing swim goggles. These protect your eyes from chemicals or contaminants found in lakes or oceans. Chlorinated pools can cause eye irritation, so be sure to remove contacts before swimming.

Also use protective eyewear during other outdoor activities like cycling or playing ball sports. Goggles, safety glasses or helmets with face shields can provide an extra layer of protection for your eyes. It's also important to stay hydrated and maintain a healthy diet rich in antioxidants, vitamins A, C and E to maintain good eye health.

This summer, prioritize your eye health and schedule your annual eye check-up today. Your eye doctor can provide personalized advice and recommendations based on your specific needs and help ensure the long-term health of your eyes.

Donald A. Barnhorst, Jr., M.D., is a Ponte Vedra resident and board-certified ophthalmologist at Florida Eye Specialists. For more information on Dr. Barnhorst, go to FloridaEyeSpecialists.com or call 904-564-2020.

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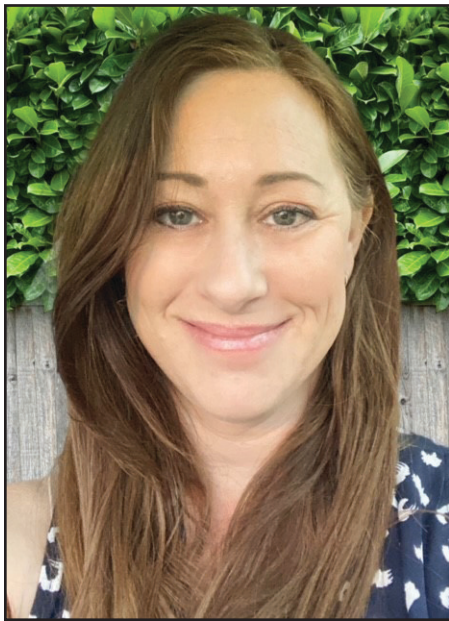
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GUEST COLUMN

Can functional medicine help your brain?



By Emily Glasser

Functional medicine is becoming increasingly popular. But what is it and can it help you? In a markedly different approach than traditional Western medicine, functional medicine seeks to understand how your organs, glands and tissues are functioning, as well as how they can be

finely tuned to work in greater harmony together. It has the capacity to appreciate the body and mind as an integrative whole and to reveal the imbalances at the root of your symptoms. Much like when you hear an orchestra with several instruments playing in harmony, the human body is designed to synchronize, which can bring about the greatest possibility for healing.

In my 19 years as a functional medicine practitioner, I have furthered my own practice to investigate the critical factors that lead to those imbalances in the first place. From chronic, latent infections that slip undetected by traditional labs to food allergies, poor lifestyle choices and a multitude of environmental toxins, there can be any number of concerns that lead patients to my office with prior diagnoses of fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue, auto-immune disease, gut problems and cognitive issues.

One frequent patient complaint is brain fog, poor memory and a sense of deteriorating brain function. To shed light on the health of your brain, it is essential that we understand the gut.

According to the National Institutes



For Health, “The gut produces approximately 95% of our serotonin ... Medical research has revealed that the gut-brain axis is a communication highway, a direct link to the brain and your nervous system. And if your gut is out of balance, this can have significant impact on your mood, cognition and mental health.

It is not enough to know that magnesium is a key nutrient that enhances different forms of learning and memory and can reduce inflammation or that zinc is critical for thinking. While we can eat magnesium-rich foods (think avocados, spinach and pumpkin seeds) and get zinc from oysters, tofu or squash, the real question is, “Is my gut absorbing/metabolizing these foods?”

After years of specialized lab testing on hundreds of patients, I have found the vast majority of people have, at best, a sub-par gut microbiome. Your gut microbiome consists of 100 trillion bacteria in your intestines that serve the necessary functions of making your vitamins and allowing (or disallowing) the absorption of essential nutrients. It serves to break down sugars and produce our own internal antibiotics and antifungals so that we don’t acquire pathogenic infections, among other functions.

Even if you don’t experience bloating, gas or diarrhea, you can still have an imbalance in your gut microbiome called dysbiosis or leaky gut syndrome in which the inflamed gut is the trigger for brain dysfunction, systemic inflammation and immune challenges.

If you would like to know if your gut is at the center of your health or brain challenges, I recommend finding a qualified functional medicine practitioner to run a GI map or specialized testing to evaluate your microbiome.

Emily Glasser, AP, LAc, ACN, Dip.OM
thequiettiger.com



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Cypress Village residents thank Station 59

The Healthcare Committee at Cypress Village recently wanted to show support for all the work and service provided by first responders at Station 59. Each shift was provided with special baskets with all their favorites, each handmade by one of the committee members.

When asked why the residents went out of their way to do this small gift for the station, Wendy Griffith replied, "Because the first responders of Station 59 provide prompt and compassionate service to the residents at Cypress Village, we wanted them to know we appreciate them. The members of the Healthcare Committee made up baskets with snacks to tell the EMTs thank you."

The baskets contained things like crackers, cheese, fresh fruit, candy and other snacks and were decorated with a bow. The management of Cypress Village was thrilled to support such a giving initiative and supplied the funds for the expenses. They delivered the baskets to each of the three shifts during the week of May 21 to thank first responders.

