

*first coast*  
**Register**

December 2016 - January 2017

Ponte Vedra • Nocatee  
Jacksonville  
The Beaches • St. Augustine  
& Amelia Island



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**ELEGANT MANSION IN MARSH LANDING CC**

Expansive views of golf course, lake and Marsh. Walk into the grand foyer with a spectacular staircase. Upstairs are 4 suites including a Master Bedroom with sitting area. The private, downstairs, guest suite also with sitting area and a private door to the pool area. A large sun-room/playroom across the back of the house overlooking screened pool. \$1,475,000



**MEDITERRANEAN STYLE HOME IN MARSH LANDING CC**

Built in 2006 with superb quality including weather shield windows, custom window coverings, chiseled stone wood flooring, wood floors sanded on site, library/office with coffered ceilings, an incredible chef's kitchen with Schrock cabinets, game room with balcony to screened pool below and gorgeous marsh views. \$1,595,000



**MEDITERRANEAN ESTATE OVERLOOKING 12TH HOLE OF THE MARSH LANDING CC**

This exceptional 5 bedroom, 7 bath home has been meticulously maintained and offers tremendous floor plan flexibility. Main level includes Master Bedroom (complete with remote control window treatments), large Master Bathroom, Office and Guest Suite. Upstairs you will find 3 additional Suites and a sizable Bonus/Theatre room complete with kitchenette. \$1,595,000



**ENCHANTING ITALIAN COURTYARD CUSTOM HOME**

Constructed by Elwood Collier in the exclusive Pablo Creek Reserve. If you are looking for an open floor plan, you have found it! Huge wooden doors open to spacious courtyard featuring a summer kitchen and heated salt water pool/spa lit by two gas "coal pits." Courtyard connects to the guest house complete with mini-kitchen and master suite. All three bedrooms on the property offer luxurious ensuites. \$1,055,000



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10



# contents

6	ONE OF US Dr. Jennifer Crozier	30	HOLIDAY ARTS & EVENTS
8	STRIVING TO SUCCEED Goodwill gala	38	DECK THE CHAIRS beach benefit
10	SAWGRASS MARRIOTT new spa offers serenity	40	NOCATEE-A-GLOW holiday celebration
14	A SEASON OF GIVING local nonprofits	42	AMELIA ISLAND holiday happenings
18	UNITED WAY creates moments of joy	44	4TH AVENUE SOUTH shops open house
19	ARC VILLAGE Dinner with Bill	46	AT HOME WITH THE RUTHERFORDS
20	CARING CHEFS annual benefit	50	PINEAPPLE POST Vietri event
22	CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN GALA	52	HOLIDAY BAKING Life is Sweet by Angie
24	FLORIDA FORUM 25th season	54	HOLIDAY SHOPPES Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach
26	PRESERVED Southern cuisine	56	ALHAMBRA'S 50TH anniversary season
		60	BEACHES OKTOBERFEST



26



42

## about this magazine

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- Susan Griffin, Publisher
- Jennifer Logue, Editor
- Rob Conwell, Circulation Manager
- Carrie Resch, Staff Writer/Production Coordinator
- Jasmine Marshall, Staff Writer/Office Assistant
- Ed Johnson, Senior Account Executive
- Kristin Flanagan, Account Executive
- April Snyder, Sales Assistant
- Cary J. Howard, Alex Burrows, Ashley Stancil Publication Designers

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1102 A1A N., Unit 108, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082 • 904.285.8831

## on the cover

The mantel of the Fairbanks House is bedecked for the Amelia Island Bed & Breakfast Holiday Cookie Tour. Photo by Scott Moore, courtesy of the Amelia Island Tourism Development Council (AITDC).



52





# OH *what* FUN!

**Saturday, December 10**  
10 am to 5 pm

 **Horse-drawn Carriage Rides**

 **Music, Activities & More Fun**

 **Stuff Your Stocking & Win It**

Select items to go in your dream stocking from Sawgrass Village merchants, and enter to win it!

 **Spirit of Giving Raffles**

Purchase tickets to win exciting prizes from Sawgrass Village merchants! Benefitting Charities of the Ponte Vedra Woman's Club



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CVS Pharmacy.....285-3634

Publix.....280-5440

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John Craig Clothier.....686-1501

Lemon Twist Boutique .....280-5955

Marcia's Place .....280-9212

Scout & Molly's Boutique...373-5856

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J Turner & Company .....834-7435

Village Arts Framing & Gallery .....273-4925

Village Jeweler.....285-4812

## Specialty

ABC Fine Wine & Spirits ....273-6637

Cutter & Cutter

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Peterbrooke Chocolatier....273-7878

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Metro Diner.....513-8422

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Modern Tavern.....712-5832

Trasca & Co. Eatery.....395-3989

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One of  
Us!

## DR. JENNIFER CROZIER

by JASMINE MARSHALL

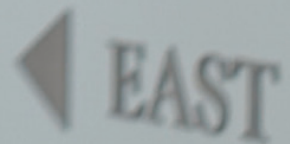


photo by JASMINE MARSHALL

*Dr. Jennifer Crozier, MD, is a hematologist/oncologist at Jacksonville's newly opened Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center. An Atlanta native, she fell in love with the First Coast after completing her residency and fellowship at Mayo Clinic. Crozier's ambitions in the medical field were all but a birthright, and she is constantly looking to the ever-progressing research in the field to help put an end to breast cancer.*

### ***Are you originally from the First Coast?***

I am originally from Atlanta and went to the University of Georgia, where the Georgia vs. Florida football game was my first introduction to Jacksonville. I knew that after I graduated from medical school from the Medical College of Georgia that I wanted to move to the First Coast for my residency. After completing residency and fellowship at the Mayo Clinic, my husband and I knew the First Coast was the only choice.

### ***How did you first become interested in medicine?***

My parents have a great story about their parent-teacher conference with my first-grade teacher, where I had informed my teacher that I was going to be a doctor and she asked me if there was anything else I was interested in and I told her no. I had the opportunity to observe some doctors at a young age and it really impressed me how they could be so caring at such a difficult time in people's lives.

### ***What prompted you to pursue a career in hematology/oncology?***

In medical school, I was most fascinated by the lectures in

oncology and the complex nature of cancer care. One of my first patients in medical school was a patient with advanced breast cancer. The relationship that I built with her and her family helped solidify my interest in caring for cancer patients. It was also at that time that I became interested in conducting research to find new and better treatment options.

### ***The new Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center just opened in Jacksonville one year ago. What do you feel the benefits of the partnership between Baptist Health and MD Anderson have been?***

The Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center is an amazing addition to the First Coast and the Southeast. This partnership combines the unique and extensive network of Baptist Health, the "most preferred" health care provider in the Jacksonville area, with the state of the art personalized cancer care of the number one ranked cancer center in the United States according to U.S. News & World Report. The multidisciplinary team approach employed at our center provides individualized comprehensive care utilizing the latest technology and research.

### ***Has there been any promising new research in the hematology/oncology field?***

Research in the hematology/oncology field is evolving quickly. There are discoveries daily and technology and research are changing the way cancer is diagnosed and treated. My research has focused on breast cancer and the development of new treatments. We continue to make progress in the treatment of breast cancer but will not stop



until no patients are dying of breast cancer.

**What do you find most rewarding about your work as a hematologist oncologist?**

Working with patients with cancer is my passion and by far the most rewarding part of my career. Hearing the diagnosis of cancer is one of the worst moments in someone's life. During this difficult time, I want to decrease the anxiety of the diagnosis as much as possible. I enjoy spending time educating my patients on their illness and the options for treatment that we have available.

**What do you enjoy most about living on the First Coast?**

The weather here is incredible and allows us to enjoy year-round outdoor activities, but our favorite thing about the First Coast is the people. Everyone is so kind and friendly it felt immediately like home. We enjoy the sporting and cultural events and continually evolving culinary options. The First Coast is amazing and I have enjoyed my last six years here and cannot wait to continue to be part of this vibrant community for many years to come.

**What do you like to do in your spare time?**

There is so much to do and see I feel like we haven't even scratched the surface. We love walking our golden retriever down the beach at Mickler's Landing. We enjoy attending concerts at the St. Augustine Amphitheater and Ponte Vedra Concert Hall. We are discovering all the amazing restaurants including the fantastic seafood at Aqua Grill and I've recently started Pure Barre at Sawgrass Village.

**Amahl and the Night Visitors**  
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Succeed*  
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anniversary  
luncheon  
and celebrity  
fashion show



photos by Susan Griffin  
Karen Phillips, CEO of Goodwill  
Industries of North Florida



Karen Brune Mathis

Local celebrities showed off their modeling skills for a worthy cause Nov. 3, when Goodwill Industries of North Florida held its 16th Annual Striving to Succeed luncheon and celebrity fashion show.

Held at the Morocco Shrine Center, the luncheon honored Goodwill's 2016 Achievers of the Year, recognizing three individuals who have succeeded in gaining employment through Goodwill's employment programs. This year's award recipients included Kristin Holland, Leonard Halsted and Bryanna Johnson. After viewing video presentations on the award recipients, a number of celebrity models took to the runway in support of Goodwill programs. Hosted by 99.9 FM's Eden Kendall, the show included local TV news personalities Lindsey Boetsch and Tenikka Hughes, THE PLAYERS Championship Executive Director Matt Rapp, Casa Marina Hotel Maitre d' Sterling Joyce, the Florida Times-Union's Matt Pittman and more.



Kelly Whitaker and Wanda Petersen



Lindsey Boetsch





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Sandy Bennett, Trudy Toche and Ingram Caswell



Tracy "Dot Com" Collins

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# New Sawgrass Marriott spa offers *sanctuary, serenity*

by JENNIFER LOGUE

Step through the doors of the Sawgrass Marriott spa and the outside world gently fades away.

Newly renovated as part of a multimillion-dollar upgrade of the entire resort, the spa has been transformed into a tranquil sanctuary from the stress and strains of daily life – a place where both resort guests and local residents can relax, renew and refresh.

Located in its own building near the entrance to the 65-acre resort, the 25,000 square-foot spa now

features a soothing zen décor, with soft lighting, peaceful music and calming coastal hues throughout.

“We’re secluded here in our own building,” Spa Director Blanca Albor says. “It’s such a beautiful, fresh space and we want people in the community to know that we are open to the public.”

With 19 private treatment rooms – including two rooms for couples’ treatments – the spa offers nearly 50 services ranging from facials and massage to hydrotherapy, body treatments and more. The





Sawgrass Marriott photo

spa has also incorporated ELEMIS products into its treatments and services: New offerings, for example, include the ELEMIS Body Nectar Nourishing Wrap-Frangipani and the ELEMIS Pro-Collagen Age Defy facial.

“We’ve introduced ELEMIS products at all Marriott spas,” Spa Director Blanca Albor notes. “So now in addition to our other services, all Marriott spas will offer the same three signature Elemis services.”

### **State-of-the-art facilities**

In addition to facial and body treatments, the spa features a fitness center that offers 23 classes each week. Aqua classes, Zumba, yoga, Pilates and sculpting are all on the schedule at the fitness center, which now boasts all-new, Bluetooth-enabled gym equipment that syncs with guests’ cell phones and Fitbits.

“We wanted to keep the fitness center current and update it for the 21st century,” says Brian Vahey, resident manager for the Sawgrass Marriott.

The spa’s tranquil ambience continues throughout the facilities, which include dry saunas, steam rooms, locker rooms, Jacuzzis, an indoor pool and

heated outdoor pool. Food and beverage service is available to spa guests, who also enjoy locker room beverage stations that will soon add herb-infused drinks featuring mint and teas grown in the resort’s own garden.

“We want to bring more of the green inside and be Mother Nature friendly,” Albor says.

### **Catering to brides**

The spa’s salon, meanwhile, has expanded beyond manicures and pedicures to offer a blow dry bar and full hair styling services.

“We always catered to a lot of bridal parties,” Albor says, “but now that we offer updos and other hair styling services we plan to host more brides staying at the resort down here at the spa.”

Located at 1000 PGA Tour Blvd., the Sawgrass Marriott spa offers services from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Spa treatments are available to those 21 and over, while the salon is open to all ages.

“We love our community,” Vahey says, “and want the public to know we’re open to serve them.”





Sawgrass Marriott photo



photos by Jennifer Logue

# Spa Packages

The Sawgrass Marriott Spa offers a variety of individual treatments, overnight packages that include accommodations and day spa packages. Popular day packages include:

**The Sawgrass Package:** Includes one customized Touch De-stress and choice of Oxygenating Trio Red Carpet Facial or ELEMIS Men High Performance Skin Energizer. \$260.

**The Azalea Package:** Includes choice of one customized Touch De-stress Massage or Oxygenating Trio Red Carpet Facial or ELEMIS Men High Performance Skin Energizer, plus an ELEMIS Garden of England Rose Restore Hand and ELEMIS Best Foot Forward Pedicure. \$250.

**Serenity Rose Couples Package:** Includes a customized Touch De-stress Massage, plus an ELEMIS Garden of England Rose Restore Hand Manicure for Two, plus an ELEMIS Best Foot Forward Pedicure for Two and lunch for two from Soothies Café. \$280.

**The Valley Package:** Includes a customized Touch De-stress Massage, Oxygenating Trio Red Carpet Facial or ELEMIS Men High Performance Skin Energizer, an ELEMIS Garden of England Rose Restore Hand Manicure and ELEMIS Best Foot Forward Pedicure plus lunch from Soothies Café. \$420.

**The Stadium Package:** Includes an 80-minute customized Touch De-stress Massage, Oxygenating Trio Red Carpet Facial or ELEMIS Men High Performance Skin Energizer, an ELEMIS Intensely Cleansing Salt Scrub Frangipani or Lime and Ginger, ELEMIS Garden of England Rose Restore Hand Manicure and ELEMIS Best Foot Forward Pedicure, plus lunch from Soothies Café. \$595.

