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INSIDE



Sports
— FEATURING —
Veteran Sharks too much for youthful Panthers
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Thursday, January 18, 2024

PonteVedraRecorder.com

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Community gathers to fight hate

By Shaun Ryan

Dozens of local residents from diverse backgrounds and faiths gathered Thursday, Jan. 11, at Christ Episcopal Church in Ponte Vedra Beach to take a stand against antisemitism and all forms of hate. The dinner and program served as a kickoff for a series of events inspired by a UF Hillel initiative launched in 2020 called Spread Cream Cheese Not Hate®.

The evening featured compelling speakers, including Basma Alawee, a leader in refugee resettlement and inclusion. In 2010, Alawee and her family fled their home country of Iraq after their lives were threatened. They eventually became American citizens, but not before being confronted by anti-Muslim prejudice and discrimination in

HATE continues on Page 8

Nocatee takes plunge for first swim of 2024

The Nocatee Community held its 15th Annual Polar Plunge event as residents welcomed the first swim of 2024 by jumping in the pool at the Nocatee Splash Waterpark on Jan. 13. The water was 65 degrees at the time of the plunge. See more photos from the event on page 8.

Photo by Anthony Richards



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

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Send us your news

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



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2	7	6	1	3	4	5	9	8
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BRIEFS

PARC Group, Davis Family acquire Glen Kernan land

The PARC Group and the Davis Family, known for successful Northeast Florida communities including Nocatee, Pablo Creek Reserve and eTown, have purchased the remaining undeveloped land in the southern part of Jacksonville's Glen Kernan community, located between Hodges Boulevard and Kernan Boulevard.

PARC plans to complete the development of Glen Kernan with new estate homesites while respecting and maintaining the unique vision that has defined Glen Kernan as a special community.

Development plans will be released later this year, including more information on homesite availability and custom home opportunities. To join the VIP waitlist, go to glenkernanhomes.com. Follow @ThePARCGroup on social media for development updates.

St. Johns County to host large beach cleanup

In collaboration with St. Johns River State College's "Viking Spring into Service Day," the St. Johns County Solid Waste Division is hosting a New Year's Beach Cleanup. The division's staff will lead cleanup efforts along with SJR State's student-athletes and a group of beach-loving employees.

It will take place from 1 to 4 p.m. Jan. 19 at multiple sites throughout the county including Mickler's Landing, GTM Reserve south beach at 2200 S. Ponte Vedra Blvd., North Beach Park at 3721 State Road A1A, Vilano Beach, St. Augustine Beach Pier, St. Augustine Beach, Crescent Beach at Cubbedge Road and Ft. Matanzas Beach.

Partner organizations include St. Johns River State College, Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve, Keep St. Johns County Beautiful, Sol Margin Fishing & Conservation Foundation, City of St. Augustine Beach, Matanzas Riverkeeper, National Park Service: Fort Matanzas National Monument, Marineland, Trailmark Feet on the Earth, Beaches Go Green, Friends of Anastasia State Park, University of Florida: Whitney Lab and A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway.

Among those participating will be County Commissioner Roy Alaimo and Joe Pickens,

president of St John's River State College.

Beach club reportedly suspends operations temporarily

The Serenata Beach Club has temporarily suspended club operations amid financial challenges arising in part from a crime perpetrated against the club during its process of refinancing, according to an email sent to members that has been published by various news outlets.

Two foreclosure lawsuits were previously

BRIEFS continues on Page 3

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Briefs

Continued from 2

filed against the club and its owners, according to documents filed in the Circuit Court of the Seventh Judicial District. The suits by World Business Lenders of Elmsford, New York, and DLP Lending Fund of Delaware allege that the club owes them money.

The Recorder has reached out to co-owner Molly Ann Butler for clarification of the issue.

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.

Explore the beach at GTM Research Reserve

Join volunteers at the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve (GTM) for a beach exploration 9-11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 20. Collect seashells, search for shark teeth and learn about coastal wildlife. Meet at GTM Research Reserve Visitor Center, 505 Guana River Road, Ponte Vedra Beach.

Wear comfortable closed-toe shoes. Hat, insect repellent, water and sunscreen are recommended. The event is free but online

registration is required. To register, go to gtmnerr.org/visit/events.

Job hunter workshop planned

The Savvy Job Hunters Ministry of Christ Episcopal Church will host a free Zoom workshop, "Do What You Are: Connecting Personality Types to Careers Using MBTI," from 10:30 a.m. to noon Jan. 26. The workshop will be presented by Margaret MacNaughton, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Qualified Practitioner. Email pottesen66@gmail.com to register. All are welcome to attend.

Sports columnist to speak at library

The FOL Speaker Series returns on Tuesday, Jan. 23, with sports columnist Gene Frenette. The program is free and open to the public, made possible by the Friends of the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library. Frenette's talk begins at 6:30 p.m. in the library's FOL Community Room. Doors will open at 6 p.m.

A columnist since 1988, Frenette has covered everything from college football to the Summer Olympics, along with several Super Bowls and World Series games. Vermont native, Frenette moved to Florida in 1978 to take a sports writing job at the Fort Pierce News Tribune, then moved to the Palm Beach Evening Times in 1980 before being hired by the Jacksonville Journal in 1981 to cover high school sports.

In his talk, Frenette will provide insights to the Jacksonville Jaguars season and

share stories of the athletes and sports he's covered.

Renourishment planned for Duval beaches

USACE Jacksonville has awarded a \$32.4 million contract to Great Lakes Dredge & Dock Co., LLC, of Houston, Texas, for renourishment of approximately 10 miles of the Duval County Atlantic shoreline.

The project will renourish critically eroded beach within the municipalities of Atlantic Beach, Neptune Beach and Jacksonville Beach, extending from the St. Johns River to the Duval-St. Johns County line.

The project will be 100% federally funded through flood control and coastal emergencies monies.

The renourishment includes construction of both a dune and beach berm with sand sourced from a federally administered offshore borrow area. Beach restoration work will include beach tilling, vibration control and monitoring, environmental species monitoring and turbidity monitoring.

For more information about USACE studies and projects, go to saj.usace.army.mil.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

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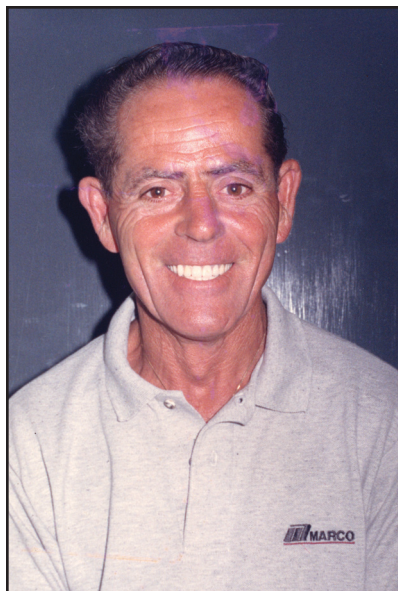
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OBITUARIES



Carl Roger Hashey

Carl Roger Hashey was born August 10, 1935 in Uxbridge, Massachusetts. He passed peacefully on January 5, 2024 after a prolonged illness. He was 88 years old. He served in the US Air Force and the Florida Army National Guard. Carl retired from the Federal Aviation Administration Air Traffic Control after 30

years' service. Carl's service to the community includes serving in the US Coast Guard Auxiliary, Duval County Road Patrol, and as Fire Chief with the Duval County Fire Department (Garden City).

Carl is predeceased by his parents, Frederick and Beatrice and his siblings John (twin), Frederick Jr., Jahn, Karen, and daughter Priscilla Merkel. He is survived by his sisters, Gayle and Sheila; ex-wife Carol; daughter Christine (Victor) and son Terry (Natalie); grandchildren Marie Johnson (James), Alan Jowanna, Zachary, Gregory, Krya and Luke Hashey; great grandchildren Ailise, Ethan, Emory Johnson and Kaleah Jowanna.

He will be interred in Uxbridge, Massachusetts at a date to be determined. Please visit his Tribute online at www.quinn-shalz.com.

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DEATH NOTICES

Bea Andrews

Bea Andrews, 87, of Palm Coast, Florida, died Jan. 5, 2024. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravalle.com

John Bracco

John Bracco, 81, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Jan. 5, 2024. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravalle.com

Richard Dean Crowder, Sr.

Richard Dean Crowder, Sr., 63, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Jan. 10, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100

William "Bill" Donovan

William "Bill" Donovan, 73, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Jan. 2, 2024. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravalle.com

David Jordan

David Jordan, 75, of Ponte Vedra, Florida, died Jan. 2, 2024. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravalle.com

Andrew Kostecki

Andrew Kostecki, 62, of Rocky Point, North

Carolina, died Dec. 28, 2023. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100

James Linfante

James Linfante, 72, of Ponte Vedra, Florida, died Jan. 3, 2024. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravalle.com

Mary Elizabeth Machael

Mary Elizabeth Machael, 98, of Jacksonville, Florida, died Jan. 10, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100

Elaine Ray

Elaine Ray, 89, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Jan. 7, 2024. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – 904-285-1130 – www.pontevedravalle.com

Deborah E. Schur

Deborah E. Schur, 80, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Jan. 13, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100

Mary Evelyn Williams

Mary Evelyn Williams, 93, of Atlantic Beach, Florida, died Jan. 11, 2024. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. www.quinn-shalz.com. 904-249-1100

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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: CELEBRATE THE NEW YEAR WITH FLOWERS

Camellias

"Go confidently in the direction of your dreams." — Henry David Thoreau

By Kathy Esfahani



Kathy Esfahani

Winter has arrived in North Florida, and we still have several more weeks before spring planting to avoid the chance for frosts. But that doesn't mean you can't have color in your landscape now! Camellias are evergreen shrubs that brighten the cooler months with stunning, colorful blooms in January.

Camellias have adorned Southern landscapes for around 200 years. Many types of camellias are available and offer sizes ranging from dwarf varieties to the larger camellia japonica. These Japanese camellias often grow to heights of six to 12 feet but can be larger if older. They can reach six to 10 feet in width and produce flowers in white, pink



Camellia bloom at the nursery this week!

and red. Consider the growth potential for your selected camellias when adding them to your landscape. Because camellias are low maintenance and can live for many years, they can be ideal landscaping plants. Camellias prefer partial sun — ideally morning sunshine and afternoon shade. Plant them in shallow holes to expose the top of the plant's crown (the area of the plant where the stem meets the roots). Be sure your camellias have at least five feet of space between them and other trees and shrubs so that they are not competing for water and nutrients. Camellias prefer well-drained but consistently moist soil. Regular watering is essential, particularly during the first year after planting. Rainfall may be enough for more mature plants as long as extra water is given during dry periods. If needed, prune camellias during summer months before new buds appear.