Cypress Village is a retirement care community located adjacent to the Mayo Clinic. Cypress Village has homes and apartments on a 120-acre campus.

For more information, call 904-223-6100.



Contributed photo

The residents of Cypress Village recently put together gift baskets for the first responders at Station 59.

Baptist Health recognized for diversity initiatives

Forbes Magazine has once again named Baptist Health of Northeast Florida one of America's top employers for diversity.

In the publication's "America's Best Employers for Diversity" list for 2023, Baptist Health was the highest ranked health care system in Florida for the second consecutive year and ranked No. 14 among the 50 rated hospitals and health care systems in the country.

"Providing high-quality, compassionate care starts with respect — for each other and the diverse communities we serve," said Kate McCann, senior vice president and chief human resources officer of Baptist Health. "We are committed to fostering an inclusive culture where every team member feels a sense of belonging and can thrive.

"Our diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives also extend beyond our walls

through our commitment to supplier diversity and our efforts to build healthier communities by addressing health disparities and removing barriers to care."

Among Baptist Health's many diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives are:

1. Developing a DEI Council committed to setting the vision and strategic objectives to advance diversity and inclusion throughout Baptist Health
2. Launching 11 Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) whose members have participated in a wide range of activities within the local community, including:
 - Food and clothing drives
 - Parades to mark Veteran's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Pride month
 - Collaborations with iHeart Media to promote the free health resources available to Jacksonville's Hispanic communities
 - Veteran and military hiring events through a partnership with SkillBridge, an organization that connects service members with industry partners in real-world job experiences.
3. Being a Healthcare Equality Index (HEI) leader for the past four years
4. Expanding the supplier diversity program to support the growth of diverse business opportunities within the local community
5. Using a DEI lens to review and update HR policies, translating key policies into five languages to support team

members for whom English is a second language

6. Creating culturally sensitive campaigns to improve health screenings, preventive care and overcome barriers to health care access among underserved racial and socioeconomic groups

Forbes Magazine partnered with global market research firm Statista Inc. to compile the annual list, which is now in its sixth year. The results are based on a survey of 45,000 Americans working at companies with a minimum of 1,000 employees.

Participants were asked to rank their employers based on criteria such as age, gender, ethnicity, disability and LGBTQ+ equality, as well as general diversity. Those from underrepresented groups were also asked to nominate companies other than their own.

Forbes also considered publicly disclosed information about representation, board and leadership diversity, and proactive diversity and inclusion initiatives when compiling its list.

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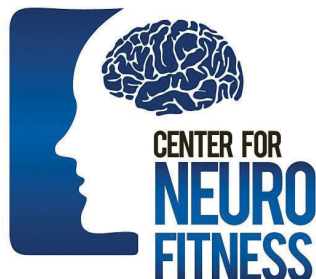
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The founding members of the group that became the Flagler Hospital Auxiliary. The auxiliary began 1888.



This photo shows members of the Flagler Hospital Auxiliary in 1957.

Contributed photos

Flagler Hospital Auxiliary celebrates 135 years

Auxiliary is the oldest in Florida

With a rich history of service to the St. Augustine community, the Flagler Hospital Auxiliary celebrated its 135th anniversary on May 22. The establishment of the Auxiliary in 1888 was the cornerstone of the creation of the Flagler Hospital.

Recognizing a need for a hospital in his new home city, industrialist Henry M. Flagler began a campaign to bring the vision to reality. Pulling together the city's most influential ladies for a meeting in

the rotunda of the Ponce de Leon Hotel, Flagler challenged them with a proposal where if they could organize and maintain it, he would build the hospital.

This group became the Flagler Hospital Auxiliary, the oldest hospital auxiliary in Florida and the seventh oldest in the United States. The hospital, which was originally named the Alicia Hospital and later renamed Flagler Hospital, opened in 1890. Since then, the Auxiliary has remained a constant through fires, relocations and tremendous growth throughout the region.

"Congratulations to the Flagler Hospital Auxiliary for reaching this milestone,"

said Carlton DeVooght, president and CEO of Flagler Health+. "It is through their support that we can attain the level of care and service that we are able to provide for our community. Their tireless efforts and enthusiasm for what they do is truly inspiring."

Members of the Auxiliary can be found working in nearly every area of the hospital. From running the gift shop to interacting with patients or working behind the scenes on administrative duties, their presence is felt daily.

"For 135 years, residents of St. Augustine have come together to volunteer

their time for the benefit of their fellow citizens," said Rita Hubbs, Flagler Health+ volunteer services specialist. "We are proud of the rich tradition of the Flagler Hospital Auxiliary in helping to service the needs of our community and look forward to a long and bright future."

The Flagler Hospital Auxiliary is actively recruiting volunteers. Anyone interested in joining the Flagler Hospital Auxiliary can pick up an application at the front desk in the hospital lobby or in the Volunteer Services office. Applications and more information are also available online at FlaglerHealth.org/volunteer.

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Flagler Health+ CAIR Center extends hours of operation

Mental and behavioral services center marks one year of service to the community

The Flagler Health+ CAIR Center has extended its hours of operation to 24 hours a day, seven days a week, as it marks one year of operation.