*All package prices include a 20 percent service charge*

# Holiday Specials

The spa also is offering a number of holiday specials in December, including:

- 50 minute "Fa la la la Facial" .....\$120
- 80 minute "Ho-Ho Hot Stone Massage" .....\$195
- 75 minute "Mistletoe Express Manicure & Signature Pedicure" with eppermint martini ..... \$90
- "Bubbles & Blow Out" .....\$70
- "Get Holiday Ready" Makeup.....\$66

*All package prices include a 20 percent service charge*



# Who's Who on the *First Coast*



CAROLYN  
S. ZISSER  
ESQUIRE



## CAROLYN S. ZISSER, P.A.

CAROLYN S. ZISSER limits her practice to family law, providing solutions to the most complex family law problems and focuses exclusively on matters involving divorce, child custody, military family issues, modification of judgments and division of retirement plans and other assets. Carolyn has been representing family law clients for more than 35 years. She continues to receive numerous accolades -- including an AV rating with Martindale-Hubbell, an AVVO rating of 10 (out of 10), inclusion in Super Lawyers and an appointment as Master of the Jacksonville Family Law Inn of Court. Carolyn offers her clients an unequalled commitment to obtaining the best results possible and has been certified in Collaborative Law to enable her to offer her clients an alternative to the traditional approach to divorce. The firm works with a network of professionals, including forensic accountants, business valuation experts, occupational evaluation experts, Certified Divorce Planners and other consultants, as needed. Carolyn is strongly dedicated to providing the finest representation to every client.

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To learn more about her firm, please visit [www.zisserfamilylaw.com](http://www.zisserfamilylaw.com) or contact them at 904-249-8787

## Janet E. Johnson, P.A.

## *Criminal Defense Attorney*



Janet Johnson is committed to aggressively defending people accused in all criminal matters in state and federal court. In practice since 1994, she is a member of the Florida Bar, The Federal Bar, Colorado Bar, as well as the Florida Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers. She has been on the faculty of FACDL "Blood, Breath & Tears" annual DUI seminar. Ms. Johnson appears as a legal commentator on CNN, HLN, GMA, and Fox News. She has been awarded the very highest possible rating, the AV preeminent rating™, from Martindale-Hubbell® and was named a fellow to the prestigious Litigation Counsel of America™, as well as one of the ten best criminal defense attorneys nationally for client satisfaction by the American Institute of Criminal Law Attorneys.

Areas of criminal law that are handled by Janet Johnson: **Driving While Impaired, DUI Defense • Robbery/Burglary • Armed Robbery • Assault & Battery • Juvenile Cases • Date Rape • Domestic Violence • Sex Offenses • Child Abuse/Exploitation • Health Care Fraud • Drug Trafficking/Possession • Shop-Lifting, Vandalism • Probation Violations • White Collar Crime • Federal Cases.** Please call our office for a free initial consultation.

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# A Season of Giving

by JASMINE MARSHALL

It's the season of giving – and what better way to feed spirit than by giving to local charities? From food pantries to pet shelters, there's no shortage of ways to pay kindness forward on the First Coast.

**First Coast No More Homeless Pets (FCNMHP):** The North Florida nonprofit responsible for reducing the area's euthanasia rate by more than 90 percent since 2002 credits its staff, volunteers and the help of the community for the gains it has made saving area animals. Its Mega Pet Adoption events, formed in partnership with shelters and rescues from all over the region, have saved the lives of more than 12,000 dogs and cats since 2012 alone. With the support of locals, they look to add more to that number.

First Coast community members can help FCNMHP any number of ways, from volunteering and purchasing Memory Tiles to shopping FCNMHP affiliate stores online. And just before Christmas, on Dec. 19, the organization will host another Mega Pet Adoption event where they'll be given the opportunity to give local pets the greatest gift of all – a forever home.

To learn more about ways to help FCNMHP, visit [www.fcnmhp.org](http://www.fcnmhp.org).

First Coast No More Homeless Pets, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and donations support its life-saving programs. There

are many ways to donate.

**The Children's Christmas Party of Jacksonville:** This annual Christmas Party, first founded in December of 1999 by Travis and Margaret Storey, brings toys to Jacksonville's children in time for the holidays. Serving kids ages 12 and under who might not ordinarily be able to receive toys on Christmas day, this nonprofit brings a day of fun, gifts and celebration. This year the party will be held on Dec. 10 at 9 a.m. at the Prime F. Osborn III Convention Center, where thousands of children will receive several toys – among them, games, instruments, books and even school supplies. Last year's party saw around 80,000 toys distributed to more than 5,000 children due to the generous support of local companies and citizens.

To help make this year's celebration a success, donations can be made in the form of volunteering, with sponsored toy booths, earned after donations of \$5,000 or more, and through checks made payable to The Children's Christmas Party of Jacksonville, PO Box 5338, Jacksonville, Fla. 32247-5338. To learn about more ways to help, visit [www.ccpoj.org](http://www.ccpoj.org).

**Toys for Tots:** The Marine Toys for Tots Foundation, founded nearly 70 years ago as an official mission of the Marine Corps Reserve and official activity for the U.S. Marine Corps, has donated more than



512 million toys to upwards of 237 million children. With several hundred drop-off locations around the country, First Coast residents all along the river will have ample opportunity to help bring toys to less fortunate children.

The foundation asks for toys in addition to supplemental gifts for older age groups, such as bath sets, cosmetics, backpacks, electronics and wallets. Toys for Tots will not distribute realistic-looking toy weapons or food gifts. To find a local Toys for Tots drive location, visit [www.toysfortots.org](http://www.toysfortots.org).

**Beaches Emergency Assistance Ministry (BEAM):** The Beaches Emergency Assistance Ministry is no stranger to the Jacksonville Beaches community; since its inception in 1985, the ministry has assisted community members in need of food and help with finances through specialized programs, a 6,500 square-foot garden and food pantry. In 2015 alone, more than 18,000 children and adults were helped by BEAM's services, more than half a million pounds of food was distributed to BEAM families and 855 children received school supplies, clothing and shoes through its school supply drive.

Locals can always help BEAM's mission by volunteering at its Grace Garden, which supplements the ministry's food pantry, and at its BEAM Thrift locations, including the newly opened 7North, all of which provide a stream of revenue that funds BEAM's programs. Gently used items – such as clothing, houseware and furniture – can also be donated to the thrift stores. Garden boxes can be adopted in the Grace Garden and cookbooks can be purchased to help fund the ministry's services.

To learn more about BEAM's volunteer and donation opportunities, visit [www.jaxbeam.org](http://www.jaxbeam.org).

**Daniel Kids:** Florida's oldest child-service agency, Daniel Kids assists an average of 2,000 children and families each day through a diverse range of innovative and nationally recognized programs. Daniel Kids offers abused and emotionally troubled children refuge and counseling, connects kids with foster and adoptive homes, helps homeless teenagers find housing and jobs, and offers an array of prevention programs. It also operates Daniel Academy, a K-6 private school that caters to children with special needs, including autism, ADHD, behavioral or learning disabilities and more. From the cradle to college, Daniel Kids is there for our community's children in crisis. You can help Daniel Kids through corporate sponsorship, private donations or volunteering. For more information, visit [DanielKids.org](http://DanielKids.org) or call (904) 296-1055.

**Betty Griffin Center:** This holiday season, the Betty Griffin House, which has provided emergency shelter and services for residents experiencing domestic or sexual abuse since 1990, has announced a new name for the nonprofit agency: Betty Griffin Center.

"After more than two decades it was time for us to refresh our design, but also to have a name and brand that captures all the services we provide beyond our important role in providing shelter for those fleeing domestic or sexual abuse," says Betty Griffin Center Executive Director Joyce Mahr. "In addition to providing shelter for more than 350 people annually, last year Betty Griffin Center provided 7,085 hours of free counseling services to 500 participants. Betty Griffin Center also operates a 24-hour crisis helpline and two thrift shops to help fund these services. We have many other initiatives under way in our communities. We think the new name, Betty Griffin Center, better captures the extent of services we provide today."

## LEND A HAND TO KIDS IN CRISIS

### Donate to Daniel Kids

An average of eight cases of child abuse or neglect are reported right here in our community every day. Yet, helping these children is as simple as making a contribution to Daniel Kids – an organization that's been helping local kids in crisis for more than 130 years.

Your donation to Daniel Kids can:

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- connect a neglected child with a caring foster or adoptive family
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HEAL Founder, Leslie Weed with new Executive Director, Jason Gurka

The HEAL Foundation is a local non-profit organization in Northeast Florida. Through grants, HEAL supports organizations serving those with Autism Spectrum Disorders. The Foundation serves as an outreach organization providing educational programs and camps tailored to the needs of our Autism Community. Our newest initiative is called *iHeal - iPads Helping Enrich Autistic Lives*. After witnessing the progress students with Autism are making with iPads, the foundation was inspired to purchase over 100 iPads and donated them to Exceptional Student Education (ESE) classrooms across the five counties surrounding Jacksonville, Florida.



The HEAL Foundation | 904.716.4198 | HealAutismNow.org

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As part of the transition, the agency has also launched a new brand campaign that includes a new logo and tagline, along with a new website and marketing materials. The new brand will be incorporated into use at all its public facilities, thrift shops and other assets over the next few months.

The new brand will be on display at the nonprofit's next major fundraiser – The Run for Peace, a 5K run/walk on Saturday, April 8, which begins and ends at the St. Augustine Beach Pier. People can register or find out more information on the Betty Griffin Center Facebook Page or on the website at [www.bettygriffincenter.com](http://www.bettygriffincenter.com).

“Last year, our counseling services increased by 130 percent, reports into our Rape Crisis Unit increased by 32 percent and we had a 55 percent increase in the nights at shelter, so this is still a very serious problem in our community,” Mahr says. “Events like the 5K allow people to contribute in the effort to help victims of domestic and sexual abuse in a fun way, knowing they are helping provide support services to the women, men and children we help every year.”

Betty Griffin Center shelters up to 350 victims of domestic and sexual abuse annually, operates a 24-hour crisis helpline, provides professional counseling for victims of domestic and sexual abuse, provides age-appropriate violence prevention training and operates two thrift stores at Julington Square and Anastasia Square to assist in funding the agency's ongoing operations

*For more information or to make a donation, visit [www.bettygriffincenter.org](http://www.bettygriffincenter.org). To report if you or someone you know is being abused, call the Betty Griffin Center 24-hour helpline at (904) 824-1555.*



## Betty Griffin Center

*Healing for now. Hope for tomorrow.*

Hundreds of women, men & children in St. Johns County get help from Betty Griffin Center each year to escape and recover from domestic and sexual abuse.

Please consider them, and us, when it comes to your holiday giving this year.

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1375 Arapaho Ave. St. Augustine, FL 32084  
[www.bettygriffincenter.org](http://www.bettygriffincenter.org) . 904-808-8544

If you or anyone you know is being abused, call the Betty Griffin Center 24 hour helpline at 904-824-1555



## Mission House

Mission House would like to thank all those who support our mission:

*“To empower individuals affected by homelessness in the Beaches area by providing food, clothing, medical care, and support services with an avenue to self-sufficiency”.*

We are proudly supported by our community. We could not achieve the results of assisting **319** homeless men and women into housing over the past five years without your gifts. This year as of October 31, 2016 we have helped **63 men and women into housing** because of your generosity. Your donations, along with over 500 volunteers, is what gives hope to those without a roof over their heads.

If you have not visited our remodeled facility at 800 Shetter Avenue, we invite you to come and see the incredible difference your gifts make to so many individuals who once had full lives and careers. The efforts of Mission House make an impact on the community. The **1,897 new patients** we've seen in our free clinic in the last five years equates to a savings to the hospitals and community of \$2,559,053 in what would have been unnecessary emergency room costs.

Please visit [www.missionhousejax.org](http://www.missionhousejax.org) to donate or for more information about how you can get involved. You can also find us on social media, call us at **904-241-6767** or send us an email [missionhousejax@gmail.com](mailto:missionhousejax@gmail.com).

Thank you in advance for making Mission House part of your Holiday charitable giving.

*Tax ID# 59-3376704 All donations are tax deductible*

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# Create moments of joy through United Way and its partners

by CARLY NEMBACH

Imagine if you were presented with the opportunity to make a positive impact on someone's life in your community. This holiday season and beyond, United Way of Northeast Florida is offering you that opportunity and so much more.

Think beyond the usual approaches of holiday giving and envision yourself helping a child succeed in school, contributing your knowledge to a financial stability workshop or simply making a donation to help strengthen our community. By participating in any one or combination of these activities, you'll make a tremendous impact on the lives of those who need it most in Northeast Florida.

"We are working to build a community of hope where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential," says Michelle Braun, president and CEO of United Way of Northeast Florida. "We need your support to continue this important work."

Perhaps you're asking yourself, "Why United Way?" With more than 90 years of dedication to Northeast Florida and partnerships with 56 organizations implementing more than 65 programs, United Way and its impact partners have already touched more than half a million lives. United Way is dedicated to producing measurable results with a focus on improving our community through education, financial stability and health initiatives. Dollars raised here stay here, and by focusing on these key areas, United Way and its partners are able to make the biggest impact in improving the quality of life in our community.

Rosa Luna has already started her journey to making a difference through United Way's RealSense financial-stability initiative. Because of her dedication to helping others, she realized her financial knowledge would be a great asset to United Way as a RealSense volunteer tax preparer. She loves her clients' reactions when they

see their refunds. And with the help of Luna and other RealSense volunteers, United Way and its partners filed 21,000 2015 tax returns at no cost to hardworking families and individuals.