Camellias can serve many purposes in your landscape. Use them to establish a foundation for landscape beds, to



Flower of the Week

Camellia

create borders or hedges around your yard, or to accent with pops of color for winter months. Grouping several camellia shrubs together can enhance their impact in a landscape.

Happy planting!

Flower of the Week: Camellia

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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With years of experience in the HVAC industry, Crissy Collins and husband Zach moved to Northeast Florida last year and launched World's Greatest Heating & Air.

Crissy Collins

As told to Shaun Ryan

Tell me about World's Greatest Heating & Air.

We are 90% residential. We do maintenances, repairs, replacements and duct balancing and cleaning. We do Aeroseal, which is kind of like Fix-a-Flat for your duct work; it fixes leakages. We do indoor air quality, which is one of my personal favorites, because it changed my life. My daughter has allergies. I have multiple allergies. So, I'm a big proponent of indoor air quality.

We are not upsell-focused like many companies. A lot of companies will bonus their employees off of sales and higher ticket averages. We don't do that. We give bonuses to our employees on client satisfaction, completion of work and no call-backs.

We educate homeowners to be sure they know all of their options instead of just the most expensive options.

We even take this one step further. We refuse to quote replacements inside the home. Facing large replacements or repairs combined with different variables, like having a newborn baby or caring for an elderly parent in the home, can create urgency and emotional decision making. We want a cool-down period so homeowners can review all aspects of the solutions we offer. We want them to be absolutely sure that our solution is the best one for them and their family.

Also, I recommend mid-sized companies. The reason for that is you're large enough to handle the workload if it is 100 degrees in the summer or if there's something going on that one person or two people can't get out to. We like to have enough staff that we can get to you and not make you wait for three to four weeks.

Then, with the large companies, we're seeing a lot of corporate people pressing those sales and pushing for sales, and it's not necessarily pushing for the best thing for the client.

How long has the company been here in the Duval/St. Johns area?

We have been here for a little over a year. We've had other HVAC companies, and we went into a partnership — so that freed me up to come down here and open this business.

Tell me about your team.

My husband is the technical guru. He's been doing it since he was 14. He has two licenses in Florida, one in South Carolina and one in Georgia. He also has a general contractor's license.

And then we have two in our main management team. We've got Darius Brown. He's been with us for about 10 years. He's awesome. And we have Jesse. He hasn't been with us for as long, but he sees the vision. They both relocated here with us [from Georgia] because they believe in what we're doing.

How did you come up with your sci-fi theme?

My husband and I were brainstorming, and we thought: What if we just said, "We're the greatest in the whole world, we're the best of all time?" And then we thought: Wouldn't it be funny if it was not just the world? Maybe the whole universe. Maybe we're the best in the whole universe!

It kind of spiraled out from there, and we had a graphic designer create the cast of characters. The purple color was picked by my daughter Eden. She's 5. At the time



Photo by Shaun Ryan

Crissy Collins, who with husband Zach founded World's Greatest Heating & Air a year ago, enjoys the Nocatee lifestyle.

her favorite color was purple.

Do you have any advice for the average homeowners regarding maintaining, updating or replacing their current HVAC systems?

One of my biggest things is: always get multiple estimates. Obviously, I want to be one of them. I would love that. But always get multiple estimates. Because no matter how close the company controls their process, they're going to have people who forget to check warranties. And we've gone behind people and they were facing these large repairs, and we're like, "We can fix this for \$200. You're still under warranty. What was this other company talking about?"

Not everybody is going to know or be able to quote you a solution that's going to solve your problem. You want to make sure you know exactly what's going on before you spend thousands of dollars on some repair. Because a replacement may not fix your issue.

Know your options, always.

What is your background, and how did you get into this line of work?

I am a Georgia girl, born and raised. I graduated with a degree in psychology and moved into training and development for almost 10 years. I transitioned into marketing and business development with our other HVAC brands as we expanded and opened new branches.

What do you like best about what you do?

I love being a woman in a male-dominated industry. Last time I checked, our industry was only 3% female.

When you get into management and ownership roles that number goes down to less than 1%.

After learning that, I created the Women of HVAC paid internship program. We are launching it here March 1.

They go through and for one week they work each position in heating and air, so they learn all about the system. They learn how to do maintenances. They ride with technicians.

You don't have to have experience. You don't have to have a college degree. All you have to have is grit: courage, strength of character, being able to keep going when things get hard.

Most women I know have these qualities already. They just need to be told that you can do this, too. It can be a very lucrative career with pathways to management and ownership, but most importantly it can provide stability for their families. I've seen lives completely changed through this program.

What do you like best about living here on the First Coast?

It's the people. The first time we visited we knew immediately that we were home. I'm a Southern girl, so I always thought I knew Southern hospitality. But the people here are so warm and welcoming, it's different from anywhere else in the world.

This is truly the best place in the world to live! That is why we offer free service calls, with a repair, to all St. John's County police officers, firefighters and teachers. We are so thankful for them keeping us safe and teaching our children that we wanted to say "thank you" to them by offering our free services!



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Cindy Sutton

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Owner Jalaram hotels

Farid Ashdji

Owner The Ponce Hotel St. Augustine & Vilano Beach Holiday Inn Express

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Owner Davidson Realty

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Owner Devil's Elbow Fishing Camp

Larry Wang

Attorney & Certified Firearms Instructor

Jane Blair

Community Leader

Justin Palesotti

Business Owner & Community Leader

Tanya Wang

Home Educator

Julie Pearson

Registered Nurse

Kenneth Pearson

Business Executive

Kimberly Loferski

Real Estate Agent

Robb Muley

Business Executive & Community Leader

Lori Muller

Retired Educator

Kent Olsen

Business Executive

Missy Nevin

President Standby Security

Debbie Weigel

Senior Account Manager

Angie Larson

Senior Paralegal

Chris Catania

Community Leader

John Bubar

Retired Navy

Clara Edwards

Senior Vice President, Financial Institution

Gussie Roberts

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Andy Loferski

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Retired Business Executive

Joe Follenweider

Business Executive

Suzy Catania

Community Leader

Kelly Mitchell

Mental Healthcare Professional

Sue Clarke

Business Executive

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Owners The Watt Team

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Cindy Cigrand

Community Leader

Dr. Doug Kowieski

Law Enforcement & Community Leader

Taking the plunge

Photos by Anthony Richards



Hate

Continued from 1

this new land.

But unforeseen acts of kindness turned things around for Alawee.

“A Jewish friend extended a hand of friendship, inviting me to Thanksgiving family dinner,” she said. “Around that table, three families, each representing a different faith, shared stories of their homeland.”

This shared humanity eroded the walls that divided the families.

“My Jewish friend with an open heart and home showed me the true meaning of compassion and friendship,” Alawee said. “Similarly, a dear work friend, recognizing my vulnerability as a newcomer and expectant mother at that time, surprised me with a baby shower.”

In these moments, she said, she felt the embrace of newfound community.

Alawee went on to become deputy executive director of the Community Sponsorship Hub and an advisory board member for The Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative. She is a co-founder of the U.S. Refugee Advisory Board and works with the U.S. Department of State Welcome Corps program.

“In the teaching of various faiths, we find common threads that emphasize love, hospitality and compassion,” she said, citing passages in the Quran and the Bible.

About 50 volunteers came together to conduct the dinner event. Christ Church was joined by Beth El The Beaches Synagogue, Palms Presbyterian Church, Jax-THRIVE, OneJax and students from UNF. Several teens from Ponte Vedra High School, Landrum Middle School,



Photo by Shaun Ryan

Basma Alawee speaks during an event focused on combating hate.

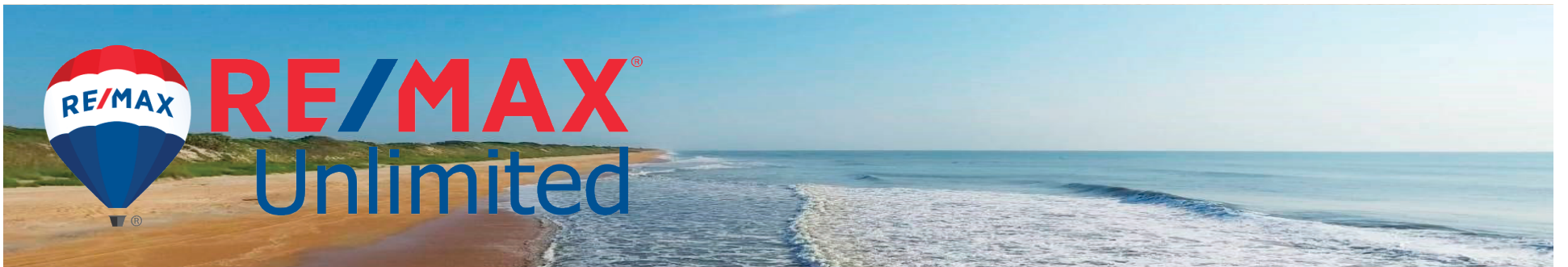
Episcopal High School and Bolles High School also spoke about their commitment to stopping hate.

“In the spirit of unity, let us raise our voices, standing up against hate through everyday acts of kindness, understanding and solidarity,” Alawee told those assembled.

In the coming weeks, members of Palms Presbyterian and Christ Church will be invited to sign a pledge to combat antisemitism and all forms of hate. Signers

receive a free bagel with cream cheese, a reminder to Spread Cream Cheese Not Hate®.

Members of the community not affiliated with the participating churches can still take the pledge online at <https://form.jotform.com/233165102944148>. Signers can claim their free bagel and cream cheese between 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. Jan. 28 at Trasca & Co., 155 Tourside Drive, No. 1500, Ponte Vedra Beach.

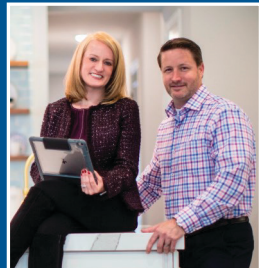


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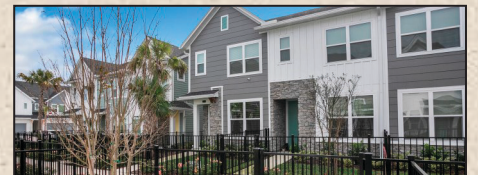
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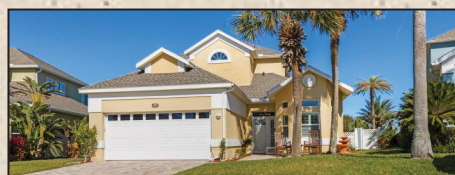
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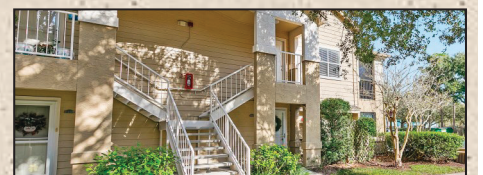
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Drainage issues in MSD are 'solvable,' but challenging

By Anthony Richards

Finding a solution to the drainage issues facing many residents in the Ponte Vedra Municipal Service District remains in the process of being figured out, but it is moving along according to MSD trustee Mickey White.