Flagler Health+ opened the CAIR (Crisis Assessment Intervention and Referral) Center on June 9, 2022, as a way to provide increased access to mental and behavioral health services, especially for those individuals in crisis or in urgent need of mental health care.

Dating back to its opening, the CAIR Center has had 854 visits with a total of 503 patients comprised of 408



adults and 95 youths. It is estimated that, were it not for the CAIR Center, approximately 75, or 15%, of the patients, would have to have been Baker Acted for lack of another option.

“The support being provided by the team at the CAIR Center has made a tremendous impact on those in our community with mental and behavioral health needs,” said Valerie Duquette, director of the CAIR Center. “These services are vitally important to our community and exemplify the mission of Flagler Health+ as we are committed to improving not only the physical health of our neighbors but mental health as well.”

Serving both youth and adults, the Flagler Health+ CAIR Center is de-

signed to provide access to and coordination of mental and behavioral health services in St. Johns and surrounding counties. The CAIR Center is a supportive, compassionate place to access crisis assessment, brief interventions, referral services and care coordination support. The CAIR Center team also works with individuals to establish a long-term connection with a provider for continued support.

CAIR Center professionals work together to give clients the most personalized approach to obtaining mental health services. Often, the mental health struggle is tied to other needs in the household — food insecurity, lack of stable housing, difficulties obtaining prescriptions and more. The CAIR Center then utilizes Care Connect+, a program established by Flagler Health+, to connect patients to other critical resources. Care Connect+ helps clients navigate the process to clarify questions, remove barriers and connect the patient to social health services, as needed.

Coordinating with mental health partners in the community, the CAIR Center aims to reduce unnecessary Baker Act admissions, increase diversion from the criminal justice system and reduce recidivism to hospitals while providing those in mental health crisis a supportive and approachable environment to receive support.

The CAIR Center at Flagler Health+ is located at 300 Health Park Blvd., Suite 1008, on the campus of Flagler Hospital and is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

For more information about the CAIR Center at Flagler Health+, go to flaglerhealth.org/CAIR or call 904-819-5204.

Care Connect+ was established by Flagler Health+ to link area residents in need with available services and address social determinants of health in a coordinated way throughout Northeast Florida. By aligning community resources into a single access point, Care Connect+ increases coordination and access of available resources. For more information, go to stjohnsareconnect.com.

Flagler Health+ is a total care enterprise aimed at advancing the physical, social and economic health of Northeast Florida communities. Flagler Health+ is an extension of Flagler Hospital, which has a 130-year legacy of caring for the community.

Learn more at flaglerhealth.org.

How the CAIR Center helps

Experiencing an urgent mental or behavioral health crisis can be a frightening and confusing time in someone’s life. The Flagler Health+ CAIR Center is a supportive, compassionate place for youth and adults to access:

- Mental health crisis assessment
- Brief interventions
- Referral services
- Care coordination
- Help in establishing a long-term connection with a provider

A team of professionals from the CAIR Center works together to give each client the most personalized approach to obtaining mental health services. The team guides clients throughout the process to clarify questions, remove barriers and connect clients to social health services if needed.

CAIR Center Impact

Serving both youth and adults, the CAIR Center provides access to and the coordination of mental and behavioral health services in St. Johns and surrounding counties.

- It decreases the stigma associated with seeking mental health support by creating a supportive and approachable environment.
- It reduces emergency room visits and law enforcement contacts for both youth and adult populations.
- CAIR center works to divert unnecessary Baker Act admissions, provide a diversion from the criminal justice system and reduce recidivism to the hospital.
- CAIR center establishes a robust care coordination program that provides ongoing follow-up and connection to resources for both the individual and their family.

Flagler Health+ CAIR Center is located at 300 Health Park Blvd., Suite 1008. The phone number is 904-819-5204.

The CAIR Center is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. No appointment is necessary.

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National expert joins Nemours Department of Pediatrics

Renowned physician to lead hematology/oncology team

Nemours Children’s Health, Jacksonville has named Anderson Collier III, M.D., division chief of hematology/oncology, Department of Pediatrics.

Collier is a national expert in the treatment of sarcomas in children and earned his medical degree at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine.

Before joining Nemours Children’s, Collier was the division chief of pediatric hematology/oncology at the School of Medicine at the University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC). Additionally, he was a professor in the Department of Pediatrics in the School of Medicine at UMMC.

An active clinical researcher, Collier was the institutional principal investigator for Children’s Oncology Group work at UMMC, as well as director of



Dr. Anderson Collier III

pediatric oncology research.

He is an author, editor and reviewer for a number of medical journals, with a specific focus on recurrent or refractory Ewing Sarcoma and outcomes

NEMOURS continues on Page 21

New members join Baptist Health’s Board of Directors

Baptist Health recently appointed three new members to its board of directors for the health system. The board plays a key leadership role in advancing the mission of the not-for-profit, locally owned, locally governed health system.

“We are fortunate to add each of these individuals’ diverse perspective and experience expertise to the board of directors,” said Michael A. Mayo, president and CEO at Baptist Health. “Their volunteer role in the health system is a key differentiator — decisions about Baptist Health and its role in the Jacksonville community are made by respected, local leaders.”

