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Thursday, September 21, 2023

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VOLUME 54, NO. 47 \$1.00

Gathering marks treaty anniversary

By Shaun Ryan

Principal Chief Lewis Johnson of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma made a clear distinction Monday, Sept. 18, concerning a gathering to mark the 200th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Moultrie Creek.

“This is not a celebration,” he said, “but it’s a commemoration and it’s an observance of a time, of a people who believed that they had the right to live as the Creator had placed them upon this Earth.”

The small gathering of tribal leaders, state and county officials and others was held at Treaty Park, south of St. Augustine. The 47-acre park is located near the spot where the treaty was signed on Sept. 18, 1823.

Johnson was one of several speakers during the ceremony, which concluded

TREATY continues on Page 16

UF Health St. Johns created as part of Flagler Health+ merger

By Anthony Richards

The merger of UF Health and Flagler Health+ was made complete as the two organizations joined forces officially on Sept. 1 and made it public with a press conference at Flagler Hospital in St. Augustine on Sept. 13.

“Today is a day that we celebrate the history of who Flagler has been, and we also celebrate the future of who we will be as UF Health St. Johns and UF Health Flagler Hospital,” said Carlton DeVooght, CEO of Flagler Health+.

As a result of the transaction, the St. Johns County health system Flagler Health+ is now partnering with UF Health, which is one of the Southeast’s premier academic health systems.

The addition of academic and research initiatives to accompany the established health care already being offered is one of the ways it looks to make an impact with the merger.

MERGER continues on Page 10



Photo by Anthony Richards

Carlton DeVooght, CEO of Flagler Health+ and members of the organization’s board were on hand as its merger with UF Health was made complete with a public announcement on Sept. 13.



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Visit our new website at www.pontevedrarecorder.com

Plus, find the Recorder on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ThePVRecorder

BRIEFS

St. Johns Riverkeeper to speak at luncheon

Coastal Friends will hold their next monthly luncheon from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Oct. 4 at Marsh Landing Country Club, 25655 Marsh Landing Parkway, Ponte Vedra Beach. This month's guest speaker will be Lisa Rinaman, St. Johns Riverkeeper. She serves as the chief advocate and public's voice for the St. Johns River and will talk about all things regarding the river and the status and care of it.

The luncheon is open to members as well as the community; the cost to attend is \$25. Reservations must be made in advance by contacting the luncheon chairman at bartshar@comcast.net. The deadline for checks to be received is Friday morning, Sept. 29.

For information on joining Coastal Friends, email brookemeister@msn.com.

A1A South, St. Augustine, to discuss the findings presented in the Summer Haven Feasibility Study draft report recently completed by the county's contracted coastal engineering firm, INTERA-GEC. The purpose of the study is to develop environmentally and financially sustainable long-term solutions to maintain the flow of the Summer Haven River. Go to sjcfl.us/CoastalProjects/summerhaven.aspx to view the draft report and bit.ly/SHRstudyPublicComments until Sept. 21 to provide public comment on the draft report.

The public will have an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the findings of the draft report with representatives from St. Johns County Coastal Management and INTERA-GEC at the meeting.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

Beach cleanup set for Saturday, Sept. 23

Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve is planning a beach cleanup from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 23. Meet at the visitor center, 505 Guana River Road, Ponte Vedra Beach, where gloves and trash bags will be provided. Participants will be directed to a specific beach for cleanup. Hat, insect repellent, water and sunscreen are recommended. Email Candace.Killian@FloridaDEP.gov to take part.

Palm Valley Market every Tuesday

The Palm Valley Market is held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Tuesday inside the Palm Valley Community Center, 148 Canal Road. The market offers fresh produce, baked goods, local honey, tea, seasonal treats, soap, jewelry, plants and more.

South Ponte Vedra Park temporarily closed

St. Johns County has temporarily closed South Ponte Vedra Park, 2993 S. Ponte Vedra Blvd., to complete a \$306,000 restoration project. The closure is expected to last until Thursday, Sept. 28.

The restoration project will help restore the dune that protects the upland infrastructure of the park, which took substantial damage from both hurricanes Ian and Nicole in 2022.

The project is being funded by FEMA through Public Assistance Category G (Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Areas).

Summer Haven study subject of public meeting

St. Johns County will host a public meeting from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 21, at Celebration Hall at St. Anastasia Catholic Church, 5205

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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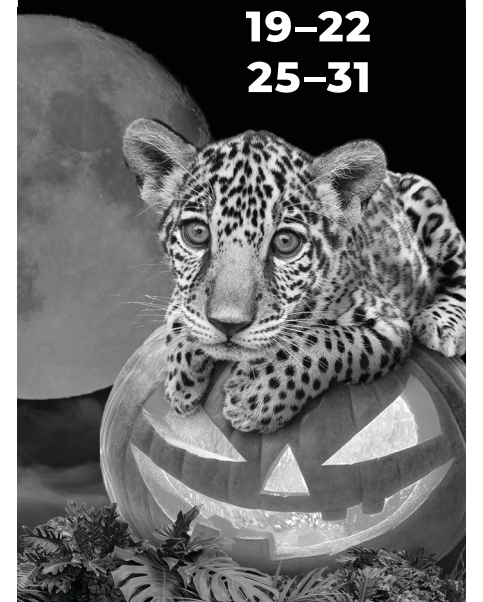


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Chabad at the Beaches invites community to ‘Sukkot Under the Stars’

Chabad at the Beaches is planning “Sukkot Under the Stars,” an enchanting and meaningful event that invites the entire community to come together and celebrate the festival of Sukkot in a unique and memorable way. People of all backgrounds are invited to experience the joy and festivities of Sukkot, a Jewish holiday known as the “Holiday of Joy.”

This event embraces the spirit of unity and celebration as attendees come together to rejoice under the open sky.

It will be held at 7 p.m. Friday, Sept. 29, at The Aaron and Blanche Scharf



Chabad Center, 521 A1A N, Ponte Vedra Beach. Admission is \$18 for adults, \$15 for children (all ages). Sponsorship opportunities are available.

A capacity crowd is expected, so timely reservations are important. RSVP to ChabadBeaches.com.

The centerpiece of the evening is the sukkah, a temporary outdoor structure adorned with natural materials like branches and fruits. Guests will have the opportunity to step into the sukkah, a symbol of joy and shelter and immerse themselves in the traditions and customs associated with Sukkot.

There will be a kosher cuisine and traditional Sukkot delicacies.

“Sukkot Under the Stars” is a family-friendly event. Children will have their own special activities, ensuring that everyone can join in the festivities. Organizers say that, whether you’re well-

versed in the traditions of Sukkot or simply curious to learn more, “Sukkot Under the Stars” promises a memorable experience for all.

For more information, contact Dafne at dafne@chabadbeaches.com or 904-770-0502.

Chabad at the Beaches is dedicated to building a strong and connected community where individuals of all ages can come together to celebrate, learn and grow. Events, like “Sukkot Under the Stars” aim to foster meaningful connections and provide enriching experiences for our community members.

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OBITUARIES



Roberta Terese Kane O'Sullivan

Roberta Terese Kane O'Sullivan passed away peacefully Wednesday, September 13, surrounded by family and friends. We all knew her as Berta, or just Bert. She was born November 18, 1964, the youngest of six children, to Barney and Mariana Kane. She graduated from Fletcher HS in 1982 and University of Florida, 1988. Berta's family was always the center of her life, growing up in Atlantic Beach, FL, her home was always a welcoming place for anyone who walked in the front door.

She brought light, literally and figuratively, to people around the world as she made friends with everyone she met and maintained so many of those friendships throughout her life. Her compassion

wasn't just for people, her many pets throughout the years lived happy lives, including her three cats.

Her early career was a happy time: climbing scaffolding and lighting shows, entertaining the world. She organized one of the first lights shows at Universal theme park when it opened in Orlando. She spotlighted the performers in Cirque de Soleil. She toured the world with the bands, The Violent Femmes, Joan Jett, and several other acts. She approached life with the attitude of "I can do it Myself" including bleeding the brakes on her car when needed. Berta's sense of style (her refrigerator closet) and humor often defied the conventional and highlighted the creativity and sense of individuality that drew so many to her. The definite light of Berta's life are her sons Connor and Cian. They brought her joy and comfort every day.

She is survived by her husband Joe, sons Connor and Cian, Mother Marianna, her brothers Philip (Kathleen) and Gerard (Anne); sisters Ellen Cage (Colin) and

Marian Kane (Chris Van Hoof); sister-in-law Joann Kane; nine nieces and nephews and many dear friends who have so many great stories to share. She was predeceased by her father Barney and brother Steven.

A viewing will be held at Quinn-Shalz Funeral Home, 3600 3rd St. S, Jacksonville Beach, FL on Tuesday, September 19, 2023, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

A Funeral Mass will be celebrated at St. Paul's Catholic Church, 523 Pablo Ave., Jacksonville Beach, FL on Wednesday, September 20 at 12:00 p.m.

Please visit her online Tribute at www.quinn-shalz.com.

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DEATH NOTICES

Donald G. Jacobsen

Donald G. Jacobsen, 89, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Sept. 16, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre, 3600 Third St. South, Jacksonville Beach, Florida. www.quinn-shalz.com

Agnes Leona Leskanic

Agnes Leona Leskanic, 93, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Sept. 15, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre, 3600 Third St. South, Jacksonville Beach, Florida. www.quinn-shalz.com

Michael D. Moskowitz

Michael D. Moskowitz, 65, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Aug. 31, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. 904-249-1100 www.quinn-shalz.com

Roberta Kane O'Sullivan

Roberta Kane O'Sullivan, 58, of Ponte Vedra, Florida, died Sept. 13, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre, 3600 Third St. South, Jacksonville Beach, Florida. www.quinn-shalz.com

Lewis Ivey Wade, Jr.

Lewis Ivey Wade, Jr., 69, of Jacksonville Beach, Florida, died Sept. 15, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre, 3600 Third St. South, Jacksonville Beach, Florida. www.quinn-shalz.com




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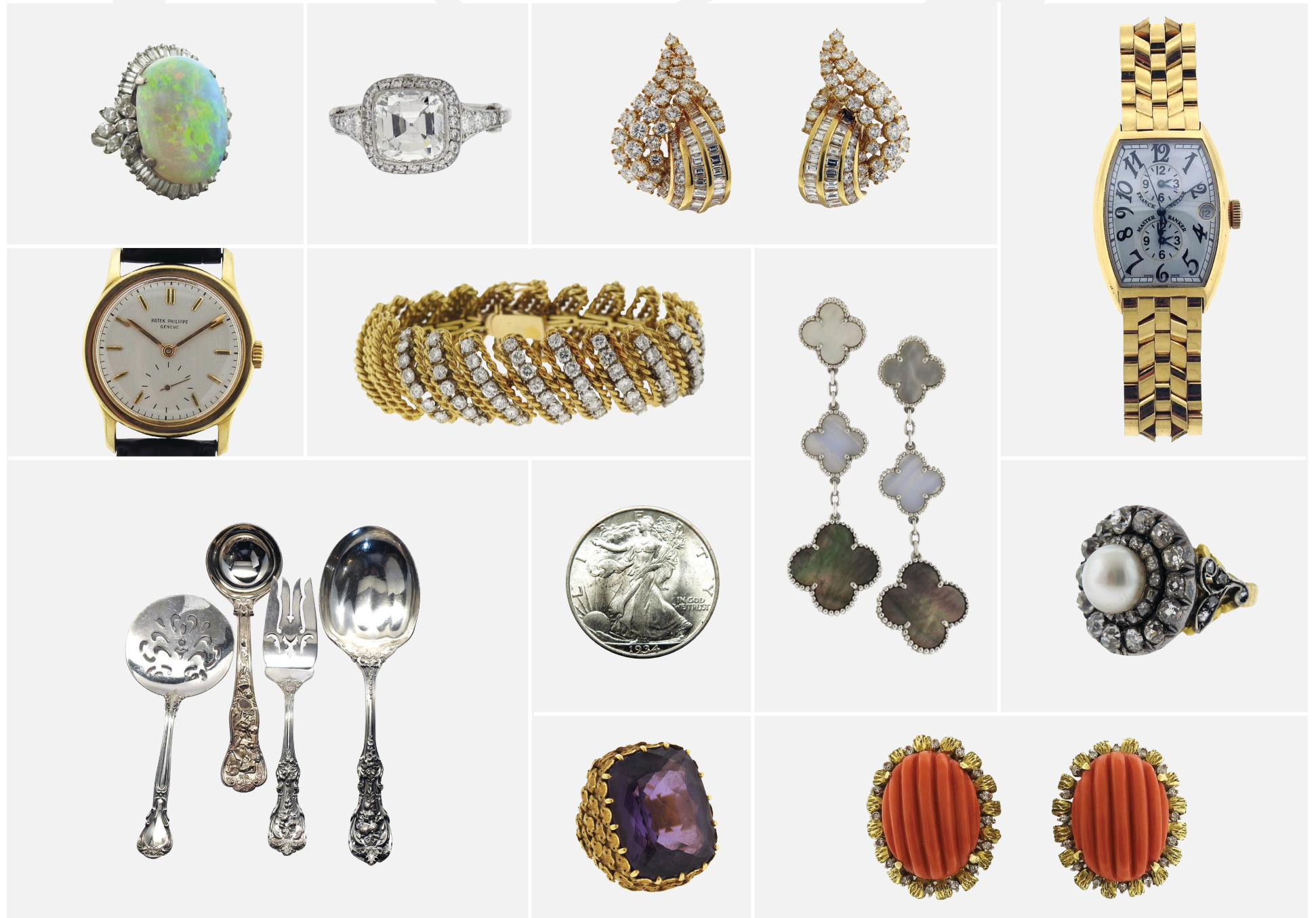


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CALL TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT

Anne Urban is the new president of the Ponte Vedra Woman's Club. She started her own company in 2004 after 22 years in the hotel business and now she has a pair of companies specializing in event planning and wedding supplies. She has enjoyed the many wonderful women who are part of the club and share the common belief of community and giving back to others in need as she does. Her involvement in the club has led to lifelong friendships being developed.

Anne Urban

As told to Anthony Richards

Tell us a little about yourself and your background.

I own two businesses, called Destination Planning and Florida Wedding Supplies. We plan and design more than 150 events per year in North Florida.

I moved to Ponte Vedra in 1991 and have lived in the community for over 30 years. I have been married 39 years to Steve Urban and have two daughters, Lauren and Sarah along with four amazing grandchildren.

What led to the creation of Destination Planning, and how long have you been in business?

I was in the hotel business for 22 years and when the community secured the Super Bowl in 2005, I knew the time was right to start my own company to serve the corporate clients that the Super Bowl would bring to town.

I started my company on April 1, 2004, and booked over \$1 million worth of Super Bowl business. That event is truly what launched my company and has allowed me to be in business for almost 20 years.

We specialize in assisting companies and organizations from around the country who are bringing groups to our region with all their planning needs. We are their local destination experts.

Florida Wedding Supplies makes up over half our business. We are the largest full-service wedding planning company in North Florida. We do everything but cook.

From in-house floral designs, rentals, custom signage, to full-service coordination, we offer a one-stop shop service to assist our couples with the planning process.

We make it stress-free and, most of all, fun to plan their wedding in these very busy and unpredictable times.

What are your goals and objectives for the business moving forward?

My passion is definitely the wedding side of our business. I also love to support the nonprofit community by offering my expertise to help their planners maximize their fundraising efforts.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

Getting to know my clients is my favorite part of the job. I get to help them with some of the most important events of their life.

As I get to know my customers and their vision, the fun part is making their vision come to life! I help plan and design weddings, anniversary parties, significant birthday parties and even celebration of life events.

What are some of the aspects of the industry that are more challenging but still fun?

