

Ponte Vedra 

Recorder

August 23, 2018
Volume 47, No. 85
75 cents

Not your average newspaper, not your average reader

PonteVedraRecorder.com

RYDER STATE OF MIND



U.S. Ryder Cup Captain and Ponte Vedra Beach resident Jim Furyk holds the Ryder Cup trophy atop the Empire State Building Aug. 14 in New York City as part of the ceremonial lighting of the building to kick off the 2018 Ryder Cup Trophy Tour. **More on the Ryder Cup in Sports, Page 36**

Photo courtesy of Empire State Realty Trust

Crash in
Ponte Vedra
leaves 1 dead

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Properties*



Distinctive Properties

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Business Weekly

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Send us your news

We welcome submissions of photos, stories, columns and letters to the editor. Let us know what's happening. Email submissions to pvrecorder@opcfla.com or bring them by our office at **1102 A1A N., Unit 108, Ponte Vedra Beach**. Submissions may be published in the paper, on our website or on our social media platforms.

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Also, check out the **Ponte Vedra Recorder** channel on YouTube.

WHAT'S THIS?



Do you know what this is?

Email your answer to jonb@opcfla.com by Monday at 5 p.m. All correct entries will be entered into a random drawing to win tickets for two adults and two children to the Jacksonville Zoo. In order to allow as many families as possible to win, participants are only eligible to win a ticket prize pack once every four months.

No readers correctly identified last week's photo. As a result, we're going to give you all another opportunity to guess. Good luck!

ADOPT A PET

CAT OF THE WEEK

My name is Velcro, and I am a 7-year-old male cat who is looking for a new home. I was brought to the pet center by my previous owners because they could not care for me anymore. Come visit me today here at the pet center! #44533



DOG OF THE WEEK

My name is Sally, and I am an 8-year-old German shepherd mix who was brought to the pet center as a stray. I'm heartworm positive, so my adoption fee will be waived,



and the Friends of the Pet Center are willing to sponsor up to \$250 toward my treatment. Come visit me today here at the pet center! #43285

Any new pet being introduced to a new home will need time to adjust to its new environment. Please reinforce house training and behavioral training, and be mindful of interacting with other pets.

St. Johns County Pet Center

Cat adoptions at the St. Johns County Pet Center are \$30 for males and \$40 for females. Dog adoptions are \$45 for males and \$60 for females. Adoption fees include microchipping, neutering/spaying, rabies vaccinations and shots. The pet center is located at 130 N. Stratton Road off U.S. 1 between County Road 210 and International Golf Parkway. Business hours are Tuesday through Friday 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The center is closed to the public on Sunday. On Monday, the office is open by appointment only to claim a lost pet. For more information, please call the **St. Johns County Pet Center at (904) 209-6190**.

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

W	O	K	E	N	E	M	S	F	U	S	S
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9	3	8	1	7	5	4	2	6
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5	4	9	6	8	7	2	1	3
6	8	1	4	2	3	9	7	5
3	2	5	7	1	6	8	9	4
8	9	4	5	3	2	7	6	1
1	6	7	8	9	4	3	5	2

Solutions correspond to last week's puzzles.



AFRICAN FOREST

A celebration two years in the making!

Join us in welcoming our primates into their new, wellness-inspired home: The African Forest

Opening Preview
Friday, August 31—
Monday, September 3
10am-2pm

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Craftsman Style Waterfront Oasis
St. Augustine / Quarry Creek
This custom designed Craftsman style home underwent a complete renovation in 2010 with no detail spared. With panoramic views of the Matanzas River and Downtown St. Augustine, this home is within walking distance of local shops and restaurants and the beach. **3 bedrooms, 4 baths \$1,375,000**



Stunning Classic with Beach Access
Marshside, Off Ponte Vedra Blvd
Picturesque home in a charming neighborhood off Ponte Vedra Blvd. Large kitchen with granite countertops and island plumbed for gas. Also features a downstairs master, study & game room. Access available to the Old Ponte Vedra Condos amenities. This home is the perfect backdrop for all of life's memories. **3 bedrooms & 2.5 bathrooms \$725,000**



Rare Waterfront Opportunity on Roscoe
3 purchasing options: Combine lots to create One of the last opportunities to have 150' frontage on the Intracoastal! **\$1,399,000.** Or this beautiful 150 x 400 lot can be divided into 2 -75' lots. **\$699,000 each.**



A Once in a Lifetime Opportunity!
Build your custom dream home in the heart of Ponte Vedra Beach with ocean access across the street. This enclave of 23 estate-sized home sites on Ponte Vedra Boulevard is surrounded by majestic Live Oaks with pristine preserve and lake views. **Starting in \$500,000s.**



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"From Cottages to Castles"



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Why I Serve

The Ponte Vedra Recorder is excited to bring you Why I Serve, a video series featuring Wounded Warrior Project that highlights local veterans and active service members, revealing why they decided to serve and what the experience provided them.

Watch the series on the Ponte Vedra Recorder website at www.pontevedrarecorder.com.

Future sponsorship opportunities are available for Why I Serve, as well as for similar video series; interested parties should contact Ben@OPCFLA.com for more information.

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OPEN HOUSE 8/25, 1-4pm

619 Porto Cristo Ave.,
St. Augustine, FL
\$303,990 | MLS 941499

For More Information, Contact:
Jim Zeller, 904.772.5592



OPEN HOUSE 8/25, 1-4pm

60 Captiva Dr.,
Ponte Vedra, FL
\$335,000 | MLS 935157

For More Information, Contact:
Dina Boscio, 904.891.8309



OPEN HOUSE 8/26, 2-4pm

620 Palencia Club Dr. #205,
St. Augustine, FL
\$529,000 | MLS 945107

For More Information, Contact:
Richard Ray, 904.806.3488



OPEN HOUSE 8/26, 1-4pm

147 Sea Hammock Way,
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL
\$560,000 | MLS 925735

For More Information, Contact:
Carol Light Manning, 904.803.7729



OPEN HOUSE 8/25, 11am-2pm

2876 Oakgrove Ave.,
St. Augustine, FL
\$589,900 | MLS 917417

For More Information, Contact:
Missi Howell, 904.716.1713



OPEN HOUSE 8/26, 2-4pm

620 Palencia Club Dr. #104
St. Augustine, FL
\$646,000 | MLS 906289

For More Information, Contact:
Cammy Ray, 904.806.3489



OPEN HOUSE 8/25 & 8/26, 1-4pm

131 S Wilderness Trl.,
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL
\$799,000 | MLS 929208

For More Information, Contact:
Jim Zeller, 904.772.5592



OPEN HOUSE 8/25 & 8/26, 11am-1pm

144 South Bend Dr.,
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL
\$879,900 | MLS 943503

For More Information, Contact:
Diana Kelly, 904.859.4368



OPEN HOUSE 8/25, 12-3pm & 8/26, 1-4pm

34 Sea Winds Ln. E
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL
\$999,000 | MLS 942107

For More Information, Contact:
Jim Zeller, 904.772.5592



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Crash on Solana Road leaves 1 dead

By Jon Blauvelt

One person was killed Monday morning in a single vehicle crash on Solana Road in Ponte Vedra Beach, according to the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office (SJSO).

The driver was identified as Austen Stoddard Jenney, 22, of Ponte Vedra. The accident on Aug. 20 took place at the 500 block of Solana Road, east of the entrance to Marsh Landing Country Club. Chuck Mulligan, the community affairs bureau commander for SJSO, said the vehicle was traveling westbound as it entered the curve of the road. He said Jenney continued straight instead of turning and struck a concrete post. The car proceeded to overturn and then collide with a tree.

Mulligan said Jenney's vehicle struck the tree so hard that the engine and transmission were both ejected from the car. Due to the damage to the vehicle, Mulligan said speed was a significant factor in the crash. He noted the vehicle was discovered early in the morning around sunrise but that the exact time of the crash is unknown. As a result of the crash, a portion of Solana Road was closed for several hours.

The Recorder will continue to report on this story as more information is revealed.



Photo by Benjamin Naim

Authorities respond to a fatal car crash Monday, Aug. 20 on Solana Road in Ponte Vedra Beach. Austen Stoddard Jenney, 22, of Ponte Vedra, was identified as the driver.

Immigration issue hits close to home

Area family with close ties to Nease NJROTC deported to Bosnia after 10 years in the U.S.

By Paris Moulden

Medina Blekic was a standout member of Nease's NJROTC program, a patriot who was known to proudly sing the national anthem at various events throughout St. Johns County.

Medina, her mom Amra, sister Jenny and father Elvir, who was from Bosnia and Herzegovina, came to the U.S. 10 years ago. They created a life in St. Johns County, with both Jenny and Medina becoming involved in one of the country's top NJROTC programs at Nease, and Amra and Elvir opening their own cleaning business.

They followed all the rules and regulations, applying for asylum upon arrival, maintaining their visas, contributing to the community, paying taxes and staying out of trouble. According to a column by Mark Woods of the Florida Times-Union, the family's request for asylum was denied in 2014, but they were repeatedly issued stays of removal, allowing them to remain here as they continued to try and find a pathway toward citizenship. Medina worked her way up to company commander of Nease's NJROTC program, Amra worked as the manager of a local fast-food restaurant and Jenny got married less than a year ago.

But, in 2017, their stay of removal was denied, meaning, despite all their efforts, technically, they were here illegally. That's when Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) got involved, allowing



Photo courtesy of Marcia Knous

Nease graduate and former member of the school's NJROTC program Medina Blekic sings the national anthem at a gala hosted by the Ponte Vedra Democratic Club in March 2018 at the Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa. Blekic's family was recently deported to Bosnia after 10 years in the United States.

the Blekics to remain in the country until Medina graduated from Nease, but notifying them that deportation was imminent.

So, on June 25, the family obeyed orders again, flying to Bosnia, a place completely unfamiliar to Amra, Jenny and Medina, a place no longer at war, but still in turmoil with massive unemployment and continuing tension over ethnic and religious divides.