If you're wondering how you can connect your unique passions to purpose, United Way's easy "Make Your Moment" online quiz can match you with volunteer opportunities tailored to your interests.

John Klopfenstein, a longtime United Way supporter, was inspired to get involved with United Way of Northeast Florida due to his admiration for his mother's involvement with the nonprofit during his childhood. He knows firsthand the impact United Way and its partners make – and you can make a huge difference, too.

From investing his talents to even his money in our community, Klopfenstein goes to sleep each night knowing his United Way support deeply impacts the lives of people who need an extra hand or someone to point them in the right direction.

"It really touches you when you meet people who have been impacted by a United Way program, hear their story, and how it has changed them," says Klopfenstein.

It only takes a moment to make a difference through United Way and its partners, and there are opportunities for all to bring about lasting, positive change in our region.

So during this season of giving as well as every day, remember there is no better feeling or gift than helping someone live a better life.

Ready to make your moment through United Way and its partners? Visit [makeyourmoment.org/unitedwaynefl](http://makeyourmoment.org/unitedwaynefl) or text "MYM" to 50503 to find out how.

From our United Way family to yours, we wish you a happy holiday season.





Jacksonville's Arc Village has seen leaps and bounds within the year. Having first opened its doors to residents in May, the village now houses more than 90 tenants on its sprawling campus and continually pushes progress for young adults living with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).

The village played host to the ARC's annual Dinner with Bill Nov. 4 with home tours, a cocktail reception and dinner program on its Community Center green. Aglow with fairy lights to a soundtrack of live jazz, residents, their families, and community sponsors and members came together for a dinner intrinsically linked to the Arc Village's mission.

Named for Bill Sackter, an early ambassador for people with I/DD who advocated for "a good friend, a good job and a good home," the dinner served to herald the achievements of the community and help support needed programs.

The evening's guests of honor included presenting sponsors, The DuBow Family Foundation, David and Linda Stein and J. Wayne and Delores Barr Weaver. Also in attendance were Lou Vaccaro, Arc Jacksonville board chair, and Baptist Health's Audrey Moran, who served as event chair.

# A Village of friends

## Arc Jacksonville Village celebrates 2nd annual Dinner with Bill

by JASMINE MARSHALL



Photo by Jeremy Paterno, courtesy of Arc Jacksonville  
Jason Hamilton with Wayne Weaver



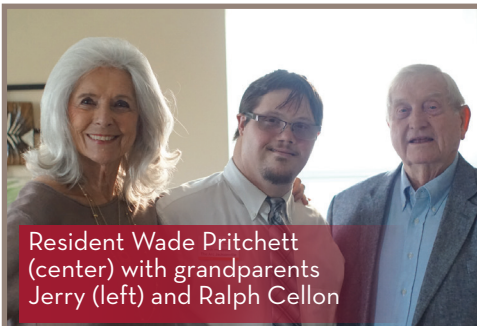
Board Chair Lou Vaccaro (center) with Maryann (left) and Lauren



Terry Boyd and Lisa Littlehale with Katherine Boyd, a new resident



Residents Ali Perricone and Priya Mathineri



Resident Wade Pritchett (center) with grandparents Jerry (left) and Ralph Cellon





# Avenues Mall hosts

# Caring Chefs

## benefit for Children's Home Society

An estimated 2,000 attendees gravitated to the Avenues Mall Oct. 2 for the 33rd annual Caring Chefs food festival to benefit the Children's Home Society of Florida.

With nearly 60 First Coast restaurants participating, guests sampled and savored their way around the mall and the culinary globe: From Italian bruschetta and Asian noodle salad to pulled pork and coconut curry chicken saute, the annual fundraiser offered something to please every palate. Local restaurants participating in the event included Pusser's Bar & Grille, TPC Sawgrass's Nineteen and Mulligan's Pub at the Hilton Garden Inn. Copeland's of New Orleans, Seasons 52, the Casa Marina, Moxie Kitchen + Cocktails and HOBNOB were also among the restaurants participating.

Proceeds from the event support the Children's Home Society of Florida's efforts to advocate for children and build strong families through counseling, adoption and foster care services. Since its inception, the Caring Chefs event has raised more than \$3 million for the nonprofit organization, with the 2015 event raising more than \$200,000.



photos by Jennifer Logue  
Sarah Philips, Elizabeth Wells,  
Heather Estep and Amanda Mann



Lindsay Gutting of German Schnitzel Haus



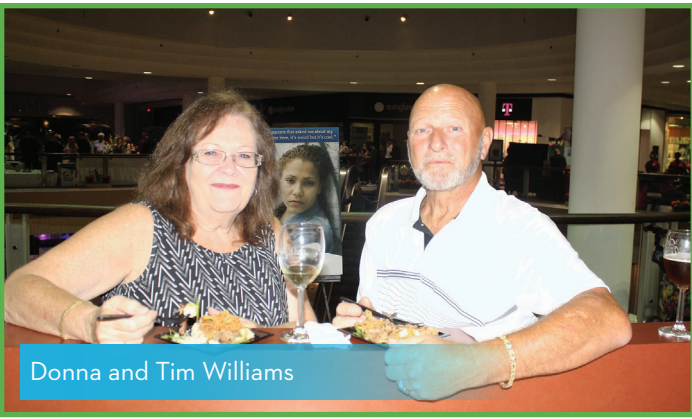
Alberto de Jesus and Nicole Perez



Chrissy and Jason Punt







Donna and Tim Williams



John and Donna Stevens, and Jonathan and Jamie Atkinson



Nineteen at TPC Sawgrass served up pulled pork, scallion grits and crispy onion straws



photos by Jennifer Logue

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An estimated \$250,000 was raised at the MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation's 20th anniversary Champions for Children Gala.

Held Oct. 13 at the Florida Blue Conference Center, the event included a cocktail reception, dinner and both silent and live auctions for a wide range of items. Former tennis pro and MWYF founder MaliVai Washington shared auctioneer duties with Florida Blue CEO Patrick Geraghty, as the two engaged in a good-natured competition to see which side of the room could raise the most money to support the foundation's tennis, tutoring, mentoring and life skills programs. Specialty auction items included a trip to London with the Jacksonville Jaguars which went for \$9,000 and a trip to the ESPY Awards that garnered \$12,000.

Guests also had an opportunity to hear from former tennis pro and current U.S. Tennis Association President Katrina Adams. The highlight of the evening, however, came when MWYF alumni took to the stage to share their stories of how the foundation's programs had made a positive impact on their lives.

"I wouldn't be a mother of three children with a BA in Logistics if it weren't for (the foundation staff,)" Talecia Felix said through tears. "They challenged us and extended their time and personal lives to see me through to the person I am today."

Robert Byars agreed. "I stand before you at 28 a college graduate, a husband, homeowner and father of three beautiful children," he told attendees. "A stable foundation is the basis for a successful life. (Executive Director) Terri Florio is a maternal figure and a pillar of support to everyone up here."

The evening also focused on the future, as foundation officials presented \$59,000 in college scholarships to current program participants, who told attendees about the impact the foundation is already having in their young lives.

"If I hadn't attended (MWYF) I probably wouldn't have set goals in life," said Terry Thomas-Jacobs, recipient of the George M. Soper Student Athlete of the Year scholarship award.

A student at Robert E. Lee High School, Thomas-Jacobs said he enjoyed participating in the foundation's tennis and tutoring programs as well as educational field trips, one of which took students to a local jail.

"It informed me that I never want to go to jail - ever," he said. "It also made me appreciate my mom's home cooking. I'd like to thank my mom and my coaches for helping me become the young man I am today."

Washington told attendees that his reason for starting the foundation was "selfish."

"I love watching young people succeed," he said. "I love putting young people in situations that are uncomfortable and watching them excel."



# Champions for children

## MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation celebrates 20 years

by JENNIFER LOGUE

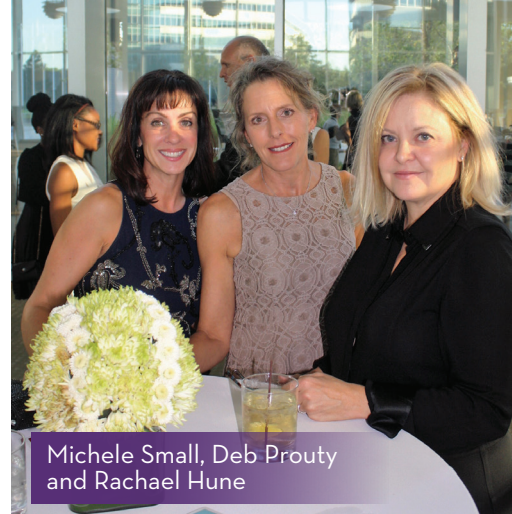


Maria and Jose Cortes with Barbara and Larry Kurz  
photos by Jennifer Logue





MaliVai Washington  
photo by Susan Griffin



Michele Small, Deb Prouty  
and Rachael Hune



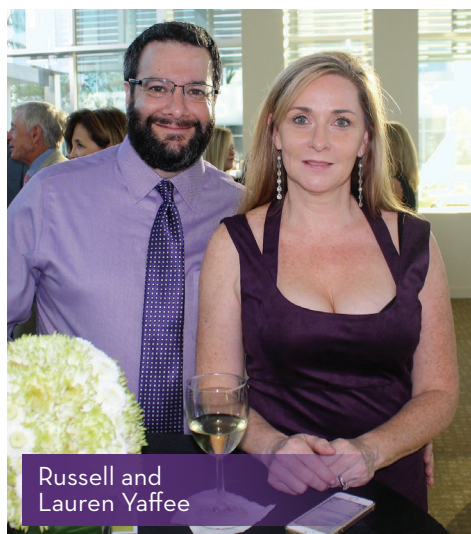
Pat and David Livesay with  
Felicia and Mel Cox



Natalie Anderson and  
Jaime Perez



Raphael and  
Skip Thomas



Russell and  
Lauren Yaffee



Robert and  
Marianne Byars



# Coming full circle:



Lisa O'Steen and Margaret D'Antignac  
photos by Jennifer Logue



## Dr. Ben Carson kicks off 25th anniversary of Florida Forum

by JENNIFER LOGUE

Dr. Ben Carson believes God has a sense of humor.

The acclaimed pediatric neurosurgeon – famed for being the first doctor to successfully separate twins conjoined at the head – told attendees at his Florida Forum presentation Oct. 25 that as a youth he struggled both academically and with a temper that threatened to send his life down a dark and troubled path. After praying that God would grant him wisdom, Carson found his perspective transformed by reading from the book of Proverbs, which was written by King Solomon.

“My middle name is Solomon,” Carson noted. “So God knew that I was going to have an affinity for the book of Proverbs and Solomon.”

The connection went even further. “Solomon was famous for his wisdom and for telling the two women who fought over a baby to divide it in half,” he continued. “And that’s how I became very well known – for dividing a baby. So, I think God has a sense of humor!”

Carson’s story held particular significance for members of The Women’s Board of Wolfson Children’s Hospital, which was founded in the 1970s after twin girls Annie and Abbie Martin were born prematurely and the hospital lacked the equipment needed to care for both infants. As a result, Abbie lived just eight days. Since that time, The Women’s Board has raised more than \$28 million to support the hospital’s program and equipment needs through fundraising events such as the Florida Forum speaker series.

Thanks in part to that support, in 2015 Wolfson Children’s Hospital was the facility at which conjoined twins Conner and Carter Mirabal were successfully separated. Now at home with their parents, the twins were backstage briefly at Carson’s Florida Forum presentation – an experience that organizers said felt like The Women’s Board had “come full circle.”

“What a poignant evening this is for us,” said Grace Sarber, president of The Women’s Board and the older sister of Annie and Abbie Martin. “To have this renowned pediatric neurosurgeon visit our hospital and to hear about his life and his perspective on medicine, it was really just the perfect way to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Florida Forum.”

Robin Albanese, who co-chairs the Florida Forum series with Judy D’Antignac, agreed. “To have Dr. Carson here and to see how far we’ve come,” she said, “it just makes your heart sing.”

### Harnessing potential

Carson said the most rewarding part of his recent presidential campaign was having an opportunity to meet some of the 15,000 patients on whom he operated during his 29-year career as a pediatric neurosurgeon. At an appearance in Kentucky, for example, Carson was approached by a family who pointed to a young man in his 20s and said, “Do you recognize this young man?...You operated on his brain when he was a year old and he just



Bill and Judy D'Antignac





Sabrina and Lloyd Carter



Women's Board President Grace Sarber, Ann Gattoni and LandStar CEO Jim Gattoni



Cindy Glover and Kendra and Parker McCrary



Robin, Jeff and Dave Albaneze and Pat Jeffery

graduated from college, number one in his class.”

At another event, a young woman told Carson, “You operated on me when I was still in my mother’s womb.”

“That’s why no one will ever convince me that what’s in a woman’s womb is a meaningless bunch of cells,” Carson said.

Carson also addressed the nation’s current political climate and stressed that Americans must be unified if our country and its people are to realize their full potential.

“We the American people are not each other’s enemies,” he said. “Because there really are people out there who want to destroy us.”

America is unique on the world stage, Carson said, because our founding documents are based on Judeo-Christian values and an inherent belief in right and wrong that is currently being sacrificed at the altar of political correctness.

“The secular progressive movement, they don’t care if you disagree with them as long as you sit down and shut up,” he said. “If America is to remain ‘One Nation Under God,’ then it’s time for people who believe that to stand up and shout out.”

In order for America to remain competitive with other countries, Carson said, it is imperative for all Americans to have the opportunity to climb out of poverty and become part of the fabric of society.

“When we look at the myriad young people wasting time, we begin to understand how important it is for us to cultivate that talent,” he said. “And isn’t that what real success is – using the talent God has given you to elevate other people?”