The hospitality industry has been through so much over the last 25 years. From 9/11 to two recessions and one pandemic, it has been a real challenge to keep the industry whole. I have loved using my experience to help my clients and colleagues navigate these turbulent times.



Contributed photo

Anne Urban is a business owner and president of the Ponte Vedra Woman's Club.

What are you looking forward to most about being the new president of the Ponte Vedra Woman's Club?

I have loved helping the PVWC increase their fundraising by over 100% in the last few years. It is very rewarding especially in light of the economy.

My passion for this club has been getting to know so many wonderful women who share the common belief of community and giving back to others in need.

I look forward to developing even stronger programs, fundraising events and increasing our membership by introducing our club to all the amazing women that continue to grace our community.

How have you enjoyed the club since joining?

Living in a community our size can be difficult to meet friends once your kids grow up. Since joining our club, I feel I have met lifelong friends.

We share fun activities; common goals and our social events are so much fun! This club has made making friends and getting involved so much easier to do.

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

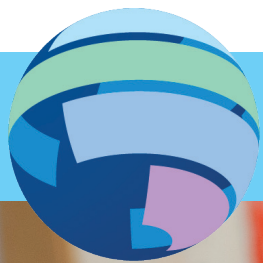
Where do I begin... the beach, the big city/small town feel, the friendliness of our community, the convenience of our location to everything.

Did I mention the beach? LOL

What do you like to do in your free time?

Spending time with family is definitely top on the list. I do love to travel when time permits.

I am involved with several women's groups because I am so inspired with the women in our area. I feel these groups help me to be a better wife, mother, grandmother, friend and employer. They just make me a better "me."



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Jaguars discuss stadium plans during county huddle

By Anthony Richards

Talks between the Jacksonville Jaguars and the City of Jacksonville pertaining to a plan to construct a new stadium have begun, and the team held a community huddle event at the St. Johns County Convention Center at the World Golf Village on Sept. 18.

The community huddle was one of about 20 that the Jaguars have held as a way to gather fan feedback about the initial design renderings and plan.

According to Jaguars president Mark Lamping, there are two tweaks that have already been made to the proposed plan as a result of the community huddles.

“One really deals more with pedestrian flow and public safety, and that is the concept of adding pedestrian bridges that will allow you to cross Bay Street without having to stop traffic,” Lamping said. “The second piece is that people are really curious about the parking, but then what follows after that is that if they start using mass transit or ride share, they don’t want to lose the tailgate experience.”

One of the solutions Lamping said has been tossed around has been creating a tailgating zone area for those who arrive



Jacksonville Jaguars president Mark Lamping discussed the proposed plan for the team’s future stadium at a community huddle event at World Golf Village on Sept. 18.

Photo by Anthony Richards

STADIUM continues on Page 12

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Public input sought on World Golf Village

St. Johns County has invited the public to provide input at two meetings concerning the World Golf Village properties that are being vacated by the World Golf Foundation. The meetings will be held 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Sept. 27 and 9-11 a.m. Sept. 28 at the St. Johns County Public Administration Building Auditorium, 500 San Sebastian View.

Both meetings will be broadcast live and as video-on-demand on the county's GTV broadcast (co.st-johns.fl.us/GTV/watchGTV.aspx) as well as to local subscribers of Comcast Cable and U-verse. The public can go to sjcfl.us/wgv to learn more and to provide online input by Sept. 30 on potential future uses of the properties.

"I am excited to gather community input and professional proposals on this vital piece of property located in District 2, which is pivotal to the continued quality of life in the county," District 2 Commissioner Sarah S. Arnold said in July as the county began its public outreach efforts. "There are so many possibilities that can be realized, and to listen and learn about what the community wants will be a part of the process the Board of County Commissioners uses to make its decisions about these assets."

At the June 6 Board of County Commissioners regular meeting, staff presented an update on the assessment of the properties and recommendations moving forward.



WORLD GOLF VILLAGE®

On Sept. 6, with the support of the board the county sent a letter of intent to the foundation expressing interest in acquisition of the PGA Tour Productions facility,

located at 21 World Golf Place and South Legacy Trail, which is comprised of various easements, parking lots and other outdoor spaces.

Additionally, the county is working with the foundation to collaborate on efforts to continue operation of the IMAX movie theatre.

The properties that are open for public input include:

- World Golf Hall of Fame: a 64,113-square-foot multi-purpose facility. The foundation notified its intent to discontinue Hall of Fame operations on or about Sept. 1. Currently, the foundation is proposing a temporary lease extension to Dec. 31.

- World Golf Hall of Fame IMAX Theater: a 17,865-square-foot movie theater. The equipment (movie screen and audio/visual components) would remain in the building.

- PGA Tour Productions: a 32,329-square-foot Class-A office building. The foundation is relocating at the end of 2024.

- South Legacy Trail: 36.07 acres of various parking lots, rights-of-way areas, landscaping and lakes.

The county's Economic Development Department continues to analyze public feedback and public engagement to establish themes and bring back a report to inform the commissioners for a comprehensive planning approach for the properties.

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Dr. David Nelson, UF Health president, announced the new name of Flagler Hospital in St. Augustine will be UF Health Flagler Hospital.



Photos by Anthony Richards

Members of the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office were on hand for the press conference.

Merger

Continued from 1

“All this is because we want to create the ideal health system for the communities that we serve,” said Dr. David Nelson, UF Health president. “We’re grateful to be here and to welcome Flagler Health+ into the UF Health family.”

According to DeVooght, the system has had different names and locations

over the years, but throughout all of it the commitment they have to the communities they serve has remained consistent.

The merger is just the latest change, but one that he believes only strengthens the mission the health care system has never wavered from.

“When our board made the decision to find a partner to ensure that commitment continued, we were fortunate to find a like-minded organization that is committed to the communities we serve as much

as we are,” DeVooght said.

DeVooght stated that additions are the primary aspects they are focusing on and there will be no effect to the residents that are already patients within the established Flagler Health+ program of care.

According to Nelson, the partnership is all about bringing in new resources, which includes bringing in human and intellectual capital through funding and innovation.

“We’re very interested beyond the clin-

ical care, in our research and educational mission, as well as being entrenched deeply in community engagement,” Nelson said. “Hopefully, the future of Flagler systems will see a lot of training programs and opportunities for patients to engage in clinical research trials for cutting-edge research.”

Combining the organizations means a shared identity was needed, and it was announced during the press conference that moving forward Flagler Health+ will now be known as UF Health St. Johns at the enterprise level and the hospital will be named UF Health Flagler Hospital.

“People often don’t think what it means to have high quality health care in their neighborhood,” said James Kelly Jr., interim CEO with UF Health Shands. “They just know that when they need it, they want it to be there to meet their needs.”

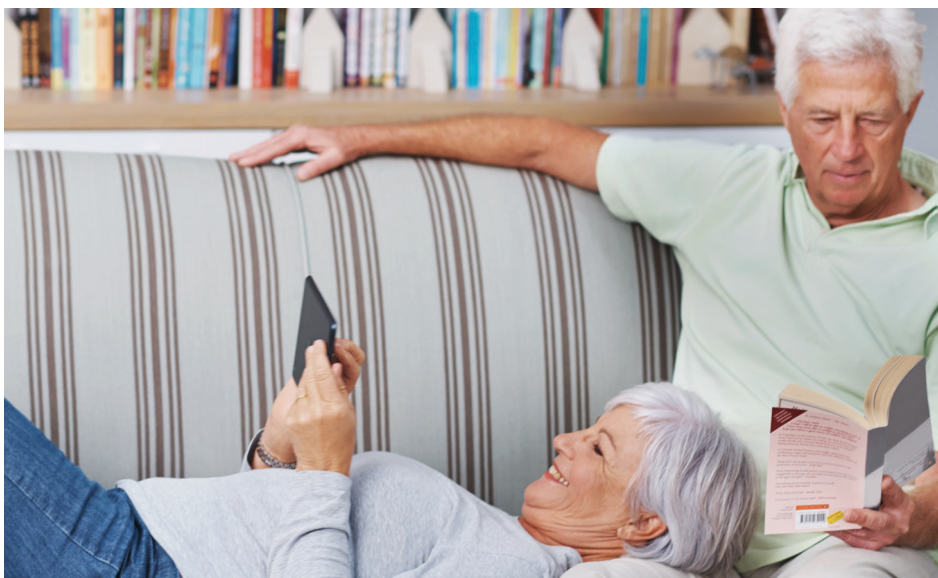
The history and the legacy of the facility within the community were instrumental factors in the naming of the hospital, to honor those that laid the foundation through generations of medical service.

That legacy includes Flagler Health+ being around for 130 years.

“As we move forward together, we will be able to strengthen the recruitment and retention of team members, physicians and advance practice providers to further enhance our local and high-quality health care for the community,” Kelly Jr. said.

Kelly Jr. stated that part of that enhancement plan is to add an integrated enterprise-wide technology strategy, including new clinical equipment to support current and future health care professionals.

“As we further develop and implement our integration plan, I believe everyone will see an energized group of people working together to grow an already outstanding organization,” Kelly Jr. said. “I look forward to seeing the results of that effort.”



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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.

KATHY'S GARDENING GUIDE

Landscaping with Deer

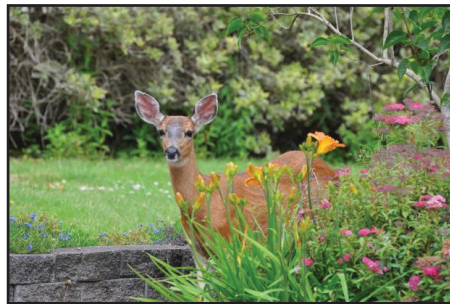
"Live bold, without fear. This is life amongst the deer." — Katelyn S. Bolds



By Kathy Esfahani

Observing nature in action is part of the wonder of gardening! Although deer can be as beautiful as butterflies, hummingbirds and other visitors, they can also cause significant damage to the plants in a landscape. Leaves and stems with jagged edges are a sign that a deer has been feasting on your plants, particularly if the damage is high off the ground.

So, how can you protect your landscape? The most effective strategy is a combination of multiple methods. Physical barriers — such as fences and motion-activated lights — can be a good starting point.



Deer can do a lot of damage to your landscape.

You can also purchase chemical repellents in lawn-and-garden stores. While many of these commercial formulas may be effective, the cost of repellents can become significant.

Homemade deer repellents include sprays made of 1 cup milk, 1 egg, 1 tablespoon cooking oil, 1 tablespoon liquid dish soap and 4 cups water in a 1 gallon jug (allow to ferment in the sun before spraying).

Another recipe is a mixture of 1 gallon water, 3 tablespoons red pepper flakes and 2 teaspoons liquid Castile soap (boil the

water and red pepper flakes before adding soap; allow the solution to sit for 24 hours before straining into a spray bottle).

Some believe that sprinkling flakes of Irish Spring soap or handfuls of human hair around your yard will make it less attractive to deer. The key for any deterrent is to mask the smell of the plants that the deer want. They will avoid areas that smell like humans or less desirable scents (in their opinion).

Try to be patient as you experiment with various deterrents to determine an effective strategy for your deer.

Ultimately, it is most helpful to fill your landscape with plants and flowers that deer do not enjoy. Consider planting spiny or smelly shrubs and ornamental grasses around the perimeter of your yard.

When planning your landscape, look for deer-resistant trees, shrubs and flowers. Tree options include bottlebrush, crepe myrtle, live oak, magnolia, queen palm and royal palm.

Select deer-resistant shrubs such as bird of paradise, camellia, carissa, Chinese

Photos provided by Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery

Flower of the Week



Mona Lavender

holly, croton, gardenia, juniper, lantana, plumbago and viburnum

Finally, there are also annuals and perennials that deer will avoid. Deer do not enjoy the flowers of African iris, black-eyed Susan, blue daze, canna lily, coneflower, gaura, marigolds, mona lavender, penta, snap dragons and verbena.

Happy planting!

Flower of the Week: Mona Lavender

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 and ideas, visit Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery, 196 N. Roscoe Blvd. The phone number is 904-655-7373.



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Stadium

Continued from 8

via mass transit to take part in.

He also stated that they are aware that NFL fans do not want parking garages, so they are going to attempt to avoid those the best they can when figuring out how to handle the loss of parking spaces around the stadium due to the size of the new structure and the landscape around it.

Another major talking point following the Jaguars home opener against the Kansas City Chiefs was the hot conditions that fans and players faced with a 1 p.m. kickoff in September.

Lamping agreed that the heat was difficult for all those involved and that the team's stadium plans have deeply considered the weather in Florida, especially early in the season by designing a tinted roof that would cover the stadium while still allowing fans a view of the sky and flyovers but lowering the temperature by an estimated 10 degrees for those sitting in the stands.

Whether or not season ticket holders would see an increase in their pricing once the project is complete was also asked during the event.

Lamping informed the roughly 20 people in attendance that yes, season ticket members are likely to see an increase in pricing, but the goal will



Courtesy of the Jacksonville Jaguars

The maximum capacity of the stadium is projected to be 72,000 for events such as the Florida-Georgia Game or concerts but would probably seat 62,000 on average for Jaguars games.

remain to keep the cost as reasonable as possible among the industry standard.

However, during the two years the construction would be taking place, in which the Jaguars would likely be playing in a different venue in the likes of Gainesville or Orlando, Lamping assured that season tickets holders would

not be required to travel to those cities in order to keep their standing.

Instead, a season ticket holder's status will be frozen during those two years and be intact once the stadium is completed and games resume in Jacksonville.

The maximum capacity of the stadium is projected to be 72,000 for events such as the Florida-Georgia Game or concerts but would probably seat 62,000 on average for Jaguars games.

The idea was to have an extra 10,000 seats built in along the upper deck east and west sides of the stadium that can be hidden with a video board that is made of a flexible material and would be able to be folded and stored away to reveal the seats for events that require them.

"It's (video board) removeable and can be tucked up into the roof very easily," Lamping said. "It's one of the great challenges we gave to the architect, because each year for the Florida-Georgia Game, the City of Jacksonville brings in all these temporary seats, which is

disruptive for Jaguars games. This way you get those extra seats with the push of a button."

The new stadium would also have a proposed doubling of the width of the main concourse, which would allow for more room to add more food options around the venue, which is something they have heard expressed by fans over the years.

As a result, they plan to have different food choices with each corner of the stadium having a specific cuisine featured, such as Southern, international, coastal and urban as part of the food districts on the floor plan of the stadium.

The amenity updates will also include 32 new escalators, 13 new elevators and 14 new restrooms that will be renovated and expanded in size.

"We want it to be very efficient for people to move around," Lamping said. "It will make it a lot easier for our fans to not only get into the stadium, but also get out of the stadium. It's all about making the experience as comfortable as possible."