Heather Matthews, parent booster club president for Nease's NJROTC, knew the girls and their parents well after volunteering with Amra for numerous NJROTC

events and having sons in the program with Jenny and Medina. She said the family now stays in a single room with just a couple of couches.

"The girls are just in shock," Matthews said. "They don't want to leave their room, they're afraid to go out."

She said Medina was a "real go-getter," an asset to Nease and beyond, with hopes of joining the Navy someday.

"Medina, from the word 'go' her freshman year, she jumped in with both feet," Matthews said. "She ended up with leadership positions on the drill team. She went

to the Area 12 Leadership Academy, which is a very elite program. Her senior year, she was one of the company commanders. She was one of the few who was on the varsity drill team for all four of her years in high school."

She said it's also what makes what happened to the family a terrible surprise.

"They did it all right," Matthews said. "They were here legally. They left when they were told to. Everybody has been behind them. It is the kind of family you want to see stay here. It seems like the ones like them who do the right thing are on the radar, when we have so many immigrants who aren't doing the right thing flying under the radar because they haven't filed the proper paperwork and you don't know where they are."

"It's one of those things where you hope that doing it the right way will benefit you, and it didn't," Matthews added. "It definitely came back to bite them."

Part of the problem for the Blekic family was a policy passed by the Trump Administration in 2017 which eliminated prioritization when it comes to deportation. According to Time magazine, President Barack Obama's policy regarding ICE and deportation primarily focused on violent offenders and recent border crossers. In January 2017, President Donald Trump issued Executive Order (EO) 13,768, which "set forth the administration's immigration enforcement and removal priorities" and expanded ICE's enforcement focus, broadening the scale. According to Time, in December 2017, acting director of ICE Thomas Homan told reporters, "There's no population that's off the table. If you're in the country illegally, we're looking for you."

Barrera discusses growth, academics and school safety with parents in Ponte Vedra Beach

By Samantha Logue

District 4 St. Johns County School Board Member Kelly Barrera met with local parents at the Plantation at Ponte Vedra Beach's Beach Club Monday, Aug. 20 to discuss some of the key challenges the school district is facing and how she intends to address them if re-elected to another term.

Listing St. Johns County's continued growth as a major issue for the district, Barrera said she is currently pushing for a new high school to be built.

"One of my huge priorities is to have a new high school, because I feel like we've already built K-8s, we built Picolata Crossing, we're expanding Mill Creek Academy right now, but we haven't done high school," she said. "And I don't think that's the only school that needs to be built. There will probably be another school built beyond that, but my first priority is the high school."

In response to her opponents' assertions that St. Johns County's high schools were dropping in their national rankings, Barrera contended that such claims were inaccurate.

"You have to look at the information you're being given, and you have to look at how it's being put together," she said, referencing the list of the "Best High Schools in Florida" released by U.S. News & World Report, which ranked Ponte Vedra High as No. 24 in the state — one slot down from the school's previous ranking as No. 23.

Noting that the rankings also took factors like students' ethnic and economic backgrounds into account, Barrera held that academically, the district's high schools were actually improving.

"The state assesses our different schools, and both Nease and Ponte Vedra have moved forward," she said. "The number of kids taking AP at both schools has gone up and their passage rates have gone up."

"And by the way, we're growing like



Photos by Samantha Logue

District 4 St. Johns County School Board Member Kelly Barrera discusses growth, academics and school safety at an Aug. 20 meet-and-greet in Ponte Vedra Beach.

crazy," she added. "There are kids being assessed that are literally walking in the door. What has happened on the backs of our teachers and our students and our parents is really nothing short of phenomenal. We aren't dropping, we're doing well in spite of (our growth)."

Addressing another concern some voters have raised regarding an apparent lack of diversity on the school board, Barrera said there was no truth to the idea that the board agrees on everything and "rubber-stamps" the superintendent's decisions.

"We absolutely disagree," she said. "We absolutely do, but at the end of the day, we come to some consensus or it won't go forward. At the end of the day, we'll put our personal differences aside for the best interest of the students of the district, because everybody that you have on that board, that's what their concern is. Their agenda is the students in the district, hands down."

Also identifying school safety as a primary concern for the district in the wake of the Parkland shooting, Barrera contended

that the county has been proactive on that front.

"We already had 16 psychologists on staff for our schools, we were able to add two more," she said. "We already had six mental health counselors and we were able to double that to 12. We had four social workers, we were able to add three, and we had 11 behavioral therapists. So, we were already moving towards mental health and beefing it up, and we love the fact that we were able to add those positions."

Endorsed in her bid for re-election by several past educators and district staff members — including former Superintendent Dr. Joseph Joyner and past School Board Members Bill Fehling and Dr. Pam Mullarkey Robbins — Barrera also recently received an endorsement from the St. Johns Education Association, the local teachers' union.

"Our endorsement is based on our belief that Kelly Barrera is best positioned to support teachers and lead the charge in new ideas for our growing, changing district," St. Johns Education Associa-



Barrera (center) stands with supporters Sonia Thomasino (left) and Regan Cartwright.

tion President Michelle Dillon said in a statement released Aug. 12. "We have watched her in action as she has served on the board for the last four years. She has showcased her abilities to listen, question and act. We look forward to working with her in the future."

Nocatee resident and parent Robbin Bray, who attended Monday's meet-and-greet, said she agreed that Barrera was the best candidate for the job. Recounting an occasion when she had encountered Barrera at a meeting in Jacksonville to help girls impacted by the juvenile justice system, Bray said she was moved by Barrera's dedication to supporting students of all means and backgrounds.

"There were no cameras there, she was not seeking votes, she was just working towards the best interest of children that need her," Bray said. "Kelly shows up, rolls up her sleeves, does not expect kudos and gets to work. That is why I am convinced she is the best person for this position."



Photo by Susan Griffin

Early voting for the Aug. 28 primary election will continue until Aug. 25.

Early voting continues until Aug. 25

Early voting for the Aug. 28 primary election began Saturday, Aug. 18 and will continue until Saturday, Aug. 25.

There are six early voting locations throughout St. Johns County. Voters may cast their ballot at any of the locations from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., regardless of where they reside.

- Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library, 101 Library Blvd., Ponte Vedra Beach
- Supervisor of Elections Office, 4455 Ave. A, Suite 101, St. Augustine
- Southeast Branch Library, 6670 U.S. 1 South, St. Augustine
- St. Augustine Beach City Hall, 2200 A1A South, St. Augustine
- Julington Creek Annex, 725 Flora Branch Blvd., St. Johns
- W.E. Harris Community Center, 400 E. Harris Street., Hastings

This election is open to all registered voters in St. Johns County. Remember to take your current and valid photo and signature ID with you when you vote. If you do not have proper ID, you must vote a provisional ballot.

For more election information, visit www.votesjc.com or call (904) 823-2238.

Mark Refosco is a franchise owner of Arthur Rutenberg Homes, which is one of the preferred homebuilders for EvenTide in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Mark Refosco

Can you please briefly tell us about your background?

I went to a small college in West Virginia and studied civil engineering and architecture. I worked for three years for an architect while in school and for a year afterwards. I decided to move to a sunnier spot, which brought me to beautiful Northeast Florida. I got in the homebuilding business early on with a great company, Summer Homes by Charlie Brown. I enjoyed five years with that company and then the next 10 years as an executive with another large company in Northeast Florida, building beautiful homes. I ultimately decided to go out on my own, and I joined the Arthur Rutenberg Homes franchise network in January 2001 and have never looked back.

What's your involvement with EvenTide? What can you tell us about the new neighborhood?

Arthur Rutenberg Homes is a preferred builder in EvenTide, which is a beautiful enclave of only 23 homesites near the Guana Preserve and right across the street from a private beach. Residents in the community will have deeded beach access. What's not to love about EvenTide and its positioning in the heart of Ponte Vedra.

What are the latest trends in home building?

We used to do a lot of Mediterranean-style architecture, and the market has shifted to more coastal, West Indies-style architecture. The West Indies style consists of different versions, including Spanish Indies, French Indies, British Indies, Dutch Indies and more. What we're focusing on in EvenTide is the British West Indies style of architecture, which features larger overhangs, combination sloped roofs, lots of windows, shutters, etc.

What do you enjoy most about working in your industry?

Our industry has a new challenge every single day, and that's what keeps me sharp. I really like working with the team that we have in our company. We have about 28 employees. We handle everything from architecture to interior design to homebuilding itself. It's so exciting for me to work with all of those different disciplines, having gone to school for architecture and engineering.

What are your favorite parts about Ponte Vedra?

It's a great spot. We have excellent restaurants and excellent shopping. It's a low traffic area. It's a beautiful place to live. I also enjoy being surrounded by the water.

What do you like to do in your free time?

I like to go look at houses and architecture, but I also enjoy boating and spending time with my family. My wife and I have four children and four grandsons. We're looking forward to more grandchildren.



Edited by Jon Blauvelt

Photo by Jon Blauvelt

To watch a video portion of the interview, visit pontevedrarecorder.com and click One of Us.

Bolles Ponte Vedra Beach opens George Hall with luau

After a year of construction, the Bolles School's new 10,800-square-foot gym and multipurpose building at the Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach Campus was officially opened Aug. 13 — the first day of school — with a luau-themed celebration hosted by school leaders.

Dubbed George Hall, the new facility includes expanded areas for fine arts study and performance, gymnasium space to promote indoor "Power of Play" activities, a coaching staff office, bathrooms and an outdoor amphitheater.

"Today, we are fortunate to experience first-day-of-school zest at its highest height — not only are we beginning a new school year, but we are making official the opening of George Hall," said Tyler Hodges, Bolles president and head of school, during the opening ceremony. "We certainly embrace the 'it takes a village' approach at Bolles, and the construction of this beautiful building has been no different. It took a village of special donors and leaders to step forward and build this incredible facility."