The new members include Mark LaBorde, Ilene Levenson MD and Rachael Tutwiler Fortune.

LaBorde has more than 30 years of health care management experience and retired as senior vice president and head of enterprise sales, product and marketing at Aetna Inc. in 2017.

He joined the Baptist Medical Center

Jacksonville Board of Directors in 2019.

In addition, he currently serves as the chair-elect on the board of directors for the Cathedral Arts Project and on the board of trustees for Episcopal School of Jacksonville.

LaBorde graduated from Emory University with a bachelor’s degree in business marketing and finance and holds a Certified Employee Benefit Specialist designation from the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans.

Levenson served as a board-certified internal medicine physician in Jacksonville for nearly 35 years before retiring from Baptist Primary Care — Baymeadows in January 2023.

While practicing at Baptist Health, she served as the board chair of Baptist Physician Partners, the Baptist Physician Partners Clinical Transforma-

DIRECTORS continues on Page 21

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- Bad bites and poor oral-facial development increases risk for sleep apnea.
- Gum disease increases risk for head, neck, pancreatic, and kidney cancer.
- If you have diabetes and bleeding gums, your risk of premature death increases by 400 to 700 percent.
- Gum disease is linked with blood vessel disease, heart attacks, and strokes.
- Cavities are caused by acid-loving bacteria spread during kissing and sharing food.
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Flagler Health+ to provide free Cope Notes subscriptions to students

Service offers daily mental health support

Thanks to Flagler Health+'s BRAVE program, 800 subscriptions of Cope Notes are being gifted to middle and high school students in Northeast Florida. Cope Notes is an added resource BRAVE makes available to teenagers to improve their mental health, along with the BRAVE text line and an extensive list of qualified counselors.

Flagler Health+ has purchased the yearly subscriptions to Cope Notes, which will be made available free of charge. The text-based service, which is 100% anonymous and confidential, helps youth train their brains to combat stress, anxiety, loneliness, depression and more. Reports show that 86% of users experience improved mental health within 30 days.

"Cope Notes is an invaluable resource

for teenagers to combat the mental health issues they face daily," said Paige Stanton, executive director of Care Connect+, which administers BRAVE. "We are excited to be able to offer Cope Notes subscriptions to continue the great progress that is being made in making teens aware of the tools available to help improve their mental health."

BRAVE, which stands for Be Resilient and Voice Emotions, is designed to reduce stigma and create conversations around mental health. Initially launched in partnership with the St. Johns County School District, the program has already made a significant impact.

Before BRAVE's implementation in St. Johns County Schools, only 35% of students referred to mental health providers were seen by a medical professional. With the BRAVE program, that rate has increased to 90%. Since its founding five years ago, and despite the pandemic, BRAVE has expanded into more school districts, including Clay, Nassau, Putnam, Flagler and Volusia, with the ability to assist more than 167,000 students.

"Cope Notes is an invaluable resource for teenagers to combat the mental health issues they face daily. We are excited to be able to offer Cope Notes subscriptions to continue the great progress that is being made in making teens aware of the tools available to help improve their mental health."

- Paige Stanton

Executive Director of Care Connect+

With a Cope Notes subscription, youth receive a text message each day that offers peer support, positive psychology, brain training and digital journaling with no appointments, wait lists or diagnoses necessary. The program works to train a user's brain to differentiate between healthy and unhealthy habits through repetition, disruption and adaptation.

"We've been building a relationship with Flagler Health+ for a couple of years now, and seeing how proactive they are in the mental wellness field has been nothing short of inspiring," said Johnny Crowder, founder and CEO of Cope Notes. "I can already see how this initiative is going to build on our collaborative foundation in a way that will undoubtedly change lives and impact families throughout the state and beyond."

Flagler Health+ has begun to distribute the subscriptions through BRAVE clients to middle and high school students in the five Northeast Florida school districts it serves. Students can also obtain subscriptions directly through their respective schools.

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Nemours

Continued from 19

of patients with relapsed or progressive Ewing Sarcoma.

“It is with great pleasure we welcome Dr. Collier to lead our hematology/oncology team,” said Eric Sandler, M.D., chair, Department of Pediatrics, Nemours Children’s Health, Jacksonville. “With Dr. Collier’s leadership, we will be able to amplify our efforts to provide the highest quality of care and expand our program to help more children with cancer and blood disorders. We are thrilled for what Dr. Collier will bring to our already robust and well-respected program.”

Collier will lead a team of eight hematology/oncology physicians and staff at THE PLAYERS Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders. Opening in late June, the new cancer center is the culmination of the Hand in Hand capital campaign, a multi-million-dollar renovation and expansion that has created a world-class destination for families seeking specialized and comprehensive pediatric hema-

tology and oncology care in Northeast Florida.

The center is part of Nemours Children’s Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders (NCCBD), the most extensive pediatric cancer program in Florida. In addition, NCCBD houses the only pediatric sickle cell program in the city and one of the largest in the state, as well as a National Institutes of Health-funded Hemophilia Treatment Center.

Collier completed a residency in pediatrics followed by a fellowship in pediatric hematology/oncology at the University of Texas at Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas. He is board certified in pediatrics and pediatric hematology/oncology by the American Board of Pediatrics.