According to White, the engineering firm Eisman & Russo, Inc. have been tasked with developing a proposal and are amid that process.

"They are writing a proposal to expand the footprint of the county's drainage study to include Solana Road and San Juan Drive," White said.

The firm is waiting on information from JEA, but once it is finished they will send a copy of the proposal to White to bring toward the MSD board at their next meeting on Feb. 12.

"As it relates to advancing design of the sidewalks, I think we need to release a survey company to go out to do a full right of way/corridor survey throughout the phase 1 area as soon as we get the county's study," White said.

Although that is part of the process and a survey that will need to be done prior to construction of the sidewalk project, White wants to see the board push for that survey to take place as soon as possible in hopes of expediting the process.

"We need to push for the advancement of that, because the quicker we can get them to do that, the better," White said. "It's valuable information for the sidewalks as well for the drainage, and we can use it for both."

Chairman Al Hollon asked if the study will help the board determine which stormwater drains are private and which ones belong to the county.

"From 1930-whatever to 1970-whatever, I've read the plats and they're different throughout the whole thing, so from a title standpoint it's a mess," White said. "Each one of these things is kind

of unique, so I think that what we need to do when we do the feasibility studies is also explain in each one which have a real bad property rights situation."

According to White, a bad property rights situation would just mean more process involved with it prior to getting the solution in place, because consent would have to be received from the private property owners involved with the property in question to fix that certain segment of drainage issue.

"It's just not as simple as going to one place and having it fixed, because of the way they did the property rights for years," White said.

An easy situation would be the ones where the drainage system in question sits on county property, so the path to digging up dirt and installing new pipes would be much quicker to take place.

"Everybody has to work within the limits of what they can do," White said.

"It's a solvable problem, but the challenge is that we're going to have the county and the (Ponte Vedra Inn & Club) staffs will all have to be involved to figure out how we're going to address this issue."

The Ponte Vedra Inn & Club is one of the many private property owners where drainage infrastructure exists.



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Discussion of Joseph comments cut from county commission agenda

By Shaun Ryan

St. Johns County Commissioners removed an item from their regular meeting agenda Tuesday, Jan. 16, that would have addressed election-related comments made by Commissioner Krista Joseph during a previous meeting. The board was to have heard a presentation by outside counsel engaged to provide an opinion as to whether Joseph's comments had run afoul of a section of state statute sometimes called Florida's "Little Hatch Act."

In part, Section 104.31 forbids elected officials to use their official authority or influence for the purpose of, among other things, "influencing another person's vote or affecting the result thereof."

At the board's Nov. 21 meeting, Joseph began her commissioner comments by giving a laundry list of grievances that the public might hold against the status quo and then mentioned the upcoming election. She was stopped from going further.

At the Dec. 5 meeting, the commission voted 4-1 to censure Joseph after

Commissioner Henry Dean claimed that Joseph had given a "campaign speech," which he believed had violated state statute.

Dean also moved that the opinion of outside counsel be sought in the matter. That legal analysis was performed by Raymond Treadwell, a shareholder in the firm of Lawson, Huck, Gonzalez PLLC of Tallahassee, and rendered on Jan. 8.

Treadwell concluded that Joseph "likely violated section 104.31."

"In context, the unmistakable purpose of her comments was to encourage voting out the Incumbent Commissioners," he wrote.

A violation of section 104.31 would be a misdemeanor, according to the Election Code. The Florida Elections Commission may determine whether such a violation exists, but it must first find that the conduct in question was "willful."

On Jan. 10, Joseph filed suit against the commission in federal court disagreeing with the interpretation of section 104.31, citing a 1978 Florida Attorney General opinion that construed section 104.31 as requiring "corrupt

intent," rather than simply being applied to political speech.

The complaint notes that Joseph would like to speak on political matters to county residents in the months preceding the primary election in August but states that the threat of criminal prosecution has had a chilling effect on her constitutionally protected political speech.

In her lawsuit, Joseph requests a declaration by the court of her First Amendment rights to express her political views.

Tuesday's agenda item was removed at the recommendation of County Attorney David Migut, citing the litigation and advising the board not to discuss the matter in public.

Migut also informed the board that he would schedule a private executive session of the commission for the sole purpose of discussing the litigation. He could not say whether or not Joseph would be able to attend the executive session.

Joseph was elected to the board in 2022, defeating incumbent Commissioner Jeremiah Blocker.

Three commission seats are up for election this year, District 1, currently held by Commissioner Christian Whitehurst; District 3, currently held by Commissioner Roy Alaimo; and District 5, currently held by Dean.

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Birthdays at Adventure Landing: fun and carefree

A child's birthday is one day of the year that parents work so hard to make perfect for their children. Decorating a space with your child's current favorite theme, setting up a space for delicious food and birthday treats and planning games to entertain the children — nothing short of becoming an amazing event planner for the day!

The payoff of seeing all of the kids happy and having fun is always worth the work, but sometimes don't you wish you could just find a way to skip the work and focus on the fun, too? Look no further than Adventure Landing — the home of the "No-Hassle Birthday Party"!

At Adventure Landing, there is nothing you need to worry about except relaxing and watching your child enjoy their special day. Or, you can join in the fun, too. They have trained party captains to host and organize the party. The parties include 90 minutes of table time, which



includes all paper goods needed to enjoy food and treats at the party. They even decorate the table as well, which includes balloons.

All birthday party packages include pizza or hot dogs and soda, and you're welcome to bring a specialty themed cake or cupcakes for your little one's special day. Don't worry, the kids will have plenty to do as they enjoy arcade games, mini golf, go-karts, Laser Tag or — starting March 15 — Shipwreck Island

Waterpark.

Plus, the birthday honoree receives some special perks by getting additional redemption tickets for that special toy or prize from the arcade, a customized group birthday photo to remember for years to come, and a free three-attraction pass to use on a future visit.

If your child happens to be a bit older and wants a little more freedom and flexibility, Adventure Landing also offers a teen party package, which doesn't include table time but offers more time to enjoy the attractions at their own leisure.

Whether you are planning a birthday party for a younger child, or an older one, Adventure Landing will take care of all of the party planning so you don't have to. And perhaps the best part is that the adults don't have to do any clean-up after the party is over.

Right now, Adventure Landing is offering some great ways to save and get

your bang for your buck. If you book your party to be held Monday through Friday, you'll get an extra 100 free arcade tokens to distribute to the party however you wish. Plus, you can get \$20 off any party package by going to their website at AdventureLanding.com and downloading the coupon.

They also offer online invitations that you can download from the website so you don't have to spend money on birthday invitations either. If you have special take-home goodies you'd like to give to everyone at the party, just bring them with you and they'll include them in their goodie bags, which are given to the party guests.

So, are you ready to make your child's birthday party an amazing day of fun without all of the stress that comes from hosting it yourself? It's time to finally relax and let someone else do all of the work.

This year, why not throw a foam party?

We are coming up on the warmer weather, and it's time to start planning your outdoor parties, but what can we do that is different and cool — and easy?

Have you heard about First Coast Foam Party? They are probably the ones doing foam parties at your kids' daycares and at churches.

Well, they don't only specialize in throwing foam parties for schools, daycare facilities and churches; they can also come to your house and do a foam party right in your backyard!

Here in the Ponte Vedra area, First Coast Foam Party LLC is the premier company that provides foam parties,



miniature golf and bubble mania parties and they even have a cotton candy machine that you can use.

Now, the team at First Coast Foam Party LLC has introduced First Coast Game Truck LLC, which adds the newest and biggest video game truck in North Florida, boasting seven 55-inch



TVs playing the newest gaming systems Xbox X and PS5 as well as Nintendo Switch.

Whenever moms call to ask what they can do for their kids' birthday parties, First Coast Foam Party LLC is happy to tell them about Cristy Butler at Smart Soiree, where they can get all of their party needs to complete the pack-

age with one or all of the company's services.

One of the best parties is either foam or the game truck along with miniature golf and cotton candy. This would be a perfect setup for a large party with 30-plus kids. Moms love that all they have to do is call First Coast Foam Party LLC for the entertainment and Smart Soiree for the party goods.

Once the party experts get to your house, they take care of setting up equipment and everything needed for the party while parents can hang out while the party is underway.

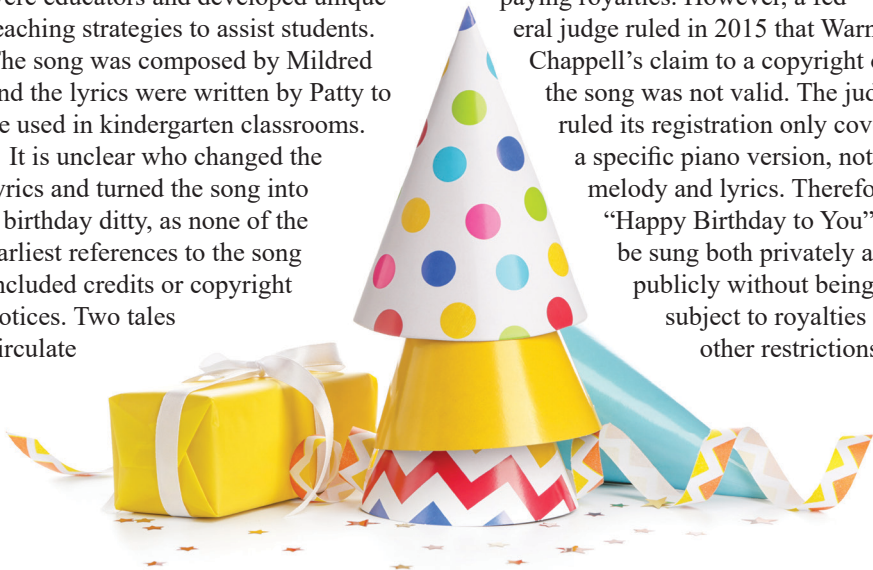
For more information, go to firstcoast-foamparty.com and smartsoiree.com.

DID YOU KNOW?

The pinnacle of birthday celebrations, if there's no piñata to break open, is when the birthday cake comes out and party attendees serenade the guest of honor. The song everyone harmonizes to is among the most widely recognized and well-loved tunes in the world. The "birthday song," also known as "Happy Birthday to You," is in the public domain in the United States and the European Union. The song originally was penned as a classroom greeting song titled "Good Morning to All," written by sisters Mildred J. Hill and Patty Smith Hill. Both were educators and developed unique teaching strategies to assist students. The song was composed by Mildred and the lyrics were written by Patty to be used in kindergarten classrooms.