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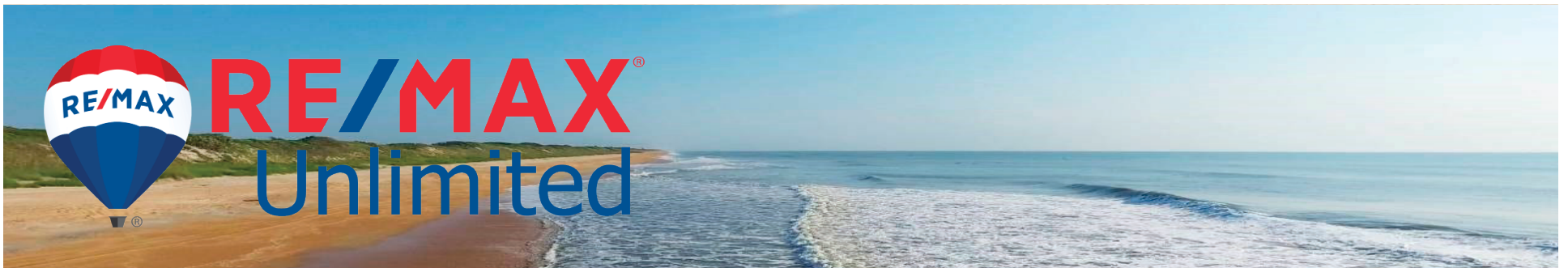
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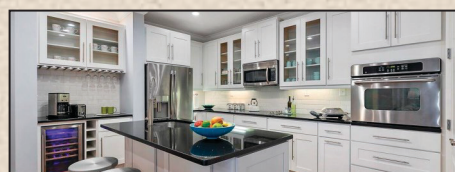
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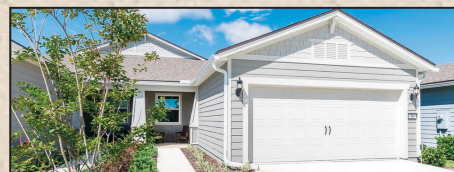
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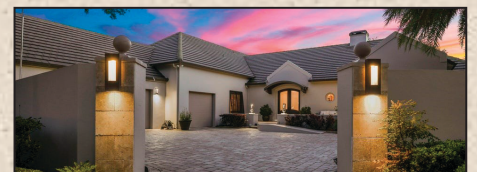
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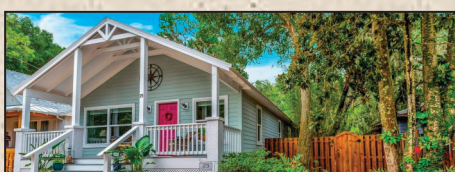
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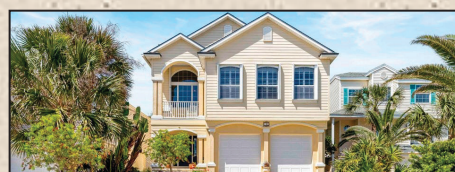
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OPE student ambassadors participate in a school cleanup project at their first meeting.

Leadership takes flight at Ocean Palms

The newly appointed fifth-grade ambassadors at Ocean Palms Elementary School kicked off the school year with their first meeting on Sept. 6, during which they received their assignments for the year and took part in a school cleanup project.

The ambassador program, a long tradition at Ocean Palms, engages fifth-grade students in leadership and community-based projects throughout the year. Students assist in classrooms, help with carline, lead the canned food drive, lend a hand for Treats for Troops, implement the Kindness Card Project, execute the First Responders Project and more each year.



Contributed photos

The 2023-24 fifth-grade ambassadors at Ocean Palms.



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First Coast Dancing with the Stars

The 2023 First Coast Dancing with the Stars event raised more than \$75,000 to support the free concerts and educational programming of the Beaches Fine Arts Series.

The event was held Sept. 16 at WJCT Studios.

The eight participating teams included:

Winners

- champion, Clarissa Walker Chandler and pro Allan Alday of Dance Alday
- first runner up, Pat Gillum Sams and pro Sean Anthony of Studio 904
- second runner up Mark Marcoux and Ekaterina Derevleva of Ballroom Dance

Academy.

Other teams

Jessica Ring and Tony Kantin of Seaside Ballroom

Aurica Duca and Christian Marcantio of Allure Dance Experience

Paul Saville and Johnetta Wise of Wise Footwork

Brittany Molina Moore and Jeremy Jose of Monarch Ballroom

Cyndy Tomassetti and Chris Thomas of Monarch Ballroom.

A special performance by professional Tony Kantin and his professional partner

Olivia Card ended the gala with their routine that received fourth place in the Professional World Cabaret Division of the United States Dance Championships the week prior to the BFAS event.

The event is made possible by many in-kind donations. Orsay is the VIP party host. The eight restaurants for the gala buffet included Medure Brothers; SoNapa Grille; True Foods Kitchen; Mandola's; Dawn to Dusk Catering; Seasons 52; TacoLu; and Hamburger Mary's.

Southern Glazers provided drinks.

Scott Blake was the official gala photographer.



Photos by Scott Blake

Pro Tony Kantin and Olivia Card perform their pro routine.

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Principal Chief David Hill of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation speaks Monday, Sept. 18, at an observance of the 200th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Moultrie Creek.



Principal Chief Lewis Johnson of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma addresses the gathering Monday, Sept. 18, at Treaty Park.

Treaty

Continued from 1

with the raising of five flags, including those for the Seminole Nation and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

Andrew K. Frank, director of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Center at Florida State University, said in his remarks that the treaty was pushed by the government of the United States under President James Monroe, not the indigenous people.

“It was one of the many acts of American expansionism and one of the first parts of what we can call the land grab in Florida,” Frank said. “It was one of the first steps toward forced Indian removal.”

In fact, said Frank, the vision of Monroe and others for Florida didn’t include the indigenous people at all. They advocated not just for removal of the people from their ancestral lands, but also their

confinement.

However, the treaty also did something else: It confirmed the sovereignty of the Muscogee and Seminole peoples and established obligations for the federal government to follow in future dealings.

“The very treaty that sought to erase Native Americans contained some of the very legal apparatus that helped them assert their authority, retain their dignity and help them survive,” said Frank.

“This treaty was part of some of the darkest days and times in America,” said Principal Chief David Hill of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. “It was the beginning of removal, of wars, death and a lot of pain. This treaty, like many others, was never truly honored. It was part of the policy to eradicate our people. But it didn’t work. We endured.”

RaeLynn A. Butler, historic & cultural preservation manager for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, pointed out that indigenous peoples continue to thrive two

centuries after the treaty was signed.

“We want people to know that we’re still here,” she said, “that we are the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.”

Johnson thanked organizers for the invitation to participate in the ceremony. He also expressed his pride in how his people have stood up to their adversity.

He closed on a hopeful note.

“As we reconcile our hearts and our spirits with one another, as we find resolution with one another, then that’s when the blessings of the Creator will continue to pour out on the great United States of America and all the sovereign Indian nations of the Americas, as well,” he said.



Photos by Shaun Ryan

RaeLynn A. Butler, historic & cultural preservation manager for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, speaks Monday, Sept. 18, at an observance of the 200th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Moultrie Creek.

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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2023

Delicious Destinations thrills taste buds at luncheon PAGE 18

St. Augustine Humane Society raises record \$49K in Pin Up Paws contest PAGE 19

Hubbard House plans memorial breakfast PAGE 21

Registration open for Wolfson Children's Challenge PAGE 23

K9s United receives \$400K in state funding PAGE 24

Cross Country for a Cure cyclists ride 5K miles, raise \$140K PAGE 26

Halloween Doors & More supports pediatric program PAGE 31

...AND MORE INSIDE





Celebrity chef Dennis Chan of Blue Bamboo Canton Bistro garnishes his award-winning Mandarin orange cake with brittle during his presentation.



The event's wine educator Matthew Citriglia mingles with guests in attendance. Photos by Anthony Richards

Delicious Destinations thrills taste buds at luncheon

By Anthony Richards

For the past 21 years, the Delicious Destinations fundraiser put forth by Ascension St. Vincent's has lived up to its

name in more ways than one, and the 2023 event followed suit.

The two-day event kicked off with the Celebrity Chef by the Sea Luncheon at

Ponte Vedra Inn & Club on Sept. 8 with Dennis Chan of Blue Bamboo Canton Bistro as the featured chef, and the featured wine educator was Matthew Citriglia, director of wine education for Southern Glazers.

Chan created a three-course meal for all those in attendance at the luncheon and demonstrated on stage how he made each of the dishes as they were being served and eaten.

The first course was a curry crème brulee with tomatoes and green garnish followed by a fire-grilled fish with a mini-Thai basil pesto on top of baby bok choy dressed in oil, ginger garlic salt and Chinese sausage fried rice as the second course.

Finally, the third course was his award-winning Mandarin orange cake garnished with brittle.

"A few months they came and asked if I wanted to be a part of the event, and I knew of it because they have a great committee that has a lot of our customers," Chan said. "We've always supported with experiences or gift baskets, but it was nice to be part of the live luncheon."

Having grown up in the area, he understands the importance of not just the event, but of how important it is to support community initiatives and the good that Ascension St. Vincent's is doing through events like Delicious Destinations.

"All the good that they're doing just made me feel so good about being a part of it even more than ever," Chan said. "It was just such a great turnout as well."

Sarah Rowe, newly named manager of mobile health with Ascension St. Vin-

LUNCHEON continues on Page 20



Sister Rosie Judith spoke about the spiritual care Ascension St. Vincent's offers and led the prayer prior to lunch being served.



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St. Augustine Humane Society raises record \$49K in Pin Up Paws contest

Contributed photos

The St. Augustine Humane Society launched its 13th annual Pin Up Paws pet calendar photo contest in June to support the nonprofit's mission of providing safety net services to pet owners. For a chance to have a pet featured in the full-color, high-quality calendar, photos of pets were submitted with heartfelt and entertaining descriptions to let people know why they should vote for the pet to be featured.

Votes were made with donations starting at \$1. According to Carolyn Smith, executive director of the Humane Society, a record \$49,735 was raised by the entries and voting efforts this year.

The top three winners in votes were:

- Katherine Johnson, a tuxedo cat who raised \$8,450 and is the first feline to grace the Pin Up Paws calendar cover.
- Bix Atteberry, a black Lab mix who raised \$5,975.
- Otis Gott-Bamberg, a Yorkie and veteran contest participant with \$5,323.

To view the winners, go to pinuppaws.com.

The "Best Buds" calendar will feature the winning pets in a flower garden theme. Styling and photography sessions are provided by award-winning photographer Addison Fitzgerald, who has donated his talents to the Humane Society since the calendar's inception.

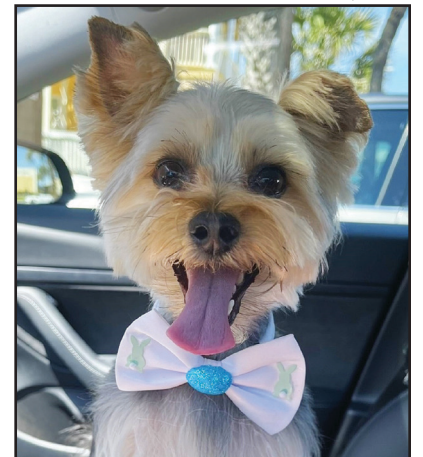
Local fine artist and graphic designer Maribel Angel continues to donate her creative talents for the distinctive calendar publication.



Katherine



Bix



Otis

"Each year presents a new challenge for the creative team, and this year's calendar promises to be exceptional," said Smith.

Columbia Restaurant gift certificates, courtesy of the dining establishment's annual Community Harvest program, were also awarded to winners. For 25 years, the restaurant program has provided \$3.5 million to nonprofit organizations throughout Florida. Customers who dine at the St. Augustine location during the month of September may select St. Augustine Humane Society or any of the other worthy charities listed on a ballot, which is provided at the table. The restaurant calculates

5% of the check and donates the value in gift certificates to the nonprofit.

The release of the 2024 "Best Buds" calendar will be held Nov. 3 during the Annual Pin Up Paws Party at Embassy Suites by Hilton St. Augustine Beach Oceanfront Resort, 300 A1A Beach Blvd., St. Augustine. Tickets are available for purchase at PUPparty.org.

All proceeds from the calendar contest and sales, sponsorships, event tickets, wine pull and silent auction will benefit the organization's programs, including the Humane Society's charity clinic, which includes the only ASPCA Spay Neuter Alliance clinic in St. Johns County.

A Community of Healing Offering a Place of Compassion and Camaraderie



William & Terri

William is an Air Force Veteran who spent time at The Gabriel House of Care while healing from a heart transplant with his wife and caretaker, Terri. "We are so happy to be here and thankful that a facility like Gabriel House exists," explains William. "Without it, a lot of people would not be able to get this kind of care."



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11 am Event Kickoff & Play Begins	4 pm Awards and Raffle
3 pm Post-Celebration Begins	6 pm Event Concludes

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Find out more about Hearts 4 Minds and our charity event by visiting our website.

Hearts4Minds.org





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Luncheon

Continued from 18

cent’s gave an example of one of the programs that events like Delicious Destinations supports.

“It began long ago in my teenage years when I felt a calling to serve the underserved,” Rowe said. “It is obviously very special to me, and I love what we do at mobile health and for our patients. It truly is a blessing to work there every day. We wouldn’t be able to do what we do without

the donations from others.”

The local mobile health program services Duval, Nassau, Clay, St. Johns and Putnam counties, where they serve adults, pediatrics and have a large senior population.

“We had a total of more than 11,000 visits last year, and the value of that care was more than \$2.7 million, and we avoided more than 1,800 E.R. visits.”

The dishes featured at the luncheon were hand chosen by Chan and a lot of thought went into his final choices.

“It was pretty much a two-month process,

because I met with chef (Hermann) Mueller who is in charge here at the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club and we talked back and forth until we came up with a menu that would really work,” Chan said. “They executed it very beautifully.”

As Chan walked around and visited with the attendees at the various tables at the event, he discussed the dishes with them and one of the popular talking points was the curry crème brulee, which seemed to capture the taste buds of so many people.

“Chef Mueller said that we needed to do

something that really surprises them at the beginning, so that’s when I decided to do the crème brulee as an appetizer and the first course,” Chan said.

At a premier food event such as Delicious Destinations, a surprise usually entails being creative with a dish and that was exactly the feedback with the crème brulee.

“When they were telling me that it shocked them, their plates were empty, so it made me feel good to know that they meant shocked in a good way,” Chan chuckled.



Delicious food, fun times for a good cause



The 21st Annual Delicious Destinations, an Ascension St. Vincent’s fundraiser, included a celebrity chef luncheon on Sept. 8 and the main event and auction on Sept. 9, with both being held at Ponte Vedra Inn & Club. The money raised as part of the fundraisers will go toward the Ascension St. Vincent’s Foundation and its initiatives within the local community.

Photos by Anthony Richards and Susan Griffin



Hubbard House plans memorial breakfast

To honor the strength of survivors of domestic violence in Northeast Florida, Hubbard House is hosting the 29th Annual Barbara Ann Campbell Memo-

rial Breakfast, presented by Bank of America.

This annual event brings together community leaders, prominent busi-

nesses and passionate supporters to raise awareness of domestic violence and Hubbard House resources. The signature event also memorializes the local lives

lost because of domestic violence, while sending an inspiring message of strength

BREAKFAST continues on **Page 22**



Contributed photo

The 29th Annual Barbara Ann Campbell Memorial Breakfast, presented by Bank of America, will help to raise awareness about domestic violence and Hubbard House resources.




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Jaguars take part in 'Community Tuesdays'

Check presented to New Town neighborhood during home opener

The Jacksonville Jaguars players will be giving back a lot this season as part of an initiative called "Community Tuesdays," where they will be giving back to the community in a variety of ways. The Jaguars Foundation also joined forces with the NFL Foundation and several other local charities to present a donation of \$1.1 million to the First Coast Relief Fund on the field during the home opener to help the New Town community, following the recent shooting that took place.