Led by Hodges, Board of Trustees Chairman Dan Rice, Ponte Vedra Beach Campus Head Peggy Campbell-Rush and Chief Advancement Officer K.C. Cassell, the event included an extended show of gratitude to a long list of Bolles community donors who had made possible one of the campus' largest construction projects in recent history.

Initial funding for the building came from Bolles Ponte Vedra Beach pre-kindergarten teacher Cathy Stupski, who made the lead donation in honor of her late husband, Karl. As a result of her

donation, several other Bolles families provided financial backing to the project, including: Ellen and Greg Rogowski, Teresa Bennett and Dr. James Staman, Mr. and Mrs. Martin E. Stein Jr. and The Bolles Parent Association.

"We are so fortunate to have donors who made this much-needed campus addition a reality," Campbell-Rush said. "We are all excited to get in there and play."

Local building firm Sauer Inc. managed the facility's construction. Students on the Bolles Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach Campus will utilize George Hall this school year for physical education and performing arts classes, among other special events.



Bolles staff holds a ribbon-cutting for George Hall, the new 10,800-square-foot facility gym and multipurpose building at the Bolles School's Lower School Ponte Vedra Beach Campus. It is now officially open after the school held a grand opening celebration Aug. 13.



Photos courtesy of The Bolles School

Bolles students celebrate the opening of George Hall with a luau-inspired party.

Should You Be Talking To a Different Kind of Financial Advisor? Fee-Only. Fiduciary. Exceptional Training. *No investment commissions...clients come first!*



About Dr. Camarda & Camarda Wealth
Chairman Jeff Camarda has been repeatedly named by Barron's* as "one of the best financial advisors in America," one of WORTH

Magazines' "Top 250 advisors" in the US, and one of Forbes* "Best in State Wealth Advisors" for Florida. His advice has been featured in the Wall Street Journal for years, and he's been quoted as a financial expert in the national press for decades. Barron's* has called advisors like Jeff "the best people in the business" and "truly great financial advisors" and says that they are "accepted in the industry" as the "top 1%" who set "the highest standards of their profession." Forbes says it "scours... financial services industry" and has "uncovered great advisors" like Camarda "that are leading the way" and apply "best practices" to deliver a "high-quality experience for clients." Camarda's completed the CFP®, ChFC®, CLU®, CFS® and BCM™ designations**, and currently holds the CFA® investments expert and EA tax expert designations, as well as graduate degrees in financial planning, including a PhD in Financial and Retirement Planning. Dr. Camarda has written hundreds of articles and dozens of financial reports, whitepapers, and guides, and founded Wealth Education Radio. He is also an award-winning academic researcher into advisor competence and ethics. Camarda Wealth is A+ rated by the Better Business Bureau and has offices in Ponte Vedra Beach and Fleming Island.

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Dr. Camarda's Weekly Wealth Nugget **4 SMART TAX MOVES TO MAKE THIS YEAR**

Taxes are always complicated, and doubly so now that Tax Reform has set in. Here are some smart tax moves for 2018:

1. Try to lower your property tax. This is easier and much more effective than most people realize, if you know how — which almost no one does. Summer is prime time to get on the bandwagon in many states, including Florida. You could save thousands or more. Contact Camarda's affiliate TaxMaster for more details.
2. Revisit your estate plan to control estate taxes. The estate tax threshold has been doubled, meaning more wealth can pass tax free before the dreaded death tax kicks in. But this is for a limited time only, and the tax free amount will shrink again in just a few years, and maybe go down even more. If you think you may be exposed to estate taxes, talk to TaxMaster about smart estate tax moves.
3. Fear the Kiddie Tax! If you're a parent or grandparent whose gifted assets to minors, after tax reform those kid's tax brackets may be even much higher than yours! If this is you, talk to your tax preparer about potential exposures and counter measures.
4. Be wary of claiming Social Security while you are still working! Besides cutting your benefit, claiming too early can expose up to 85% of your Social Security to avoidable income taxes!

Taxes don't get no respect, but they should, since they can be the single biggest factor controlling you wealth! As Ben Franklin should have said, "taxes saved is wealth earned!"

Free Reports on:

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County tightens restrictions on operation of golf carts, other low-speed vehicles

By Samantha Logue

At the urging of the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office (SJSO) and other concerned community members, the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners voted unanimously to repeal and replace the county's golf cart ordinance with a revised and more clearly-defined version on July 17.

First brought before the board on May 15, the request to clarify and revise the county's golf cart ordinance was originally made by SJSO.

"Probably the biggest issue that we had from the Sheriff's Office perspective ... is there was no uniformity of enforcement," St. Johns County Undersheriff Matthew Cline explained at the commissioners' May 15 meeting. "We were doing one thing in Nocatee, we were doing another thing in Ponte Vedra (and) doing a completely different thing out in Hastings."

Cline noted that, since the ordinance (No. 2010-48) was enacted in 2010, changes have been made not only to statutory law, but also throughout St. Johns County as more and more neighborhoods have embraced the use of golf carts for transportation. Citing safety concerns for the children who are often unaware of the laws regarding golf cart use (operators must be at least 14 years old), Cline said that what the Sheriff's Office needed most



Photo courtesy of metrocreativeconnection.com

was clarity.

"We need an ordinance that we can apply county-wide — something that we can teach our folks, something that they understand — and then we can really start to get into the enforcement side of this," he said. "I don't think, from the Sheriff's Office side of things, we've done a very good job enforcing what laws that we do have on the books, because they're so confusing and we have different rules for different parts of the county."

Golf carts, according to the Florida Statutes, may

not be operated on a public road unless the county has specifically designated that road for golf cart use. For other low-speed vehicles and mini trucks, however, the opposite is true — they may operate on any road with a speed limit of 35 mph or less, except where the county has expressly prohibited their use. Further, although golf cart operators in Florida must be at least 14 years old, they are not required under state law to carry any form of identification.

Taking that information into account, St. Johns County staff drafted a proposed list of revisions to the county's ordinance and presented them before the board on July 17, including: an expansion of the procedure for designating roads for golf cart use to include multi-use paths, an added option for the county to prohibit the use of low-speed vehicles and mini trucks on certain county roads, the requirement that applications regarding the designation for or prohibition of such vehicles' use on existing roads and sidewalks be submitted by the affected homeowners' association, as well as enhanced operational and equipment regulations, including the requirement for unlicensed golf cart operators to carry photo ID.

Received without protestation from either the board or the meeting's attendees, the motion to repeal and replace St. Johns County's golf cart ordinance with Ordinance No. 2018-42 passed 5-0.

Blekics

Continued from 4

Since the EO, there has been a sharp rise in the number of deportations. According to the American Immigration Council, ICE statistics show that between Jan. 25, 2017, and the end of fiscal year 2017 (Sept. 30), ICE made 110,568 arrests — a 42 percent increase over the 77,806 arrests made during the same period in 2016.

Tammy Spicer, public affairs officer for ICE, wasn't specifically familiar with the

Blekic case, but said once ICE is involved, it's almost too late to do anything.

"We're only involved because they're not able to stay here legally," Spicer said. "ICE is never a path to legal citizenship."

She said if someone has overstayed a visa, ICE is automatically alerted. The Blekic family was allowed to stay until Medina's graduation, but Spicer said those extensions are just delaying the inevitable.

"Stay of removal just means you don't have to move right this second," she said. "We might be able to put off the inevitable for a period, but they probably don't have

a legal path to stay here."

But the across-the-board policy often affects long-term immigrants who have built lives and businesses in the country, which doesn't sit well with Master Chief John Duffy, a former NJROTC instructor who got to know Medina and Jenny during their time at Nease.

Duffy said deporting families like the Blekics contradicts what the country claims it wants in regard to immigrants.

"That really bothers me that our government did this," he said. "They didn't go case-by-case and look at those involved. ... It's kind of two-faced. You say one thing and then you have to take it back."

Spicer said she also understands the delicate nature of the deportation issue, especially when it comes to long-term immigrants.

"It's a very sensitive topic on so many levels," she said. "We don't remove someone until they've exhausted their avenues to stay. We do not deport anyone until they've had full due process."

And while what happened to the Blekics may be agonizing, Spicer said it's important for ICE to treat all cases equally.

"Where do you draw the line?" she said. "It's a slippery slope, and so emotional. Especially when you have a family that is involved."

Duffy, a retired Navy veteran, said while he understands and supports the need for a strict immigration policy, deportation should be based on the situation and the individuals involved.

"I'm all for sending someone back who comes into our country illegally,

regardless of what the reason is," he said. "But they didn't do that. They came here legally, and they did everything they were supposed to, and we should have done everything we were supposed to do. We did not do that, as far as I'm concerned."

Duffy was also concerned about the threat the Blekic family may face for fleeing Bosnia in the first place.

"Imagine trying to get a job over there where everybody resents you," Duffy said.

The language barrier is also a big issue.

"Medina doesn't speak a word of Bosnian," Duffy said. "This was a big slap in the face. She just graduated school. We know how difficult it is when somebody comes to our country and doesn't speak the language and tries to get a job. It's hard to get a job if you don't speak the language, and that's what she's dealing with."

Many in the Nease community still have hope the situation will be resolved and they can welcome the family's return. A GoFundMe campaign (www.gofundme.com/theblekicfamily) has been launched to support the family. So far, \$13,615 has been raised.

Attempts to reach the Blekics were unsuccessful, but Matthews said the family hasn't given up hope of returning to the country they've grown to love, practically the only country the two girls have ever known.

"They still seem optimistic, they still really want to come back," Matthews said. "In spite of it all, this is still the country they consider home at this point in their lives and they still desperately want to come back."

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Ponte Vedra Beach businessman to participate in transcontinental walk for Alzheimer's awareness

By Benjamin Naim

Karsten Jacobson, an Edward Jones financial advisor in Ponte Vedra Beach, will participate in a portion of a transcontinental walk on Tuesday, Aug. 28 to raise awareness of Alzheimer's disease.