It is unclear who changed the lyrics and turned the song into a birthday ditty, as none of the earliest references to the song included credits or copyright notices. Two tales circulate

regarding the eventual copyright of the song. One has The Summy Company registering a copyright in 1935, crediting authors Preston Ware Orem and Mrs. R. R. Forman. The other says Jessica Hill, sister to Mildred and Patty, who was working with publisher Clayton F. Summy Company, copyrighted and published "Happy Birthday to You" in 1935. Eventually Warner Chappell bought the company that was originally The Summy Company, and argued the birthday song was under copyright until 2030, making performances of the song illegal without paying royalties. However, a federal judge ruled in 2015 that Warner Chappell's claim to a copyright on the song was not valid. The judge ruled its registration only covered a specific piano version, not the melody and lyrics. Therefore, "Happy Birthday to You" can be sung both privately and publicly without being subject to royalties or other restrictions.



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The TPC Sawgrass storytellers program presented \$36,000 to five local charities during its luncheon in December.



Captain storyteller Jim Kleck (wearing glasses) speaks at the podium during the luncheon. Photos courtesy of TPC Sawgrass

TPC Storytellers present \$36k to local charities

By Anthony Richards

Every year the tips given to the storytellers at TPC Sawgrass go toward helping local charities, and during 2023 the group was able to raise \$36,000 as part of the tips its volunteers earned from the tours they offer of the TPC Sawgrass Clubhouse and the property throughout the year.

The money was dispersed to five charities across the area during presentations at the Storytellers' annual luncheon event in December, and the charities included V for Victory Fighting Cancer, Hopeful Handbags, the St. Gerard campus, Forgotten Angels and Jacksonville Naval Historical Ship Association for the USS Orleck.

According to captain storyteller Jim Kleck, the program always tries to find a variety of different charities that specialize in helping people dealing with many types of situations, and this year's group of charities is a perfect example of that.

"The tours are free, and we tell that to our guests when they come in, but if they enjoy the tour we let them know that any gratuities we get from our tours go to charities we select as storytellers," Kleck said.

He believes the ability to give back is a strong motivating factor for both the storytellers and guests who go on the tours of the TPC Sawgrass Clubhouse.

"Most people are very open and generous with their contributions," Kleck said. "Since 2007 (when the clubhouse

opened), we've collected more than \$300,000 in gratuities that have then been turned around and given to charities."

The money donated will go a long way in helping each charitable organization get closer to achieving their goals of helping those in need in the community.

In the case of the Jacksonville Naval Historical Ship Association, they are working on getting enough funds to offer an interactive warship museum of naval military history for visitors to Jacksonville while also developing their STEAM+H educational program for local children.

V for Victory Fighting Cancer was founded by the owner of V's Pizza and its mission is to cultivate relationships

with local businesses and community groups to offer everyday services and support to families battling cancer at no cost to them.

St. Gerard campus strives to empower and provide hope to teens who are pregnant or parenting, while Hopeful Handbags wants to assist those who have dealt with domestic abuse and their children.

The elderly in nursing homes are the focus of Forgotten Angels, especially those with no family by working with activity directors to make sure they get presents at Christmas and have all the essential items they need.

"It's such a great program to be a part of, and its great when all the stories we tell can make a difference like that," Kleck said.



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Girl Scout cookie season is underway

By Anthony Richards

The new year means many things to many different people, but for those with a sweet tooth, it means that it is the start of cookie season for the Girl Scouts.

The local Gateway Council, which covers troops within the Northeast Florida region, unboxed this season's cookie selections on Jan. 2 and has officially begun selling.

According to the council, the primary goal of the cookie program is to teach girls important life skills and prepare the future generation of entrepreneurs.

Such skills taught during the experience include money management, team building, public speaking and decision making.

This year's cookie choices will include the full assortment of selections that Girl Scout cookie fans have gotten accustomed to over the years, including Trefoils, Lemon-Ups, Adventurefuls, Girl Scout S'mores, Toffee-tastic, Tagalongs, Do-si-dos, Samoas and the ever-popular Thin Mints, with many of the flavors being Girl Scouts staples for some time now.

Although the Girl Scouts cookie program is a nationwide event, all proceeds from the cookie sales will stay with local



Contributed photo

The Girl Scouts of Gateway Council are now selling cookies across the First Coast.

councils and troops to help provide Girl Scouts with amazing experiences and opportunities year-round.

Each year the cookie season undertakes a theme, and this year it is "unbox the future," which aims to remove social barriers that often keep girls boxed in, making it difficult to discover their full potential.

When bold, goal-getting Girl Scouts sell a package of cookies, they're doing much more than what's seen at face value. They're creating a more equitable future for themselves and the world. Every box of cookies sold provides invaluable experiences for Girl Scouts, such as service projects, troop travel and summer camp.

For more than 100 years, the cookie

program has gone on thanks to the continued support of the local communities, and nearly 700,000 girls will participate in the Girl Scouts' Cookie Program nationwide.

As part of the program, Girl Scouts can earn a variety of badges and awards to develop valuable business skills, including cookie business badges, financial literacy badges, cookie entrepreneur family pins and entrepreneur badges.

Below are ways to go about purchasing Girl Scout cookies this year:

- If you know a registered Girl Scout, reach out to her to find out how she's selling cookies. If you don't know a Girl Scout, reach out to Girl Scouts of Gateway Council, or use the Girl Scout Cookie Finder at gsgateway.org to find a booth to purchase cookies.

- Beginning February 16, customers who do not already know a Girl Scout will also be able to purchase cookies to be shipped directly to their homes by entering their ZIP code into the Girl Scout Cookie Finder on the website. The link can also be used to find a local booth, purchase cookies and/or to donate cookies for local community causes.

- You can also text COOKIES to 59618 to stay informed about how to purchase Girl Scout Cookies and other exciting Girl Scout news.

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Security booth supervisor a community hero

By Soleil Shah

There are many important heroes around Ponte Vedra: veterans, police officers, firefighters and more. However, there is one local hero who is especially humble in her work. Jacqueline Stanczyk, the supervisor of Fairfield's security booth, is one local hero who deserves recognition.

Stanczyk's job is to regulate visitors who go into the Fairfield neighborhood, but her job is not always easy. She might have said, "Me, I'm not important," but

anyone who puts their life on the line on a daily basis is considered a hero.

Fairfield is a neighborhood in Ponte Vedra. There are about 462 families living in this gated residential. According to Stanczyk, her job is to "make sure of proper access control," and as supervisor, "make sure other guards do their jobs." She has been guarding Fairfield from unsafe intruders for 13 years.

Part of her job is accepting that she can and will be put in dangerous situations. Although, she said, suspicious people do not often try to enter, there was one occa-

sion where she nearly lost her life.

An unusual car had pulled up to her booth and asked to be let in. Stanczyk knew that this person was neither a Fairfield resident nor a worker scheduled to come in that day. She refused entry to this individual. The person, suddenly filled with rage, got out of the vehicle. Stanczyk's first instincts were to lock the doors of the booth and call the police. The intruder stormed up to the booth, began grabbing at the door and started threatening to kill Stanczyk. The police pulled up minutes later during the struggle and took the intruder away. Stanczyk recalls this incident as one of the scariest situations she faced while on the job.

Before becoming a security guard at a guard booth, Stanczyk originally worked as part of the security team for tennis professionals. She is a Florida native and grew up with a fascination for sports such as tennis. Eventually, she was meeting the pros and ensuring their safety when they came for tournaments in North

Florida. Stanczyk is still in awe to this day that she was able to meet tennis stars and provide them safety.

Another reason she chose to enter this field is because she is a social person. Stanczyk said that she loves meeting new people, and it is her favorite part of doing her job. She usually has a good time meeting the residents because sometimes the "guests are not nice."

When Stanczyk is not protecting the Fairfield residents, she is at home taking care of her two green winged Macaws. Both are a few weeks old and must be hand fed. Stanczyk said they are a lot of work and need constant attention, but she loves caring for them and enjoys watching them grow.

Stanczyk has plans to retire in the near future but said she will always treasure her time spent working in the Ponte Vedra community.

Soleil Shah is a student at Ponte Vedra High School.

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Club donates \$3.5K to nonprofit

The Jacksonville-Oceanside Rotary presented a check for \$3,500 to Here Tomorrow, a local nonprofit that provides no-cost, no-wait mental health care for an entire year to individuals feeling hopeless or suicidal in Northeast Florida.

The magic-makers at Here Tomorrow are Certified Recovery Peer Specialists who team with individuals in crisis to develop coping skills and accomplish SMART goals toward recovery (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-Bound). They have served more than 1,500 individuals in less than three years.

Jacksonville-Oceanside Rotary's donation of \$3,500, which was raised from its charities fund and individual club member donations, will provide the resources for State of Florida certification for Here Tomorrow's teen and adult recovery peer specialists.

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Episcopal School tackles AI in the classroom

Like all schools, Episcopal School of Jacksonville (ESJ) graduates' achievements over time may be based in part on how well they work with technological advancements such as artificial intelligence (AI). To that end, Episcopal division heads and the Student Life office spent much time in 2023 delving into the world of AI, how it works and what it does well, what it does not do well and what it means for students as learners and even as humans.

With questions from parents, faculty and students around the use of AI for academic purposes, the school has developed a policy that applies to AI in the classroom for grades six through 12.

ESJ's new policy reads: "Our approach and philosophy regarding this type of content is authentic to the future our students will live and work in, but more importantly is rooted in our mission and our learner-centered approach to education. Episcopal will teach students to utilize machine intelligence ethically and efficiently, ensuring that our programs and pedagogy continue to emphasize the irreplaceable value of that which makes us human."

"The most important word in our policy is 'human,'" said Natalie Herford, ESJ head of upper school. "We are — and our

students are — first and foremost, human beings. No machine can take the place of our creativity, our joy for learning, our Harkness classroom discussions or our imagination. But we can use AI for learning with parameters placed around it."

Ultimately, the use of AI in an academic environment comes down to what is permitted by the faculty member in a certain instance, and how that permission is understood by the student. Therefore, the importance of clear and precise direction is imperative.

Development of a hard line on what constitutes an authentic work by a student was part of the interdepartmental discussions this summer. Questions were developed that covered all the bases for how a faculty member should give direction for an assignment to students.

In addition, in the past, much of grading has depended on the final product a student submits. With the development of AI, the process the student goes through to create that final product now becomes exponentially more weighty for the grade because the learning is now shown differently. Learning now has become the process, instead of learning being the final product.

"With AI, it is easy to turn in a pol-

AI continues on Page 19



Contributed photo

Image made using AI.

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Community support sought for Museum of Black History

St. Johns County has put out a call to action to its residents to help encourage the state to locate the proposed Florida Black History Museum in St. Augustine.