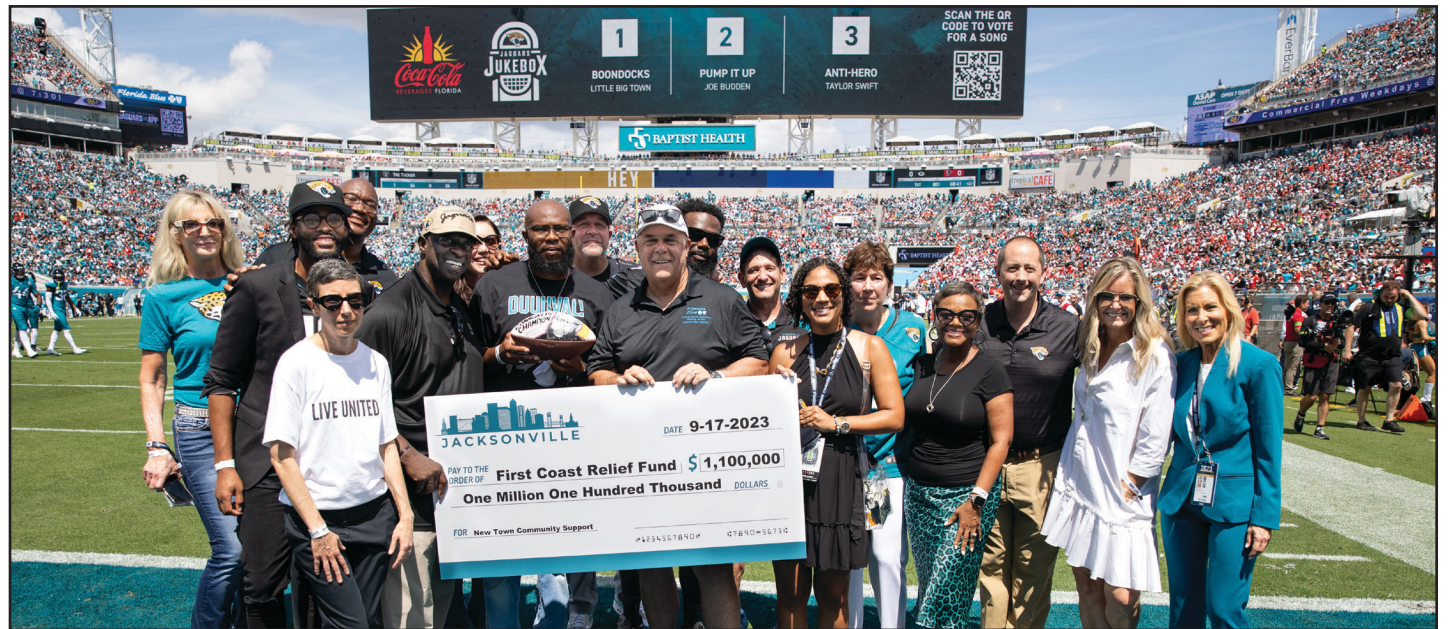


Photo by Kerrigan Zambrana/Jacksonville Jaguars

A check donation of \$1.1 million was presented to the First Coast Relief Fund on the field during the home opener on Sept. 17. to help the New Town community, following the recent shooting that took place.



Photo by Kam Nedd/Jacksonville

Trevor Lawrence gives a fist-bump to a patient.



Photo by Kam Nedd/Jacksonville Jaguars

As part of child cancer awareness month, Jaguars quarterback Trevor Lawrence and his wife Marissa made a special visit to Wolfson Children's Hospital on Sept. 5.



Photo by Kam Nedd/Jacksonville Jaguars

The Jaguars distributed 500 books to John Love Elementary School in Jacksonville as part of team's literacy locker room initiative presented by Gallagher.



Photo by Kam Nedd / Jacksonville Jaguars

Trevor Lawrence interacts with a patient at Wolfson Children's Hospital.

Breakfast

Continued from 21

and hope to all survivors.

The breakfast takes place at 7:30 a.m. Oct. 11 at EverBank Stadium, East Club.

Learn more about the event and purchase a ticket or sponsorship on the Hubbard House website at hubbardhouse.org/events.

Hubbard House offers life-saving, life-changing shelter and supportive services for survivors of domestic violence in Du-

val and Baker counties. Free, confidential support is always available through the Hubbard House Hotline at 904-354-3114 and Textline at 904-210-3698. Beyond shelter, services include housing support, job coaching, children's counseling and more.

Those unable to attend the breakfast, but who would like to learn more about Hubbard House, can go to hubbardhouse.org.

Hubbard House will host a series of events through October in recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Buddy Walk to benefit those with Down syndrome

The Down Syndrome Association of Jacksonville (DSAJ) will host its 21st annual Buddy Walk on Oct. 14 at the Seawalk Pavilion in Jacksonville Beach. More than 4,000 participants are expected to attend the nonprofit's fundraising event. Proceeds from DSAJ's Buddy Walk will support the organization's programs, all of which are designed to enhance the lives of children, teens and adults with Down syndrome in Jacksonville and the surrounding communities.

The one-mile walk will begin at noon on the beach. In addition to the walk, attendees can expect family friendly festival activities, including carnival rides, music, face painting and more.

The Buddy Walk is a nationwide event created to celebrate individuals with Down syndrome and to help ensure they are given the opportunity to become valued members of our community.

DSAJ Executive Director Debbie



Revels said her organization is aiming to raise \$375,000 at this year's Buddy Walk. The organization has already raised more than \$270,000 ahead of the event.

"We are beyond excited to once again host this heartwarming event," Revels said. "Buddy Walk is about more than fundraising — it's about showing our loved ones with Down syndrome that our community supports and appreciates them for their unique abilities."

Interested participants can register at dsaj.org/events or in person at the event.

Registration open for Wolfson Children's Challenge

Wolfson Children's Challenge is celebrating its 15th anniversary this year. The challenge, which features team and individual races, will move to the Nocatee Station Field, 400 Nocatee Center Way, for the first time. Those who want to give back to Wolfson Children's can be a part of the event by signing up as a sponsor, organizing a relay team or competing in one of the following challenges:

- 55K Ultra
- 55K Relay
- 30K Run
- 1-Mile Fun Run

Registration is now open at wolfsonchildrenschallenge.com. It will close at 11:59 p.m. Jan. 24. The event will be held Jan. 27. On-site food will be available as well as a kids' zone featuring a variety of vendors.

The Wolfson Children's Challenge was co-founded in 2009 by the Baptist Health Foundation and Paul Wilson, whose then-newborn son, Luke, underwent corrective surgery for spina bifida just hours after his birth. Wilson and others hoped to raise \$5,000 by running 55 miles, honoring the year Wolfson Children's Hospital opened in 1955. Wilson's mission has far surpassed the event's initial goal, with the



Wolfson Children's Challenge raising more than \$4 million to date.

This year, the Wolfson Children's Challenge aims to raise \$125,000. All proceeds benefit Wolfson Children's Rehabilitation, a unique resource for kids' health in Northeast Florida and South Georgia. At Wolfson Children's Hospital and several outpatient clinics, Wolfson Children's Rehabilitation offers comprehensive therapy services to help children of all ages with sensory, movement, feeding and communication difficulties. These clinics exclusively serve children and are designed and equipped with children in mind.

For more information, go to wolfsonchildrenschallenge.com.

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* Save the date for Women with Heart Luncheon February 7, 2024 *

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* Save the date for the Volunteers in Medicine Golf Tournament May 6, 2024 *

VIMJax.org



K9s United receives \$400K in state funding

K9s United, a national nonprofit dedicated to supporting and advocating for law enforcement K9s, has received a \$400,000 grant from the state of Florida to further its mission to support K9 law enforcement officers.

State Sen. Tom Wright presented the grant Aug. 28 at St. Johns County Sheriff's Office headquarters.

The funding will allow the Jacksonville-based organization to provide equipment K9s need most including bulletproof vests, medical kits and supplies, kennels, vehicle heat alarms and door poppers to help keep them safe and healthy as they serve and protect their communities.

It will also provide free canine first aid seminars that focus on training and educating K9 handlers and EMS professionals on the dog's anatomy, combat and environmental injuries, treatment protocols and other life-saving techniques K9s may require in a moment's notice.

These immersive seminars will be held in the coming months and throughout 2024 in St. Petersburg and Miami, in addition to Madison, Marion, Palm Beach and Polk counties.

Additionally, the grant will provide four-day, in-depth training sessions in Lee and Osceola counties. The free seminars integrate the first aid training into the traditional training topics that include



Contributed photos

Sen. Tom Wright presents K9s United board members with a \$400,000 state grant, along with St. Johns County Sheriff Robert Hardwick and deputies, and representatives of the Nassau County Sheriff's Office.

human detection such as tracking, trailing, area and building searches; criminal apprehension techniques and scenario-based training; odor and narcotics/explosive detection, along with basic and advanced obedience training.

"We believe that dedicated K9s play a

pivotal role in enhancing the safety of our Florida communities, and it's our mission to provide them and their law enforcement handlers with the tools and resources they need to improve their chances of a safe return after each call," said Debbie Johnson, president and founder of K9s United. "We

feel immeasurable gratitude to the state and Sen. Wright for this grant, which will allow us to channel support back into our communities by offering vital equipment, essential first aid and advanced training to safeguard these courageous canines who serve and protect us all."

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St. Augustine Lions Club donates \$7,500 for Take Stock in Children

The St. Johns County Education Foundation Inc., which operates as Investing in Kids (INK!), recently announced it has received a donation of \$7,500 from St. Augustine Lions Club.

According to INK! Executive Director Cathy Newman, the contribution supports the purchase of scholarships for the 2023-24 school year, supporting new students being accepted into Take Stock in Children-St. Johns County (TSIC).

The TSIC program provides low-income students with a unique opportunity to escape the cycle of poverty through mentorship, education, college success coaching and the opportunity to earn college scholarships. Since 1998, INK! has been the exclusive umbrella agency for the St. Johns County Take Stock in Children organization.

St. Augustine Lions Club has supported the Take Stock in Children program since 2014 with more than \$65,000 in donations, supporting scholarships for 19 St. Johns County students to date. Each student can earn two-year tuition scholarships to a Florida state or community college by meeting TSIC aca-

demic, citizenship and school attendance requirements.

According to James Wheeler, INK!'s operations and student programs director, every dollar donated by the Lions Club and other organizations gets matched one-to-one by the Florida Prepaid College Foundation via funding from the Florida Legislature.

Students are selected for TSIC when they are in the eighth grade in St. Johns County public schools. Upon acceptance into the program, students sign a contract to maintain a minimum 2.5 grade point average, continue good behavior and attendance and remain drug and crime free.

The program provides training and support for mentors to facilitate a variety of youth development and enrichment experiences, encourage good character, provide navigational support around school-to-work transitions and safeguard against adversity both in and out of school.

For example, Larry Dillahay is a



Contributed photo

Pictured from left are Larry Dillahay, St. Augustine Lions Club member and TSIC volunteer mentor; Jim Wheeler, INK! operations and student programs director; and Memory Hopkins, St. Augustine Lions Club president.

LIONS CLUB continues on Page 26

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Contributed photos

Cyclists Moi Monroe and Jason Rogers complete their 5,000-mile fundraising ride at Wolfson Children's Hospital.

Cross Country for a Cure cyclists ride 5K miles, raise \$140K

On Sept. 3, Wolfson Children's Hospital welcomed back cyclists Moi Monroe and Jason Rogers from their cross-country cycling ride.

Over the course of their 45-day journey, which started in Anchorage, Alaska, the two traversed Canada and the United States, traveling nearly 5,000 miles by bicycle. Their goal with this cross-country ride was to raise awareness for families battling childhood cancer as well as raise money for childhood cancer programs at Wolfson Children's Hospital and Georgia-based Mattie's Mission. Each day of the ride was dedicated to a child who has had or currently has cancer.

The current fundraising total for the initiative has surpassed \$140,000. Donations are still being accepted through the end of the month at mattiesmission.org/event/cross-country-ride.

Mattie's Mission, which will split all donations for this fundraising initiative with Wolfson Children's Hospital, honors Mattie Goble, a former patient who lost her battle with diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma (DIPG), an inoperable, incurable brain stem tumor.

"As hard as the ride was, we continually reminded ourselves that this cycling



Cyclists Moi Monroe and Jason Rogers and representatives of Wolfson's Children's Hospital and Mattie's Mission gather around checks showing donations gathered during the ride.

challenge was nothing compared to what childhood cancer patients and their families go through fighting this disease,"

said Monroe. "It gave us a daily dose of strength even on the worst of days."

Fittingly enough, Monroe and Rog-

ers' arrival at Wolfson Children's Hospital coincided with the start of Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. This month aims to bring more awareness to childhood cancer and honor the courage of the children who are fighting cancer as well as the support that their loved ones provide them with.

A Wolfie plush toy, representing the official mascot of Wolfson Children's Hospital, accompanied Monroe and Rogers as they made their way from Alaska back to Jacksonville. Stopping in a myriad of towns and roadside attractions along the way, Wolfie returns to Jacksonville as a seasoned traveler after spreading hope for those fighting childhood cancer throughout the ride.

"We are excited to welcome Jason and Moi back to Wolfson Children's Hospital and are incredibly grateful for their support of our mission," said Allegra Jaros, president of Wolfson Children's Hospital. "Their dedication to helping fight childhood cancer is evident in their arduous cross-country cycling journey. The funds Jason and Moi raised will continue to allow our doctors, nurses and entire medical staff to provide advanced pediatric care to our kids with cancer."

Lions Club

Continued from 25

member of the local Lions Club, and has more than eight years of experience as a mentor with TSIC. He retired in St. Augustine from a longtime career as a mechanical engineer while traveling around the world. Dillahay began mentoring

while in college and during his work life and continues to work with young men from Pedro Menendez High School who have gained from his maturity, focused direction and positive guidance.

His mentoring of numerous boys at the high school has included a diverse group from many different cultures and home environments. All of the students he has mentored have continued on to

higher education at various colleges and universities throughout Florida.

"The Lions Club is pleased to continue its support of INK! and Take Stock in Children," he said. "We can make a change in the lives of at-risk boys and girls with our donation and as mentors by simply being there and listening while sharing positive conversations and direction, plus knowledge gained from

careers, life experiences and more."

Dillahay added that TSIC has a prepared program that trains and helps mentors learn how to properly communicate with mentees. Dillahay recently celebrated his 80th birthday and plans to continue to mentor and volunteer well into his octogenarian years for TSIC and additional local nonprofits while helping men, women and children in need.

Hospice group invites young professionals to tailgate

The Foundation of Community Hospice & Palliative Care has announced the re-establishment of the Community Hospice Young Professionals (CHYPs) auxiliary group and their first kick-off event of the season.

CHYPs is a collective of young professionals age 35 and younger who share a common goal of making a positive difference in the lives of those facing life-limiting and life-ending illnesses.

This auxiliary group collaborates to raise funds for programs and provides volunteer support at events organized by The Foundation of Community Hospice & Palliative Care. Their slogan, Esprit de Corps, derived from the French expression “spirit of camaraderie,” embodies the collective dedication and energy of its members, who are committed to furthering the compassionate mission of Community Hospice & Palliative Care.

Chaired by board president Madison Mahaffy, who was once a member of the teen advisory board, CHYPs offers young professionals an opportunity to network with like-minded individuals while cultivating their leadership skills and profoundly impacting the community. Members gain invaluable personal and professional growth experiences by joining this esteemed group while championing a cause that resonates deeply with

their philanthropic spirits.

The kick-off event will begin at 10:30 a.m. Sunday, Sept. 24, at Manifest Distilling. This will be an indoor tailgate before the Jaguars vs. Texans game. Admission is free, but attendees are encouraged to become members of CHYPs for \$75 per person.

For more information, contact Nidhi Every at 904-407-6223 or NEvery@communityhospice.com.

Foundation awards \$9K to nonprofits in St. Johns, Putnam counties

Capital City Bank Group Foundation, a nonprofit organization created in 1983 by Capital City Bank Group Inc., has donated annually for 40 years to charitable institutions across the Capital City footprint in Florida, Georgia and Alabama.

During the 2023 grant cycle, the foundation reinvested \$9,000 into the communities of Putnam and St. Johns counties, awarding grants to organizations like Shepherd’s Haven, Lee Conlee House Domestic Violence Center, Open Door Church of God, Florahome Park and Heritage Association, Feed the Need of Putnam County, Center for Sustainable Agricultural Excellence, The Arc of

Putnam County and The Pilot Club of St. Augustine.