Jacobson is one of more than 1,000 Edward Jones financial advisors and branch office administrators participating in the event. His leg of the trip will see him walk on A1A in Ponte Vedra Beach until he hits Ponte Vedra Boulevard.

Known as "Walk Across America," the 16-week, relay-style event launched by Edward Jones will encompass 3,100 miles through 12 states. The oldest cities on each coast serve as the trailheads for the event, leaving from San Diego July 9 and from St. Augustine Aug. 27.

Each team will carry a hand-carved walking stick harvested from the farm of Ted Jones, the son of the firm's founder Edward Jones Sr., to signify solidarity in the fight to raise awareness. Each stick will be passed from one walker to the next.

The overall trek will culminate Oct. 28 in St. Louis, the site of Edward Jones' North American headquarters.



Karsten Jacobson

Jacobson said he decided to participate in the walk because he has family and clients who have been affected by Alzheimer's and he wants to make people aware of the disease and how it affects families.

"It's a huge burden and not only emotionally but financially," he said. "I just want to make sure people are aware that it affects way more people than people realize ... I've spoken to the support groups about providing presentations and trying to give as much information or help that I can for this."

In January 2016, Edward Jones entered an alliance with the Alzheimer's Association and committed \$4.7 million over two years to enhance the Association's care and support programs, provide educational materials and fund Alzheimer's research and awareness efforts.

Additionally, the financial services company created the Edward Jones Alzheimer's Research Fund and signed on as the first national presenting sponsor for Walk to End Alzheimer's — which is unaffiliated with the Walk Across America.

FOUNDER OF AMELIA ISLAND CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE ADDRESSES LOCAL ROTARY CLUB



Photo by Susan Griffin

Bill Warner, founder and chairman of the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance, poses with Cyndi King, past president of the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach Sunset, at the club's Aug. 14 meeting at the Hilton Garden Inn. Warner served as the club's speaker to discuss the 24th annual event, which is taking place March 8-10, 2019 at the Ritz-Carlton. For more information, visit www.ameliaconcours.org.

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Paid for and approved by Kelly Barrera for School Board

Nemours Women's Committee kicks off 2nd year of fundraising with annual tea party

By Samantha Logue

Last Friday, Aug. 17, the Nemours Fund for Children's Health Women's Committee hosted its second annual tea party at the Plantation at Ponte Vedra Beach to launch yet another year of raising funds and awareness for Nemours Children's Specialty Care in Jacksonville.

"I'd like to thank the Women's Committee for all of your tireless efforts," said Committee Chair Hilary Keeley, who is also chief legal officer for the Nemours Foundation's Florida operations. "There are so many of you here today, and the vision of the Fund just 24 months ago to where we stand today... it really is a testament to what we've done, and I appreciate every one of you for coming along on this journey."

A nonprofit pediatric health system dedicated to improving the health of children, regardless of their financial status, Nemours serves patients in Delaware, Georgia, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Florida, including in Jacksonville. Formed last year, the Women's Committee has

since organized multiple fundraisers to benefit the nonprofit's local services, including shopping events, a Princess Ball, the Nemours Day of Giving and the Our Promise For the Kids Golf Tournament, which ultimately raised more than \$100,000.

For Jacksonville resident Casey Andeer, who spoke at the inaugural Women's Committee Tea last year, the fact that her young daughter is still alive is a testament to the invaluable nature of Nemours' work.

"My daughter Rue was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia almost three years ago, and I'm very pleased to say she finished her treatment last December, so she's eight months treatment-free, which is pretty amazing," Andeer said. "It was about 26 months filled with chemotherapy, steroids, hair loss, hospitalizations, illnesses. Needless to say, it's been a very long journey, getting to where we are today, and I know that we only have the doctors, nurses and staff at Nemours to thank for, quite honestly, saving my daughter's life."



Photos by Samantha Logue

Rue and Casey Andeer (center left and right) help the Nemours Fund for Children's Health Women's Committee to kick off another year of fundraising at a tea party held Aug. 17 at the Plantation at Ponte Vedra Beach. Pictured from left: Adriana Renner, Women's Committee Chair and Nemours Chief Legal Officer for Florida Operations Hilary Keeley, Rue Andeer, Casey Andeer, Maggie Hightower and Lynn Erhard.

Andeer noted how fortunate her daughter is to live so close to a facility like Nemours, whereas other children that receive such devastating diagnoses are not always so lucky.

"I hope that each of you understands that for every survival story there's another child being diagnosed, and they're going to need the same treatment and care, just like my Rue had," she said.

Stating that she would be forever grateful for Nemours' life-saving work, Andeer emphasized the importance of raising support and awareness for the nonprofit's mission.

"We need to ask ourselves what we can do to make sure that Nemours keeps being able to do the tremendous work that they're doing, from post-treatment care to the medicine, and the research, and the music therapy and art therapy, and com-



A table is set with tea, scones and finger sandwiches at the fundraising event.

munity education really is an integral part of this journey," she said. "Rue is a survivor... and it doesn't mean that that worry is ever going to go away in the back of my mind, but I know every time we walk into Nemours, we're met with professional, loving, caring people that have two things on their mind: curing this disease and making our experience at Nemours the best that it possibly can be."

First Congregation Sons of Israel to reopen sanctuary in St. Augustine

After 22 months of recovery from hurricanes Matthew and Irma, the historic St. Augustine synagogue, First Congregation Sons of Israel, is reopening its sanctuary.

The community is invited to join the synagogue for its "Restoring Our Past, Building Our Future" Reopening Celebration and Historic Sanctuary Open House taking place Aug. 24-26 at 161 Cordova Street. The event schedule is as follows:

Friday, Aug. 24

- 4 p.m. | Ribbon-cutting
- 5-6 p.m. | Wine and cheese and tours
- 7:30 p.m. | Erev Shabbat service, Rabbi Joel Fox

Saturday, Aug. 25

- 10 a.m. | Shabbat service, Rabbi Joel Fox
- 6-8 p.m. | Food, drink and silent auction

- 8-10 p.m. | Historic overview, welcome and music
- Sunday, Aug. 26**

- Noon to 3 p.m. | Tours of historic sanctuary

Restoration and repairs have been financed with assistance from the Jewish Federation of Jacksonville, the Northeast Florida United Way and the generosity of many members and friends of the congregation, along with disaster assistance from the U.S. Small Business Administration.

The roof and ceiling have been repaired and replaced; original wood floors are being restored; a replica of the original front doors will be installed; and all the vintage seating have been restored, reupholstered and will be reinstalled with other repairs and restoration efforts.

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NOCATEE HAPPENINGS

Farmers Market offers free concert

Held on Saturday, Aug. 18, this month's Nocatee Farmers Market featured a free concert by the Robbie Litt Band.

The "Sounds of Summer" event also included over 70 local vendors offering items such as organic produce, herbs, spices, unique foods, crafts, jewelry and more.

The next Farmers Market is Saturday, Sept. 15 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The event will feature BMX performances from Perfection on Wheels' BMX Pros Trick Team. Each show is set to include half-pipe tricks and stunts, crowd participation and more. Show times are at 11 a.m., noon and 1 p.m.



Photo by Susan Griffin

The Robbie Litt Band performs at the Nocatee Farmers Market Aug. 18.



Photo by Susan Griffin

Wendy Alexaitis, Amy Shopp, Shannon Largin, Katrin Casey, Nicole Bickford and Bill Bickford gather at the CRUSH Cancer event at Coastal Wine Market Aug. 18.

Chemo Noir raises nearly \$3,000 at event at Coastal Wine

Chemo Noir, a local nonprofit organization that provides financial support for cancer patients undergoing treatment, raised nearly \$3,000 at its annual CRUSH Cancer event at Coastal Wine Market & Tasting Room on Saturday, Aug. 18.

Attendees enjoyed a complimentary wine tasting and raffle, as well as the opportunity to learn more about Chemo Noir, which was founded by Nease graduate and cancer survivor Katrin Casey. Cancer-free for the last four years, Casey named her organization after a night designated for leisure time

with her mother, featuring comfort food and wine.

"Chemo Noir resulted out of my journey with cancer," Casey said in a previous interview with Recorder reporter Benjamin Naim. "I was going through treatment; it's such a surreal experience. When my mom would come over, I'd get a chance to sip on a little wine and I'd call them my 'chemo noir' nights."

Chemo Noir raises money through wine-centric events to help cancer patients pay their way through treatment. For more information, visit www.chemonoir.com.

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OBITUARIES

Teresa Kenny

Teresa Mary Kenny, 84, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died peacefully on Thursday, Aug. 16, 2018, surrounded by family and loved ones.

Born in New York on Oct. 3, 1933, to parents Patrick and Mary (Prendagast) Sheehan, she was the loving mother of four daughters, the adoring grandmother of seven grandchildren and the proud great-grandmother of a great-grandson who recently celebrated his first birthday.

An accomplished artist, she loved painting, dancing, golf and was known for her sharp sense of humor. She also enjoyed traveling; especially to Ireland, the place from which her parents were born. Above all, she loved and generously cared for her family. As stated by her loving husband, she was a "down to earth, practical person who loved unconditionally."

She is survived by her husband, Richard Kantack Jr.; daughters, Elaine, Christine, Doreen (Duane) and Donna (Sam); grandchildren, Brandon (Leanne), Brett, Cassie (Azad), Kellie, David, Matthew and Sean; her great-grandson, Ben; and a large extended family and many friends that love

her very much.

A memorial Mass will be celebrated at 11 a.m., Saturday, Aug. 25 in Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church of Ponte Vedra Beach, with inurnment in the columbarium at the church. In lieu of flowers, the family respectfully requests that donations be made to the McGraw Center of Community Hospice and Palliative Care.

Please visit the online tribute at www.quinn-shalz.com. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home.



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Mark Carrillo

Mark Dennis Carrillo, 56, of Jacksonville Beach, died Aug. 11, 2018. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz, A Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre.

Leon Dongelewicz

Leon Raymond Dongelewicz, 90, died Aug. 9, 2018. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – (904) 285-1130 – www.pontevedravalley.com.