In December, Florida Secretary of State Cord Byrd announced the release of a public survey to gather input for the Florida Museum of Black History Task Force. The public survey is available online through Feb. 29. The Department of State is distributing the survey on behalf of the task force, which was created by legislation signed into law by Gov. Ron DeSantis on May 11, 2023.

Responses received from the public will be included in the task force's report to the Florida Legislature to be completed before July 1. The survey is a vital component of the task force's report and is an opportunity for the public to participate in the process of planning for the future museum.

St. Johns County has the Florida Museum of Black History listed as a priority in its 2024 Legislative Action Plan, and the Board of County Commissioners is requesting

residents provide their input to help make this a reality. One proposed site is the former Florida Memorial University located in St. Augustine.

"This is an enormous opportunity for our community to voice its opinion and share its desire for this historic museum," St. Johns County District 2 Commissioner and Chair Sarah Arnold said. "I encourage everyone in St. Johns County to take the time to complete and share the short survey and join in the effort to create recommendations that the Department of State will submit to the Florida Legislature. Having the Florida Museum of Black History in our community would be a tremendous honor, and there is no better location for it. This is the Historic Coast — no one can tell these impactful stories the way we can. St. Johns County's unwavering support of community pillars like Fort Mose State Park and the Lincolnville Museum and Cultural Center, along with our powerful civil rights history, emphasizes how compatible the Florida Museum of Black History would be here."

The county is working on the Florida Museum of Black History project in collaboration with Florida Memorial University, the West Augustine Community Redevelopment Area, the Accord Civil Rights Museum, the Friends of Fort Mose State Park, Lincolnville Museum and Cultural Center, the City of St. Augustine, the St. Johns County Visitors and Convention Bureau and the St. Johns Cultural Council.

The task force is a nine-member body appointed by the governor, the speaker of the House, and the Senate president. Its purpose is to develop plans for the location, design, construction, operation, administration and marketing of the future museum. The task force will also develop a transition plan for the museum to become financially self-sufficient and recommend priorities for collections acquisition, exhibits, research and educational materials for use in Florida schools.

For more information about the task force, including member bios and links to recordings of past meetings, go to FLHeritage.com/BlackHistoryMuseum.

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Auction to fund dental care for pets in need

While your annual dental exam may seem like a routine task, it's not so simple for dogs and cats. Even the best pet owners may not realize the critical importance of dental health for their companions. When pets don't receive routine dental care, major issues — and major costs — can arise.

This February, the St. Augustine Humane Society's Share the Love Auction recognizes National Pet Dental Health Month by raising money to help animals with important dental procedures. From Friday, Jan. 19, through Feb. 10, a multitude of special items, experiences, services and more will be available for auction at sahsauction.org.

"Many pet parents don't realize how important dental health is for their treasured friends," said Carolyn Sindad Smith, executive director of the St. Augustine Humane Society. "We recognize that for some families, the services their pets need can really add up and exceed their financial capabilities. That's where we can step in and offer some much-needed assistance. All proceeds raised by the Share the Love Auction directly benefit pets that require the most care."

The St. Augustine Humane Society works tirelessly to ensure that all pets live safe, happy and healthy lives and that pet owners have the tools and education to create lasting relationships with their animals, lowering the risk of them ending up in shelters or on the streets.



The St. Augustine Humane Society's Dental Health Program aims to provide life-saving dental care to the animals that need it most. Dental issues are increasing in pets, with 80% of dogs and 70% of cats showing signs of periodontal disease by the age of 3. These diseases can cause serious issues, damaging not only the teeth, roots, mouth and gums but also vital organs, including the kidneys and heart.

Proceeds from the Share the Love Auction are used to assist dogs and cats that need dental surgeries and procedures that are critical and, in some cases, life-saving.

AI

Continued from 17

ished product and learn nothing in the process," said Herford. "This is what ESJ is determined to protect against, using a few different methods. Episcopal is at an advantage because of the student-teacher relationships that are what make ESJ such a special community. We know our students, so we know when all of a sudden an assignment is submitted that doesn't seem to jive with a students' normal work product. Other methods include the increased use of Google docs and assignment checks throughout the project."

Figuring out how to use the positive aspects of AI has also been important.

ESJ Faculty who are early adopters of the technology have found AI is useful for problem set generation, brainstorming idea generation and using AI as a tutor in certain circumstances. Faculty use the misinformation AI produces as a learning tool as well — students are asked to correct, edit and rework what AI spits out. This increases the emphasis on process, keeping the lesson learner-centered, and teaching that AI does not have all, or even always correct, answers.

"There is so much still to come with AI, both positive and challenging," said Herford. "We will continue to tackle AI the 'Episcopal way,' ensuring our students are learning from it, that our grading system is reflective of the learning process, and that we use it as a tool instead of a crutch. The more comfortable our students are with many facets of AI, the better prepared they will be for their next steps after ESJ."

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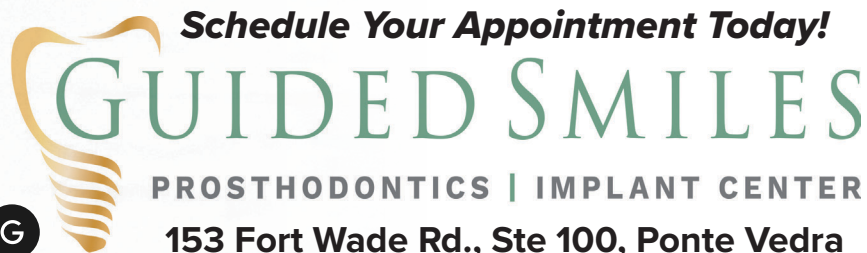
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Ability Housing breaks ground on Villages of New Augustine

Nearly 100 new affordable apartment homes will be coming soon to St. Augustine. Wednesday, Jan. 10, representatives from Ability Housing, St. Johns County, the West Augustine Historical Community Development Corp. (CDC), Bank of America and Churchill Stateside Group broke ground on Villages of New Augustine.

The 92-unit, new-construction apartment community will be located on three parcels totaling approximately 6.5 acres at the intersection of North Volusia Street and Chapin Street in the West Augustine neighborhood.

All units will be affordable to households earning up to 60% of the Area Median Income, based on data updated annually by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Rental prices will vary based on household size, income and apartment size and will start at approximately \$547 minimum per month for one-bedroom units and \$759 minimum per month for three-bedroom units.

Actual rent prices will be contingent on current HUD data at the time of the apartment community's completion.

Ability Housing was approached by the West Augustine CDC in 2018 to collaborate on plans for an apartment community that could fill a critical need for working families in the neighborhood. The development is Ability Housing's first community in St. Augustine.

"Today's groundbreaking has been several years in the making," said Shannon Nazworth, president and CEO of Ability Housing. "Ability Housing is proud to partner with the neighborhood, helping bring their vision for their community to reality. And we are excited to be part of the solution for affordable housing in St. Johns County. We want to thank all the partners that made this possible, especially the County's Board of Commissioners and staff for ensuring this project came to



Contributed photo

Local officials ceremonially break ground on the Villages of New Augustine.

fruition. We could not have done it without them."

Site plans feature four three-story residential buildings comprising 20 one-bedroom apartments, 36 two-bedroom apartments and 36 three-bedroom apartments. Additional amenities will include a community center with on-site leasing offices; a computer lab; a library; flexible spaces for workshops, training and events; outdoor recreational features like a pavilion and dedicated walking trail; and 149 parking spaces.

Funding for the \$25 million project has been secured through various state, local and private sources. Florida Housing Finance Corp. provided \$4,265,345 in affordable housing loan financing and awarded \$1.625 million in Low Income Housing Tax Credits, which resulted in

a \$14,867,263 equity investment from a nonprofit syndicator, National Equity Fund, with Bank of America providing the equity investment.

Bank of America is also providing a construction loan in the amount of \$13,814,121. Churchill Stateside Group will provide the post-construction permanent financing with a \$4,145,000 mortgage.

The St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners approved a \$460,000 Affordable Housing Grant and a \$1,207,134 award of American Rescue Plan Act funds at their June 6, 2023, meeting. Additionally, in 2022 the board passed an ordinance making it possible to defer impact fees.

"The Villages of New Augustine, like the county's other affordable housing efforts, is much more than just bricks and

mortar to build housing," said County Commissioner Sarah S. Arnold. "This is about building a better quality of life for those in need of a place to call their own — a place to call their home. This kind of project builds a stronger community and more connected neighborhoods for all of us."

Construction for the Villages of New Augustine is anticipated to take 18 months. Group 4 Design, Inc. is the project architect. Bradley Construction Co., Inc. is the general contractor. JBPro is the civil engineering firm.

Leasing details will be available closer to completion in late 2025.

For more information about Ability Housing's other properties throughout Florida, go to AbilityHousing.org/portfolio.



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Hope at Hand receives grants from philanthropic organizations

Hope at Hand, a Jacksonville-based nonprofit organization that provides poetry lessons for vulnerable and at-risk youth, recently shared details of its receipt of multi-year grants from three major philanthropic organizations. As the organization prepares to celebrate its 15-year anniversary in August, these grants will provide support for programming and operations, including a first-of-its-kind initiative that will launch at Florida State University's College of Social Work in Tallahassee.

Funders include:

- Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Fund at The Community Center for Northeast Florida will fund \$40,000 to Hope at Hand across the next three years, \$120,000 overall.
- Kids Hope Alliance (KHA) will serve as the funding agent for the City of Jacksonville, dedicated to building and ensuring access to a continuum of comprehensive and integrated programs, services and activities that address the critical needs of children and youth. KHA has committed more than \$230,000 to be distributed over the next three years.
- The Jim Moran Foundation will provide a total of \$80,000 in grant funding for Hope at Hand's Write Track program in Duval County.

"We are extremely grateful to receive these grants from our longstanding partners," said Hope at Hand Executive Director Steffani Fletcher. "As a local non-

Hope at Hand, Inc.



poetry.wellness.hope

profit in Northeast Florida, this funding will provide tremendous support and stability to our organization and help us further our mission of using the healing power of poetry to instill confidence and positive self-esteem in the youth we serve."

In addition to these multi-year grants, the organization is eligible to receive matching donations from THE PLAYERS Championship through their Birdies for Charity initiative, a fundraising program designed to give participating 501(c)3 organizations the opportunity to generate contributions through one-time flat pledges or donations. This donation, in combination with the match from the Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Fund, triples the impact of donations made through the end of

2026.

"As a long-standing partner and supporter of Hope at Hand, we could not be more happy to be donating these funds to the organization," said The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida Senior Director of Grantmaking Amy Crane.

"The Kids Hope Alliance invests millions of dollars on an annual basis to organizations conducting programs and initiatives supporting youth in Jacksonville," said Kids Hope Alliance Assistant Director of Provider Training and Engagement Sylvester Pinkney. "We are more than proud to support Hope at Hand in their life-changing efforts to facilitate healing and personal growth to the children and adolescents who need it most."