The donations provided by the foundation help nonprofits carry on the mission of the foundation to enhance the quality of life for countless local citizens.

“Community involvement has been a hallmark of Capital City Bank since our inception in 1895,” said Keith Jensen, Capital City Bank president of Putnam and St. Johns counties. “We remain dedicated to investing in worthwhile organizations and seize every opportunity to empower local nonprofits and foster positive change in our own backyard.”

The foundation provides grants to

nonprofits, charitable organizations and institutions exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The mission of the foundation is to invest in initiatives that benefit local communities.

Most of the funds are distributed to

specific areas of focus, including: arts/culture, children/youth services, economic/community development, education, health/sciences and human services.

For more information, go to ccbgfoundation.org.

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Feeding Northeast Florida observes Hunger Action Month

Feeding Northeast Florida (FNEFL) recently kicked off Hunger Action Month, an annual observance in which people and organizations all over the country stand together against hunger each September. Started in 2008 by Feeding America, Feeding Northeast Florida leads the effort to highlight hunger in Northeast and North Central Florida across the 12 counties the organization serves.

More than 240,000 individuals, including approximately 65,000 children, living in the organization's service area struggle with some level of food insecurity

— equating to one in 10 adults and one in seven children.

With inflationary pressures, historic rent increases and the rising cost of food and other necessities, the need for food assistance has continued to affect many families, children, seniors and veterans in our community. In 2022, FNEFL estimates it served more than 85,000 meals per day and distributed more than 28 million pounds of food.

Throughout the month of September, FNEFL is bringing attention to hunger and its effects on many in our community through targeted initiatives in honor of

Hunger Action Month, including two Southeastern Grocers-sponsored food distribution events, a virtual food drive and shopping experience and an interactive coloring wall at both Jacksonville and Gainesville facilities, among others.

Local landmarks, including the Acosta Bridge, Florida Blue, Daily's Place and EverBank Stadium, will display orange lights during the month to raise awareness and stand in solidarity with FNEFL in their efforts to alleviate hunger.

"Every person deserves access to quality, affordable, nourishing food," said Susan King, president and CEO of Feed-

ing Northeast Florida. "Unfortunately, many in our community struggle to feed themselves and their families. During difficult times, we step in to help fill the meal gap so that families can focus their budgets on everything else. Throughout Hunger Action Month, we are proud to join food banks around the country in bringing awareness to this important need, keeping hunger and its effects top of mind."

For information about Feeding Northeast Florida's efforts, to make a donation to the food bank or sign up to volunteer, go to feedingnefl.org.

Applications for art grants taken until Nov. 15

The St. Johns Cultural Council has announced its new "Arts for All" grant program (AFA). With support from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Cultural Council will award a total of \$80,000 in grant funds to arts, culture, heritage organizations and individual artists in St. Johns County.

The goal of the Arts for All grant program is to improve funding for programming that is primarily for the benefit of county residents.

Arts organizations with annual revenues of less than \$200,000 are eligible to apply for between \$5,000 and \$10,000, and individual artists can apply for up to \$5,000. Arts, culture and heritage projects can be of any discipline and must take place in St. Johns County between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2024.

"By limiting eligibility to small organizations and individuals, Arts for All grants are more accessible to local artists and emerging cultural organizations from rural, minority and underserved communities in our county," said Christina Parrish Stone, the Cultural Council's executive director. "Because of this, we hope to share more of the county's varied arts, culture and heritage with our residents."

According to Parrish Stone, though priority will be given to projects from underserved communities in the county, artists and organizations throughout the county are encouraged to apply.

Online applications will be accepted until Nov. 15. After review by a panel of local arts educators, consultants and organization leaders, grant awards will be announced in December.

Applicants must be St. Johns County residents or organizations based in St. Johns County and meet basic eligibility requirements included in the AFA guidelines. For more information about AFA grants and to review grant eligibility and guidelines, go to stjohnsculture.com/arts-for-all-grants.

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

For more information about initiatives of the St. Johns Cultural Council, contact Christina Parrish Stone at 904-434-0959 or email christina@historiccoastculture.com. The website is stjohnsculture.com.



Contributed photo

Pictured from left are Kathy Brady, executive director of the GATE Foundation, and Annie Tuttle, executive director of The Foundation of Community Hospice & Palliative Care.

GATE Foundation donates \$45K to Community Hospice foundation

Kathy Brady, executive director of the GATE Foundation, the philanthropic arm of GATE Petroleum Co., recently presented Annie Tuttle, executive director of The Foundation of Community Hospice & Palliative Care, with a \$45,000 contribution to support Community Hospice & Palliative Care in their mission of providing compassionate care for children and adults.

The Coin Box Charity program, designed to impact local communities positively, has once again demonstrated its effectiveness by offering crucial financial assistance to an organization dedicated to its charitable mission.

"We are incredibly grateful to the GATE Foundation for their donation through the Coin Box Charity,"

said Tuttle. "This significant contribution will enable us to expand our reach and enhance our services, ensuring that individuals and families continue to receive the utmost care, comfort and support during their most challenging times."

The Foundation of Community Hospice & Palliative Care has a long-standing tradition of ensuring that the unfunded and community benefit programs and services that Community Hospice provides have the funding and the support necessary to provide care to all who need its help, both today and into the future.

For more information about The Foundation of Community Hospice & Palliative Care and its services, go to thefoundationcares.org.

Organizations mark Celebrate Community Week with food drive



Contributed photo

Members of several Beaches community service organizations observed Celebrate Community Week (Sept. 11-17) by conducting a joint food drive to benefit Beaches Emergency Assistance Ministry (BEAM). Participating clubs included the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach, Oceanside Rotary Club, The Exchange Club of the Beaches and the Jacksonville Beach Lions Club. Dropping off the food donations at the BEAM food bank were, from left, John Mullins and Bobby Bass of The Exchange Club, Jennifer Logue of the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach, Susan Dixon of the Jacksonville Beach Lions Club, Cathryn Hagan of Oceanside Rotary Club, Pat Schaaf of the Jacksonville Beach Lions Club and Mike Johnson of the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach.

Jacksonville Area Legal Aid launches new branding with annual report

Fifty years after adopting its current name, Jacksonville Area Legal Aid is updating its branding with the release of its 2022 annual report, the first document to bear JALA's new logo.

Titled "Housing Takes Center Stage," the report shines a spotlight on JALA's work to prevent unlawful evictions and foreclosures, ensure that fair housing laws are enforced and resolve other landlord-tenant issues.

Of 6,724 cases JALA handled in 2022, JALA closed 2,618 housing cases, representing nearly 40% of its closed cases.

"Preserving shelter is our highest and best use, and we remain focused on that mission," the report states.

JALA's annual report also cites a recent report by the City of Jacksonville's Special Committee on Critical Quality of Life Issues, which states that, "The City should work with and financially support the Jacksonville Area Legal Aid office in efforts to reduce eviction rates, human displacement and homelessness."

That work gets a boost in Mayor



JACKSONVILLE AREA
Legal Aid

Donna Deegan's new budget, which recommends greater funding for legal aid.

JALA's 2022 annual report includes a full-page infographic with data on JALA's services in housing and other areas, including family law and domestic violence prevention, veterans' legal services, disability benefits and services provided to seniors and to children with a combination of medical and legal issues.

Among the data on JALA's services

LEGAL AID continues on Page 30

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Run/walk to help fight lung cancer

On Oct. 14, members of the Jacksonville community will once again come together with the American Lung Association to help defeat lung cancer and lung disease one step at a time. The LUNG FORCE Run/Walk, presented by Jazz Pharmaceuticals, will take place on the Southbank Riverwalk. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the family-friendly event, which has raised more than \$635,000 in total for lifesaving lung cancer research, early detection initiatives and awareness.

“For the past 10 years, the Jacksonville community has enthusiastically laced up their sneakers to help save lives,” said Cindy Springer, senior manager of development for the American Lung Association in Jacksonville. “Lung cancer touches thousands of Florida families. Our LUNG FORCE event offers an opportunity for people impacted by this disease to unite and stand together to educate, advocate and fuel critical research.”

While lung cancer remains the leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States, there is hope. More Americans than ever are surviving lung cancer. The sur-

vival rate has increased by nearly 40% in the last decade. Funding research, encouraging lung cancer screening and reducing stigma around the disease is the key to unlocking a future free of lung cancer.

The LUNG FORCE Run/Walk is open to individuals, families and company teams. Participants may run or walk the 5K route along the St. Johns River and afterward enjoy the vendor village, which will feature a DJ, a photo booth, food truck Jazzee’s Wings and Things and more.

Check in at The Haskell Company, 111 Riverside Ave., Jacksonville will be at 7:30 a.m. The run/walk will be from 8 to 10:30 a.m.

Funds raised by the LUNG FORCE Run/Walk will support the American Lung Association’s work to defeat lung cancer, improve the air we breathe, reduce the burden of lung disease on individuals and their families and eliminate tobacco use and tobacco-related diseases.

For more information and to register for the Jacksonville LUNG FORCE Run/Walk, go to LUNGFORCE.org/Jacksonville.

Take Stock to benefit from Community Harvest program

Take Stock in Children-St. Johns County, a scholarship and mentoring program operated by Investing in Kids (INK!), was selected by the 1905 Family Of Restaurants to benefit from the 26th Annual Community Harvest. During the month of September, the restaurant company will donate 5% of all diners’ checks to charities selected by guests while dining at the company’s restaurant locations across Florida.

Patrons at the local Columbia Restaurant, 98 St. George St. in St. Augustine, can support Take Stock in Children-St. Johns County through the fundraiser, by voting for Take Stock in Children (TSIC) as the nonprofit of the diner’s choice on the ballot provided during lunch and dinner.

When TSIC is selected, the hospitality company will donate 5% of diners’ checks as food and beverage gift certificates. The certificates will be shared with TSIC program graduates, volunteer mentors and dedicated supporters. There is no additional cost to the guest to vote.

“We started this program as a way to help many of the worthy nonprofit groups that are so important in our communities,” said fourth generation family member and president Richard Gonzmart. “I can’t believe how much the program has grown in 26 years. We’re excited



this year to extend the ballots and gift certificates to all our restaurant concepts, which should provide a real increase in our donations to the charities.”

Columbia Restaurant’s Community Harvest program has provided \$3.5 million to nonprofit organizations throughout Florida.

Take Stock in Children is a statewide nonprofit organization established in 1995 to offer low-income, at-risk students a unique opportunity to excel beyond the cycle of poverty through education.

The St. Johns County Education Foundation which operates as Investing in Kids (INK!) provides innovative resources to support academic success for all St. Johns County public schools to benefit more than 51,000 students and approximately 3,200 teachers. The office is located at 1 Christopher St., St. Augustine.

For more information, contact Cathy Newman at 904-547-7120 or email Catherine.Newman@stjohns.k12.fl.us. The website is ink-stjohns.org.

Legal Aid

Continued from 29

in the annual report:

- 286 evictions avoided through attorney intervention and \$472,832 in financial relief secured for renters
- 124 foreclosures prevented and \$468,415 secured in financial relief for homeowners
- 3,643 people used JALA’s online eviction prevention tool
- \$661,000 in class action for landlord’s failure to rectify substandard conditions and refund deposits for 2,836 tenants
- \$939,725 in income and assets protected by averting predatory lending and illegal debt collection
- \$1,164,497 in family support secured for domestic violence survivors and others

“These are just a few of the data points that underscore the tremendous return on investment legal aid provides,” said JALA President and CEO Jim Kowalski.

JALA’s impact in providing access

to justice in Northeast Florida is illustrated by its new logo, which blends the scales of justice with an image of a bridge.

“We wanted the logo to speak more to the work JALA does, which is to bring justice to the people of Northeast Florida, a region known for the bridges that connect its various communities,” Kowalski said. “But the bridge also represents access to the justice system, which many people desperately need. For some people there is no way to arrive at justice without the bridge that legal aid provides.”

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Halloween Doors & More supports pediatric program

On Oct. 14, The Foundation of Community Hospice & Palliative Care will transform the Jacksonville Fairgrounds Exhibition Hall into a magical, Candyland-themed day of family-friendly fun and entertainment for the 19th annual Halloween Doors & More.

Northeast Florida's premier Halloween event since 2005, Halloween Doors & More will begin at 2 p.m. for fun attractions with candy, toys, food, interactive experiences and live characters. Visit with the Jacksonville Jaguars cheerleaders, trick or treat at the 14-foot-high Fantasy Doors, stroll the Magical Meet and Greet Streets to see favorite costumed characters, show off dance moves in the Fiesta Family Disco, visit the Bootiful Salon for a spooktacular make-over and stop by the Grown-Up



Contributed photos

Grotto and Food Court for gourmet foods and drinks.

Proceeds from Halloween Doors & More benefit Community PedsCare, the pediatric program of Community Hospice & Palliative Care, supporting children living with serious and life-limiting illnesses and their families.

Most Community PedsCare services are provided without charge, regardless of insurance coverage. All vital care and support are provided at no cost to the family, which is made possible through generous community supporters, efforts of The Foundation of Community Hospice & Palliative Care, and Medicare.

To purchase Halloween Doors & More admissions, call 904-886-3883 or go to HDM.CommunityHospice.com.

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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2023 • PAGE 33

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Comcast makes donation following hurricane

Comcast NBCUniversal has announced a \$250,000 donation to support relief and recovery efforts in Florida following Hurricane Idalia.

This includes a \$200,000 contribution and \$25,000 worth of advertising time for public service announcements to support Volunteer Florida's Florida Disaster Relief Fund in addition to a \$25,000 donation to Second Harvest Food Bank of the Big Bend.

In preparation for the storm and to help residents and emergency personnel stay connected during clean-up efforts, 415,000 public Xfinity WiFi hotspots throughout Idalia's path in Florida, Georgia and South Carolina were made available for anyone to use, including non-Xfinity customers, for free.

Comcast also removed the data thresh-

old for Xfinity Mobile and Comcast Business Mobile customers and removed data overage charges for "By the Gig" Xfinity Mobile and Comcast Business Mobile customers from Aug. 30 to Sept. 12.

To help get communities back online as quickly as possible, Comcast deployed 2,100 emergency generators to provide a temporary power solution and routed Xfinity WiFi-enabled vans to communities impacted areas.

Through the Comcast NBCUniversal Matching Gift Program, the company is matching employee donations to eligible nonprofit disaster relief organizations.

For help and information, customers can chat online with an agent, go to Xfinity.com/response or connect with Comcast on Twitter at @xfinitysupport.

What to do when under threat of a tropical storm or hurricane

Knowing what to do when such a storm is approaching is vital. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration urges individuals to be prepared to evacuate if they are living in areas threatened by a storm surge. In such situations, ample time should be afforded to pack and inform friends and family that you are evacuating. In addition to those measures, the NOAA recommends individuals heed these tips.

- **Secure your home.** All windows should be covered in areas that are threatened by a tropical storm or hurricane. The NOAA recommends homeowners in such areas utilize permanent storm shutters, which can be closed and offer the best protection for windows. If a home does not have permanent shutters, the NOAA recommends boarding up windows with 5/8-inch exterior grade or marine plywood. That wood should be built to fit and ready

to install. Purchase supplies in advance of hurricane season to ensure access to materials necessary to secure your home.

- **Listen to the forecast.** The NOAA advises individuals to visit the website of their local National Weather Service office as well as the website of their local government/emergency management office. NOAA Weather Radio also can be a great resource. NOAA Weather Radio broadcasts the latest weather information on seven frequencies in the 162.40 and 162.55 MHz range, and these broadcasts can be received up to 40 miles away from the local transmitter. Local radio and television stations also can be great resources for weather information during tropical storm and hurricane season.