He is a member of professional societies including the American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology, the American Society of Clinical Oncology and the Connective Tissue Oncology Society.

Collier is joined by his wife, Rachel, and son, Harrison, who will live in the San Pablo area.

Directors

Continued from 19

tion Council and the Baptist Physician Partners Accountable Care Organizations Board. She went beyond expectations to advance Baptist Health’s value-based care strategy and played a key role in building bridges between all physicians throughout the health system.

She received her bachelor’s degree from University of Florida before continuing to University of Florida College of Medicine for her medical degree.

Fortune is the president of Jacksonville Public Education Fund and also serves as an adjunct instructor in leadership at the University of North Florida. In her role at Jacksonville Public Education Fund, she is committed to helping close the opportunity gap between historically underserved students and their peers in Duval County’s public schools.

Fortune, who is a Jacksonville native, holds a master’s degree in education policy, organization and leadership from Stanford University and a bachelor’s degree in political science from the University of North Florida. She was a member of Leadership Jacksonville’s Class of 2022.

There were also new appointments to hospital and physician group boards this spring.

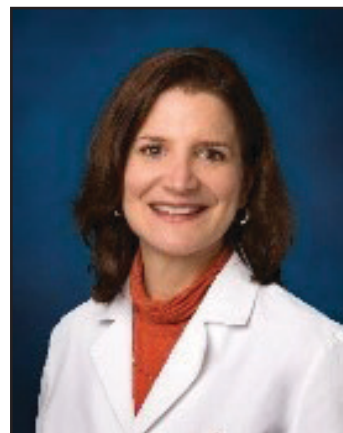
New board members at Baptist Medical Center South include Allison Bovee, Emily Dawkins, Julie Merten PhD, Veronica Lee, Hugh Matthews and Jeremy Wood MD.

The Wolfson Children’s Hospital Board of Directors welcomed a new member, Anne Egan MD.

New board members at Baptist Physician Partners include Sofija Rak MD, Linda Di Teodoro MD, Amy Greenwald MD and Brian Gilligan MD. New board members for Baptist Physician Partners’ Accountable Care Organizations include Sofija Rak MD; Matthew Braddock DO and Craig Shapiro MD.



Mark LaBorde



Ilene Levenson MD



Rachael Tutwiler Fortune



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THURSDAY, JUNE 15, 2023

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Simple actions can keep the cool air flowing

By Shaun Ryan

Forget what the calendar says. In Northeast Florida, summer comes early and stays late. That means months of hot, humid conditions and a critical need to have reliable air conditioning.

Anyone who's ever had their air conditioning break down will tell you: Avoid it at any cost. Fortunately, there are some simple things homeowners can do to ensure their air conditioning keeps them cool through the summer months.

Perhaps the most effective strategy is to have regular maintenance, especially to keep drains clear as these units generate a lot of water.

"Getting a certified, trained technician out there twice a year — really, before the seasons," said Jen Booker, service dispatcher with Creek's Air Conditioning & Heating. "We prefer to do it in the very early part of the year and towards the late part of the year, right before you start using your air conditioner or right before you start using your heat."

The technician can show the homeowner where problems are beginning to occur and make notes on things to check on the next visit.

"It's a lot like your doctor visit,"

Booker said. "Keeping up with your routine checkups and making sure everything's tiptop."

Another big thing homeowners can do is regularly change the filter, especially if there are pets in the home or if there's a lot of dust.

"Just keeping an eye on it can really solve a lot of problems in the long run," Booker said.

A third thing is keeping shrubs clear from outdoor units. Indoors, not allowing bookshelves or other furniture to block vents.

"These units need to breathe," said Booker. "They need to have airflow coming through them."

Outside, it's important to think about where sprinkler heads are pointed. Water from sprinklers may cause rust to coils and other parts of the exterior unit.

Taking care of a home HVAC system will extend its life and helps ensure that you don't return home from work one day to an indoor temperature in the 90s. It's also important to note that homes near the beach are particularly vulnerable due to the salty air.

Creek's Air Conditioning & Heating, like other service providers on the First Coast, does residential and commercial installation and routine maintenance.



Photo by Anthony Richards

University of North Florida men's basketball coach Matthew Driscoll was the guest speaker during the NEFAR quarterly breakfast June 13.

Driscoll talks life lessons, approach at NEFAR breakfast

By Anthony Richards

The Northeast Florida Association of Realtors quarterly breakfast June 13 felt like a locker room before a big game, as University of North Florida men's basketball coach Matthew Driscoll was the event's guest speaker.

Driscoll captivated the room as if they were players listening to a speech from the head coach prior to running out onto the court or field for a big game.

As he walked around The Plantation Club Beach House he stressed several

DRISCOLL continues on **Page 25**

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Arthur Murray hosts Chamber before hours event

The following are photos from the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division before hours at Arthur Murray Ponte Vedra Beach Dance Center.



Photo courtesy of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Arthur Murray Ponte Vedra Beach Dance Center hosted a Chamber before hours event.



Photo by Susan Griffin

Arthur Murray owner Heiko Leyhausen dances with his daughter during the event.