Hope at Hand will hold a fundraising event, "Swing into Action," from noon to 3 p.m. Feb. 18 at Top Golf, 10531 Brightman Blvd. This fundraiser marks its first since the start of the pandemic and aims to raise funds for poetry programming for at-risk youth in Northeast Florida. Tickets include lunch, three hours of unlimited play, participation in a silent auction and two drink tickets. For more information and to purchase tickets, eventbrite.com/e/top-golf-swing-into-action-fundraiser-tickets-732278924977?aff=ebdssbdestsearch.

To learn more about Hope at Hand, how to become involved, provide support and view upcoming events, go to hopeathand.org.

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www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

New card shop caters to sports memorabilia fans

By Mike Mulhern

If you have a spare 25 grand to play around with, you can own the football Trevor Lawrence used in his first NFL game, autographed and — in his handwriting — verifying its “game-used” authenticity. For a bit more — \$12.6 million, to be exact — you can add a mint-condition Mickey Mantle Topps 1952 rookie card to your collection. Yes, sports memorabilia is something folks with deep pockets are investing in, with big ticket items galore.

“The \$12.6 million figure is what the Mantle card went for at auction in 2022,” says Woodie Woodward, a former pharmaceutical executive who now resides at the TPC. “No, I never had one, but if you go retrieve your grandpa’s shoe box of old baseball cards from the attic and discover one inside, you can sell it and live a life of luxury till the end of your days. It’s strange. It’s probably more money than Mantle made during his entire lifetime — all for just one of his rookie cards in mint condition!”

Always having had an interest in sports memorabilia, Woodward recently decided to fulfill his lifetime dream of opening a shop dedicated to providing for this market. He has rented store space next to Woody’s Bar-B-Q across the parking lot from Winn-Dixie on the corner of A1A and Solana Road.

The name of the store is Ponte Vedra Beach Cards & Comics. Even if you’re not in buying mode, the shop is worth a visit because its walls and display cases are a museum of mouth-watering items sure to tickle your cravings for latching onto mementos from your sport of choice. And it’s all for sale.

“My name is Woodie, and I’m right next to Woody’s,” Woodward says with a laugh. On a more serious note, he adds, “People like to have a tangible link to their athletic heroes — a rare card with their picture or something they have autographed, like a photo, baseball, football or jersey,” he said. “It makes the one possessing it feel more a part of the game, like he has an actual stake in that athlete’s accomplishments, and



Six-year-old Finn Mailes admires autographed football mini-helmets and a signed Joe Montana football in the display case at the newly opened Ponte Vedra Beach Cards and Comics in the Winn-Dixie Shopping Center by Don’s Barber Shop and Dunkin’ Donuts.

I’m here to provide that connection for him — or her. If that item is ‘game-used,’ it’s more significant, more valuable, and consequently, more expensive.”

“I used to enjoy visiting card shops when I was a kid, and now I’m giving the next generation of kids the opportunity to experience that same thrill,” he says, adding that he even gives his youthful visitors a free card as a souvenir. “Life is short, and you have to do what you always wanted to do because we’re not promised tomorrow. I always wanted to have a sports



Photos by Mike Mulhern

This mint-condition Mickey Mantle Topps 1952 rookie card was auctioned in 2022 for \$12.6 million.

shop, so now here I am, running this shop during the spare time I have when I’m not engaged in my other great passion, which is coaching flag football teams at area schools. I want to be a part of this community and provide Ponte Vedra Beach with something it never had before, which is a shop of this kind.”

He is now an authorized distributor for Fanatics, one of the largest providers of game-used and autographed sports memorabilia in the nation, with contracts with almost all the big-name athletes to produce such items. Recently, Fanatics purchased the Topps Chewing Gum Co., the nation’s largest manufacturer of baseball and other sports cards, which are also available in his store.

CARD SHOP continues on Page 23

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GUEST COLUMN

How a gift of money can help build investing habits

Written by/for Wells Fargo Advisors

As a parent or grandparent, you likely want to teach children sound money habits and help them become financially successful adults.

There are a variety of ways to instill good financial habits. The following two approaches allow you to gift assets to children while providing them with hands-on investment experience that may prove useful in the future.

1. Custodial accounts

Custodial accounts can be opened for your children before they turn 18. They can be a useful vehicle to teach them about the principles of money and investing.

With these accounts, custodians control how investments are managed. Sharing account statements and the way you make decisions on your children's behalf can be an opportunity to teach smart investment principles.

There are a couple of considerations you will want to think about as you determine whether such an approach is right for you and your family. First, when funding these accounts, keep in mind that control of these accounts transfers to the child when the custodianship ends. This generally happens when the child reaches age 18, 19 or 21, depending on state law. You may not want your child to have control of more financial assets than they



can handle at that age.

It is also important to know that special tax rules, the “kiddie tax” rules, may apply. The income and capital gains generated in these accounts could be taxed at the parents’ income-tax rates for children under age 19 (age 24 if a full-time student). This means your young child may be required to file an income-tax return of their own. Your tax adviser can help you determine how these rules would apply to your situation.

2. Gifting money in an IRA (Individual Retirement Account)

Helping fund an IRA can benefit adult children who are starting their career and can't afford to contribute to a retirement account or don't have a workplace retirement plan. Even teens with earned

income can fund an IRA.

The earlier your children start investing for retirement, the more their investments may accumulate over time. There are two types of IRA, a traditional and a Roth.

- Traditional IRA: If eligible, your child may receive a tax deduction when they contribute to a traditional IRA, which will also offer tax-deferred growth potential. Any earnings from the account may grow tax free until the money is finally distributed.

- Roth IRA: This type of account is not eligible for tax relief on the contributions, but any earnings could be distributed tax-free if taken after the Roth has been opened for more than five years and your child is aged 59½ or older. In addition, your child may be able to tap into these funds if they need them due to a dis-

ability or for use in purchasing their first home.

If you are thinking of gifting money, be sure to talk to a tax professional. Any time you give money to a child — including to a custodial account or an IRA — IRS gift rules apply.

Wells Fargo Advisors does not provide tax or legal advice. Please consult your tax and legal advisors to determine how this information may apply to your own situation.

This article was written by/for Wells Fargo Advisors and provided courtesy of Jamie Seim, CFP, Senior Vice President – Investment Officer in Ponte Vedra Beach at 904-273-7917.

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Card shop

Continued from 23

While some of the items are pricey and for serious collectors, Woodward

insists it is a local shop with something for everyone, whether it's the seven-year-old just starting out or the 70-year-old looking for a conversation piece to exhibit in his den.

“While adults come in here looking

for nostalgia from when they were kids, the kids come in looking to create future nostalgia to enjoy when they themselves get older,” he points out. “I love seeing parents bonding with their kids through sports. That's what this is all about.

“So, if you're interested in finding your nostalgia or seeing your kids start on the road to their own, do stop in. That's what I'm here for! You might be surprised at what you find.”

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JAX Chamber names Small Business Leaders of the Year

The JAX Chamber has announced the Small Business Leaders of the Year for the 2024 term. One of the 11 business leaders will be named the overall 2024 Small Business Leader of the Year during a breakfast reception presented by TD Bank at Adam W. Herbert University Center on Feb/ 14. The Northeast Florida business leaders were selected for the honor by the Chamber Councils, the Beaches Division, NextUp JAX and Venture Services.

Here are the leaders:



Stephanie Dale
Go Tuk'n, Inc.
Transportation &
Logistics Council



Gretchen Kornutik
Salt Air Stays Consulting
Professional Women's Council



Brandy Lewis
Platinum Realty Group, LLC
Arlington Council



Belkis Plata
Plata Schott Law, LLC
NextUp JAX



Priscilla Redd
PR Insurance Agency, LLC
Three Rivers Council



Aaron Robles
Innovative Physical Therapy
Beaches Division



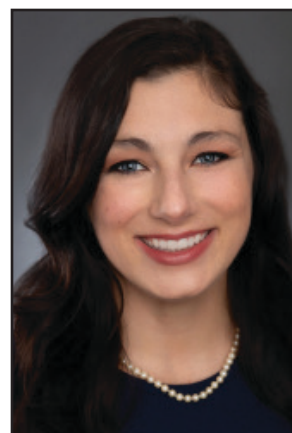
Eric Ross
Two Twelve Benefits
Health Council



Jon Singleton
Jonathan David Singleton PA
– The Singleton Team
Downtown Council



Lakita Spann
Mr. Potato Spread
Venture Services



Dr. Dalton Tolliver
Seven Bridges
Chiropractic, LLC
South Council



Summer Vyne
AnuVision Technologies, Inc.
Jacksonville IT Council

SilverLeaf nation's 9th fastest growing master planned community

The Hutson Companies' SilverLeaf is still one of the fastest growing master planned communities in the nation. SilverLeaf has earned the 9th place rank with 902 sales in 2023, according to RCRLO, a real estate company that surveys master planned communities across the nation.

"Once again we hit amazing numbers, finishing in the top 10 Fastest Growing Communities in the Nation," said Senior Vice President Travis Hutson. "SilverLeaf

in 2023 experienced a 25% increase in closed homes sales and a 12% increase in average lot prices. We have an additional four miles of county collector road completion, a near lease out of our first commercial complex with new businesses, and the opening of our first apartment community. Our growth is expected to continue into 2024 with eight subdivisions currently under construction and two more in design, along with another county

collector road. We currently estimate our economic impact to be over \$1.5 billion in St. Johns County. We want to thank our builders, contractors, sub-contractors and residents for being a part of our vision."

"I want to congratulate SilverLeaf for its continued success," said County Commission Chair Sarah Arnold. "This developer continues to expand on its infrastructure commitment with even more roads and sidewalks for residents in and around SilverLeaf. The economic impact alone in such a short span has been a tremendous asset for our county."

"We have seen a strong demand for commercial and retail businesses interested in opening in SilverLeaf," said Chet Skinner, vice president of Skinner Bros. Realty. "We see the true potential for the SilverLeaf community and are excited about future possibilities within this

project."

SilverLeaf is a master-planned community with no CDD fees, boasting neighborhood parks and an award-winning amenity. This new-home community is located between County Road 210 and State Road 16 at St. Johns Parkway west of Interstate 95. It is comprised of approximately 11,000 acres and seven miles of a county roadway, St. Johns Parkway. SilverLeaf is zoned for 16,300 dwelling units, 2.9 million square feet of mixed use and commercial space and has more than 4,350 acres of conservation land.

SilverLeaf consists of several neighborhoods in a wide range of sizes, price points and styles for both individuals and families. It will be one of the largest community developments in Northeast Florida.

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Benchmarks of Success

A look at major career developments in the area

MOSH names new CEO

The Museum of Science & History's Board of Trustees recently announced the unanimous selection of Dr. Alistair D.M. Dove as the museum's new chief executive officer, effective Feb. 5.