The 25th anniversary season of the Florida Forum continues on Jan. 30, 2017 with a presentation by FOX News Anchor Megyn Kelly. The series will conclude March 13, 2017 with an evening with Tim Tebow.

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# *Preserved*

gives Lincolnton Victorian,  
Southern cuisine  
new lease on life

by JENNIFER LOGUE







photos by  
Jennifer Logue

The 1865 Victorian had seen better days.

By the time St. Augustine businessman David Corneal purchased the boarded up building at 102 Bridge St. in the city's Lincolnville neighborhood, the home had been stripped of both its historic character and its dignity, serving at various times as a gas station and convenience store before being shut down in an organized crime raid in 2010.

To witness the home today, therefore, is to appreciate both the full extent of its transformation and the aptness of the name of the restaurant that now calls it home. Open since April, Preserved has given new life to the former home of Thomas Jefferson's great-granddaughter while preserving Southern cuisine, albeit with a French influence.

The response from both residents and patrons has been enthusiastic.

"It's been overwhelmingly amazing, really," Front of House Manager Francesca Cooper says. "Everyone is really excited – excited about the house because it was under construction for two years, and excited about what we're doing in the kitchen."

From the gracious front porch and understated dining room to the picturesque outdoor dining patio, Preserved evokes a genteel Southern history updated for modern times – a feeling that carries over to the cuisine. From the "pickle wall" featuring preserved pickles, asparagus, radishes and okra – to the in-house charcuterie board, Preserved takes its name seriously, and reflects the commitment of Executive Chef Brian Whittington, well-known for his tenure as executive chef at Jacksonville's acclaimed Restaurant Orsay.

"It's really important to him to have locally sourced ingredients," Cooper says. "With the in-house charcuteries, it's important to him that the staff appreciate every being on the planet and know that



nothing goes to waste.”

To that end, Preserved’s supper menu features locally caught fish with Conagree & Penn rice middlins, shrimp and grits featuring Anson Mills antebellum grits, Black Hog Farms chicken, Maple Leaf Farms duck breast and more.

Lunch offerings include a shrimp po’ boy, chicken with black-eyed pea and corn salad and a corn flour-fried fish sandwich, while the brunch menu includes house-made lemon scones, banana bread French toast with fresh berries and spiced pecans, chicken and potato hash, a variety of omelets and more.

“All of our staff are just insanely talented,” says Cooper, who notes that customers have been pleased with both the cuisine and Preserved’s commitment to superior customer service that includes inquiring about and recognizing special occasions with a complimentary glass of wine or dessert.

“People are just amazed at how much attention we’re paying to their needs,” she says. “Then they get the food and it’s just icing on the cake.”



Preserved is open for lunch Tuesday through Thursday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Supper is served Tuesday through Friday from 4 to 10 p.m., Saturday 4 to 11 p.m. and Sunday 4 to 9 p.m. Sunday brunch is served from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Special menus will be offered on Christmas Eve and New Year’s Eve; reservations are encouraged.



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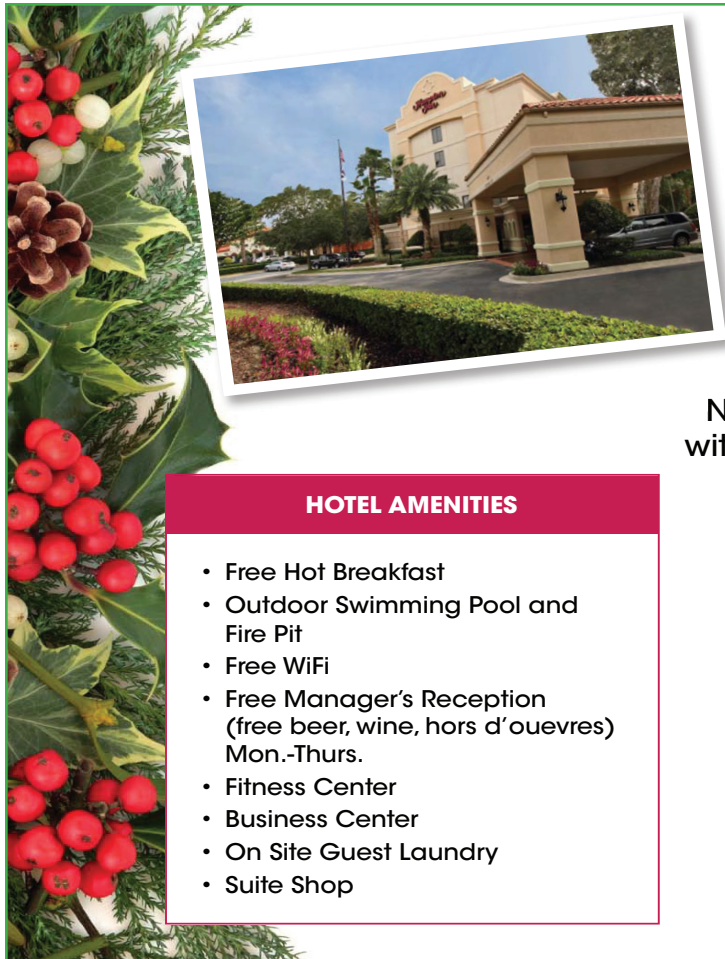
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# Holiday ARTS & EVENTS

by CARRIE RESCH

With an abundance of holiday happenings on the First Coast, the problem is not finding something to do, but deciding what can be packed into a fun-filled holiday season. Get in the holiday spirit with the First Coast Register's holiday event calendar, and mark your calendars for the best holiday season to date. Happy holidays from all of us at the First Coast Register!

## ..... JACKSONVILLE EVENTS .....

### **'A Christmas Story' at Alhambra Theatre & Dining**

For the 2016 holiday show, Alhambra Theatre & Dining takes on "A Christmas Story," a comedy based on the 1983 movie of the same name featuring 9-year-old Ralphie and his quest for a Red Ryder BB Gun.

"A Christmas Story" opened Nov. 23 and will be on stage through Dec. 24.

The theater is located at 12000 Beach Blvd., Jacksonville. For tickets, call (904) 641-1212 or visit [www.alhambrajax.com](http://www.alhambrajax.com).

### **'Mrs. Bob Cratchit's Wild Christmas Binge' at Players by the Sea Theatre**

"Mrs. Bob Cratchit's Wild Christmas Binge" will be performed at Players by the Sea Theatre Dec. 2-17.

The adaptation is a parody of the classic "A Christmas Carol."

Players by the Sea Theatre is located at 106 N. 6th St., Jacksonville Beach. For tickets, call (904) 249-0289 or visit [www.playersbythesea.org](http://www.playersbythesea.org).

### **Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra holiday productions**

The Jacksonville Symphony's "Holiday Pops" performances will take place Dec. 8-11. The performances will feature the Symphony, Symphony Chorus, guest performers and what is billed as the area's "only guaranteed snowfall."

The Symphony's performances of Handel's "Messiah" will take



place Saturday, Dec. 17 and Sunday, Dec. 18.

Jacksonville Symphony's First Coast Nutcracker Ballet will take place Dec. 16-18.

Performances take place at the Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts, 300 Water St., Jacksonville.

For tickets, call (904) 354-5547 or visit [www.jaxsymphony.org](http://www.jaxsymphony.org).

### 'A Peter White Christmas' at Ritz Theatre and Museum

Peter White will perform with smooth jazz artists Rich Braun and Euge Groove Sunday, Dec. 11 at 7:30 p.m. at the Ritz Theatre and Museum.

Event tickets can be purchased online at [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com) or Ticketmaster outlets, by phone at (904) 807-2010 or in person at the Ritz Theatre Box Office.

Ritz Theatre and Museum is located at 829 Davis St., Jacksonville. For more information, visit [www.ritzjacksonville.com](http://www.ritzjacksonville.com).

### Florida Theatre holiday shows

- Florida Theatre's Rock & Roll Holiday featuring the Jacksonville Rock N Roll All Stars Dec. 3
- The 25th Anniversary Community Nutcracker Dec. 9-10
- The Oak Ridge Boys Christmas Celebration Dec. 13
- "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer: The Musical" Dec. 20
- Moscow Ballet's Great Russian Nutcracker Dec. 28

The Florida Theatre is located at 128 E. Forsyth St., Jacksonville. For tickets, call the ticket office at (904) 355-2787 or visit [www.floridatheatre.com](http://www.floridatheatre.com).

### Enchanted Christmas Village

This year, there's a new option for making Christmas memories - the Enchanted Christmas Village located on The Keeler Property grounds at 17255 Normandy Blvd. in Jacksonville.

The village features carolers, hay rides, cookie decorating, ornament making, holiday food and drink, ice sculptures, pictures with Santa and a New Year's Eve celebration. More than one million Christmas lights will adorn the village. An animated Christmas tree will perform every half hour and there will also be live mainstage entertainment.

The Enchanted Christmas Village, presented by Jacksonville Holiday Extravaganza, opened Nov. 25 and will run through Dec. 31.

Tickets and season passes are on sale now. A buffet-style breakfast with Santa and Mrs. Claus along with several of their North Pole elves will take place Saturdays from 9:30 to 11 a.m. in the Enchanted Custom Igloo. The breakfast will also include storytelling by Mrs. Claus and other kid-friendly activities. This will be a separate ticketed event.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call (888) 486-6413 or visit [www.jacksonvillechristmas.com](http://www.jacksonvillechristmas.com)

### Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts events

- "Hansel and Gretel" - Dec. 2-4
- Jingle Jam for St. Jude - Dec. 7
- "A Christmas Carol" - Dec. 19
- A Drag Queen Christmas - Dec. 29

The Times Union Center for the Performing Arts is located at 300 W. Water St., Jacksonville.

Tickets are available for purchase at [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com) or by phone at 1-800-745-3000 or at the Tom Bush Family of Dealerships



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For more information about these works, the artists, or other works, contact Bob Nickerson at First Coast Artists at 904.280.8187.

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# The Nutcracker Suite

Box Office located at Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Arena, 300 A. Philip Randolph Blvd., Jacksonville.

Jacksonville. For more information, visit [www.jacksonvillelanding.com](http://www.jacksonvillelanding.com).

## The Nutcracker Dance Suite

The 21st annual Nutcracker Dance Sweet will be performed at the Lazzara Theater at the University of North Florida's Fine Arts Department Saturday, Dec. 10 at 6 p.m.

The annual presentation benefits several charities including Pediatric Hospice, Dreams Come True, and Amistad Orphanage in Bolivia.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit [www.missfeliciasdance.com/purchase-tickets](http://www.missfeliciasdance.com/purchase-tickets).

## Champagne & Shopping at The Cummer Shop

Enjoy complimentary champagne and appetizers while shopping an expanded store inventory and special artisan merchandise for the Cummer Museum of Art & Garden's annual Champagne & Shopping at The Cummer Shop event.

This two-day event will take place from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 8 and Friday, Dec. 9.

Admission is free; registration is not required.

The museum is located at 829 Riverside Ave. in Jacksonville. For more information, call (904) 356-6857 or visit [www.cummermuseum.org](http://www.cummermuseum.org).

## Trans-Siberian Orchestra

The 2016 winter tour of Trans-Siberian Orchestra: The Ghosts of Christmas Eve, includes a stop in Jacksonville Thursday, Dec. 15.

The concert will take place at Jacksonville Veteran's Memorial Arena. For tickets, visit [www.trans-siberian.com](http://www.trans-siberian.com).

## Yappy Hour Christmas "Paw"ty

The Jacksonville Landing will host the final Yappy Hour of the 2016 season Sunday, Dec. 18 from 2 to 5 p.m.

The event will include live entertainment, prizes, cash giveaways, drink specials and more. Dogs can have their photos taken with Santa.

The Jacksonville Landing is located at 2 W. Independent Drive in

## Community First Jacksonville Light Boat Parade

Traditionally held over Thanksgiving weekend, this year the Community First Jacksonville Light Boat Parade will take place Friday, Dec. 30 at 7 p.m.

The boat parade, which features dozens of decorated vessels that will cruise the St. Johns River, can be viewed from either the Northbank or Southbank.

The parade culminates with a fireworks display, including cascading fireworks from the Main Street Bridge.

For more information, visit [www.lightboatparade.com](http://www.lightboatparade.com).

## ZOOLights

The Jacksonville Zoo & Garden's 5th annual ZOOLights event will take place Dec. 9-11 and Dec. 16-Jan. 7, 2017. ZOOLights will be closed Christmas Day. The cost is \$8 for members, \$10 for non-members. Thousands of LED lights will be on display at the zoo along with lighted animal sculptures, forest of lighted trees and animal silhouettes. Event activities will include performances by local artists including University of North Florida and Jacksonville University students, a fairy village in the Range of the Jaguar, and yarn bombing by Yarn Bomb Jax. For an additional fee, guests can ride the holiday-decorated zoo train for a unique view of the lights. Marshmallow roasting and warm weather "ice" skating will be available in the Great Lawn area and the zoo's 4-D Theater will be featuring the "Polar Express." For more information, visit [www.jacksonvillezoo.org](http://www.jacksonvillezoo.org).

## Art & Antiques Show

The 40th annual Art & Antiques Show will take place Dec. 2-4 at the Prime F. Osborn III Convention Center. Presented by The Women's Board to benefit Wolfson Children's Hospital, the show will feature 45 internationally known art and antiques dealers along with a lecture from actress Goldie Hawn on Saturday, Dec. 3 at 11 a.m. For more information or to purchase tickets, call (904) 202-2886 or visit [www.artandantiquesshow.com](http://www.artandantiquesshow.com).