Gail Ford

Gail Patricia Ford, 73, of Jacksonville, died Aug. 15, 2018. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz, A Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre.



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OP-ED SUBMISSION

St. Johns County schools benefit from millions in safety, security enhancements

By Kelly Barrera

When almost 40,000 students returned to the St. Johns County Schools this month, I'm sure that safety was as top of mind for parents and their children as it was for me.

As a School Board member, I have always said that no matter how outstanding our schools are, none of it matters if our students aren't safe. Safety has always been — and must continue to be — our top priority. As we begin a new school year, I'd like to share just a few of the many improvements and enhancements that the St. Johns County School District has made to strengthen the security measures that keep our students safe.

Trained, armed security in all schools

I'm pleased to report that every school in the St. Johns County School District is now protected by trained, armed security personnel. As vice chair of the School Board, I have been vocal in my opposition to arming teachers. My fellow School Board members and I agree that teachers are there to teach and that the job of keeping our schools secure is best

handled by trained security professionals. To that end, we have worked closely with the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office to assign school youth resource officers (SYROs) to 15 schools. While the sheriff's Office continues to hire new trained SYROs, we have hired U.S. Security Services to provide a trained, armed officer for each of the remaining schools, providing full security coverage of every school in our district. With more than 50,000 employees, U.S. Security Services provides security for a number of colleges and educational facilities, and is therefore highly experienced in protecting young student populations.

Millions in security upgrades

The addition of these trained security officers builds on the tremendous investment our current School Board and school administration have made in recent years to ensure that we offer students the safest possible learning environment. In the wake of the tragic school shooting in Parkland earlier this year, some school districts across the state found themselves scrambling to implement new security measures. Here in St. Johns County, that wasn't the case.

Last year, prior to Parkland, our school district invested \$1.3 million in new safety and security upgrades at many of our schools. One of the first enhancements we were able to make as a result of the half-cent sales tax, in fact, was the purchase of 800 MHz security radios for every school and every school bus. These radios allow for immediate direct communication with the Sheriff's Office, and their value was demonstrated during hurricanes Matthew and Irma, when the storms impacted cell phone communication.

In addition to conducting regular in-depth safety audits with the Sheriff's Office, our school district has been conducting active shooter training drills

for some time. In January of this year, all of our principals and assistant principals went through active shooter training, followed in March by a live active shooter drill held at Creekside High School in collaboration with local emergency response agencies. We will also be conducting regular active shooter drills with our students at our schools.

Increased mental health services

While security enhancements are important, we cannot ignore the importance of prevention and mental health services in keeping our students safe. Thanks to the extra investment from the state legislature, the St. Johns County School District was able to hire two additional school psychologists, six mental health counselors and three additional school social workers, bringing our staff to 18 school psychologists, 12 mental health counselors, 11 behavioral therapists and seven social workers.

These new psychological support professionals now work with our existing school safety teams. In years past, these safety teams met monthly; with our new security upgrades, however, we have added a separate threat assessment team that includes a guidance counselor and a law enforcement officer to focus on students at risk. We also have services for students provided on site by third-party community partners, including EPIC Behavioral Services, Community Partnership Schools and eight other agencies. As we move forward we expect to expand our partnerships for direct services.

In our strategic plan, we continue to add additional avenues for social and emotional learning through such programs as Character Counts!, Capturing Kids Hearts, Link Crew, WEB and lessons by our guidance counselors. In addition, we have several peer-to-peer mentoring programs, adult-to-peer mentoring programs, clubs and character initiatives. We continue to build additional avenues to apply prevention into our schools.

I am excited about these many improvements and enhancements to our schools' safety and security. While we will never stop striving to strengthen and improve our security measures, I am confident that our school board and school administrators — working collaboratively with parents, law enforcement and our community partners — can make the St. Johns County School District a statewide model for school safety as we are for academic excellence.

Kelly Barrera is the District 4 representative and vice chairman for the St. Johns County School Board. She lives in Ponte Vedra Beach.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I have been a Ponte Vedra resident for 30 years and have voted Republican in every election held since turning 18. St. Johns County residents enjoy a standard of living from largely Republican governing, values and consistently low taxes.

Values matter more than experience.

Voters should verify that Republican county commissioner candidates hold truly Republican values. Some do not. Many highly successful corporate executives have values diametrically opposed to Republican values. They believe in bigger government, higher taxes and fewer personal property rights. They may have business experience, but their values reflect those of the "other" party.

When voting for county commissioner in the Republican primary, voters should ensure that Republican values will be upheld and reflected in the governing style of the candidate of their choice. Governing is not the same as running a business. People who govern have the power to force you to give them your money. Find out how long candidates have been Republican. If they have decided to "become" a Republican in the recent past, then ask, "What was your epiphany?" If they are honest, they will say that since Republican registered voters far outnumber Democrats in this county they cannot win an election without an "R" after their name.

Our choices during the Republican primary include a couple of retired corporate executives who very recently "became" Republicans in contrast with Jeremiah Blocker, a lifelong Republican and recent combat veteran continuing to serve his country faithfully. A highly successful entrepreneur, he will bring fresh ideas to our County Commission.

We do not need yet another retired corporate executive who recently switched parties. We need values, new ideas and innovation. We do not need higher taxes but redirected and less spending. Vote Republican, but not just the letter. Make sure the values are there as well.

Andrea L. Anthony, CPA, CDFA®

Former director, Ponte Vedra Republican Club
Former vice chair, SJC Republican Executive Committee
Former treasurer, SJC Republican Executive Committee

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DISTINCTIVE *Properties*



- MARKET WATCH
- ENGEL & VÖLKERS OPENS IN JACKSONVILLE BEACH
- ANALYZING BUYERS IN PONTE VEDRA & THE BEACHES
- MARK MACCO: ARCHITECTURE TRENDS IN PONTE VEDRA

MARKET WATCH

A look at the area's home-buying trends

By Lisa Barton

Realtor, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices

Florida Network Realty

Special to the Recorder

The question I most frequently hear from friends and customers is, "How is the real estate market?" I am happy to say that 2018 continues to be a terrific year from both national and local perspectives. In this article, I'll provide concrete evidence from the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors and the Northeast Florida Multiple Listing Service to support that statement.

On the national scene, several factors are affecting real estate sales and valuations. Interest rates for 30-year mortgages are low from a historical perspective (currently below 5 percent). In addition, unemployment is very low, and the economic outlook remains favorable.

In the greater Jacksonville area, the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors (NEFAR) reports similarly positive trends. Pending sales are up over last year, days on the market are down 13 percent and average sale prices are up almost 10 percent. Overall inventory of available homes remains flat, even though more homes are being listed than last year. As home prices continue to rise, affordability is becoming more of an issue.

What's happening in Ponte Vedra Beach? In the 32082 zip code area, we



Photo courtesy of Lisa Barton

also have some highly favorable trends.

- The average sales price for all homes in 32082 in July was \$616,127, up 6.3 percent year-over-year and the highest since 2010.
- Pending sales are up 14.3 percent when compared to last year.
- The number of closed sales is up 12 percent when compared to last year.
- For home sales in the luxury market

(over \$789,000), the average sale price was up 6.1 percent to \$1,415,064.

- Days on the market remains low for 32082, averaging 63 days from listing to contract.

Additionally, inventory remains low, and taken as a whole, prices per square foot are up, with the exception of the very high-end luxury market. So overall, our local picture is highly positive. Based on

this year's market trends, if you're wondering if your home's value has appreciated, you have a lot to feel good about!

From my perspective as a Realtor, there are a few notable changes in our local market. New construction has become a big competitor to resale homes in Ponte Vedra Beach. Nocatee, in particular, appeals to buyers across all price ranges and has recently started pulling buyers away from the high-end, luxury market. Nocatee's new custom-built homes are starting to compete with the mature, gated, golf and country club communities.

Our team works with more buyers who are looking for new or updated homes and want a move-in ready situation. These buyers are not interested in a "project" and are less excited than in prior years in allowances for carpets, painting, appliances, etc. Those buyers who are willing to consider a home needing renovations expect deep discounts on the sale price.

I should also mention there are many fewer bargains than in previous years. Distressed sales have been dropping for the last six years and although there are always a few distressed properties, lender-mediated sales are at historically low levels.

As always, real estate prices and valuations are heavily dependent on location. If you are looking for a detailed assessment regarding your home's value, I highly recommend a home valuation report.

Students benefit from David Weekley Homes school supplies drive

David Weekley Homes hosted its fourth annual companywide CA+RE School Supplies Drive in 17 cities across the country.

In Jacksonville, school supplies were collected for Investing in Kids (INK), which leads efforts to directly benefit the educators and students in St. Johns County School District with programs and events that strive to provide the tools and resources necessary to help each child reach their full potential.

"We are honored that David Weekley Homes chose Investing in Kids (INK) to impact students and teachers in the St. Johns County School District," said Donna Lueders, executive director with Investing in Kids. "Your support means students will have the needed learning tools and a lessened financial burden to

teachers and the children in St. Johns County to be academically successful."

Approximately \$6,000 in supplies were collected from homeowners, real estate agents and business partners during the drive, providing more than 10,000 pieces of supplies needed for the school year to 500 students. In addition, the Weekley Family Foundation donated \$1,200 to use toward classroom supplies and storage.

The School Supplies Drive is a volunteer and philanthropic initiative of the company's CARE program, which joins team members with homeowners, homebuyers, community partners and local nonprofit organizations to live out its purpose of "Building Dreams, Enhancing Lives" in each of the communities in which it builds.



Photo courtesy of David Weekley Team Members

David Weekley Team Members donate school supplies to Investing in Kids (INK) as part of the CA+RE School Supplies Drive.

Engel & Völkers celebrates opening of new office in Jacksonville Beach

By Jon Blauvelt

European elegance met the beauty of the Beaches when Engel & Völkers hosted a grand opening party last Thursday, Aug. 16 for its new office in Jacksonville Beach.