Memory Lane joins Chamber with ribbon cutting



Memory Lane in Jacksonville held a ribbon cutting ceremony and joined the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce. Regent and Pam Ducas are the owners of Memory Lane, which is the largest studio in the area with the ability to digitize memories recorded using old methods, such as film.

Photo by Susan Griffin

Regent and Pam Ducas are the owners of Memory Lane located at 8431 Baymeadows Way in Jacksonville.



Photo courtesy of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Memory Lane held a ribbon cutting ceremony recently to join the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce.



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Firm declares June as 'real estate planning month'

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty has declared June "real estate planning month."

The initiative encourages all within the global network to subscribe to the ethos that "real estate dreams deserve real estate plans."

Identifying a month to focus on planning will ensure Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Forever Agents can best assist their clients to achieve their goals — from buying, selling, renting, investing and more.

"Across our global network, our

Forever Agents will be utilizing a series of tools to help their clients fully realize their real estate goals and dreams," said Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty President Ann King. "Whether you own a home and are looking for renovation recommendations or you're looking to add a property to your portfolio, reach out to us for expert advice and a complementary real estate and lifestyle review guide."

The brand introduced the concept at its annual sales convention, held earlier this year in Las Vegas. The much-antic-

ipated event was attended by more than 6,000 Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices network real estate professionals from around the world.

Developed with the intent to fully equip network agents with the tools and education to assist clients in making viable roadmaps and actionable goals with their real estate and lifestyle planning process, the global brand has invested resources to the initiative and remains committed to providing ongoing support to ensure Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices network members

continue to provide quality service to their clients.

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices network members view their role as providers of a professional service beyond the immediate needs of a singular transaction. Planning is a vital component to the success of a clients' real estate portfolio, whether a first-time buyer, investor or collector.

For more information about Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty, go to FloridaNetworkRealty.com.

Driscoll

Continued from 23

things that he believes are transferable life lessons that can lead to success whether the person is a coach or a realtor.

"Building genuine relationships is what life's all about," Driscoll said. "Don't ever think you're wasting your time, because that relationship could make all the difference one day."

Never being afraid to put in the work is something else that he has developed his life around and it has helped him

establish a career in coaching, which includes 15 seasons at the helm of the Ospreys' men's basketball program.

To help get the point across he quoted from the Bible and Proverbs 14, which states that "hard work brings profit."

According to Driscoll, that includes putting all effort into the situation in front of them at the moment.

"It's so important to focus on where your feet are currently," Driscoll said. "Every day has got to be 'the day.' Everything you do you have to do with a genuine purpose. Having a vision is two-fold. If you truly get out and win the day, you're going to make a differ-

ence in people's lives."

His speech was incredibly relatable to the crowd, as he compared Realtors working and searching for clients to the process Driscoll and his coaching staff encounter when recruiting prospective players to the program.

He also compared one-and-done players in college, those who graduate high school and play one season at a respective school before turning pro and entering the NBA draft, to that of high interest rates that Realtors are all too familiar with.

Driscoll informed the crowd that something he has said for years is "it

ain't rocket science," to the point where it is now going to be the Ospreys' team motto for the 2023-2024 men's college basketball season.

The motto is one he believes is fitting for most people because there is a tendency to let worries make things more complicated than they are or should be.

One of the lessons his father taught him is to treat others the way he would want to be treated, regardless of how they treat him back.

"The only thing I can control is how I treat others," Driscoll said. "That's something I'll never forget."

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In the Arts

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Photo by T Charles Erikson

J. Antonio Rodriguez and company in the North American Tour production of 'Hadestown.'



Contributed photo

Naomi Rodgers as Tina Turner performs 'What's Love Got To Do With It' in the North American touring production



Photo by Jo

Gerianne Pérez as Catherine of Aragon (center) in the North American Tour Boleyn Company of 'Six.'

Broadway in Jacksonville shows announced

The FSCJ Artist Series Broadway in Jacksonville sponsored by VyStar Credit Union, has announced the 2023-24 Broadway season shows coming to the Jacksonville Center for the Performing

Arts. Subscriptions for the season are on sale now.

"I am pleased to announce the opening for returning and new subscribers to order season tickets to these spectacular

performances for the '23-24 season," said Milt Russos, executive director of the FSCJ Artist Series Broadway in Jacksonville. "I guarantee next season is going to be full of brilliant theatrical experiences, an iconic Broadway spectacle and powerful storytelling."

- **"Hadestown"** — Winner of eight 2019 Tony Awards, including Best Musical, and the 2020 Grammy Award for Best Musical Theater Album, "Hadestown" is a haunting and hopeful theatrical experience based on a Greek myth. Show dates: Feb. 6-11, 2024

- **"Tina – The Tina Turner Musical"** — the triumphant story of the Queen of Rock n' Roll set to the pulse-pounding soundtrack of her most beloved hits. "Tina – The Tina Turner Musical" presents Turner's journey against all odds to become one of the world's top artists. Show dates: March 5-10, 2024.

- **"Six"** — From Tudor queens to pop icons, the six wives of Henry VIII take the microphone to remix 500 years of historical heartbreak into a euphoric celebration of 21st-century girl power. "Six" won 23 awards in the 2021-22 Broadway season, including the Tony Award for Best Original Score (music and lyrics) and the Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Musical. Show dates: April 2-7, 2024.