Dove comes to MOSH with more than 17 years of progressive experience at the Georgia Aquarium, where he has served as vice president of science and education since 2020. His previous roles spanned multiple departments, including research, conservation, nutrition and development.

He has firsthand experience managing complex, multi-million dollar budgets, helping develop engaging visitor experiences and building mission-driven, strategic partnerships.

Dove earned his doctoral degree in microbiology and parasitology and bachelor's degree in zoology and parasitology from The University of Queensland. His academic work includes more than 75 peer-reviewed scientific publications and one book, along with research and professor posi-

tions at Cornell University and Stony Brook University.

Tucker of St. Johns Golf Club receives award

St. Johns Golf Club Director of Golf Wes Tucker was honored by the Jacksonville Area Golf Association with the 2023 Golf Professional of the Year Award. This award recognizes the long-term commitment and contributions to the association and amateur golf as a whole that Tucker has made.

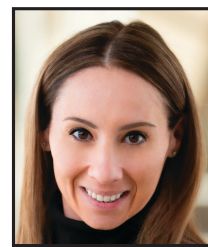
"It's an honor because this is from the amateurs, and that is what they think of you, instead of just your peers," said Tucker.

Tucker has been at the St. Johns Golf Club since it opened in 1989 and has held the position of director of golf since 2001. He was pivotal in helping with the course's renovation and reopening in 2022. Tucker currently serves as the North Florida Section Chapter president for the Professional Golf Association of America.

Last year, the course had almost 70,000 rounds played by both amateurs and professionals.

Maurno joins real estate firm

Mallory Maurno, a seasoned marketing professional with a rich background



Mallory Maurno

in real estate, recently joined Berkshire Hathaway Home Services. Born in New York City, Maurno's family relocated to South Florida during her school years, providing her with a unique perspective on the challenges of major relocations at a young age.

In 2012, she and her husband made another significant move, this time to North Florida, driven by their pursuit of a higher quality of life and the desire to be closer to family in the area.

As the chief marketing officer at O'Steen Auto Group, Mauro plays a pivotal role in overseeing and managing all marketing initiatives and charitable events for five brand stores within the O'Steen family of dealerships, covering Northeast Florida and South Georgia.

Maurno can be reached at 561-506-6997 and Mallory.Maurno@floridanetworkrealty.com or MMAurno.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@Flori-

daNetworkRealty.com, and floridanetworkrealtycareers.com.



Hollie Green

Green named manager of LTL services for Atlantic Logistics

Atlantic Logistics has hired Hollie Green as manager of LTL services. She will oversee

the third-party logistics company's less-than-truckload, also known as or less-than-load shipping services for customers and carriers in small loads to quantities of freight. Green will also be responsible for the growth and development of the newly expanded business division, planning and managing support staff, daily operations, and customer relations.

Her expertise includes more than 22 years of LTL and transportation industry knowledge as an account executive and manager. Green was born and raised in Jacksonville, graduated from the local Paxon High School and remains a Duval County resident. Additionally, she will be active with Atlantic Cares, the company's program to help those in need.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

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In the Arts

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A photo taken of Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash and Elvis Presley during their impromptu "Million Dollar Quartet" jam session at Sun Records in 1956.



Photos courtesy of Alhambra Theatre & Dining

The Million Dollar Quartet will be playing at Alhambra Theatre & Dining until Feb. 18.

Legacy of Million Dollar Quartet lives on at Alhambra

By Anthony Richards

Alhambra Theatre & Dining opened its 2024 season with Million Dollar Quartet on Jan. 11 and the show will run until Feb. 18.

The show focuses on the musical session that took place with Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins and Johnny Cash at the Sun Records Studio in 1956 in Memphis, Tennessee.

The studio is fondly known as where the birthplace of Rock and Roll took place, and the musical does an excellent job of paying homage to that and bringing out the vibes often associated with the

genre during that time.

Fans of any of the musical artists featured will be pleased by the performances, as they were vividly portrayed, especially the portrayal of Johnny Cash, who caused mouths to drop in the audience the first time he sang some musical notes, as the resemblance of his voice is uncanny.

Some timely comedic relief throughout his performance was offered by Jerry Lee Lewis. Not only was singing and dancing spot on, as his performance included his dance moves shown around and at times on top of the piano he played.

The performers showcased their

versatility as both actors and singers and did a beautiful job of playing the part by engaging the crowd at times.

The stage helped set the scene from the minute one walks into the theatre, because it was set up like a recording studio and the details were spot on adding to the atmosphere of it all.

Many of the musical hits associated with the four artists featured were sang during the show, such as "Blue Suede Shoes," "Great Balls of Fire," "Who Do You Love," and "Folsom Prison Blues," just to name a few.

As a meal, the slow-roasted top round of beef, fried pork chops and seafood

jambalaya give a hearty selection to choose from and Dave's chocolate cake hit the spot to top it all off as a dessert option.

One thing for sure is that fans of either four of the performers that made up the Million Dollar Quartet will be missing out if they do not make plans to get out and see the show before its time in the theatre runs out.

These musical acts may not be around to perform anymore, but it is shows like the one at the Alhambra that keep their legacy alive for generations to come.

Tickets to future shows can be purchased by going to alhambrajax.com.

Works by iconic artists, performers of the 1970s on view at MOCA

MOCA Jacksonville has announced "A Walk on the Wild Side: '70s New York in the Norman E. Fisher Collection at MOCA Jacksonville," an exhibition exploring the dynamic culture of New York in the 1970s that spurred a decade of collaboration and innovation between artists working in a variety of genres. The exhibition features a special col-

lection within the museum's permanent collection paired with loans from around the country, including artists like Joseph Kosuth, Gordon Matta-Clark, Robert Rauschenberg, Richard Nonas, Yoko Ono and Andy Warhol, as well as writers, dancers, musicians and singers, including William Burroughs, David Bowie, Lou Reed, Philip Glass and Robert Wilson.

This exhibition is significant, not only for the visual story it tells, but for the academic research that has been produced as a result of the installation, highlighting an under-researched time in 20th century art history and focusing on the vast influences of a Jacksonville native on the broader art world. The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalog and an array of

public programs to further contextualize the works on view.

Visitors to MOCA Jacksonville can view the exhibition through June 30 and are invited to celebrate the exhibition at the community portion of the exhibition's opening celebration event that will kick off MOCA's 100th anniversary year from 8 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 18.

Galvin Cello Quartet to perform Sunday

The Beaches Fine Arts Series will present the Galvin Cello Quartet, winner of the 2022 Concert Artists Guild Competition, at 4 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 21, at St. Paul's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church, 465 11th Ave. North, Jacksonville Beach. Doors open at 3:15 p.m.

Admission is free. A reception follows to meet the artists and view an art exhibit by Hillary McCullough

The Signature Concert Sponsor for this concert is the Tasher Curry Family.

Composed of members from China, Brazil, South Korea and the United States, Galvin Cello Quartet burst onto the scene after capturing the silver

medal at the 2021 Fischhoff Competition, followed shortly by winning the 2022 Victor Elmaleh Competition and joining the Concert Artists Guild roster. Cellists Sihao He, Sydney Lee, Haddon Kay, and Luiz Fernando Venturelli met as students at Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music in the studio of acclaimed pedagogue Hans Jørgen Jensen, and the quartet takes its name from the Mary B. Galvin Recital Hall at Bienen.

The group's mission is to bring together new works from diverse cultural backgrounds while seeking to establish the cello quartet as a core part of the classical music world.



Contributed photo

Waterworks to feature musician Richard Smith

For nearly 30 years, the Gamble Rogers Folk Festival has celebrated the revered and legendary folk artist, Gamble Rogers. Now in its second year, the Gamble Rogers Folk Festival and the St. Johns Cultural Council co-present "Live From The Waterworks," a monthly concert series hosted at the Waterworks, an intimate, historic venue built in 1898. From October to June, the series showcases musicians that echo Rogers' hallmark talents — fingerstyle guitar artistry and storytelling. The series' next performance features Richard Smith, with special guest Michael Jordan, on Saturday, Jan. 20. Both musicians will also present guitar workshops at St. Augustine High School.

World-renowned guitarist Smith has impressed audiences around the globe with his virtuoso fingerpicking. He's a winner of the National Fingerstyle Guitar Championship and was named Thumbpicker of the Year by The National Thumbpickers Hall of Fame — where he was inducted in 2009. His repertoire comprises a wide variety of music from classical Bach to Beatles pop, Scott Joplin Rags, Chopin, Mozart and fiddle tunes; and ranges from jazz standards to Django Reinhardt gypsy swing, as well as intriguing originals.

"The most amazing guy I know on the guitar," said Chet Atkins. "He can play anything I know, only better."

Special musical guest Michael Jordan has been living and playing music in St. Augustine since 2011. At the age of 12, he taught himself to play the guitar and immediately began writing songs. The seclusion of the rural coastline encouraged Jordan to experiment with eccentric approaches and techniques, often invoking the landscape's imagery.

Combining alternate tunings with tap-

ping techniques and percussion on the body of the guitar, Jordan creates sounds that defy the formal approach of playing the acoustic. His use of harmonics and his unique voice coupled with lyrics full of stories ensure you'll see something you've never seen before.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and show starts at 7 p.m. There are 120 tickets available, for \$20 each, and are available on Eventbrite. Premium ticket packages are available for \$100 and include tickets to all three winter concerts. Premium ticket holders are seated in the first three rows and receive sponsor recognition and a voucher for a complimentary beverage.

Go to: eventbrite.com/e/richard-smith-and-michael-jordan-live-from-the-waterworks-in-st-augustine-tickets-749078763747.

"This concert series is a wonderful tribute to Gamble," says Jim Carrick, Gamble Rogers Folk Festival president. "Our goal is to feature experienced and up-and-coming artists, and they also help build momentum for the festival in April."

The three-day folk music festival begins April 12 and continues through April 14. Tickets are available at: eventbrite.com/e/gamble-rogers-folk-festival-2024-tickets-754648041607?aff=oddtcreator.

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Gallery to celebrate Black History Month with African art

The works of Black artists, both local and global, are as varied as the lenses through which their unique perspectives may be viewed. Ovico Gallery will present contemporary masterpieces by African artist Chike Onuorah, a Nigerian-born painter, as part of Black History Month. The ever-rotating collection, featuring a career's worth of works by the artist, will kick off with an open house from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 1, at 2802 N. 5th St., Suite 4, in St. Augustine.

The event is aimed at showcasing the achievements of Black artists, as well as awakening interest in artworks from the African continent. Onuorah is renowned for his bold use of color and wide range of subjects and styles informed by his world travels and raw talent.

“This is my passion, my job, my



hobby, my life, my everything,” he says.