More than 100 people dressed in fine suits and dresses attended the event to celebrate the occasion and tour the sleek, modern office with white walls and wood floors. Located at 758 3rd Street South, the new “shop” is the first for the German company in Northeast Florida.

Fitting of the boutique brokerage, event attendees enjoyed sipping wine, tasting hors d’oeuvres and listening to swanky music. Guests had the chance to bid on a raffle for a \$200 gift certificate to the Spa at the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club, with proceeds benefiting Special Olympics Florida – Duval County. The event ultimately raised \$1,580 for the organization. Attendees at the event included friends and family, clients, executives and staff of the Engel & Völkers, representatives of the JAX Chamber and others.

“It means a lot to all of us to bring this brand to Jacksonville and bring this brand to our clients,” office Owner/Broker Corey Hasting said at the party. “We are so excited to see where this next step goes for all of us.”

Hasting’s team currently includes 12 real estate advisors and one full-time office administrator. He said his office includes advisors who specialize in multiple areas of the First Coast, including the Beaches, San Marco, Mandarin and more. Everyone on the team, said Hasting, sells more than \$3 million per year.

“We have a very strict criteria for who we bring on and who we don’t bring on,” he said. “We want to be held to a higher standard in everything we do.”

Hasting’s goal is to attain the highest average sales price per agent in the office. For example, he said he’d rather have 12 advisors make \$150 million per year, with each agent making \$7.5 to \$8 million, compared to an office of 300 agents making \$300 million per year.

Another differentiating factor for his team, said Hasting, is that the company as a whole is a worldwide brand with a worldwide network. Engel & Völkers has 900 shops worldwide, he said, 140 of which are in the U.S. and 30 of which are in Florida.

“If one of my advisors has a client who vacations in Capri, Italy, we can call the Capri, Italy shop, know them personally and have them put our client’s listing in their shop window,” he said. “No other brand in the world can offer you that.”



Photos by Jon Blauvelt

The Engel & Völkers team participates in a ribbon cutting ceremony Aug. 16 to celebrate the opening of the company’s new office in Jacksonville Beach.



Oliver Tonn, co-owner of Engel & Völkers Florida; Corey Hasting, broker/owner of Engel & Völkers’ office in Jacksonville Beach; and Craig Anderson, senior vice president of franchise sales of Engel & Völkers Florida



Engel & Völkers Jacksonville Beach Office Manager Christina Alexander and Cody Michaud



Engel & Völkers Jacksonville Beach real estate advisors Michelle Mousin, Melanie Escalante and Paige Covington



Engel & Völkers in Jacksonville Beach features a sleek, modern style with white walls and wood floors.

Mayor Curry helps Dream Finders Homes unveil new corporate headquarters

Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry recently joined local city officials and key players in the construction and development industry July 17 for a VIP grand opening and ribbon cutting event to celebrate the construction of the new Dream Finders Homes headquarters building at 14701 Philips Highway in Jacksonville.

Previously headquartered in Orange Park, the homebuilder's new 45,000 square foot, three-story building is located just north of St. Johns County and near Nocatee Parkway, Race Track Road, Interstate 95 and the completion of Florida 9B.

"We are proud to call Duval County our new home for the Dream Finders Homes Corporate Office," said Patrick Zalupski, CEO and founder of Dream Finders Homes.

"Not only do we have a brand new 45,000-square-foot office space, complete with contemporary work spaces, including ergonomic chairs and sit/stand desks, but we are in the heart of growth near Northern St. Johns county.

"This is a huge quality of life enhancement for our hard-working employees and will provide a wonderful



Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry helps Dream Finders Homes commemorate the opening of its new headquarters by participating in a ribbon-cutting in July.

customer experience with our new 6,000-square-foot state-of-the-art design center, where the majority of our customers will make their custom design selections," Zalupski added. "This is an exciting day to be a part of the Dream Finders family."

Dream Finders employs approximately 150 people in the building.

"Everyone that has had the opportunity to walk through the studio doors has been blown away by the grandeur and beauty of the space," said Courtney Bauer, design center manager. "We are so excited to provide a unique

home-buying experience to all of our buyers."

As of mid-June 2018, Dream Finders said it sold ownership of its headquarters building to Capital Square — a Virginia-based real estate and investment company — for \$13.75 million and entered a 15-year lease.

Vice President of Land Batey McGraw said a majority of the sale money will go toward new land acquisition.

Dream Finders also builds homes in Orlando, Hilton Head, Savannah, Maryland, Northern Virginia and Colorado. The homebuilder has plans to continue expansion into new markets soon.



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Dream Finders Homes' new headquarters is located at 14701 Philips Highway in Jacksonville.

Photos courtesy of Dream Finders Homes

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709 Spinnakers Reach Condo
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904-834-1557



255 Deer Haven Drive
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4BD/4BA/1HB 7,734 sq ft

Nicholas Eklund
904-575-1197



502 Ponte Vedra Blvd
\$5,995,000
6BD/6BA/2HB 6,192 sq ft

Jane Chefan
904-463-1179



2790 Sylvan Estates Ct
\$2,499,000
5BD/5BA/2HB 6,477 sq ft

Kasey Ritter
Catarina Soares
904-449-6648/352-222-2224



140 Muirfield Drive
\$1,749,000
5BD/6BA/2HB 5,769 sq ft

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904-810-8744
904-834-1557



96 Granada Ct
\$364,500
4BD/2BA 1,574 sq ft

Shelby Florenz
480-399-9753



209 Isle Way Lane
\$1,050,000
5BD/4BA/2HB 4,238 sq ft

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Father and son co-owners of Suncastle Properties implement new processes to expedite growth

By Jon Blauvelt

About a year and a half after purchasing Suncastle Properties, father and son duo Mark and Matt Odekirk are confident the new processes they've recently implemented have helped grow the business, and now they're seeking more properties to continue that growth.

"On an annualized basis, we were about 65 percent booked and occupied," Mark said. "Since we've now started partnering with Airbnb, we're seeing that ticking up in excess of 70 percent. The biggest thing we're looking at now is, we do need more properties."

The Ponte Vedra Beach-based business is a full-service real estate company with nine employees primarily focused on property management, vacation rentals and long-term rentals. The Odekirks acquired the company in March 2017 from Sue Ogden. Mark previously worked for 38 years in the environmental services industry, and his son, Matt, worked in sales for a plastic manufacturer and in the homebuilding and real estate industry.

Since acquiring the business, Mark said a primary initiative for the company has been to adapt to the changes in the vacation rental and property management industry, which he said has mostly moved online. As a result, Suncastle Properties has partnered with Airbnb and other online travel agents to increase the exposure of its properties. On a similar note, Mark said the company has worked to improve its search engine optimization. The business, Matt said, has also implemented a screening process to ensure prospective tenants are the right fit for the owner and the company.

Other procedures the company has implemented, Matt said, include inspections, guest processes for check-ins/check-outs, cleaning processes, maintenance programs and more.

"We try to take all the stress and anxiety away from the owner," Mark explained. "They're looking for passive income off of their investments."



Photo by Jon Blauvelt

Since purchasing Suncastle Properties in March 2017, father and son co-owners Matt and Mark Odekirk are implementing new processes at the company to expedite growth.



Photos courtesy of Suncastle Properties

Properties of Suncastles Properties in Ponte Vedra Beach

A testament to the company's success with these new processes was seen during THE PLAYERS Championship in May 2018, when the company rented out over 20 homes in Ponte Vedra. By going in and completing the inspections prior to the tenants' stay, Mark said they didn't receive a single call about any problems.

"The processes we've put in place have really enhanced the guest experience," Mark said. "That's really what our primary focus is, to make sure the guest comes in, has a flawless experience with the property, help them with other experiences of the area that they then refer us to their friends and families. (That) creates recurring revenue for the owner and enhances their return on investment."

Now with these processes in place, Suncastle Properties is looking to continue to grow. The business currently has over 80 properties stretching from Jacksonville Beach to St. Augustine, ranging in style and price from single family homes with five to six bedrooms to condominiums and townhomes. The Odekirks said if they are lacking in one area, it's oceanfront rentals.

"That's an area that we're really trying to focus on," Mark said. "It's amazing the number of people we turn away each and every month who are looking for oceanfront rentals."

For more information on Suncastle Properties, visit www.suncastleproperties.com.

Make a home offer they can't refuse

Buying a home can be very competitive. A well-maintained property with all of the bells and whistles that today's buyers demand figures to attract many offers, and buyers who have found their dream homes must be prepared to make an offer that sellers can't refuse.

Standing out in a sea of other potential home buyers is not always so easy, but there are steps buyers can take to ensure their offer is the one sellers ultimately accept.

■ **Get preapproved for a mortgage.** Sellers' patience may wear thin with buyers who are not preapproved for a mortgage when making their offers. Preapproval can speed up the selling process, as buyers won't need to secure financing afterward. When sellers receive multiple offers on their homes, they are more likely to sell their homes to buyers whose financing is already lined up as opposed to buyers who have to scramble to secure loans.

■ **Establish a strong rapport with the sellers.** It's not uncommon for homeowners to develop emotional attachments to their homes, and buyers should keep that in mind when viewing a home and negotiating their purchase. Sellers won't want to hear about how ugly a home is or how much money buyers will have to spend to bring the home up to their standards. While buyers must weigh such variables when making their offers, keep it as cordial as possible and avoid any inflammatory remarks during the negotiation process. Sellers may be more likely to accept a lower offer from a buyer they like.

■ **Don't delay an inspection.** When a property is drawing significant interest, buyers can set their offers apart from the rest by arranging for a near-immediate inspection. Some buyers may want sellers to give them a couple of weeks to arrange for an inspection, and that may irritate sellers who want to sell their homes as quickly as possible. Have an inspector ready to perform an inspection within days of making your offer.