- **Evacuate if ordered to do so.** If local

WHAT TO DO continues on Page 34



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How to get through hurricanes and power outages

Hurricanes are powerful storms that can rip through areas and leave substantial damage and devastation in their wake. Hurricanes produce very strong winds that can cause power outages by knocking down electrical poles or even individual lines running to homes and businesses. Power outages can disrupt communica-

tions, water supplies and transportation, and many an individual has lost a refrigerator full of food when the power goes out for an extended period of time. Anyone living in an area that could be affected by a hurricane should include measures to get through power outages in their preparation efforts. Ready.gov and

FEMA recommend these strategies.

- Ensure you have batteries and alternative power sources on hand to tide you over until the power can be restored. Cell phones can be charged using USB ports in vehicles. Some devices may work with solar chargers or power sources designed for camping and outdoor use. A back-up portable or whole-house generator also may be a consideration for individuals in areas prone to hurricanes.
- Disconnect power strips and unplug appliances to avoid damage from electrical surges.

- Stock up on ice to use in refrigerators and freezers to help prevent food spoilage. Well-insulated coolers can be used to refrigerate foods and medicines. Food that has been exposed to temperatures of 40 degrees or higher for two hours or more may be spoiled and should be discarded.
- Keep alternative entertainment handy, such as print books, board games, puzzles, and non-electronic toys.
- Power outages can affect ATMs as well, so always keep some cash on hand and store it in a secure, dry spot.

What to do

Continued from 33

officials issue evacuation orders, individuals should do so immediately. Individuals who remain in areas where evacuation orders have been issued put their own lives at risk, and also the lives of first responders. First responders may even be forbidden from rescue and recovery efforts in situations when evacuation orders have been issued. In such instances, rescue and recovery efforts may only be authorized after a storm has passed.

- **Take refuge even if no evacuation order is issued.** The NOAA recommends

individuals who are not under an evacuation order take refuge in a small interior room, closet or hallway on the lowest level of the home during the storm. The more walls between you and the storm, the better, according to the NOAA. Avoid windows, skylights and glass doors during the storm.

Knowing what to do when under the threat of a tropical storm or hurricane can save lives. Individuals who live in areas vulnerable to such storms may be well-versed in response protocols, but periodic refreshers can be beneficial. And anyone traveling to such areas on vacation is urged to familiarize themselves with strategies to stay safe when tropical storms or hurricanes touch down.

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— FEATURING —

**Real Estate
Spotlight**



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First Coast's unique history highlighted at NEFAR breakfast

By Anthony Richards

History was the topic at hand during the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors quarterly breakfast meeting Sept. 12 at The Plantation Beach House in Ponte Vedra Beach.

And not only was it history, but guest speaker Doug Milne, focused on local history of the area of Northeast Florida.

As a local attorney and Ponte Vedra historian, Milne took a quick but deep dive full of historical factoids, some of which are very well known and others not so much.

"I'm going to try and cover about 12,000 years in about 20 minutes," Milne chuckled.

According to Milne, the exact location may never be known, but Ponce De Leon landed somewhere between Ponte Vedra Beach and Daytona Beach.

But before his own adventures, Ponce

De Leon was the cousin of Christopher Columbus and served on the crew on Columbus' voyage to America years before.

"History is an amazing thing," Milne said. "Without a sense of history, we lack a sense of identity, and nowhere in the country has a more rich and colorful history than we have here in Northeast Florida."

Milne stated that in 1880 there were 6,000 people living in Jacksonville, which was the hub of the state.

"Jacksonville was Florida at that time, because it was where the railroads ended and where the river came through," Milne said.

He also added that Jacksonville was the site of the first of many Subtropical Expositions, which were designed to promote the region and all the unique things it had to offer and serve as a marketing campaign against a newly founded place out west called California.

President Grover Cleveland even came twice to visit Jacksonville during his time in office.

"However, yellow fever tragically took effect and led to the end of Florida's first tourist attraction," Milne said.

In 1788, Florida was still a property of Spain with the United States of America located to the north.

The various times that Florida has switched hands of ownership throughout the years is one of the things that makes it so unique, as well as having a significant Native American presence.

"Six flags would fly over the land of Florida over the years," Milne said. "And the most significant Indian concentration on the First Coast was the Timucuan, which settled in the Mill Cove area near the Dames Point Bridge.

Signs of French activity in the area are very prevalent as well over the years, with Fort Caroline being a French

outpost, and according to Milne, the first European child born on American soil was born at the fort.

He could not end his presentation without mentioning the St. Johns River, which is such an iconic part of the history of the First Coast, and it has been that way for some time now, although he stated that it is not an old river in comparison to others in the world.

"It has been covered by the ocean at least three times and probably 23 times," Milne said.

His love of history was developed at an early age, but he understands that passion can be lit at any age.

He wrapped up his presentation by handing out shards of Timucuan pottery that he has found along the banks of the St. Johns River over the years, a common hobby he and his friend would do while growing up in the area.

Housing market in flux; inventory increases 11%

While outside temperatures may continue to soar as fall approaches, the opposite is true of Northeast Florida's housing market. A cooling period has begun with the inventory of single-family homes increasing in August, while pending sales and prices are down. Home affordability in the region crept up slightly during the last month of summer, but housing continues to be expensive compared to last year and previous years.

"The real estate market is fluctuating. Interest rates, inflation and changing labor markets are factors," said Diana Galavis, 2023 president of the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors.

"Home affordability took a slight upward tick, but overall housing is significantly more expensive than this time last year," said Galavis. "Pending sales were down, which is heavily due to

interest rates. Buyers now have an opportunity to preview more active inventory, and there are more new listings entering the market," she said, referring to the increase of new listings to 3,022, a rise of 12% in August. Meanwhile, active inventory jumped 10.9% to 5,012 homes in the region.

In August, Northeast Florida's Home Affordability Index for single-family homes over the region's six counties registered at 66, a slight 1.5% hike upward from July, when the index came in at 65, its lowest point ever. However, August's score still indicated a 14.3% drop from the same time in 2022.

The Housing Affordability Index measures housing affordability for the region. In other words, it measures whether a typical family earns enough to qualify for a mortgage on a typical home, based

on current interest rates, median income, and median home prices. A higher number means greater affordability.

This index measures affordability factors for all homebuyers making a 20% downpayment. An index of 100 is defined as the point where a median-income family has the exact amount of income needed to purchase a median-priced existing home. An index value over 100 means that the family has more than enough income, while a value below 100 means that a family doesn't have enough income to qualify for a mortgage loan.

While affordability is still lower than



it was last year, the index in August was higher than it was in July, which is a good sign for buyers. The region's months' worth of supply rose 10% to 2.7 months. The median sales price for single-family homes fell 3% to \$383,000 and was down 1.8% from August the year before.

"The median sales price was reduced slightly due to buying power," said Galavis. "It is essential to use a Realtor when buying, selling or investing in real estate. Realtors abide by the highest standards when representing buyers and sellers in transactions."

In St. Johns County, August 2023 median prices decreased 6.8% to \$550,000 for single-family homes. The median days on the market continued to hover

Real estate firm adds Tindol Williams Group

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty recently announced the addition of the Tindol Williams Group, comprised of two experienced real estate professionals, Tony Tindol and Kyle Williams.

Their dedication to their craft and commitment to excellence have made them stand out as exceptional assets in the industry, according to Florida Network Realty.

Beyond their professional achievements, Tindol and Williams are actively involved in the community. Tindol participates and volunteers with Stonewall Sports Jax and Williams volunteers for Riverside Avondale Preservation Societies and annual Tour of Homes.

Florida Network Realty believes that this addition will further enrich the client experience.

With a mission to provide top-tier solutions to clients' real estate needs, Tindol Williams Group has established a reputation for delivering outstanding results in the industry.

"I'm thrilled that the Tindol Williams group has joined us and look forward to celebrating their success here with us," said Josh Cohen, broker/manager of the Metropolitan office of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty with locations in Avondale and San Marco.

Tindol can be reached at 904-303-8564 and Tony@tindolwilliamsgroup.com.

Williams can be reached at 904-304-9499 and Kyle@tindolwilliamsgroup.com.

The website is tindolwilliamsgroup.com.

Cohen can be reached at 904-296-1737, Josh.Cohen@FloridaNetworkRealty.com and through floridanetworkrealtycareers.com. The offices are located at 3627 St. Johns Ave., Jacksonville, and 1983 San Marco Blvd., Jacksonville.

The Park at River City sells for \$7.5M

NAI Hallmark, a locally owned full-service commercial real estate brokerage firm in Jacksonville, has announced the sale of The Park at River City for \$7.5 million.

The 104-unit multifamily property is located at 10621 Monaco Drive, Jacksonville. Senior Vice President John Rutherford and Vice President Luke McCann brokered the transaction on behalf of Toro Real Estate Partners, the seller, and Park at River City LLC, the buyer.

"NAI Hallmark is pleased to have represented the seller and buyer in the sale of The Park at River City," said Rutherford. "This transaction is yet another example of Jacksonville's resiliency in the current climate, and further illustrates the significant upside potential remaining in the multifamily market compared to other major markets throughout the country."

The property was built in 1967 and consists of 104 units ranging in size from one to two bedrooms in 13 two-story buildings on 5.59 acres. The property is located in the northside submarket along Interstate 95, just minutes away from Jacksonville International Airport, an Amazon distribution center, JAXPORT and Imeson Park, which is home to several million square feet of logistics and distribution space.

For more information regarding the sale of The



Contributed photo

The Park at River City recently sold for \$7.5 million.

Park at River City or any questions relating to multifamily investment assets, contact Rutherford at jr@naihallmark.com.

Established in 1993, NAI Hallmark is currently involved in the leasing and/or management of a portfolio in excess of 6 million square feet of office, industrial and retail properties and is one of the leading investment sales practices in Northeast Florida.

As a member of the NAI Global network, NAI Hallmark is also connected to the largest network of independent commercial real estate firms worldwide. Learn more at naihallmark.com.

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Benchmarks of Success

A look at major career changes in the area.



Sharon Hardy

Sharon Hardy joins real estate firm

Sharon Hardy has joined Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty in its Ponte Vedra Beach/Nocatee office. She also owns and operates Hardy Life Coach LLC. Originally from Ohio, she spent more than 20 years in Atlanta and Philadelphia, building her career and raising three children before relocating to Northeast Florida six years ago. Having moved more than 12 times since college, she understands the intricacies of home buying and selling, as well as relocations, local moves, renovations and investment properties.

Hardy can be reached at 404-345-8565, Sharon.Hardy@FloridaNetworkRealty.com and SHardy.FloridaNetworkRealty.com.

The Ponte Vedra/Nocatee office, located at 333 Village Main St., Suite 670, is managed by Holly Hayes, who

can be reached at 904-802-0432, Holly.Hayes@FloridaNetworkRealty.com, and floridanetworkrealtycareers.com.

Cathedral Arts Project expands leadership team

The Cathedral Arts Project (CAP) has announced the appointment of Doug Walker as vice president of philanthropy. He started in his new role on Sept. 5. In addition, CAP will welcome Jessie Brabender into her new position as director of leadership giving on Oct. 2.

As vice president of philanthropy, Walker leads the organization's fundraising initiatives. For more than two decades, he has served in the field of education and held senior administrative positions in independent schools, where he led large and small teams in student services, admissions and marketing, human resources and institutional advancement.

In her new role, Brabender will develop and guide CAP's leadership donor program, support the Golf Committee volunteers in their planning activities and secure sponsorships for CAP's annual Golf Tournament and Spring for the Arts.

She comes to CAP from the Flagler Health Care Foundation, where she first served as the annual giving manager and was promoted to development director.



Sujata Narayan

Jessie Ball duPont Fund names chief operating officer

The Jessie Ball duPont Fund has named Sujata Narayan chief operating officer of the Jacksonville-based private foundation, which seeks to create communities of belonging for the people, institutions and communities that its founder Jessie Ball duPont knew and loved.

As chief operating officer, Narayan will oversee talent development, business systems, resource management and grants management and evaluation. In this capacity, she will work alongside the fund's president and board of trustees.

Prior to joining the Jessie Ball duPont Fund, Narayan served for more than 13 years with the digital infrastructure company Equinix, where she ultimately held the position of direc-

tor of community impact and Equinix Foundation.

She is a family advisory council member at Nemours Children's Health in Jacksonville, where she also serves on its Family Advisory Council for the Hematology and Oncology Department.

Stalvey joins real estate business

Brittainy Stalvey has joined Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty.

Stalvey comes to the real estate business from The Hospital Corporation of America FL Orange Park Hospital, where she works in anesthesia as a vice chief CRNA. She has a master's degree in nursing from the University of North Florida.

For more information, she can be reached at 904-982-3090 and Brittainy.Stalvey@FloridaNetworkRealty.com.

The Ponte Vedra/Nocatee office, located at 333 Village Main St., Suite 670, Ponte Vedra Beach, is managed by Holly Hayes, who can be reached at 904-802-0432, Holly.Hayes@FloridaNetworkRealty.com.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

Oktoberfest coming to Beacon Lake

The public is invited to an Oktoberfest-themed Realtor event at Beacon Lake from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Oct. 11. Attendees will have the opportunity to tour three model homes designed by Toll Brothers and Dream Finders Homes. They will experience the charm of Beacon Lake while enjoying the festive spirit of Oktoberfest. Realtors who tour all three houses will be entered into a competition for a chance to win \$1,000.

To register, go to eventbrite.com/e/oktoberfest-realtor-event-tickets-699696690637?aff=ebdsoporgprofile.

Dream Finders Homes

Monday-Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Sunday, noon to 6 p.m.

Toll Brothers

By appointment only. Call 904-541-8170
Monday, 1 to 6 p.m.
Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Beacon Lake is located at 850 Beacon Lake Pkwy., St. Augustine.

Market

Continued from 35

at 36. Month-to-month, closed sales fell 17.5% to 428, pending sales tumbled down 21.6% to 428, and new listings rose 7.5% to 760. Active inventory rose to 1,568 homes, an increase of 8.7% from July 2023, and 3.7-month supply. The affordability index increased slightly, 4.5% to 46, yet still indicated St. Johns County is an expensive place

to live.

In Duval County, the August 2023 median price of single-family housing was \$335,150, a 1.6% hike from July 2023 when it registered \$330,000. The median days on the market in June decreased to 29. Month-to-month, closed sales rose 6.6% to 941, pending sales dropped 6% to 926, and new listings increased 9.7% to 1,509. Active inventory for the county rose 10% to 2,214 homes, a 2.4-month supply. In July, the home affordability index fell 3.8%, registering at 75.

DID YOU KNOW?

FLORIDA DIVORCE LAWS CHANGED ON JULY 1ST

Alimony and Adultery are addressed by new laws that went into effect on July 1, 2023. Register for our upcoming classes to learn more about these changes and other divorce laws and financial considerations.



UPCOMING CLASSES:

• November 4, 2023

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www.SecondSaturdayJax.org

Presented by Robert Franskousky, Certified Divorce Financial Analyst® and other local specialists.

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Garden Club of St. Augustine plans Holiday Tour of Homes

Contributed photos

The Garden Club of St. Augustine will host its 52nd Holiday Tour of Homes from noon to 5 p.m. Dec. 10. This is one of St. Augustine's oldest holiday traditions.

Six houses will be decorated by the Garden Club of St. Augustine. All floral arrangements and greenery are live and designed by the decorators to enhance the homes.

Three houses are located on Marine Street, including Quarters One, residence of the commanding officer of the St. Francis Barracks and Florida National Guard. There is one on Tremerton Street, on St. George Street and lastly on Onieda Street. This is a walking tour, therefore limited transportation will be provided by the COA buses from the parking garage downtown on Castillo Drive to the tea and boutique at the River House.