- **Disney's "Frozen"** — Created for the stage by the same award-winning team behind the successful film, "Frozen" tells the story of Elsa harnessing her powers within and Anna's thrilling adventure to bring her family together once again. "Frozen" features songs from the original film plus an expanded score with 12 new numbers written just for the stage by the film's songwriters, Oscar winner Kristen Anderson-Lopez and EGOT winner



Photo by Deenvan Meer

Caroline Bowman as Elsa in the North American Tour production of 'Frozen.'

Robert Lopez. Show dates: April 24-May 4, 2024.


- **"The Book of Mormon"** — The nine-time Tony Award-winning Best Musical follows the adventures of a mismatched pair of missionaries sent halfway across the world to spread the Good Word. Contains explicit language. Show dates: Dec. 1-3, 2023.

A four-show subscription package prices start at \$199, with the option to add "The Book of Mormon" as an additional purchase. Season ticket prices vary depending on the show time, day of the week and seating location.

Subscriptions may be ordered online at fscjartistseries.org or by calling 904-632-5000 or 888-860-BWAY, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday-Thursday, and 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday.


VIP seating is available to contributors to the FSCJ Artist Series at seven levels. Contributions start at \$250. Call 904-632-5000 or go to fscjartistseries.org for further information.

Groups of 10 or more are eligible for a discount on tickets to most shows. Groups may place reservation requests by emailing groupsales@fscjartistseries.org or calling 904-632-5050.



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WRITTEN BY ARTHUR MILLER
DIRECTED BY ANDREA MCCOOK


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REVIEW

'Beauty and the Beast' a fun family show

By Shaun Ryan

"Disney's Beauty and the Beast," on stage now through July 30 at Alhambra Theatre & Dining, transports the audience back to the Disney renaissance of the 1990s, when musical extravaganzas rendered in a rich tradition of 2D animation arguably achieved the pinnacle of what Walt had set in motion.

The unforgettable music of Alan Menken and sharp-witted lyrics of Howard Ashman (with additional lyrics by Tim Rice for songs unique to the stage adaptation) provide the architecture for a great show, but the Alhambra cast's flawless execution of these musical numbers guarantees it.

As Belle, Kathryn Nash delivers an outstanding performance. In voice, she channels the original Belle, Paige O'Hara, with startling precision. And nowhere does she shine brighter than in the Menken/Rice number "A Change In Me," which demands some of the strongest sustained vocals in the entire show.

Lisa Valdini Booth gives a worthy performance as the iconic Mrs. Potts. Regardless of the performer, it's nearly impossible to listen to "Beauty and the Beast" without hearing Angela Lansbury, but Booth takes possession of the song and makes it her own.

The solo vocals of Jennifer Hudson (Madame De La Grande Bouche — also known as The Wardrobe) are brief and rare, but the sheer power of her operatic voice — and her exuberant performance — virtually steal



whatever scene in which she appears.

Vocal performances aside, the show is a success on comedic and dramatic levels as well.

The interaction between Nathan Haltiwanger (Gaston) and Anthony Llerandi (Lefou) — not to mention Gaston's adoring entourage — provides some of the show's best laughs. Likewise, Rodney Holmes (Lumiere), Alec Hadden (Cogsworth) and Natalie Brouwer (Babette) trade good-natured barbs and keep the mood light and fun even as they provide indispensable narrative background.

Joshua Bond gives a strong dramatic performance as The Beast, and Nick Barnes strikes the right balance between humorous crackpot and distressed father. Kat DeCicco, with her perpetual smile, is a clear audience favorite as Chip.

The dance numbers, while tailored for a performance area significantly smaller than the typical Broadway stage, nevertheless keep the show lively. Where in a traditional theatrical venue the performers "face" only one direction, theater in the round (or nearly so) demands a more inventive approach to the choreography.

Thus, the dancers are frequently divided so that some face one seating section while others face a different one.

In one number, the dancers hold a metallic mug in each hand and, in a series of complex and ever-changing arrangements, strike the mugs against those held by other dancers. The precisely timed execution is, well, striking.

One of the high points of the show is the clever costuming. This is especially true of The Wardrobe. The costume contains drawers from which the character can extract articles of clothing. At one point, the character is able to meld back into the set itself by simply shutting the upper doors over her human half.

Another costume that brings smiles to the faces in the audience is that of Chip. The challenge of this character is that he is but a teacup. In this show, the teacup is set upon a table that allows the actor to peer out from a hole in the costume while remaining mostly hidden by a tablecloth.

Alhambra Theatre & Dining, 12000 Beach Blvd., Jacksonville, will present "Disney's Beauty and the Beast" through July 30. To learn more or purchase tickets, go to alhambrajax.com.

Elvis tribute show planned

Alhambra After Dark will present "Elvis: Nothing But The Hits!" on Sept. 20-24 at Alhambra Theatre & Dining, 12000 Beach Blvd., Jacksonville.

Ted Torres Martin, who portrays Elvis, is a multi-talented actor, singer, songwriter and musician who has toured extensively around the world. He is the 2016 "Images Of The King" World Champion. His stage acting experience includes shows like: "Biloxi Blues," "One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest" and "Death Of A Salesman."