**'The Game's Afoot (Or Holmes for the Holidays)' at Theatre Jacksonville**

Theatre Jacksonville presents "The Game's Afoot (Or Holmes for the Holidays)" through Dec. 20. It's December 1936 and Broadway star William Gillette, known for playing the role of Sherlock Holmes, invites his fellow cast-members to his home for the weekend. But when one of his guests is stabbed to death, he must assume the persona of Holmes to crack the case before another guest falls victim.

Theatre Jacksonville is located at 2032 San Marco Blvd. in Jacksonville. For more information or to purchase tickets, call (904) 396-4425 or visit [www.theatrejax.com](http://www.theatrejax.com).

**Breakfast with Santa and Sounds of the Season at The Avenues**

The Avenues mall will host Breakfast with Santa Saturday, Dec. 3

from 8 to 10 a.m. in the Food Court. In addition to breakfast, Santa and his elves will be on hand for crafts and other activities.

From Dec. 1-24, local community groups will serenade shoppers as part of the Sounds of the Season Holiday Musical Series.

The Avenues is located at 10300 Southside Blvd., Jacksonville. For more information, call (904) 363-3054 or visit [www.shoptheavenues.com](http://www.shoptheavenues.com).

**Photos with Santa at The Avenues and St. Johns Town Center**

Children can visit and be photographed with Santa through Dec. 24 at The Avenues or St. Johns Town Center.

Santa will be located in Center Court at The Avenues and in the Nordstrom Wing at St. Johns Town Center. Appointments may be booked online at [simon.noerrsanta.com](http://simon.noerrsanta.com).

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## Deck the Chairs

For families of children with special needs, Caring Santa, a special sensory-friendly environment visit with St. Nick, will take place Sunday, Dec. 4 from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. Guest can register in advance at [simon.com/caringSanta](http://simon.com/caringSanta).

Pets can even get in on the action with Pet Photo Night Dec. 11. The Avenues Pet Photo Night will be Dec. 11 from 6 to 7 p.m. and the St. Johns Town Center Photo Night will be Dec. 11 from 7 to 9 p.m.

For more information, call (904) 363-3054 or visit [www.shoptheavenues.com](http://www.shoptheavenues.com) or [www.stjohnstowncenter.com](http://www.stjohnstowncenter.com).

### Holidazzle at Riverside Arts Market

The Riverside Arts Market (RAM) will feature local vendors, holiday cheer and extended hours during the annual RAM Holidazzle event on Saturday, Dec. 10.

The event will take place under the Fuller Warren Bridge at 715 Riverside Ave. in Jacksonville.

For more information, visit [www.riversideartsmarket.com](http://www.riversideartsmarket.com).

## ..... BEACHES EVENTS .....

### Letters to Santa

First Coast children seeking to send their Christmas lists to Santa Claus may post them at Santa's mailbox in Sawgrass Village.

Located on the Sawgrass Village green next to Nona Blue, the mailbox will accept letters to Old Saint Nick through Dec. 16. What's more, letters mailed to Santa that include a return address will receive a personal response thanks to a special arrangement the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce has made with the North Pole.

### WinterFEST at Adventure Landing

Adventure Landing in Jacksonville Beach transforms its Shipwreck Island Water Park each year into a winter wonderland for the annual WinterFEST.

Featuring outdoor ice skating, an alpine ice slide, light display and a nightly snowfall, WinterFEST will also offer a number of activities for children including sugar cookie and ornament decorating, bounce houses, reindeer games, letters to Santa, and visits from Santa on select nights.

Winter-time treats such as coffee and hot chocolate will be available for purchase at the Crystal Creek Lodge and visitors can shop at the Blizzard Bluff Village for WinterFEST goodies and collectables.

WinterFEST will be open through Jan. 8, 2017. For tickets or to view a full schedule of events, visit [www.jaxwinterfest.com](http://www.jaxwinterfest.com). For more



## Boat Parade

information, call (904) 246-4386. Adventure Landing is located at 1944 Beach Blvd. in Jacksonville Beach.

### Beaches Polar Express at the Beaches Museum & History Park

The annual Beaches Polar Express departs Friday, Dec. 9 from 2 to 6 p.m. and Saturday, Dec. 10 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The movie "Polar Express" will be shown inside the museum in the Dickinson Gallery each day throughout the event. Santa and the conductor will be in the park with cocoa and cookies all day. The post office will provide children an opportunity to send letters to Santa and create Christmas crafts, and a model Polar Express train will be on display in the Upper Depot.

The event is free; donations to the Beaches Museum will be accepted.

The museum is located at 381 Beach Blvd. in Jacksonville Beach. For more information, call (904) 241-5657 or visit [www.beachmuseum.org](http://www.beachmuseum.org).

### Artisans' Faire to kick off Atlantic Beach 90th anniversary celebration

The City of Atlantic Beach's 90th anniversary celebration will kick off Dec. 1 with the 9th annual Artisans' Faire.

To be held from 5 to 9 p.m. at the Adele Grage Cultural Center, the event will feature two dozen artists who will display a variety of visual art, mixed media, jewelry and crafts for sale. Strolling violinist Beverly Chapman will provide entertainment, and free food and drinks will be available.

The Adele Grage Cultural Center is located at 716 Ocean Blvd. in Atlantic Beach.

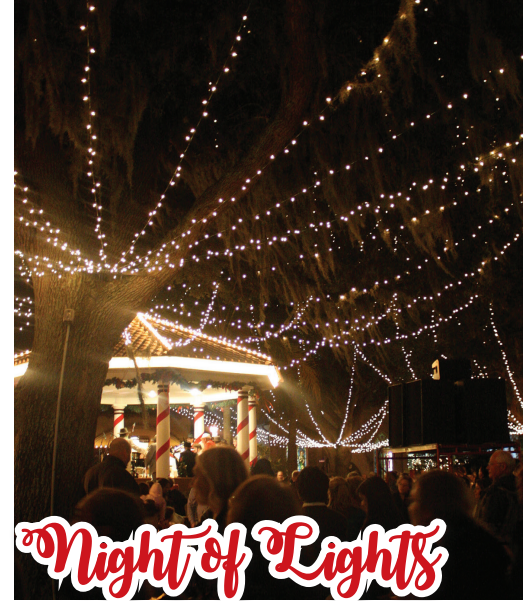
### ABET's 'A Christmas Carol'

The Atlantic Beach Experimental Theatre will perform an adaptation "A Christmas Carol" Dec. 2-18.

This version will feature a company of traveling players about to enact the classic Charles Dickens story. The troupe improvises by creating a magical world of make-believe, work their magic and warm the heart of Scrooge.

Performances will take place at the Adele Grage Cultural Center located at 716 Ocean Blvd. in Atlantic Beach. For tickets, call (904) 249-7177 or visit [www.abettheatre.com](http://www.abettheatre.com).





*Night of Lights*

### Deck the Chairs

The 4th annual Deck the Chairs, a lighted sculpture display featuring the iconic American Red Cross Lifesaving Corps lifeguard chairs decked out for the holidays, will be on display in Jacksonville Beach through Jan. 1, 2017.

New this year, the centerpiece of the exhibit, a 30-foot whimsical Christmas tree, has been expanded and will feature a digital light show synchronized with music. Several special events are planned in addition to the “Shine, Hope and Peace Music and Light Spectacular” including Players by the Sea holiday youth performances, a Night of Music and Dance and an awards ceremony.

All proceeds from Deck the Chairs benefit the Volunteer Life Saving Corps of Jacksonville Beach to help supplement funding provided by the American Red Cross and the City of Jacksonville Beach.

The chairs will be on display at Latham Plaza and the Seawalk Pavilion area. For more information, including a complete schedule of events, visit [www.deckthechairs.org](http://www.deckthechairs.org).

### Chabad at the Beaches Chanukah events

- Chanukah Wonderland – Monday, Dec. 7 from 4:30 to 6 p.m. at the Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach. The event will include the lighting of the Beaches’ largest menorah and festivities including crafts, face painting, music, free latkes, raffles, and more. Dinner will be available for purchase. The Cultural Center is located at 50 Executive Way in Ponte Vedra Beach.

- Atlantic Beach Chanukah Celebration – On the fourth night of Chanukah, join Chabad at the Beaches for a menorah lighting, latkes, free raffles, donut making and a dreidel game Wednesday, Dec. 9 from 5:30 to 6:45 p.m. at the Adele Grage Cultural Center located at 785 Ocean Blvd. in Atlantic Beach.

- Chanukah at The Landing – The 15th annual Chanukah at The Landing will take place Sunday, Dec. 6. The annual Chanukah Car Parade will kick off the event followed by live music, kiosks and exhibitions, carnival games and inflatables, a menorah lighting and more.

For more information, call (904) 543-9301 or visit [www.chabadbeaches.com](http://www.chabadbeaches.com).

### Palm Valley Boat Parade

The annual Palm Valley Boat Parade will take place Saturday, Dec. 10 on the Intracoastal Waterway in Palm Valley.

The rain or shine event also includes an annual lighted dock

competition. The parade will begin at 7 p.m. one mile south of the Palm Valley Bridge and continue north to the last home in Marsh Landing by 10 p.m.

Public viewing areas include both east and west sides of the Intracoastal underneath the Palm Valley Bridge. The parade can also be viewed from multiple local restaurants along the waterway, including Barbara Jean’s, The Palm Valley Fish Camp, Lulu’s and Palm Valley Outdoors. Reservations are recommended.

For more information about the boat parade, visit [www.palmvalleyboatparade.com](http://www.palmvalleyboatparade.com).

### ••••• FERNANDINA BEACH EVENTS •••••

#### Amelia Community Theatre’s ‘Ebenezer: A Christmas Carol’

Amelia Community Theatre’s original production of “Ebenezer: A Christmas Carol,” will be performed on the theatre’s main stage Dec. 1-17.

The musical will feature music from all genres, including gospel, country, rock and jazz.

Amelia Community Theatre is located at 209 Cedar St., Fernandina Beach. For tickets, call (904) 261-6749 or visit [www.ameliacommunitytheatre.org](http://www.ameliacommunitytheatre.org).

#### Dickens on Centre

A Victorian era-inspired holiday festival, Dickens on Centre, will take place Dec. 8-11 in Fernandina Beach.

The festival will feature costumed characters, themed entertainment and performances, visits from Saint Nick and a variety of vendors selling season gifts and wares.

For more information, visit [www.ameliaisland.com/christmas](http://www.ameliaisland.com/christmas).

#### 10th annual Holiday Home Tour

The 10th annual Holiday Home Tour presented by the Amelia Island Museum of History will take place Friday, Dec. 2 and Saturday, Dec. 3 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. Featuring five private, historic homes in downtown Fernandina Beach, each home on the tour will be decorated for the holidays by a local florist and decorator.

The cost is \$25 per person in advance; \$30 at the door. Proceeds benefit the Amelia Island Museum of History.

For more information, call (904) 261-7378 or visit [www.ameliamuseum.org/holidayhometour](http://www.ameliamuseum.org/holidayhometour).



## Ritz-Carlton Amelia Island Santa Breakfast and Santa's Storybook Tea

The Ritz-Carlton Amelia Island will host Santa Breakfast and Santa's Storybook Tea Dec. 3, 10 and 17.

The Santa Breakfast will take place from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. Admission is \$40 per person for ages six and up and \$25 for children ages five and younger.

Santa's Storybook Tea will take place from noon to 1:30 p.m. Admission is \$50 per person ages six and up; \$18 for children ages five and younger.

Ritz-Carlton Amelia Island is located at 4750 Amelia Island Parkway. For more information, visit [www.ritzcarlton.com](http://www.ritzcarlton.com).

## Celtic Christmas

St. Peter's Episcopal Church, located at 801 Atlantic Ave. in Fernandina Beach, will have a Celtic Christmas service Sunday, Dec. 18 from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

The church will be adorned with decorations and candlelight and Celtic traditional music. For more information, call (904) 261-4293 or visit [www.stpetersparish.org](http://www.stpetersparish.org).

## Amelia Island Bed and Breakfast Holiday Cookie Tour

The annual Amelia Island Bed and Breakfast Association's annual Holiday Cookie Tour of Inns will take place Saturday, Dec. 10 from noon to 5 p.m.

Tour six of Amelia Island's classic inns and bed and breakfasts, each decorated for the holidays. At each location, guests will sample a signature cookie and take home a cookie recipe card.

Tickets are \$25 through Dec. 9 or \$30 at the door. Tickets may be purchased online at [www.ameliainn.com/cookie-tour](http://www.ameliainn.com/cookie-tour), at any of the participating inns, the Amelia Island Visitors Center and other area locations.

A portion of this year's proceeds from ticket and cookbook sales will benefit Micah's Place, Nassau County's domestic violence center.

## ..... ST. AUGUSTINE EVENTS ..... St. Augustine Historic Inns Bed & Breakfast Holiday Tour

The 23rd annual Bed and Breakfast Holiday Tour will take place Dec. 10 and 11 from 1 to 5 p.m. each day.

Take a self-guided walking tour of St. Augustine Inns and Bed and Breakfasts. Each inn will partner with a local restaurant or culinary partner that will provide samples of their signature dishes or treats.

The 2016 B&B Holiday Tour charity partner is the Lightner Museum. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit [www.staugustinebandbtour.com](http://www.staugustinebandbtour.com).

## Regatta of Lights

The 36th annual Regatta of Lights will take place Saturday, Dec. 10 beginning at 6 p.m.

Hosted by the St. Augustine Yacht Club, the annual event features a parade of decorated boats that motor along the Matanzas Bay between the Bridge of Lions and the Castillo de San Marcos.

For more information, call (904) 824-9725 or visit [www.staugustineyachtclub.com](http://www.staugustineyachtclub.com).

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## St. Augustine Christmas Parade

St. Augustine's 62nd annual Christmas Parade will take place Saturday, Dec. 3 beginning at 10 a.m.