The tea and boutique will be held at the beautiful River House, 179 Marine St., from noon until 4 p.m. The tea includes holiday cookies made by Garden Club members, coffee, tea and holiday punch. Raffle tickets will be sold with cash prizes of \$500, \$300 and \$100.

The boutique will take place in several rooms. Holiday wreaths, ornaments, live arrangements and gift baskets made by Garden Club members are for sale.

A gourmet food area will have packaged holiday cookies, candy, small cakes, nuts and jam, also made by Garden Club members.

A "will call" area will be available so attendees do not have to carry their purchases on the tour. They may leave them at River House during their tour and pick them up by 5:30 p.m. Any packages not picked up will be taken to the Garden Club Clubhouse, 3440 Old Moultrie Road.

Tickets will go on sale Oct. 1 and are \$40. Go to



gardenclubofstaugustine.org for information on how to purchase tickets.

Tickets can also be purchased by check or cash only at:

- Flowers by Shirley at 2200 U.S. 1



- Palencia (call Maureen Nightingale at 503-686-1426)
- Southern Horticulture
- Leonardi's Nursery
- Carter's Jewelry
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Wounded Warrior Project CEO to retire in January

Wounded Warrior Project (WWP) recently announced that CEO Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Michael Linnington plans to retire in January 2024.

Linnington joined WWP as CEO in June 2016 after retiring from active-duty military service. He has dedicated more than 40 years of service to the country's military and veterans. The board of directors has retained a search firm and is conducting a national search for Linnington's successor.

"It has been a privilege and an incredible honor to serve those who have given so much to our country," said Linnington. "I am deeply grateful to my Wounded Warrior Project teammates, public and private partners and especially the American people who have generously supported our mission for two decades. As I begin this next chapter, I look forward to spending more time with my family and exploring activities we have put off for more than 40 years. In the coming months, I remain fully committed to serving wounded warriors and their families alongside our dedicated teammates, leader, and board of directors until the transition to my eventual successor is complete."

Kathleen Widmer, chair of WWP's Board of Directors, said, "Mike has made a lasting impact on our country, its veterans and Wounded Warrior Project. His steadfast commitment to warriors, our core values and fulfilling our donors' intent is unwavering. We are grateful for his dedication and leadership. Mike will continue to lead Wounded Warrior Project as we extensively search for a leader to continue championing support for wounded, ill and injured post-9/11 veterans and their families."

Under Linnington's leadership, WWP significantly expanded its programs and services, helped pass legislation benefiting veterans and their families, including the Honoring Our PACT Act, and made extensive progress executing its mission of honoring and empowering post-9/11 wounded veterans and families.

Linnington joined the organization during a



Michael Linnington

transformational time and has brought its brand, programs, partnerships and fundraising to new heights.

Before joining WWP, Linnington was the first permanent director of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, following a 35-year career as a soldier. Throughout his career in the Army, Linnington served in a variety of command and staff positions, including brigade command of the 3rd Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division (in Iraq and Afghanistan); commanding general, Military District of Washington/Joint Force Headquarters-National Capital Region; and military deputy for the Undersecretary of Personnel and Readiness. He is airborne-, air assault- and ranger-qualified and has received numerous awards and decorations consistent with a long career in uniform.

Community First CEO to retire

John Hirabayashi, CEO and president of Community First Credit Union, has announced his intention to retire from the organization in 2024. Hirabayashi will continue to lead Community First until a successor is in place. The organization will conduct a national search for a new CEO and president beginning in October, a process which is expected to take nine months.

"The board of directors has adopted a comprehensive succession plan to professionally manage this process," said Board Chair Malinda "Lindy" Prudencio who will also lead the search committee. "The board is fully prepared for this transition and will provide continuity of service throughout."

Hirabayashi joined Community First as CEO in 1996 when he came to Jacksonville to lead the credit union when it was known as Educational Community Credit Union, which had \$200 million in assets, 44,000 members and seven branches.

Under Hirabayashi's leadership, the credit union has grown exponentially, become a community-chartered credit union and was rebranded as Community First Credit Union.

Community First Credit Union now serves more than 171,000 members with more than \$2.7 billion in assets, making it one of Florida's largest credit unions. Community First is headquartered in Jacksonville and has 19 branch locations and three new branches in development. It has more than 400 employees.

"This evolution and growth reflects the credit union's mission to improve quality of life and banking services to residents and businesses of the Jacksonville region," said Hirabayashi. "I'm honored to lead Community First to live its 'purpose' by empowering its employees, members and the community to live their best lives."

Community First is undertaking the most aggressive branch network expansion plan in its history, which represents an unprecedented capital investment in serving more members in more places across the region. It currently has three expansion branches in construction and development. In 2022, Community First had strong growth in assets and membership and a 20% growth in total loans, an institution record.

Community First was founded in downtown Jacksonville in 1935 and remains downtown Jacksonville's longest continually operating financial institution. It has two HQ locations in LaVilla. Community First consistently outperforms the national averages in various indicators of financial strength and stability among credit unions.

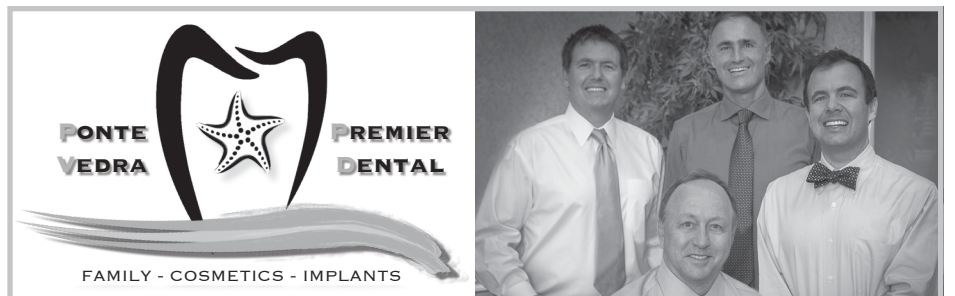
Upon retirement, Hirabayashi plans to remain active in the Jacksonville community, enjoy travel with his wife Jan and visit with his four adult children who live outside Jacksonville.

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Photos provided by FPL



FPL's Edward Mock recommends keeping the thermostat at 78 during the day.



Mock also recommends changing air filters regularly.

FPL energy expert shares three decades of energy saving tips

From FPL

Sweat beads drip down the side of Edward Mock's hairline as he kneels at the side of a residential home in St. Augustine assessing an air conditioning compressor. The stifling humidity combined with the sun's rays relentlessly beating down let him know summer is here.

He knows this is the time of year his phone will ring nonstop as Florida Power & Light Company customers call to learn how they can save money when their electric bill peaks for the year due to increased energy usage.

Mock, who served his country for six years in the Navy after high school, has been serving FPL customers as a senior energy solution specialist for 30 years.

"The first question I always get asked is, 'How can I lower my bill?'" said Mock. "I have a feeling this summer will be busier than ever."

While a customer's desire to save energy and money hasn't changed much over the

last 30 years, technology has.

Mock no longer needs to bring a level to straighten crooked mercury thermostats. Those have since been replaced by programable, smart thermostats capable of adjusting the temperature of homes and businesses without anyone needing to be there.

"The first thing I do is listen to the customer and address their concerns," said Mock. "Then, I check their thermostat."

For every degree you bump up on your thermostat in the summer, Mock said customers can save between 3% and 5% on cooling costs. He recommends in the summer customers keep their homes at 78 degrees during the day if they want to maximize their savings. He also recommends changing air filters regularly.

"You can raise the temperature during the day when you're not home and keep your ceiling fans on if you're in the room," said Mock. "At night you can cool it down by a few degrees. This is one of the biggest

ways to save."

The next largest user of electricity is typically the water heater. Mock recommends running full loads of dishes and laundry along with limiting hot shower times.

"A lot of people don't realize they are using electricity when they take hot showers," Mock added.

For Floridians with pools, energy experts like Mock recommend running pool pumps four to six hours a day. This can lower costs to \$40 to \$45 a month compared to more than \$100 a month if it's left running continuously.

"Even the smallest of things can help you save cents, like unplugging electronics when they're not in use," said Mock.

By downloading the FPL app and using the Energy Manager feature, customers can learn how much each appliance costs them hour by hour.

"People don't realize how much they can save until they realize what's costing them money," said Mock. "They're surprised

with how detailed the app is."

Before arriving at a small business or home, Mock and other energy experts make it a point to review customers' energy dashboards. He said he often spots an issue before stepping into a home or business.

"We go to the meter and look at the dashboard to understand what's going on," said Mock. The most common problems we run into causing a customer's bill to spike are hot water leaks, pool pump timer settings/failures and air conditioning settings/malfunctions."

As soon as an issue is fixed, Mock watches the usage go down on the customer's dashboard.

"It's nice when I get to go home at the end of the day knowing I helped make a difference on a customer's bill and they thank me for it," said Mock. "It makes three decades feel easy."

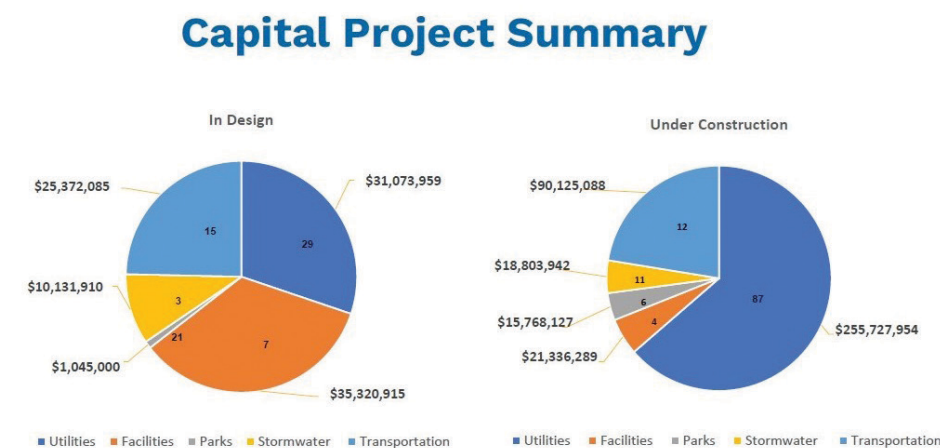
FPL customers can learn more ways to save energy and money on their bill by going to fpl.com/takecontrol.

St. Johns County making progress on 195 capital projects

At the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners meeting on Sept. 5, the new infrastructure delivery team presented an update on selected capital projects among the 195 projects either being designed or already under construction totaling more than \$504 million in infrastructure improvements for the St. Johns County community.

Led by Interim Assistant County Administrator Colin Groff, the infrastructure delivery team is taking a more cohesive, innovative approach to completing capital improvement projects. The team includes the Office of Management and Budget, Land Management, Procurement, Growth Management and Public Works.

"This new team will implement cross-functional team concepts to breakdown silos and build collaboration," Groff said. "We will encourage and reward innovative ideas from both our own staff and



the consultants we hire. This team will be the catalyst to complete projects on time and hopefully under budget in St. Johns County."

The county has 75 capital projects in design that total nearly \$103 million and another 120 capital projects under construction that total more than \$401

million. The highlighted projects included a Countywide Signal Optimization Study, the Hastings Community Center and Library as well as Mill Creek Regional Park and the widening of County Road 210 East. Project details that are available for bid solicitation and request for proposal are on the county's Demand Star online platform.

Go to: demandstar.com/app/agencies/florida/st-johns-county-purchasing-department/procurement-opportunities/5a5c8611-ac18-4c9a-9614-284ee7adaf43.

"We plan to present an update of critical projects every month which will highlight three or four projects," Groff said. "The goal is to communicate to the public important project milestones, the progress we are making on projects and what is being built by St. Johns County to improve their quality of life."

In the Arts



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Writing for young adults is workshop topic



Kate Stollenwerck

Ponte Vedra Beach author Kate Stollenwerck's debut novel "Hello, Goodbye" won the 2022 Florida Book Awards Gold Medal for Young Adult Fiction. She will give an overview of the

genre and then deep dive into the essential elements of YA fiction writing at the FWA Ponte Vedra Writers meeting on Saturday, Sept. 23. The meeting is set for 11 a.m. at the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library.

Young adult fiction is aimed at readers ages 12-18, and the YA market has been booming. While these novels have a lot in common with other genres, writers need to keep in mind the distinctive differences

when writing for that market. Stollenwerck will address those differences in her presentation.

Stollenwerck is a fifth generation Texan, born and raised in Dallas. She practiced law for a large Chicago firm for several years before taking time off to raise her children. In 2019, she revisited an old manuscript and kept on writing. She now lives in Ponte Vedra Beach with

her husband and three children.

The Ponte Vedra Writers group is part of the Florida Writers Association, a statewide, membership organization dedicated to the support of both aspiring and published writers in any genre. The Sept. 23 meeting is free and open to members and nonmembers alike.

For information on FWA go to florida-writers.org.

First Coast Opera to present 'La Boheme,' 'Pirates of Penzance'

Contributed photo

First Coast Opera, the opera company known for its extraordinary productions and captivating performances, has announced the lineup for its new season. Upcoming events feature two timeless classics — Puccini's "La Bohème" and Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Pirates of Penzance" — along with a trove of surprises.

"First Coast Opera is dedicated to providing audiences with exceptional entertainment and artistic experiences," said Curtis Tucker, general and artistic director of First Coast Opera. "We believe that this season's lineup, featuring 'La Bohème' and 'The Pirates of Penzance,' will delight and inspire our patrons. With a touch of surprise woven into every performance, we aim to create unforgettable memories for all who attend."

The season kicks off Oct. 27-28 with "Copland's America" — dinner and a show in Celebration Hall, 5205 A1A South, St. Augustine. This event will celebrate the dean of American composers, Aaron Copland, with excerpts from his opera "The Tender Land" and "Old American Songs" while savoring a catered dinner by La Cocina International. Tickets are available at firstcoastopera.com.

Then, prepare to be swept away by the emotional power of Puccini's "La Bohème," a passionate tale of love and sacrifice set in the Bohemian streets of 19th-century Paris. Performances will take place Dec. 30-31 in Lewis Auditorium at Flagler College, 14 Granada St., downtown St. Augustine.

As the curtain rises on this opera, audiences will be transported into a world of artistic expression, youthful fervor and heartrending melodies. Witness the tender romance between the poet Rodolfo



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Opera

Continued from 41

and the delicate seamstress Mimi unfold against the backdrop of the vibrant Latin Quarter. “La Bohème” promises to be an unforgettable journey through passion, tragedy and the enduring power of human connection. Tickets are available at first-

coastopera.com.

On March 15 and 17, First Coast Opera will present “The Pirates of Penzance,” the uproarious comic operetta by the legendary duo Gilbert and Sullivan. Shows are presented at Lewis Auditorium at Flagler College, 14 Granada St., downtown St. Augustine.

Audiences will join the charming pirate apprentice Frederic on his quest to escape

the pirates’ clutches, find true love and discover his own identity. Filled with witty dialogue, catchy tunes and a delightful cast of characters, this lighthearted romp promises laughter and joy for all ages. Tickets are available at firstcoastopera.com.

The Roaring ‘20s Gala will be held Feb. 14 at the Lightner Museum.

Founded in January 2000 and based in

St. Augustine, First Coast Opera serves Northeast Florida’s First Coast region through a series of concerts and staged productions of operas and operettas. Performances feature guest artists from throughout the United States performing alongside local and regional talent. Go to firstcoastopera.com or call 904-417-5555 for more information and to purchase tickets.

MOCA Jacksonville opens ceramics exhibition in UNF Gallery

MOCA Jacksonville has announced its new exhibition, “Facets: Contemporary Expressions in Sculptural Ceramics,” in partnership with the Department of Art, Art History and Design at the University of North Florida. It is on view now through Nov. 26.