■ **Include an escalation clause.** When making an offer on a home, prospective buyers can include an escalation clause. Such a clause acknowledges that a potential buyer is willing to increase his or her initial offer by a predetermined amount to exceed any bids that are higher than that initial offer. When sellers trigger such clauses, they are often required to show the other offers they received that triggered the escalation clause. Escalation clauses show the sellers you really want the house while keeping potential buyers' hopes of buying the home alive when the bids are competitive.

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Mattamy Homes expands team in Northeast Florida



Chuck Bolen, VP of Operations

Mattamy Homes announced on Tuesday the addition of three industry leaders to its team.

Chuck Bolen was appointed vice president of operations; Tara Jinks was appointed vice president of sales; and Amber King was appointed vice president of marketing.

“We are pleased to have Chuck, Tara and Amber on our leadership team,” said Cliff Nelson, Jacksonville Division president of Mattamy Homes. “Our team members are dedicated to the industry and to the communities we build. They are valuable assets to our company and support our commitment to help families realize their dream of home ownership in Northeast Florida.”

For more information about Mattamy Homes in Northeast Florida, visit www.MattamyHomes.com/jacksonville.



Amber King, VP of Marketing



Tara Jinks, VP of Sales

ARTHUR RUTENBERG HOMES BUILDING IN WOLFE POINTE AT MARKLAND



Photo courtesy of Hines

Mark Refosco, a franchise owner of Arthur Rutenberg Homes, and his team are currently building homes in Wolfe Pointe at Markland, which is located in St. Augustine off I-95 and International Golf Parkway. The Rutenberg team is offering custom Wolfe Pointe homes starting in the high \$400s. Markland, developed by international real estate firm Hines, features several amenities, including a resort-style pool, fully equipped fitness center, tennis courts, a dock with kayak launch, walking trails, event lawns, parks, a dog park and more. Visit www.Markland.com for more information.

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Kathleen Floryan



PONTE VEDRA BEACH
3/2 • \$459,000
Sally Sergeant



PONTE VEDRA BEACH
1/1 • \$119,900
Olivia or Brent Seaman



PONTE VEDRA BCH
5/4 • \$975,000
Sally Sergeant



PONTE VEDRA BEACH
6/4 • \$899,000
Jayne Young/Gwinn Volen



JACKSONVILLE BCH
3/3/1 • \$649,000
Suzanne Stephens



PONTE VEDRA BEACH
3/2 • \$724,900
Jo Mitchell



SEASCAPE
2/2 • \$729,000
Belk Ingram/Clara Sigmon



OCEANFRONT
2/2 • \$865,000
Susan Fort or Tyler Ackland



PONTE VEDRA BEACH
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Suzanne Stephens/Dawn Deehan



HILLIARD
Acreage • \$2,750,000
Earl Parker



OCEANFRONT
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Steve Martinez/Josh Spalding



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Valerie Shaw or Mary Faulds



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Olivia or Brent Seaman



JAX BEACH
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Patti Armstrong



OCEANFRONT
Homesite • \$2,575,000
Michael Curet



INTRACOASTAL
Homesite • \$795,000
Belk Ingram



OCEANFRONT
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Susan Fort or Tyler Ackland



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JUST SOLD



209 39th Avenue South
 Just sold for \$865k in one week 99% of list price
 Call Jeanie Leapley or Daryl Atkins

COASTAL OAKS AT NOCATEE



18 Cumberland Island Cir.
 4 BED/3.5 BATH + Media room & Salt water pool
 3000 sq. ft., 3 car garage
 \$649,000 | Call Pam Henry

FABULOUS SOUTH JACKSONVILLE BEACH



130 32nd Avenue South
 5 BED/4.5 BATH custom beach pool home with
 4493 sq. ft.
 \$1,650,000 | Call Connie Mabry

MARSH LANDING ESTATE HOME



7230 Oakmont Ct.
 7 BED/7 FULL BA + 4 HALF BA, 8848 sq. ft. on
 corner lot
 \$1,790,000 | Call Judy Ham

JUST SOLD



24503 Indian Midden Way
 Just sold for \$778k in one week 99% of list price
 Call Jeanie Leapley or Daryl Atkins

HARBOUR ISLAND IN MARSHLANDING COUNTRY CLUB



24649 Harbour View Dr.
 5 BED/6.5 BATH, 6000 sq. ft. with 50' floating boat
 dock
 \$1,990,000 | Call Judy Ham

GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB



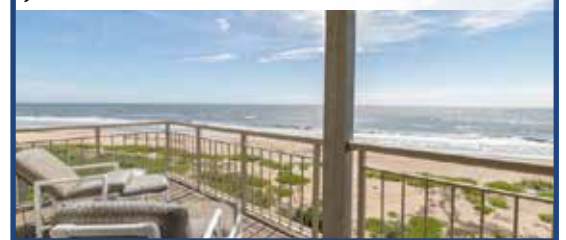
5112 Otter Creek Drive
 3 BED/ 2 BATH 2900 sq. ft.
 \$559,900 | Call Cindy Nordman

PALM VALLEY



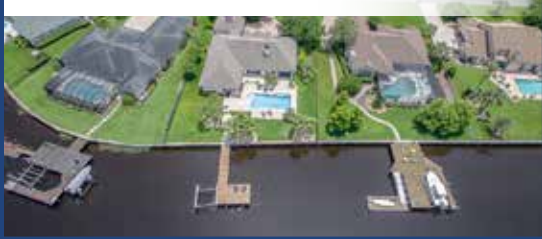
113 Buck Island Court
 4 BED/ 2 BATH 2176 sq. ft.
 \$498,000 | Call Cindy Nordman

JUST SOLD



170 Sea Hammock Way
 Just sold for \$810k at 99% of list price
 Call Jeanie Leapley or Daryl Atkins

SEVEN PINES ISLAND



14215 Pine Island Drive
 4 BED/3 BATH, 3070 sq. ft. Remodeled with pool
 & upgrades
 \$997,000 | Call Cara Ameer

THE WOODLANDS



171 Woodlands Creek Drive
 4 BED/3.5 BATH, 4941 sq. ft. with 3.5 Car Garage,
 Pool
 \$760,000 | Call Joni Zwick

TWENTY MILE AT NOCATEE



341 Eagle Rock Drive
 4 BED/3 BATH, 2835 sq. ft. with 3.5 Car Garage,
 SALE PENDING
 \$535,000 | Call Joni Zwick



Daryl Atkins
 (904) 415-7323
 datkins@cbvfl.com



Jeanie Leapley
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 jleapley@cbvfl.com



Joni Zwick
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 cameer@cbvfl.com



Judy Ham
 (904) 571-5435
 jmham2014@gmail.com



ABOVE: Backpacks filled with school supplies are donated to Dreams Come True. Pictured from left: Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty Founder, President and CEO Linda Sherrer; Dumya Proctor and family; Christy Budnick; Marisa Mariano; Emily Goldberg; and Isabel Dondero.



Staff of the Ponte Vedra/Nocatee office collects backpacks for Northeast Florida children with the company's annual Backpack Challenge.

Photos courtesy of Clockwork Marketing

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty collects 778 backpacks for local kids

During its 19th annual Backpack Challenge, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty collected 778 backpacks filled with school supplies for Northeast Florida children.

The backpacks and school supplies were donated to students throughout Northeast Florida in partnership with Dreams Come True, Operation New Hope, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the USO, Orange Park Middle School, St. Johns County Backpack Project and Charles E. Bennett Elementary School.

"We are truly grateful that our realtors, employees, clients and community joined together and contributed the supplies many local children need to begin the school year, setting the foundation for a student's confidence and academic success," said Linda Sherrer, founder, president and CEO of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network

Realty. "Our team looks forward to participating in the Backpack Challenge every year and we are very proud of their efforts."

During the campaign, backpacks and school supplies were collected at the company's offices throughout Northeast Florida. Purchased for students in kindergarten through grade 12, the backpacks' contents included pens, pencils, paper and notebooks.

"Words cannot express how much we appreciate the numerous donations and generous support we received during the Backpack Challenge," Broker/Executive Vice President Christy Budnick said. "Our team loves to support events that provide opportunities to make a difference in the lives of children and families in our communities. We are thankful for the donations we received and for our dedicated team who helped make the event a tremendous success."



Jessica Rodenhauer

Rodenhauser joins Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty at Ponte Vedra/Nocatee office

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty recently announced the addition of Jessica Rodenhauer to its Ponte Vedra/Nocatee office.

"I am excited to welcome Jessica to the Ponte Vedra office," Broker/Manager Kevin Waugaman said. "Jessica has real estate experience from working and living in New Hampshire, and she is eager to grow her real estate career with us here in Florida. Not only

is she an established real estate professional, she is a true advocate for her customers and I know she will shine here at Florida Network Realty."

The Ponte Vedra/Nocatee office is located at 333 Village Main St., Suite 670 in Ponte Vedra Beach. Rodenhauer can be reached at (603) 479-0598, jessica.rodenhauser@floridanetworkrealty.com and www.jrodenhauser.floridanetworkrealty.com for inquiries.