The parade route begins at Mission Nombre de Dios, located at 27 Ocean Ave., and will proceed south through downtown, finishing behind the Visitors Center at 10 W. Castillo Drive.

After the parade, visitors can have photos taken with Santa at the Plaza de la Constitucion, located at 1 Cathedral St.

For more information, call (904) 824-4997 or visit [www.visitstaugustine.com/event/christmas-parade](http://www.visitstaugustine.com/event/christmas-parade).

## Nights of Lights

St. Augustine's annual Nights of Lights holiday display, which adorns historic St. Augustine with millions of white lights, will be on display through Jan. 31, 2017.

A Christmas tree and oak trees draped with lights can be viewed at Plaza de la Constitucion, 1 Cathedral St.

For more information, visit [www.visitstaugustine.com](http://www.visitstaugustine.com).

## Dressing of the Palms

Decorated palm trees will be on display for the annual Dressing of the Palms in Vilano Beach through Dec. 31.

The palm trees that line the streets of Vilano Beach's Town Center are decorated by local artists.

For more information, visit [www.vilano-beach.com](http://www.vilano-beach.com).

## St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum Luminaria Night

Taking place each year on the first Wednesday in December,

visitors and community members are invited to enter the lighthouse grounds for a free evening of children's holiday crafts and warm refreshments.

Live musical performances, including a string quartet inside the lighthouse tower, will also be a part of the evening's events. Guests can also view the museum's Christmas décor and hundreds of luminarias lining the grounds of the museum.

The event will take place Wednesday, Dec. 7 from 7 to 9 p.m.

The St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum is located at 81 Lighthouse Ave. in St. Augustine. For more information, call (904) 829-0745 or visit [www.staugustinelighthouse.org](http://www.staugustinelighthouse.org).

## St. Augustine Ballet presents "The Nutcracker"

The St. Augustine Ballet's annual production of "The Nutcracker" will take place Dec. 17 and 18 at 1:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. at Lewis Auditorium at Flagler College, 14 Granada St., St. Augustine.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call (855) 222-2849 or visit [www.saintaugustineballet.com](http://www.saintaugustineballet.com).

## Garden Club of St. Augustine Christmas Tour of Homes

The 48th Christmas Tour of Homes presented by The Garden Club of St. Augustine will take place Sunday, Dec. 4 from noon to 5 p.m.

Tour six private homes in the historic downtown St. Augustine area via a walking tour. Complimentary transportation on the Old Town Trolley will be available for those who have difficulty walking or need assistance.

Tickets are \$25 per person. For more information, call (904) 686-9320 or visit [www.gardenclubofstaugustine.org/tourofhomes.html](http://www.gardenclubofstaugustine.org/tourofhomes.html).

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While decking the halls is a time-honored holiday custom, a recently-established holiday tradition in Jacksonville Beach has locals decking the iconic red lifeguard chairs instead.

The 4th annual Deck the Chairs display opened Nov. 25 and will be on display through Jan. 1, 2017 at Latham Plaza and the Seawalk Pavilion in Jacksonville Beach. In addition, this year's celebration includes a new feature known as Community Chairs. Ten lightweight replica lifeguard chairs were created for local businesses and organizations located outside the Jacksonville Beach downtown exhibit area to decorate and display. Community Chairs are located at Adventure Landing, The Courtyard at the Beaches Town Center, Sidney Cardel's, Bach to Rock, the Jacksonville Public Library Main Library branch in downtown Jacksonville, the Pablo Creek and Beaches library branches, the North Beach Center in Atlantic Beach, and a few other area locations throughout town.

Deck the Chairs (DTC), a nonprofit organization, raises money

for the American Red Cross Life Saving Corps through community sponsorships. Local businesses and organizations sponsor chairs, and are paired with regional artists and volunteers to collaborate on a theme and decorate their respective lifeguard chairs.

"The spirit of this event, beyond raising money for the lifeguards, is to engage our residents, our community, our local businesses," Deck the Chairs Executive Director Kurtis Loftus says. "It's Christmas-time, so what we're trying to do is spread the holiday experience and see how much we can engage our community in what we're trying to do as an organization."

The inaugural Deck the Chairs took place in 2013. Since then, the newest Jacksonville Beach holiday tradition has continued to grow.

In 2014, Deck the Chairs was established as a 501(c)(3) public charity. That same year, the organization also made plans to expand the event space and created the iconic handcrafted, whimsical Deck the Chairs Christmas tree sculpture reminiscent of a Dr. Seuss





# Decking

## THE CHAIRS IN JACKSONVILLE BEACH

ICONIC RED LIFEGUARD CHAIRS WILL ONCE AGAIN BE DECORATED FOR THE HOLIDAYS

by CARRIE RESCH



creation. Last year, daytime activities were added, including a craft shop, a custom inflatable sea shell slide and weekend performances by Players by the Sea youth. The event also drew national attention in 2015 when it was recognized by "People" magazine as part of the publication's "Christmas Across America: A Unique Way to Celebrate the Holidays in Each State" web article feature.

"It's exciting to see it grow," Loftus says. "It's exciting to see the people respond to the artwork or to the decorations."

This year, Deck the Chairs will again be offering something new – a digital light show synchronized with music. The "Shine Hope and Peace Music and Light Spectacular" will premiere the first weekend in December and continue every Friday, Saturday and Sunday throughout the month, with the exception of Christmas Day. The 10-minute light shows will take place every hour from 6 to 9 p.m.

Several other special events are also planned, including Players by the Sea holiday youth performances, a Night of Music and Dance,

and an awards ceremony, with prizes given for Best in Show, Best Lighting, Best Creativity and Judges' Favorites.

In addition to raising funds for the American Red Cross Life Saving Corps, the goal of the event is to share an appreciation for public art with the community and help boost the Beaches economy.

Loftus hopes that after visiting the exhibit visitors will take advantage of area boutiques, businesses and restaurants, and shop local during the holiday season. The organization also seeks to support local businesses by buying materials locally and hiring local craftsman.

All proceeds from Deck the Chairs benefit the Volunteer Life Saving Corps of Jacksonville Beach to help supplement funding provided by the American Red Cross and the City of Jacksonville Beach. The funds will be used for such things as training, outreach programs and maintenance of the oceanfront lifeguard station facility.





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Photos courtesy of Nocatee

Nocatee will be aglow with the Christmas spirit Dec. 2 and 3, when the master-planned community welcomes the holiday season with its annual "Nocatee-A-Glow" celebration.

Due to popularity, this year's celebration has been expanded to two nights, with festivities offered both Dec. 2 and 3 from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Splash Waterpark. In addition to North Pole visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus, the event will feature a "snow zone," horse-drawn carriage and train rides, a live nativity scene, a "letters to Santa" station, Christmas caroling, strolling musicians, balloon artists and more. Food trucks will also be on hand to offer refreshments.

Both evenings will also feature a tree lighting countdown followed by the kick-off of Splash Waterpark's popular Christmas light show, which will continue to run every evening on the half hour from 6 to 9:30 p.m. through Jan. 1.

Admission to Nocatee-A-Glow is free for Nocatee residents (resident access card required). Guests of Nocatee residents will be admitted for \$5 per person. Due to limited parking at the Splash Waterpark, parking will be available at the Nocatee Town Center field, with shuttle buses transporting residents to the water park every 15 minutes beginning at 5:30 p.m.

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Photos courtesy AITDC

# Dickens on Centre

to highlight Amelia Island  
holiday happenings

Amelia Island will once again transform its historic Centre Street in downtown Fernandina Beach into a 19th-century Christmas village for its annual “Dickens on Centre” holiday event.

To be held Dec. 8-11, the downtown experience recalling the yuletide celebrations of Charles Dickens’ Victorian England will include horse-drawn carriages and period vendors, characters and entertainers, along with festive lights, holiday décor and a variety of dining and entertainment options.

“We’re excited to be expanding Dickens on Centre this year and the even more festive experience it will give visitors to Amelia Island during the holiday season,” says Gil Langley, managing director of the Amelia Island Tourism Development Council. “Along with a full calendar of events and great packages and rates at our award-winning hotels, resorts and B&Bs, Dickens on Centre will make this December an ideal time to come experience the island.”

In addition to the downtown restaurants, shops,





galleries and other local businesses that will be participating, period street vendors will sell handmade crafts and traditional British holiday treats such as meat pies, Scotch eggs, sausage rolls and more.

### **Holiday Home Tour**

The Dickens on Centre events complement the island's popular Holiday Home Tour (Dec. 2-3) and Bed & Breakfast Holiday Cookie Tour. To be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Dec. 2-3, this year's Holiday Home Tour will visit five Victorian homes located in the historic district of Fernandina Beach. Each home will be decorated for the Christmas season by a local florist and decorator. Tickets are \$30 and may be purchased at the Amelia Island Museum of History or any of the featured homes. For more information, visit [www.ameliamuseum.org](http://www.ameliamuseum.org).

### **Holiday Cookie Tour**

On Saturday, Dec. 10, meanwhile, six of Amelia Island's inns will open their doors for the annual Holiday Cookie Tour. From noon until 5 p.m., guests may view the inns' holiday decorations and sample a signature cookie at each. Complimentary horse-drawn carriage and trolley rides will be available from inn to inn, or visitors can travel the short journey between homes on foot.

Tickets are \$25 through Dec. 9 and may be purchased online at [www.ameliamuseum.org](http://www.ameliamuseum.org) or at the Amelia Island Visitors Center, the Fernandina Beach Library and Chamber of Commerce Gateway Office. Tickets will also be available for \$30 that day if the tour is not sold out.





photos by Susan Griffin  
Cottage By The Sea Tree



Christmas gifts at Cottage By The Sea



Sidney Cardel's Christmas décor



Sea Side Shoppes Christmas decorations



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Reindeer wine toppers at Sidney Cardel's



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The shops and businesses of 4th Avenue South in Jacksonville Beach kicked off the holiday season Nov. 3 with a festive open house. Guests enjoyed holiday refreshments and entertainment by Mid-Life Crisis while getting a jump on their seasonal shopping at participating businesses, which included Sidney Cardel's, Ashes' Boutique, Cottage by the Sea, Cottage by the Seaside Shoppes, Gregory Paul's and Luxe Hair Studio.

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# At home with the Rutherfords

Celebrating the  
true spirit of  
Christmas

by JANET WESTLING



Christmas Nativity at a church in Rome



A floral arrangement from  
Congressman-elect John and Pat  
Rutherford adorns the table.







The Rutherfords celebrate Christmas in Rome with Francesca's family.

Welcome home to an elegantly designed, European-inspired home in the exclusive community of Palermo. As you step inside 3559 Valverde Circle, you will experience the marriage of two worlds.

Every house has a story to tell, and this Christmas story brings to life the beautiful home that Michael and Francesca Rutherford have created and the Italian traditions they have kept alive. Francesca Romana Dal Savio is from Rome and Michael Rutherford – son of Congressman-elect John Rutherford – is from Jacksonville. They met and married in Rome in the Basilica Di S. Agostino and the Palazzo Barberini.

Drawing inspiration from their lives in Rome and travels throughout Europe, the owners have designed a fabulous grand foyer filled with beautiful Italian paintings and two large porcelain pieces made in Deruta, Italy in the Umbrian region not far from Rome. The pottery made by Gina Pelli Maioliche was a gift to each other on their anniversary.

The interiors of this stunning home are warm, inviting and incorporate the textures and colors found in nature. The natural tile, throughout the main living areas, is a warm light stone porcelain tile that blends old world charm with modern amenities. The living room or drawing room features floor-to-ceiling bookcases and is home to a baby grand piano, The large dining room adjacent to the family room and kitchen offer a great area for entertaining on a large scale.

In the Rutherford household, the celebration of Christmas is centered around the Nativity and the birth of Baby Jesus. For more

than 16 years they have added pieces to their nativity that are hand crafted in Naples and Sicily. On display in the family room, their Nativity, or *Presepio*, is presented for all to see.

"In Italy, the Nativity scenes or Presepio are the center of our Christmas walks," says Francesca. "We do shopping for the season, but first there is a visit to one of the thousands of Catholic churches in Rome. Each church has its own special nativity scene that are handmade wood or ceramic figurines, that in most cases, especially the Basilica's, are from the 17th century."

Presepio are usually set up on the feast day of the Immaculate Conception – Dec. 8 – until the Feast of the Epiphany, Jan. 6. Saint Francis of Assisi constructed the first Nativity scene in a cave in Greccio in 1223 and celebrated a Christmas Eve mass and a Nativity pageant.

Christmas Eve at the Rutherfords begins with the traditional meatless dinner or "cena di magro." In Rome, it begins at 6 p.m. and ends at 11:30 p.m. The dinner begins with an appetizer of fried fish followed by a first course of pasta with shrimp or tuna. The second course is a large fish of seabass, prepared simply with coarse salt, olive oil and lemon. This is served with vegetables that can include cauliflower, spinach and broccoli.

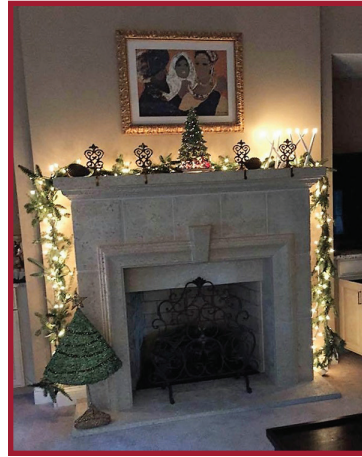
The desserts include the Pandoro, Panettone, Torrone and Pan Giallo, which is purchased at a special store in Rome.