Both Onuorah and Ovico Gallery co-owner and curator Ugochi Nwoga are from Nigeria; Onuorah continues to make his full-time home there. Nwoga came to the United States as a girl. She grew up in Tallahassee, going on to earn a master's degree in business administration from Northwestern University. Nwoga's lifelong affinity for art — particularly, African art — led her to establish Ovico Gallery in St. Augustine.

The open house on Feb. 1 will serve as a formal introduction of the community to the gallery. Live music, light refreshments and cocktails will round out the festivities. The event is free.

For more information, go to ovicogallery.com and follow along on social media @ovicogallery.



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ROWITA award recipients named

St. Johns Cultural Council, which promotes arts, culture and heritage, will honor a select group of women for lifetime achievements and influencing arts and culture in St. Johns County with the Dr. Gail Pflaster “Recognizing Outstanding Women in the Arts” (ROWITA) award.

According to Christina Parrish Stone, the Cultural Council's executive director, the organization is pleased to announce this year's recipients who follow in the respected footsteps of local women since 2008.

Honorees include:



Darien Andreu

Darien Andreu, an author, historian, preservationist and professor of English at Flagler College. She earned a Ph.D. from

Florida State University and specializes in American literature, Southern literature, and fiction writing. Her work has appeared in Princeton Arts Review, Apalachee Quarterly, Kaleidoscope and Cultures. Her research interests include the literature of place and the literature of sport.

A resident of St. Augustine for more than 30 years, she has worked to preserve and promote Minorcan heritage and civil rights history.

Andreu is a trustee and former president of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Society, most recently orchestrating the organization's annual conference in St. Augustine. She has been recognized as the Flagler College Student Government Association Teacher of the Year; two times as the Phi Alpha Omega Woman of the Year and received the J. Russell Reaver Award from Florida State University for Outstanding Dissertation in American Literature or Folklore.



Gwendolyn Duncan

Gwendolyn Duncan, a native St. Augustine who has received numerous community awards,

has been a force in preserving St. Augustine's civil rights history at the ACCORD Museum (Florida's first

civil rights museum) where she serves as president. ACCORD has brought international attention to the city's role in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and hosted speakers including Rep. John Lewis at annual luncheons. The museum archives rare documents, photography from local leaders, and its exhibits include artifacts from major civil rights figures who have been selected for displays at museums in Tallahassee and Washington, D.C.

Duncan's work preserves St. Augustine's history and cultural heritage. She has enriched people's lives with narratives that may have been lost without her efforts.



Michelle Robideaux Pent

Michelle Robideaux Pent grew up in a creative family and studied art education at Florida Atlantic University, and art coursework at the University of

North Florida. She taught art at Nease High School and R.B. Hunt Elementary School before opening Robideaux Studios in 1998, where she continues to teach hundreds of children the joy of making art.

Robideaux Pent spearheaded the Broken Pot Society, a collaborative project by a diverse group of women who used broken bottles to raise funds for an HVAC system at Betty Griffin House. She supports the local arts community by volunteering her expertise, promoting individual artists and raising funds for cultural initiatives. Her work instructing children and facilitating projects brings local people together to build connections and prompts the community to create art for the joy of it.

“St. Johns Cultural Council congratulates each of this year's award winners,” said Parrish Stone. “We are grateful for their important, lasting contributions to arts and culture on Florida's Historic Coast.”

The ROWITA commemoration will be held at 2 p.m. March 23 at The Waterworks, 184 San Marco Ave. in St. Augustine. The event is free and open to the public.

To RSVP for the ROWITA Awards reception, submit the form at form.jotform.com/240104513115135.

Sports

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Photos by Anthony Richards



Ponte Vedra senior Kennedy Rosendahl helped the Sharks win, but also reached 1,000 career points in the process.



Sage Pytel of Nease attempts to dribble past Arden Doherty of Ponte Vedra during a contest between the two teams on Jan. 11.

Veteran Sharks too much for youthful Panthers

Rosendahl reaches 1k-point milestone

By Anthony Richards

It was a memorable night for the Ponte Vedra Sharks girls basketball team, as they not only picked up a 48-38 win over rival Nease, but one of their own, Kennedy Rosendahl also broke the 1,000-point mark for her career as well on the night.

Rosendahl reached 1,000 points for her career by burying a shot late in the second quarter.

“This has been my dream since like third grade, and just to know I finally did it feels pretty good,” Rosendahl said. “I wanted to get it at home, but this way was just as special.”

After she made it, there was a break

in the action, as she walked over to the bench and received hugs from her coaches and teammates and a loud ovation from the many Sharks’ students that made the trip down the road for the contest.

“We all grew up together and have now been playing together forever, so these are not just my teammates, but they’re my best friends,” Rosendahl said.

Nease head coach Sherri Anthony also came out on the court and shared an embrace and showed her respect for the accomplishment prior to play getting back underway.

The Sharks ended a dominant first half, as everything was going the Sharks’ way and the scoreboard showed it, as they found themselves up 25-10 at halftime.

However, Nease was having none of it to start the second half and came out

fired up and making plays on both ends of the court en route to gradually cutting into the Sharks advantage and outscoring them 18-9 in the third quarter to only trail 34-28 with one quarter to play.

The Panthers received major plays from a pair of its younger players during their huge third quarter, as Sage Pytel and Casey Eliason both led the way with 13 and 10 points, respectively.

Pytel is just a freshman and Eliason is a sophomore, but the two demonstrated a tenacity down low both when it came to scoring and rebounding. Eliason also blocked a shot.

With the Panthers seemingly carrying all the momentum heading into the fourth quarter and the home crowd pumped up, Rosendahl quickly quieted the crowd with a clutch three-pointer from the left wing to extend the Sharks’ lead to nine

with less than three minutes to play.

“I’ve always been a shooter, but now it just seems like every shot is going in, or at least that’s the mindset I have,” Rosendahl said. “It’s pretty much become like muscle memory at this point.”

Prior to that shot, both teams had been trading shots for the most part and the Panthers were holding steady in striking distance only six points down.

A couple of possessions later, the Sharks put the game on ice with a beautifully placed pass from Rosendahl to fellow senior Taylor Perce who was posted under the basket for a lay-up.

Rosendahl finished with a game-high 16 points on the night, while Perce reached double figures with 10 points, including a pair from beyond the arc and Morgan Gavazzi added nine for the Sharks.

Marque events highlight JAGA’s 2024 season

By Anthony Richards

The Jacksonville Amateur Golf Association’s slate of events for 2024 consists of a dozen tournaments throughout the year, featuring men, women and junior golfers in the area and beyond.

The variety of tournament formats will also be used, including stroke play, match play and team formats held at an array of golf courses across Northeast Florida.

No time was wasted, as the season

kicked off with the JAGA First Cost Amateur at Amelia National Golf & Country Club in Fernandina Beach on Jan. 13-15, which was won by Kent Hsiao of Purdue University, who shot an event low 65 in the final round to post 11-under and win by one stroke over Egor Eroshenko of the University of Central Florida.

Other events highlighting this year’s calendar include the Underwood Cup which will take place Feb. 5 and 6 at Timuquana Country Club, while the

Celebration of Golf presented by Circle K banquet will be held at the club on Feb. 12.

A busy spring and summer will get underway with the JAGA Spring Four-ball event at Marsh Landing Country Club on March 25, while one of the marquee events on the schedule will 67th Annual JAGA Senior Amateur Championship on April 7-9 at Deerwood Country Club.

The 63rd Annual JAGA Jacksonville Amateur Championship, where the area’s

top golfers will showcase how bright the future really is for the game of golf, as well as the First Coast Women’s Amateur, where the top female golfers in the region fight for bragging rights.

The Jacksonville Amateur Championship will be held at Jacksonville Golf & Country Club on July 18-20 and the First Coast Women’s Amateur will be hosted by The Plantation at Ponte Vedra Beach the next week on July 22-24.

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Assignment for the Benefit of Creditors Case No. CACE-22-013385
Assets located in: Pompano Beach, FL 33069

The Florida Spine and Joint Institute, LLC (operating as iRISE) is upgrading its medical equipment and offering its current surplus items for sale at auction.
Auction ends: Tues, January 23, 2024 at 10:00 A.M.

Auction will consist of: GE OEC Series 9800 Plus C-Scan X-Ray Machine, Skanray Skan C frequency mobile surgical arm, ultrasounds, radiofrequency generators, chiropractic treatment tables, massage tables, exam tables, recumbent bikes, IT networking equipment, computers, laptops, electronics, office furniture, office equipment, appliances, medical equipment, medical supplies and much more.

Registration, catalog, photos and terms available at www.moecker-auctions.com

Preview: 01/22 by appointment. Call for details (954) 252-2887 | (800) 840-BIDS

https://moeckerauctions.com/2023/12/20/florida-spine-and-joint-institute-llc-d-b-a-irise-4/ (No onsite attendance)

AB-1098 AU-3219, Eric Rubin

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CROSSWORD

1	2	3					4	5	6								
7							8						9				
10				11			12										
13							14	15				16					
17				18			19				20						
21						22	23				24						
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					32					33			34	35	36	37	38
39	40					41					42						
43					44						45						
46					47						48						
49														50			
	51													52			

ACROSS

1. Microgram
4. Where golfers begin
7. Each
8. Warm weather metropolis
10. Coat with sticky substance
12. Girl's given name
13. Myth (Spanish)
14. Ultrahigh frequency
16. Former NBAer Jeremy
17. Where rockers work
19. Your consciousness of your own identity
20. Soft-finned fishes
21. Localities
25. Paddle
26. Union
27. Member of religious community
29. Small shrill flute
30. Small constellation in the Milky Way
31. They __
32. College kid on vacation
39. de Armas and Gasteyer are two
41. Part of the human body
42. A progressive grading
43. Sound unit
44. Noise some birds make
45. Abba __, Israeli politician
46. Portuguese city
48. Be extremely, uncritically fond of
49. Resembling old Norse poems
50. Ask for out of extreme need
51. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
52. Midway between south and southeast

DOWN

1. An insane person
2. __ Boothe Luce, American author
3. Buttock muscles
4. Men's fashion accessory
5. "Hotel California" rockers
6. Electronic communication
8. Magnetomotive force (abbr.)
9. Hostelries
11. A way to resound
14. Exclamation: yuck!
15. A resident of Indiana
18. Exclamation of surprise
19. Make a mistake
20. Boundary
22. Antilles island

23. It's used to make furniture
24. Clod
27. They indicate where places are
28. Bobby __, NHL champ
29. Prints money
31. Honorable title (Turkish)
32. Appetizers
33. Midway between north and northwest
34. Spanish be
35. Breezed through
36. Grilled dishes
37. In a way, excites
38. Change mind
39. A French abbot
40. Popular candy
44. Partner to cheese
47. Wood or metal bolt

SUDOKU

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

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!

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