The exhibition features work by 11 internationally recognized contemporary ceramic artists working to push the boundaries in the vibrant and rapidly evolving landscape of contemporary sculptural

ceramics. Many of them, like artists Iva Haas and Todd Shanafelt, incorporate materials such as wood, metal and fabric into their work in order to explore abstract or mechanical forms; while artists such as Tom Bartel explore the figure through fragmentation and simplification of the human form. Others, like Matt Wilt, synthesize the two, creating forms from composites of the physical body and the synthetic world; while yet others look to the landscape and natural world for

inspiration.

The exhibition was curated by Stephen Heywood, professor of ceramics, and Trevor Dunn, associate professor of ceramics.

Additional support for this exhibition was made in part by the City of Jacksonville, the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville, the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs, the National Endowment for the Arts and the University of North Florida.

MOCA will be upgrading its eleva-

tor through Nov. 18, so there will be no upper-level access during this time. The museum will have exhibitions on the first and second floors, with second floor access available by stairs only. This includes the UNF Gallery and “Facets: Contemporary Ceramic Sculpture.” Admission will be free while the elevator is under renovation.

MOCA Jacksonville is located at 333 N. Laura St. For more information, go to mocajacksonville.unf.edu.

Florida Theatre seeks storytellers for series

Are you harboring an intriguing tale within you that you’re itching to perform in front of an audience? Untold Stories, the renowned oral storytelling series at the Florida Theatre, is gearing up for its highly anticipated third season. Authentic,

original stories that span the spectrum from uproariously funny to profoundly dramatic, all rooted in the rich tapestry of Jacksonville, are being sought.

Interested storytellers can share their unique original stories (10 to 12 minutes

in length) with a live audience.

To apply, submit a video (maximum two minutes) explaining your story’s essence, its connection to Jacksonville and your passion for sharing it. Begin by stating your name (spelled out) and provide your phone number. Email your video to she-lissa@floridatheatre.com.

Prospective storytellers will receive a receipt acknowledgment.

Performance Dates & Themes:

- Nov. 9, fall theme
- Feb. 15, winter theme
- May 30, spring theme
- July 11, summer theme

Requirements:

- The story connects to Jacksonville’s

people, place and history.

- Experience with sharing stories in front of an audience.
- Willingness to develop a story with a narrative coach.

Coaching:

- Available for four to six in-person or Zoom coaching sessions.
- A cast storytelling workshop.
- Dress rehearsal week of the show.

Submit your story to: she-lissa@floridatheatre.com

Note: Written descriptions, lengthy stories and scripts won’t be accepted. Keep videos under two minutes.



Pen and Ink Series
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Sports



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WEEK 5 FOOTBALL PREVIEW

Sharks look to keep streak going against Falcons

By Anthony Richards

It has been all systems go for the Ponte Vedra Sharks in recent weeks and they look to continue that form on the road against the Menendez Falcons at 7 p.m. on Sept. 22.

Similar to Middleburg last week, the Falcons have been struggling to score points the past couple of weeks, with only 13 combined points scored in their last three games.

These struggles offensively are not what the doctor ordered against a Sharks' defense that will be doing everything it can to amplify those woes even more, especially coming off of a shutout performance against the Broncos.

Shutouts are the dream for every defense, and nothing exemplifies team defense more than looking up at the end of the night and seeing an opponent have zero points on the scoreboard.

Back-to-back shutouts are difficult to come by, but the potential is there for another stellar night on that side of the ball.

Meanwhile, on offense the Sharks have started to do their own sort of clicking on all cylinders, as it looks to build off of a career night for senior quarterback Ben Burk, who had five touchdowns to four different receivers.

However, the real question is not how the Sharks can top that, but instead how can they keep it going, because success is one thing but maintaining that success is another level and the Sharks are look-



Ben Burk looks for running room on a quarterback keeper. The Ponte Vedra senior finished with a career-high five passing touchdowns on the night.



Noah Hellyer drags down a Fletcher ball carrier as the Panther defense swarms to the ball.

Photos by Anthony Richards

ing to prove they have mastered that by winning their third game in a row.

And although the passing game took center stage against Middleburg, it is important to not forget about the Sharks' dynamic rushing attack led by Brian Case, who is a consistent force and capable of breaking 100 yards on the ground each week.

Panthers face road warrior Raiders

For the Nease Panthers, they will be looking for another bounce back contest as they welcome in the Orange Park Raiders, who will make the trip over to the Panther Den from Clay County for the contest also scheduled for 7 p.m. on Sept. 22.

Both teams appear to be in similar situations entering the game, as they both have records of 2-2 but have had their share of bright signs and question marks in the early going.

One of the interesting story lines lingering from the last game for the Panthers is who will start at quarterback?

It is a question in play after Nate Harry had been the starter through the first four weeks, but Bryce Frick was inserted into the role for the second half against Fletcher and nearly led a comeback bid.

Harry had won the starting job following an intense and close battle that lasted pretty much throughout fall practice, and Frick's performance may have been

enough to open the competition back up.

One thing for sure is that no matter which way the Panthers decide to go, it appears that they have quality options and depth at the quarterback position to choose from.

An interesting aspect heading into the matchup is that when the Raiders make the trip to Nease, it will be the fourth time in five weeks that they have had to go on the road, including a lengthy trip down to Melbourne last week.

That many road trips can eventually wear on a team at any level of football, so it will be interesting to see if it plays a factor and if the Panthers can take advantage of some good home cooking.

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Hard hits, fun times highlight week four

Below are photos from the intense action and fun atmospheres that took place during week four of the high school football season. The Nease Panthers visited the Fletcher Senators, while the Ponte Veda Sharks hosted the Middleburg Broncos.

Photos by Anthony Richards



Senior Morris Halyard rushes from his defensive end position.



Cade Papineau (No. 2) stops a Fletcher ball carrier in his tracks.



Brian Case prepares to stiff arm a Middleburg defender.



The Ponte Veda High band performs during halftime.



Brody McLeod (No. 77) helps keep the pocket clean for Ben Burk at left tackle.



Nate Harry throws a pass on the run.



The Ponte Veda High cheerleaders had a lot of pushups to do after the game with 35 points scored on "U.S.A. night" at the Shark Tank.



The present and future of Shark cheerleaders.

Girls rugby team recruiting new players

Duval Tides Girls High School Rugby has announced the launch of the 2023 fall season and is actively recruiting new players across Northeast Florida.

Now in its second season, the pioneering girls high school rugby team practices begin on Nov. 7, and no experience is necessary. There will be a player and parent interest meeting on Sept. 30 at Southeast Regional Library, 10599 Deerwood Park Blvd. from noon to 2 p.m. It is open to all

high school-aged women.

Rugby is one of the fastest growing sports in the world. The Rugby World Cup is the third largest sporting event in the world, second only to the FIFA World Cup and the Summer Olympics. It is also one of the fastest growing sports on college campuses.

For women, rugby is an NCAA Division



I and II emerging sport, but it is not currently an NCAA sport for men. Rugby teams are currently in place at 58 colleges in America, primarily on the East Coast.

Positions in rugby are suited for a variety of sizes and skills, from height and strength to speed and agility. It is a continuous game with very few stops that teaches

quick decision-making skills and builds physical endurance.

Local rugby leaders celebrate the game's ability to promote teamwork at every level, a skill that serves girls throughout their lives.

"Duval Tides is a wonderful opportunity for young women in our community to build confidence and strength, both on the

Kickboxing Competition



Contributed photo

Caleb Laguens, center right, recently competed at the Jacksonville IKF PKB-PMT-PBSC kickboxing tournament in the Point Sparring Modified Muay Thai competition. He is a welterweight. Caleb attends Nease High School.

Rugby

Continued from 44

pitch and in the classroom,” said Melissa Butler, Duval Tides High School Rugby team coach and founder of Jacksonville Women’s Rugby Football Club. “We are a new team and looking for young women who want to join our pioneering team and make an impact on the next generation of female players in their communities nationwide.”

The first rugby game played in the United States took place in Boston in 1875. At the time, rugby, soccer and American football were growing in popularity at elite East Coast universities. The sport’s roots can be traced back 2,000 years to ancient Rome.

The Jacksonville Rugby Football Club celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2022, and the Jacksonville Women’s Rugby Club just wrapped its 17th season this summer. In 2006, the Jacksonville Axemen Rugby Club was established as a member of the American National Rugby League.

At the local collegiate level, the University of North Florida’s men’s rugby team was founded 18 years ago. In 2019, the Jacksonville Wolverines Boys High School Rugby Club was created and the team won the Florida State Championship in its inaugural year. Soon thereafter, the Jacksonville Women’s Rugby Club established the Duval Tides High School Girls Rugby



Contributed photo

Melissa Butler, Duval Tides High School Rugby team coach

Team in 2022.

Duval Tides High School Girls Rugby Team practice begins on Nov. 7 and will take place twice weekly from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays at Fort Family Park, 8000 Baymeadows Road East.

No tryouts will be conducted, and no experience is necessary. Players at all skill levels are welcome.

For more information on how to register, email Jaxgirlsrugby@gmail.com or go to [@jaxgirlsrugby](https://www.facebook.com/jaxgirlsrugby) on Facebook and Instagram.

Jacksonville Women’s Rugby Club and the Duval Tides High School Girls Rugby Team is sponsored by The Creech Crew Reality and TSI Health, LLC.

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13	
14						15				16					
17						18									
19						20				21					
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	47	48						49					50	51	52
53							54				55	56			
57											58				
59							60					61			

ACROSS

- Type of cat
- Weaponry
- Western Christian Church service
- Significant eruption of pustules
- Baltic nation
- Start of American holiday season
- Unhappy
- Maintains possession of
- Metrical foot of one long and three short syllables
- Mountain pass
- Vestments
- Type of dish
- Escaped quickly
- Zoroastrian concept of holy fire
- Wings
- Political action committee
- Touches lightly
- Stood back from
- Philippine Island
- Popular winter activity
- Type of amine
- Small freshwater duck
- Filled with love
- Without (French)
- Vetch
- Swiss river
- Describes a sound
- Sign language
- Hair product
- Have surgery
- Quality of being imaginary
- Far-right German party
- Drove
- Former French coin of low value
- Hard, durable timbers

- Speak incessantly
- Relating to algae
- Jacob __, journalist
- Rock TV channel
- Boat’s cargo
- Most wise
- Within
- Chinese industrial city
- Scotland’s longest river
- Not capable
- Footwear
- Savings account
- Capable
- Vaccine developer
- Tax collector
- Fencing swords
- Native religion in China
- Promotional materials
- A shot in a film production
- Afflict in mind or body
- A passage with access

- only at one end
- Breathing devices
- Employ for wages
- Kids’ TV channel (abbr.)
- Popular Boston song
- Made amends
- Selling at specially reduced prices
- Atomic #18
- With fireplace residue
- Unleavened cornbread
- Draw out
- Southwestern Alaska island
- Where the Pyramids are
- People of Nigeria
- Smaller quantity
- Destroy the inside of
- City
- Chivalrous figure (abbr.)
- No (Scottish)

SUDOKU

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

Level: Beginner

Here’s How It Works:

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

DOWN

- Body art
- Middle East military title
- Actor Pitt
- Container

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Public Notice
Notice of Public Meeting Via Zoom I Northeast Florida Fire Watch Council
Notice is hereby given that the Northeast Florida Fire Watch Council will meet via Zoom teleconference on **Monday, September 25, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.** The purpose of this meeting is for the Northeast Florida Fire Watch Council to consider and take action on items on its agenda. The meeting agenda and materials can be obtained electronically by emailing ikeane@thefirewatch.org.

Public Notice
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF WILSON COUNTY TENNESSEE SITTING IN LEBANON
CRYSTAL DAWN SMITH, Plaintiff/Wife,
vs.
FILE NO.: 2023-DC-205
MICHAEL CHRISTOPHER BLAKE SMITH, Defendant/Husband.

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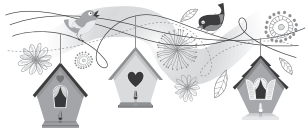
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Interested persons desiring to attend this meeting can do so via Zoom (including by computer or telephone) using the following meeting access information:

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<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86560143252?pwd=ME9nYldlNRGVyZk5VN0xsd2JVQjBOZz09>

Meeting ID: 865 6014 3252
Passcode: 675536

By Phone
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Pursuant to Section 163.01(18), *Florida Statutes*, this meeting is being conducted through the use of communications media technology. Additionally, those who unable to access the call can attend the meeting in a communications media technology facility located in the offices of **Office Evolution, 5011 Gate Parkway, Building 100, Suite 100, Jacksonville, FL 32256.**

Meetings are open to the public. All constituent questions or inquiries will be made a part of the permanent file and all efforts will be made to address the questions during noticed meetings of the Northeast Florida Fire Watch Council.

Northeast Florida Fire Watch Council meetings are open to the public. All constituent questions or inquiries will be made a part of the permanent file and all efforts will be made to address the questions during noticed meetings of the Northeast Florida Fire Watch Council. Interested persons who cannot attend this Zoom teleconference but who wish to submit public comments to be read during the public comment portion of the meeting regarding any matter on the agenda for consideration at the meeting may do so by emailing lan.keane@thefirewatch.org up to the start time of the meeting. Public comments submitted by email must be received no later than 5:30 p.m. on the date of the meeting to be read during the public comment portion of the meeting. The meeting agenda and materials can be obtained electronically by emailing ikeane@thefirewatch.org.

Please contact lan.keane@thefirewatch.org if you have any questions regarding this notice or if you experience technical difficulties during the meeting. A recording of this meeting will be available upon request by emailing ikeane@thefirewatch.org after its conclusion.

St. Johns County serves as the fiscal agent for the Northeast Florida Fire Watch Council. Inquiries/questions regarding items on the Northeast Florida Fire Watch Council agenda should be emailed to lan.keane@thefirewatch.org or by phone at 904 834 9420.

Pursuant to the American with Disabilities Act, accommodations for persons with disabilities are available upon request. Please allow 1-2 business days notification to process; last minute requests will be accepted but may not be possible to fulfill. Please submit ADA accommodations requests to ikeane@thefirewatch.org.

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PUBLICATION ORDER

This case came to be heard on the 25th day of August 2023 before the Honorable Clara W. Byrd, Judge of the Circuit Court of Wilson County, Tennessee, upon sworn *Motion to Allow Service by Publication* and for good cause shown, it is hereby **ORDERED ADJUDGED and DECREED** that:

- 1. MICHAEL CHRISTOPHER BLAKE SMITH's** (hereinafter "Husband");
- That **CRYSTAL DAWN SMITH's** (hereinafter "Wife") sworn testimony was that Husband's location is unknown;
- That Wife attempted to serve Husband via the Secretary of State at two (2) separate addresses; however, said attempts were unsuccessful;
- That counsel for Wife has attempted to reach out to Husband via Facebook, but said attempt was unsuccessful;
- That Husband's last known address to Wife's knowledge was 446 Ocean Vista Avenue, St. Augustine, St. John's County, Florida 32080;
- That pursuant to the background check ran by counsel for Wife, Husband's last known address is 851 Bulkhead Road, Green Cove Springs, Clay County, Florida 32043-8304.
- That Wife's testimony was that she knows of no other location in which Husband may be found;
- That the best possible notice under the circumstances and notice reasonably calculated to give reasonable actual notice is publication in a newspaper which circulates in St. John's County, Florida;
- As such, the publication notice shall be posted with the Ponte Vedra Recorder which circulates weekly in St. John's County which is Husband's last known address.

So **ORDERED** this the 5 day of September 2023.

CLARA W. BYRD, JUDGE APPROVED FOR ENTRY:
KANE & CROWELL, PLLC

LINDSEY W. JOHNSON, # 36839
Attorney for Wife
133 South College Street
Lebanon, Tennessee 37087
(615) 784-4802
Ljohnson@kane-law.com



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