The dinner is filled with family, friends and is a lively celebration of conversation that ends with the sharing of gifts right before the Mass. Santa Claus is not the central figure in giving gifts in Italy. Rather, it is the special gifts given by family members that





Befana, or the "good witch" who brings presents to children in Italy



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are meaningful and shared. It is the Epiphany on Jan. 6 where the children throughout Italy receive gifts from the Befana, or “good witch.” Legend has it that the Befana was visited by the three Magi or wise men on their way to visit baby Jesus. She offered them lodging and they invited her to join them. She declined then changed her mind and tried to find the wise men to bring a gift for the baby Jesus. Today, she flies around on her broom on the feast of the Epiphany to give gifts to children!

Christmas Day in Italy begins with the celebration of Christ’s birth during Mass from 11 a.m. to noon, followed by the traditional all-meat luncheon where lamb and roast potatoes are served.

The blending of the Christmas traditions at the Rutherfords’ home includes our Santa Claus and the baking of Christmas cookies to be left for Santa to enjoy! The chef’s kitchen with spacious granite counters in their Palermo home offers the perfect place to prepare for all of the seasons dinners and festivities. A beautiful wood table sits prominently between the kitchen and family room. This table was brought from Rome and is the perfect setting for a Christmas breakfast. The Rutherford home is also adorned by a traditional Christmas floral arrangement that John and Pat Rutherford send to the family each year.

Gifts are opened on Christmas Day and a dinner celebrated at John and Pat Rutherford’s home. A favorite lasagna prepared by Pat is followed by a Christmas roast and Italian desserts. The family conversation this year will no doubt include the many changes in their families. From the upcoming festivities of Congressman-elect Rutherford’s swearing in ceremony in Washington, D.C. on Jan. 3, to the listing for sale of the Palermo home on Valverde Circle, the Italian traditions and American celebrations will prosper in the coming year!

Represented by Berkshire Hathaway HSFNR, this warm and inviting home is listed by Allison Ferebee and Janet Westling, and offered for \$685,000.



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# PINEAPPLE POST

# welcomes

## VIETRI ARTIST FOR HOLIDAY SIGNING

by JASMINE MARSHALL

Sawgrass Village's Pineapple Post welcomed patrons to its storefront Nov. 12 for a meet and greet with Italian artisan Alessandro Taddei.

Unveiling a new line of "Old St. Nick" themed VIETRI ceramics for the seventh winter, the shop features the limited-edition line inspired by stories Taddei's mother shared with him as a child. Chronicling the adventures of Babbo Natale (Santa Claus) in Italian tradition, Taddei illustrated the holiday collection as an homage to time honored traditions of penning letters to Santa, chopping wood for fire and delivering presents from chimney to chimney.

"It's nice and it's special because ... these are stories," Taddei explained. "Each story ... it (means) something to me, but it will mean something to other people as well. People can create their own stories and their own memories with each piece."

During the event, Taddei signed and dated pieces of the handmade, hand painted collection and posed for photos with fans of his work. The artist's extensive line of Father Christmas-adorned décor, linens and dishware dotted Pineapple Post's main floor space with the sometimes-silly musings of Taddei's childhood. On one piece, an exhausted St. Nick slumps against a rooftop after trekking through snow with a sack full of gifts. On another, he eyes a smiling gingerbread man in contemplation. All are created in the artist's signature watercolor-like style, and Taddei welcomes the nostalgia they bring to those who see them.

"I created them with my own (memories) in mind, the stories I heard as a child," he said. "And I hope other people ... feel their own memories when they see them."



Pineapple Post owners Susan (left) and Craig Hamilton (far right) with Alessandro Taddei



VIETRI artist Alessandro Taddei signs a piece of his newly released collection.



Photos by Jasmine Marshall





# VILLAGE JEWELER



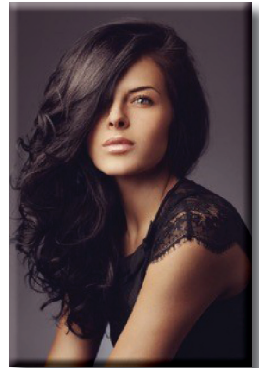
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# 'TIS THE SEASON FOR *holiday baking*

by JENNIFER LOGUE

What would the holidays be without delectable Christmas cookies, cakes and other seasonal treats?

"I love holiday baking," says Ponte Vedra Beach's Angie Anderson, owner of Life is Sweet by Angie. "It's nice to put on some Christmas music and spend some time with the kids. From gingerbread houses and Christmas cookies, there are so many things you can make and give as homemade Christmas gifts."

Since launching her home baking business, Anderson

has developed a regular following of local customers seeking her custom-made cakes, cookies and other treats for parties, special occasions and other events. She anticipates having a busy season as local residents start planning for their Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah and other holiday gatherings.

To help sweeten your seasonal celebrations at home, however, Anderson offers these simple holiday baking recipes:

## *Caramel and Pecan Fudge*

- 1 C. butter
- 1 C. light brown sugar
- C. heavy whipping cream
- 1/3 C. dulce de leche
- 4 C. sifted powdered sugar
- 1 C. chopped pecans

Bring 1 cup of butter and 1 cup of light brown sugar to the boil.

Stir in 1/4 cup of heavy whipping cream and a 1/3 cup of Dulce de leche and take off heat once stirred through. Add 4 cups of sifted powdered sugar and mix well using an electric mixer.

Mix through 1 cup of chopped pecans and press fudge into lined pan then place in the fridge to harden. Cut into squares and box for great gifts!



Photo courtesy of Angie Anderson



# Easy Chocolate Mud Pie

- Graham crackers or other cookies, crushed
- 100g dark chocolate
- 1 bag marshmallows
- 1 can evaporated milk

Make a pie base using crushed Graham crackers or other preferred cookies and one stick of melted butter. Place in the fridge while preparing the filling.

Melt 100g of good quality dark chocolate with a bag of marshmallows until it is melted smoothly together. Don't overheat the marshmallows otherwise it will become too chewy! Blend in a tin of evaporated milk until you have a velvety chocolate flow.

Pour the mixture into the cookie base and allow to set overnight.

Top with heavy whipped cream and decorate with, if you can get your hands on, a crushed Nestle peppermint crisp chocolate bar otherwise some peppermint bark!

# Chocolate and Mint Cupcakes

- 3 eggs
- C. sugar
- C. oil
- C. cocoa
- 1 C. boiling water
- 1 C. all-purpose flour
- 3 t. baking powder
- 100g grated peppermint bark

Beat together 3 eggs, 3/4 cup of sugar and 1/2 cup of oil until light in color.

Blend in 3/4 cup of cocoa dissolved in 1 cup of boiling water.

Sift 1 cup of all purpose flour and 3 tsp baking powder and mix until incorporated.

If you prefer or want something quick, use your favorite chocolate box mix.

Add 100g of grated peppermint bark or Nestle peppermint crisp and spoon into cupcake liners. Bake for about 20 minutes at 340 degrees.

Decorate with your favorite chocolate frosting and crushed candy cane!

## Life is Sweet By Angie..

... is currently accepting holiday orders. During the busy holiday season, Anderson recommends placing orders two weeks in advance. For more information, email [lifeissweetbyangie@mail.com](mailto:lifeissweetbyangie@mail.com).



Photos by Jennifer Logue

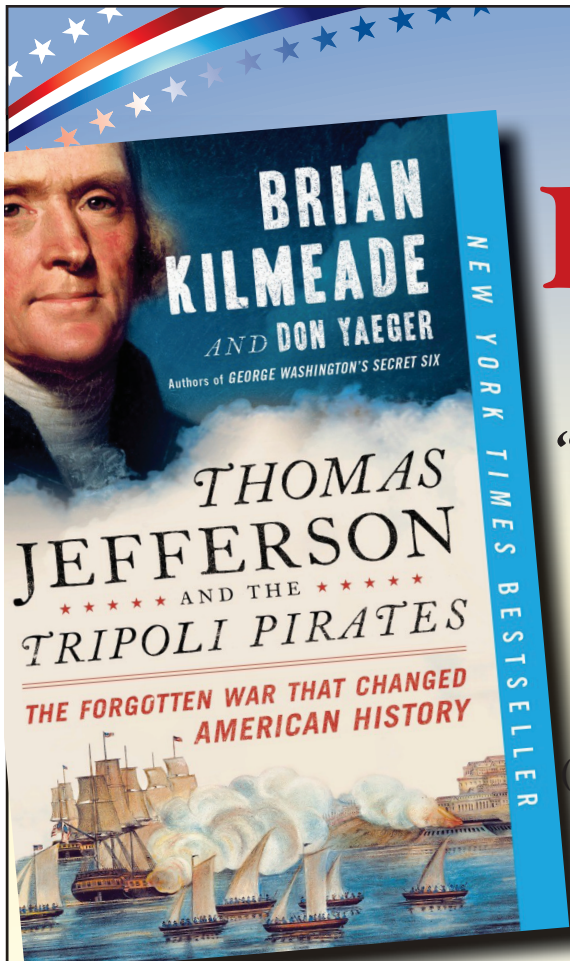




Cultural Center  
presents annual  
*Holiday Shoppes*



Photos by Susan Griffin



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Local residents searching for the perfect gift for that special someone had an opportunity to get an early jump on their holiday shopping, when the Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach hosted its annual Holiday Shoppes event.

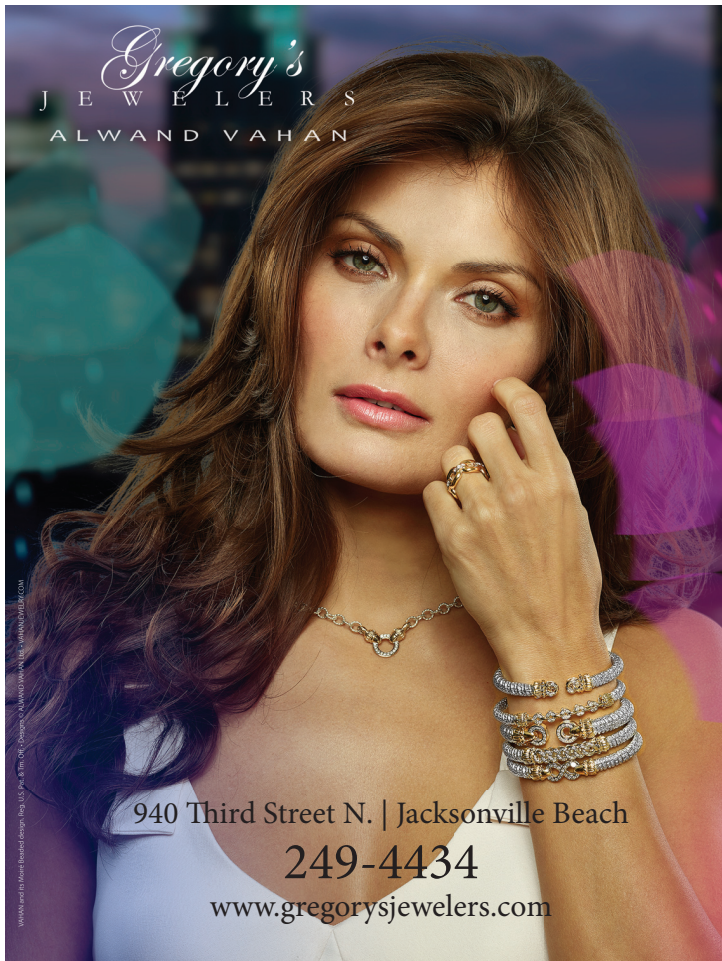
Held Nov. 10-12, the popular event moved to a new location this year, as the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall hosted the seasonal shopping extravaganza. With nearly two dozen vendors from around the country, Holiday Shoppes featured a variety of one-of-a-kind gifts including clothing and accessories, fine jewelry, ceramics, home accessories, children's clothing, gourmet items and more. Food trucks were also on site to provide refreshments.

Shopping hours for Holiday Shoppes will be from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Nov. 10, and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Nov. 11-12. Admission is \$5.

### Timeless Design raffle

In keeping with the holiday spirit, the Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach is holding a raffle for an artistic package featuring an original work of art by Ponte Vedra Beach artist Susan Woodburn. Presented in collaboration with Janet Westling and Jennifer Turner, "Marsh on the Harbour" will be raffled off along with a rug from Fixer Uppers' Joanna Gaines and her Magnolia Market rug collection. Raffle tickets are \$100 and will be available at cultural center receptions throughout the season.

Founded in 1994, the Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach is a nonprofit dedicated to bringing the arts to the local community. With programs for both children and adults, the center offers more than 170 ongoing art classes, summer camps and workshops led by regional and national artists. From drawing and sewing to sculpture, pottery, music, dance and more, the center provides opportunities for artists working in all media and of all skill levels.