His portrayal of The King Of Rock N' Roll is considered one of the top tributes in the world. He acquired the "Images Of The King" title in Memphis as recognized by Elvis Presley Enterprises. His vocals are the closest to those of Elvis Presley that today's audiences will ever hear, according to a media release.

The cost of tickets for the three-course dinner and tribute show is \$76. For more information, call the Alhambra box office at 904-641-1212.

Box office hours are 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday.

For more information, go to alhambrajax.com.

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SOFTBALL SKILLS TAKE CENTER STAGE DURING NEASE CAMP



Nease High School hosted a softball summer camp June 12-14 for girls who are going into fourth grade to eighth grade.

The campers had the chance to take to the school's softball field and be taught by current Panthers' players and head coach Vinny Stolp and focused on basic skills pertaining to offense, defense and game situation.

Photos by Anthony Richards





The newly formed girls flag football team has players with various experience levels.



Hanna Sherma hauls in a pass.

Girls flag football team hopes to gain support to become school sport

Photos by Anthony Richards

By Anthony Richards

There are several sports available for students at Ponte Vedra, Nease and Beachside High schools and the list continues to grow.

However, one sport that is not on the athletic program list at those schools is girls flag football, but there are a group of girls that are hoping to change that soon.

A mix of girls from the three schools recently came together to form a team to represent St. Johns County at a girls flag football tournament hosted by the Jacksonville Jaguars and held at TIAA Bank Field in downtown Jacksonville on Jan. 24.

“I first heard about it (flag football) from my friends, and I’ve started to really like it more and more since I got into it,” said Izzy Murray, who will be a freshman at Ponte Vedra High School in the fall. “It’s like a lot of other sports where you have to train and train to get better,” Murray said. “I think I like the hard work of it that goes in.”

There is a push within the community from certain members who want to see it

added to a school’s list of state programs, and they are hoping athletic directors at the local schools can orchestrate the process of making that a reality.

The girls coming together to form a team shows the amount of interest that exists if it were to one day be a sanctioned sport at Ponte Vedra, Nease or Beachside High.

Beachside sophomore Bianca Fawcett believes that it would be a great opportunity if girls flag football was introduced at her school before she graduates in a couple of years.

“I would definitely go out for it if that happened, and there would definitely be a lot more competition amongst the schools,” Fawcett said.

There is a mixture of girls that are still relatively new to the sport as well as those that have been involved with the sport for several years already.

One of the veteran players on the team is Isabella Tuccilla, who will be a freshman at Nease High and has been playing flag football for four years and has developed a passion for the game.

“I used to always play with my brother and his friends, and then I went to one of his games one time and I decided to join,” said Tuccilla said.

According to Tuccilla, she plays both wide receiver and safety, but she has found a knack for pulling flags so the defensive side of the ball is where she gets to really showcase her skills.

The fact that there are girls from three different schools represented is probably one of the biggest hurdles to overcome, but the relationships have been fun to develop and have come along fairly easily.

“I played powderpuff in school, but this is just so much more intense and fun,” Chaves said.

Many of the girls have played or currently play other sports, and there are certain areas that are easily transferable to flag football.

Grace Chaves has only attended a couple of practices so far, but she has already started to see the similarities and advantages that can come from playing other sports.

“I really enjoy running routes and try-



Izzy Murray fires a pass during practice.

ing to catch the ball, because I play soccer, so running is just something I’m used to,” Chaves said. “Soccer has also really helped with footwork and when it comes to getting around the defenders. The spin move is really similar to the spin move in soccer.”

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62						63					64			

ACROSS

- In a place to sleep
- Chemical compound (abbr.)
- A way to fish
- Classic Linklater film "___ and Confused"
- Legume
- Indonesian island
- Smooth, creamy substance
- Arctic
- Wood sorrels
- Defied
- Cattle
- Tableland
- Honorably retired and retaining one's title
- Repossession
- Danced
- Adult males
- A type of section
- Type of Japanese animation
- Satisfaction
- Fit
- "Ain't No Sunshine" singer
- Failure
- Israeli city
- French river
- Cavalry-sword
- Nocturnal S. American rodent
- Liquefied natural gas
- Afflicted
- Electronic counter-countermeasures
- Popular HBO fantasy series (abbr.)
- Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
- Large body of water
- ___kosh, near Lake Winnebago
- Impudence

- Highest parts of something
- Correct behavior
- Batty
- Cyprinid fishes
- Expression of sorrow or pity
- Site of the famous Leaning Tower
- American rocker Snider
- W. African language
- Symbol to mark for removal
- ___ Squad
- Resident
- Federal savings bank
- Paddle
- Returned material authorization (abbr.)
- One point south of due east
- Winter melon

- Last or greatest in an indefinitely large series
- Anger
- Central European river
- First responders
- Spanish noble
- Persons with absence of skin pigment
- Defunct airline
- Small island (British)
- The extent of something from beginning to end
- Capital of Bangladesh
- Dutch cheese
- Imitates
- A contest of speed
- Swiss river
- Prejudice
- Actor Idris
- UNLV's are Runnin'
- Criticize

SUDOKU

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

Level: Beginner

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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

- Payroll firm
- Unit of transmission
- Rockers Better Than ___
- Bambi is one



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