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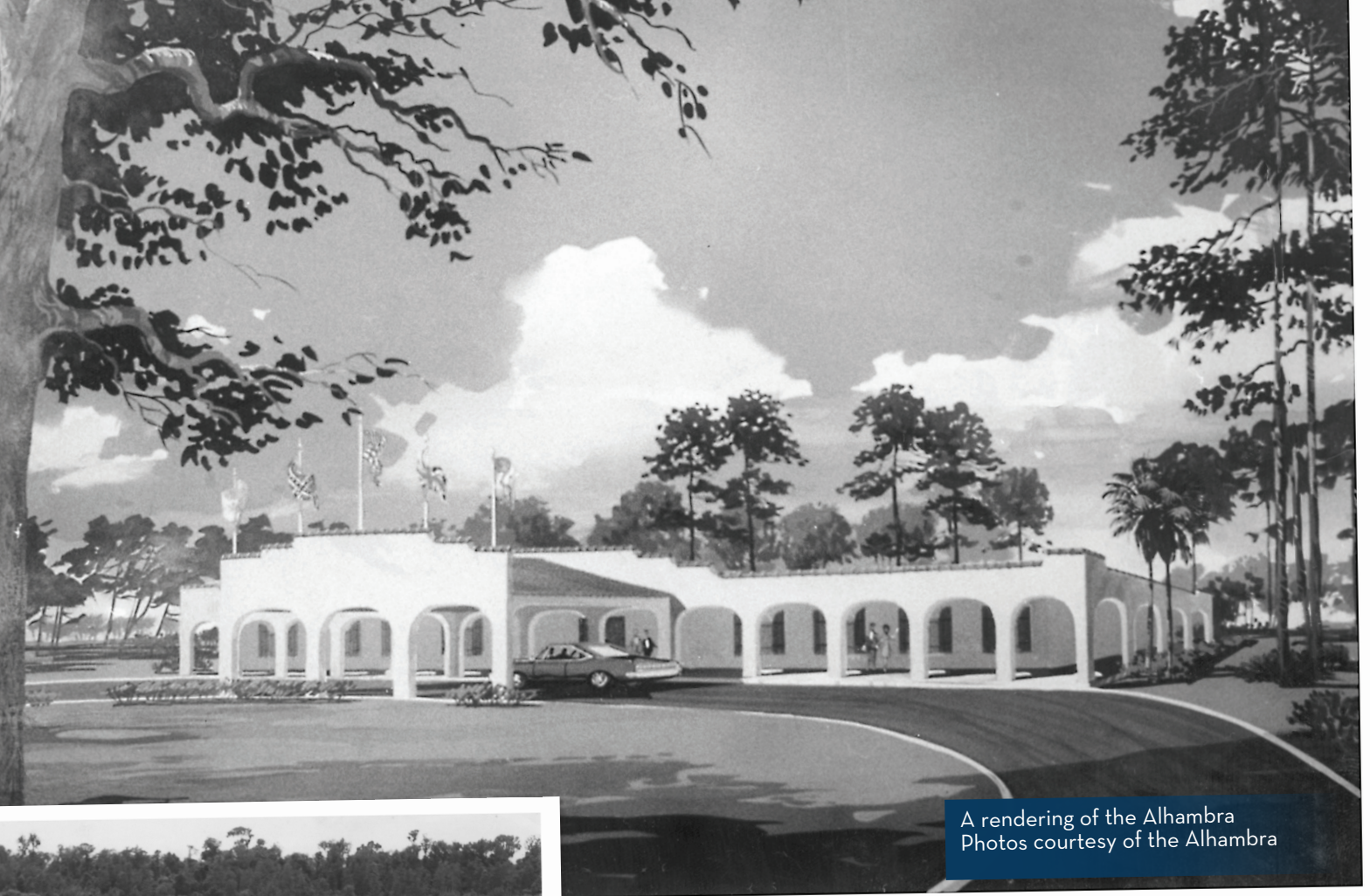
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A rendering of the Alhambra  
Photos courtesy of the Alhambra



Ted Johnson and George Ballis sit in the empty lot where they would build the Alhambra Theatre & Dining.

# ALHAMBRA SET TO *celebrate* 50TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

by JENNIFER LOGUE

In July 1967, Ted Johnson and George Ballis sat in an empty lot on Beach Boulevard in Jacksonville, chatting over coffee at an elegant table set with fine china and a candelabra, and envisioning the future.

Nearly 50 years later, the dinner theatre they built on that spot has become a beloved local institution and the longest-running dinner theater in the country. Now, as the Alhambra Theatre & Dining prepares to launch its 50th anniversary season, the theatre is embracing its past and celebrating a bright future with the theme “Looking back. Looking forward.”

To that end, the golden anniversary season will begin with a limited-run presentation of “Come Blow Your Horn” – the first show ever performed at The Alhambra back in 1967. What’s more, the show set to open Jan. 4, 2017 will be offered at a special 50th anniversary price of two tickets for \$50.

The season will feature “Gilligan’s Island” star Dawn Wells in “Steel Magnolias,” Morgan Fairchild in “Dixie Swim Club” and such popular musicals as “Showboat,” “Dreamgirls,” “Annie” and more. Both Wells and Fairchild performed at the Alhambra back in the 1960s and 1970s.



# Beauty and the Beast



# Blithe Spirit



The season will also be punctuated by special events, including a signing party for the Alhambra's commemorative coffee table book in December 2016 and a 50th Anniversary Birthday Bash in December 2017.

"For 50 years The Alhambra has been a place of Broadway-quality shows and fine meals, but the Alhambra really is more of a place where people make memories," Managing Partner Craig Smith says. "This theater is where we go to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries; it is where people came for the prom; it is the place of first dates and marriage proposals. Recently, the Alhambra has even been a place where people get married."

## A JACKSONVILLE TRADITION

Opened in 1967 as The Alhambra Dinner Theater, the Alhambra has hosted nationally known entertainers such as Tony Curtis, Claude Aiken, Sid Caesar and Cesar Romero, and more recently the likes of Loretta Swit, Barry Williams, Jamie Farr, Sally Struthers, Joyce DeWitt, Michael Learned, Barbara Eden, Lisa Whelchel and Mike Farrell. It has been a place of beginnings and endings: Former Miss America Leanza Cornett got her start at the Alhambra at age 15, while pin-up idol Betty Grable made her last theatrical appearance at the theater.

"When I walk through this theater, I can almost hear the voices of the memories," Smith says. "Some say the Alhambra is haunted and those are the voices of the ghosts, but I say she just shares a lot of

stories – and a lot of joy."

Over the years, however, attendance waned and the theater's subscriber base dwindled from a peak of 4,500 to fewer than 500. In November 2009, Smith and his partners purchased the theater and began an overhaul that included changing the name and replacing the traditional buffet dinner with a seated, high-quality dining experience featuring menus tied to the theme of the evening's performance.

"We wanted to change every aspect of this experience, to make the Alhambra not just relevant again, but to make it a leader in Jacksonville's cultural renaissance," Smith says. "We broke the mold and started over, but still managed to keep the charm, passion and joy to which our guests had become accustomed."

Today, Alhambra shows regularly boast 80 to 90 percent capacity – including several sold out shows in recent years – and its subscriber base has grown to nearly 5,000. The theater employs more than 70 full-time staff and donates tens of thousands of dollars and tickets annually to area charities.

"Our job isn't just to sell seats to a great show – it's to be part of this community and supportive of things that are meaningful to our guests," says Smith. "We can only take credit for putting a good product together. I give all the credit to the Jacksonville community for rallying around this old girl and putting her back on the map. It's a journey that isn't finished, but we're off to a good start...that's more than 50 years in the making."



# The Alhambra Theatre & Dining 50th Anniversary Season

Sticking to the theme of “looking back and looking forward,” the Alhambra’s 50th Anniversary line up features a mix of classic shows, “popular demand” shows and new offerings.

A Closer Walk with Patsy Cline, starring Gail Bliss .....	January 27 - February 19
Showboat.....	February 22 - April 2
Dreamgirls .....	April 12 - May 21
Steel Magnolias, starring Dawn Wells .....	May 24 - June 25
Annie .....	June 28 - August 13
Dixie Swim Club, starring Morgan Fairchild.....	August 16 - September 24
The Addams Family .....	October 4 - November 12
Christmas Carole, starring Tony Triano .....	November 22 - December 24

Tickets range from \$35 to \$53 and include dinner, show and parking. Season partnerships start at \$267 for a six-show series. For more information, contact the box office at (904) 641-1212 or visit [www.alhambrajax.com](http://www.alhambrajax.com).

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# Beaches Oktoberfest

Jacksonville Beach  
festival lights up  
Sea Walk Pavilion

by JASMINE MARSHALL

The Beaches Oktoberfest returned to Jacksonville Beach's Sea Walk Pavilion Oct. 14-16, bringing with it the brews, music and festivities for which the ocean-side festival has been known for three years.

Featuring a score of musical guests, locally made craft beers, food and attractions, the three-day festival enlivened the beach in its first celebration since Hurricane Matthew. Kicking off with Craftober, the largest festival of its kind in the nation, visitors were welcomed to taste brews made by more than 50 local breweries and listen to the sounds of The Movement and Cloud9 Vibes.

The festival continued Saturday with a packed musical lineup including the likes of local favorites The Band Be Easy and the Grammy-award winning Blues Traveler. With the weekend's festivities bolstered by a food truck village, brat eating competitions, a kids' "Kinderzone" and an arts market, many locals welcomed the opportunity to look to lighter activities in the face of Hurricane Matthew's destruction.

"I think it's just what the people here needed," said Lisa Moore, who decided to attend the festival for the first time after returning from an evacuation to a relative's home in Georgia. "I'm just happy we have a beach community to return to. Everyone's been in the process of ... trying to return to normal and just breathing a sigh of relief so this festival and all the events going on here came just in time."

The Jax Beach Fall Clean Up was one such event, kicking off Saturday morning just behind the pavilion with a goal of doubling last year's efforts where more than 200 people collected, extending a community tradition of conducting a series of cleanups to protect and beautify the beach and its inhabitants. The festival closed Oct. 16 after performances by headliner Collie Buddz and local bands Split Tone and Young For a Day in addition to the festival's annual Oktober 5K Beer Run.

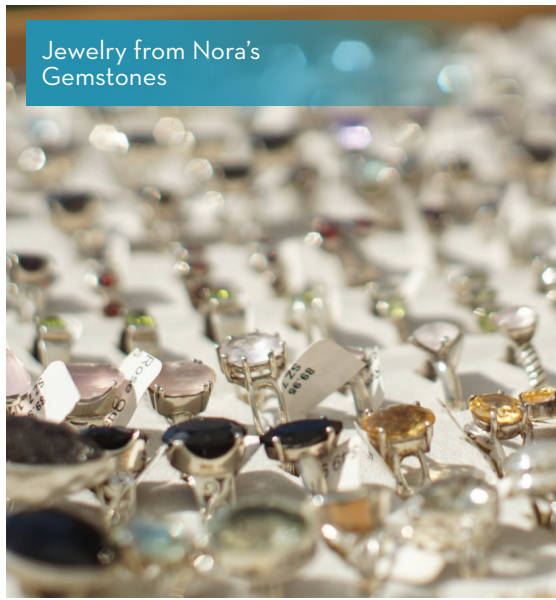
Vendors, artists and visitors alike all expressed appreciation for the passion of the event's coordinators and the commitment of the community to thrive, even in the face of adversity.

"It's just a nice reminder that the Jax Beach community is always lively, always fun and always ... here for one another," said Moore. "As long as there's a will to support the art, music and business of this community there'll be a way."

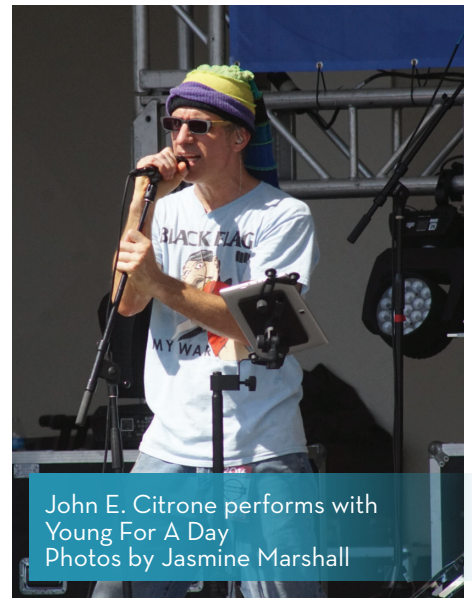




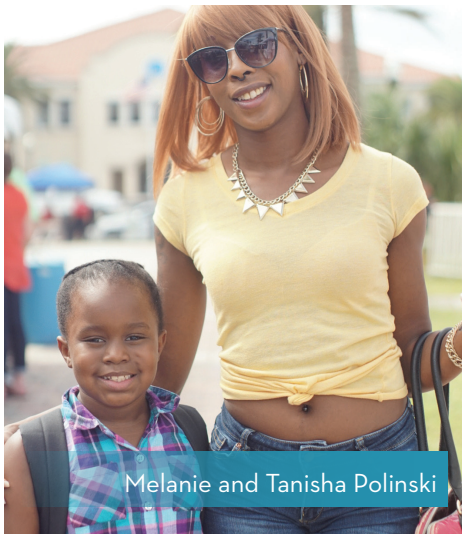
Rebecca Hancock



Jewelry from Nora's Gemstones



John E. Citrone performs with Young For A Day  
Photos by Jasmine Marshall



Melanie and Tanisha Polinski



Amanda, Susan and Taryn McCauley and Valerie Evans  
Photos by Jasmine Marshall

2017

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A resource for newcomers and long-time residents alike, LIVING HERE is a guide to the best neighborhoods of Ponte Vedra Beach, the Jacksonville Beaches, St. Augustine and Jacksonville.

Issue Date

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Advertising Deadline

March 10, 2017



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**2:00 p.m. Traditional**  
Main sanctuary

**2:00 p.m. Contemporary**  
with toddler pageant  
Contemporary worship center

**4:00 p.m. Contemporary**  
Contemporary worship center

**6:00 p.m. Traditional**  
with Christmas pageant  
Main sanctuary

**8:00 p.m. Festival**  
Main sanctuary

**10:00 p.m. Festival**  
Main sanctuary

## Christmas Day

**10:00 a.m. Traditional  
Christmas Eucharist**  
Main sanctuary

## Christ Church San Pablo

2002 San Pablo Road  
Jacksonville

## Christmas Eve

**7:00 p.m. Candlelight  
Eucharist**

## Christ Church Serenata Beach Club

South Ponte Vedra Beach

## Christmas Eve

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[christepiscopalchurch.org](http://christepiscopalchurch.org)

# Lessons & Carols

A morning of carols accompanied  
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Presented by  
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community church

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and 11:15am

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[www.crosswaterchurch.net](http://www.crosswaterchurch.net)







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