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Thursday, Aug. 23	Friday, Aug. 24	Saturday, Aug. 25	Sunday, Aug. 26
<p>Savvy Job Hunters Ministry The Savvy Job Hunters Ministry is kicking off the Fall season with two presentations Aug. 23 from 9 a.m. to noon (sign-in begins at 8:45 a.m.) The first, entitled The Future of Work: The Gig Economy, will be presented by Candace Moody, Vice President of Communications for CareerSource Northeast Florida. Moody will talk about preparing for a new career. The second presentation, entitled Resume Writing the Right Way, will feature Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at Keiser University Cari Andreani.</p> <p>Adult coloring club Join the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library Aug. 23 at 1 p.m. for this adult coloring club designed to reduce stress and help members of the community meet new people. Participants will create new art in a relaxing and fun atmosphere. Supplies will be provided. The Ponte Vedra Library is located at 101 Library Blvd.</p> <p>Farm Swap & Music Jam Enjoy music from musicians while shopping for produce at the Florida Agricultural Museum Aug. 23 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. The event will feature musicians and vendors offering fruits, veggies, honeys, jellies, nuts, arts and more. The Farm Swap & Music Jam will take place at 7900 Old Kings Road N. in Palm Coast. Visit www.floridaagmuseum.org for more information.</p> <p>Yoga for Survivors The Y Healthy Living Center at the Ponte Vedra YMCA will host a Yoga for Survivors class Aug. 23 at 11:30 a.m. Cancer patients, survivors, caregivers and others with range of motion and pain limitations are invited to join in this gentle and safe yoga practice, which is free and open to the public. Call (904) 202-5376 or visit www.baptistjax.com/ymca to reserve a spot. The Ponte Vedra YMCA is located at 170 Landrum Lane.</p> <p>'Under the Tuscan Sun' showing A writer impulsively buys a villa in Tuscany in order to change her life. This film is showing at the Corazon Cinema and Cafe at noon. Admission costs \$10. The Corazon Cinema and Cafe is located at 36 Granada St. in St. Augustine.</p>	<p>Music in the Courtyard Music in the Courtyard will take place weekly through Aug. 31 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. Visitors can enjoy local music with a cup of coffee or a glass of wine and a bite to eat under palm trees rustling in the ocean breezes. This event will take place at 200 1st St. in Neptune Beach.</p> <p>Between Truth and Illusion exhibition The general public is invited to an exhibition, entitled Between Truth and Illusion, in the Scene Room at the Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra, located at 50 Executive Way. The exhibit is presented by the Society of Mixed Media Arts (SoMMA), it will run through Sept. 22.</p> <p>Family Storytime Children of all ages are welcome for this Family Storytime event featuring stories, puppets, music, crafts and more. This event will take place Aug. 24 at 10 a.m. at the Hastings Branch Library, located at 6195 S. Main St. in Hastings.</p> <p>Documentary Days Enjoy Documentary Days at IMAX Theater at World Golf Hall of Fame featuring "Pandas," "America's Musical Journey," "Amazing Mighty Micro Monsters," "Dream Big: Engineering Our World," "Extreme Weather," "Hubble," "We the People," "Lewis & Clark," "Under the Sea," "Born to be Wild" and "Flight of the Butterflies." Visit www.worldgolfimax.com for showtimes and ticket pricing. The World Golf Hall of Fame IMAX Theater is located at 1 World Golf Place in St. Augustine.</p> <p>Florida Skimboarding Pro/Am Tournament The Florida Skimboarding Pro/Am Tournament, taking place Aug. 24 through 26 at Vilano Beach, will feature competing athletes from more than 75 different beaches throughout Florida, the United States and the world. Visit www.rundropslide.com/flproam for more information.</p>	<p>St. Augustine Amphitheatre Farmers Market The St. Augustine Amphitheatre Farmers Market will take place every Saturday morning from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The market features more than 100 tents with local produce, flowers, baked goods, handmade arts and crafts and more. The St. Augustine Amphitheatre Farmers Market is located at 1340 A1A S. in St. Augustine.</p> <p>Full moon kayak tour Join Ripple Effect for a kayak tour date night from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. This once-a-month experience will take place Aug. 25 at 101 Tolstoy Lane in Marineland. The Earth and moon are ready to change the tide as guests paddle with a certified Ripple Effect guide. Reservations are required and can be made online at www.rippleeffectecotours.com.</p> <p>Rick Springfield at St. Augustine Amphitheatre The St. Augustine Amphitheatre will host 1980s power pop icon Rick Springfield Aug. 25 and his Best in Show Tour featuring guests Loverboy, Greg Kihn and Tommy Tutone to the stage. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. and the performance is at 7 p.m. The St. Augustine Amphitheatre is located at 1340 A1A S. For more information, visit www.staugamphitheatre.com.</p> <p>Lung Force Run/Walk The American Lung Association will host a Lung Force Run/Walk Aug. 25 at 8 a.m. to raise awareness for lung health and defeat cancer. By joining the run/walk and raising funds, participants can help make a difference for those affected by lung disease. This event will take place at the Jacksonville Landing, located at 2 Independent Drive. Visit www.lung.org for more information.</p> <p>Sewing studio The Southeast Branch Library will host a sewing studio Aug. 25 at 10:30 a.m. Registration is required, call (904) 827-6900 to reserve a spot. The Southeast Branch is located at 6670 U.S. 1 S. in St. Augustine.</p>	<p>Sandals, Shorts and Steel Drum Service Every Sunday from 11:30 a.m. to noon, St. Paul's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church invites guests to put on sandals and shorts for a more casual worship service featuring the tropical sound of steel drum music. The church is located at 465 11th Ave. N. in Jacksonville Beach.</p> <p>'Urban Spaces, Open Skies' exhibition The newest exhibition at the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens, entitled "Urban Spaces, Open Skies: 20th-Century American Landscape," will be on display through Feb. 3, 2019. Drawn from the Cummer Museum's extensive collection of works on paper, this presentation will feature more than 30 prints celebrating modern cities and the timeless charms of the country. Visitors can admire how artists have captured the changing landscape of cities like Chicago and New York. For more information, contact Amber Sesnick at (904) 899-6034 or asesnick@cummuseum.org.</p> <p>Salt Air Farmers Market The Salt Air Farmers Market will feature homegrown produce, local art and more. This event will take place Aug. 26 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 9505 Oceanshore Blvd. in St. Augustine. For more information, visit www.saltairfarmersmarket.com.</p> <p>Night of Worship Night of Worship, taking place Aug. 26 at 6 p.m., is a gathering of numerous churches combining choirs and orchestras to worship God through song. This event will take place at First Baptist Church of Orange Park, located at 1140 Kingsley Ave.</p> <p>Gary Owen at The Comedy Zone Gary Owen will perform at The Comedy Zone Aug. 26 at 7 p.m. Owen's most recent comedy special, "I Got My Associates," is currently being shown on Showtime. Last year, Owen starred in his docuseries "The Gary Owen Show" on BET. The Comedy Zone is located at 3130 Hartley Road in Jacksonville.</p>

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Monday, Aug. 27	Tuesday, Aug. 28	Wednesday, Aug. 29	Thursday, Aug. 30
<p>Senior Pilates Enjoy this Senior Pilates class Mondays from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and Wednesdays from 10:30 a.m. to noon at River House, located at 179 Marine St. in St. Augustine. Admission costs \$4 for members or \$5 for non-members. Students will need to bring a yoga mat and straps. Call (904) 209-3655 to register. Pilates is a form of exercise that results in an improved core of stability, flexibility, strength and energy.</p> <p>MOSH Mondays The Museum of Science and History's MOSH Mondays feature discounts including buy-one-get-one-half-off admission for adults, 10 percent off MOSH-branded items in the museum shop, 10 percent off memberships when signing up in-person and 10 percent off birthday packages when signing up in-person. MOSH Mondays also feature rotating weekly programs. MOSH is located at 1025 Museum Circle in Jacksonville. Visit www.themosh.org for more information.</p> <p>Hernia screenings The Y Healthy Living Center in Riverside will be hosting hernia screenings Aug. 27 at 12:30 p.m. A hernia happens when part of an internal organ or tissue bulges through a weak area of muscle, they're common and can affect men, women and even children. A combination of muscle weakness and straining as with heavy lifting might contribute. Y Healthy Living Center Riverside is located at 221 Riverside Ave. in Jacksonville.</p> <p>Dr. Jim Marshall presentation on detoxification Dr. Jim Marshall will be talking about how every day products can affect people's health, and how making informed decisions about daily living can help people detoxify their lives. This event will take place Aug. 27 at 6:30 p.m. at Beaches Chapel, located at 610 Florida Blvd. in Neptune Beach.</p> <p>Financial literacy class World Financial Group will host a financial literacy class Aug. 27 at 6:30 p.m. This event will take place at 4401 Salisbury Road Suite 101 in Jacksonville.</p>	<p>Tapas Tuesday The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens presents Tapas Tuesday at the Cummer Cafe every Tuesday from 5 to 7:30 p.m. View the sunset on the Cummer Cafe patio while listening to local musicians and enjoying beer, wine or artfully-inspired tapas for sale at the Cafe. Reserve your table by calling (904) 899-6022. For more information, visit www.cummuseum.org. The museum is located at 829 Riverside Ave.</p> <p>Life Enrichment Day retreat program This program, which is offered Monday through Friday at Arbor Terrace, is designed for those with memory changes who want to remain mentally, physically and socially active, while giving caregivers and loved ones some free time for themselves. For more information, call (904) 417-7354 or email life_enrichment_group@yahoo.com. Arbor Terrace is located at 5125 Palm Valley Road in Ponte Vedra.</p> <p>Prenatal yoga Prenatal and postnatal yoga is designed to help women cope with the changing needs of their body before and after pregnancy and birth. The public is invited Aug. 28 at 6 p.m. to share individual experiences with other women and gain empowerment through yoga, meditation and guided visualization. This approach is gentle and safe for women in all stages of pregnancy, and once recovered from birth, but prior approval from a healthcare provider is advised. This event will take place at the Y Healthy Living Center, located at 170 Landrum Lane in Ponte Vedra Beach.</p> <p>Fishing clinic St. Johns County Parks and Recreation will offer free fishing clinics each Tuesday in August. The clinics will expound on fishing regulations, bait, nets, fish identification and how to tie a knot. Sunscreen, sunglasses, hat, water bottle, fishing rod and reel with fishing line are recommended. Clinics will take place at the Shands Pier, located at Shands Pier Road in St. Johns, from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.</p>	<p>Toastmasters Club Toastmasters Club #5199 of Ponte Vedra Beach meets every Wednesday at 7:30 a.m. at THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center. These meetings help attendees improve public speaking and gain leadership skills. The senior center is located at 175 Landrum Lane in Ponte Vedra Beach. Email Lucy Reep at lucyreep@gmail.com for additional information.</p> <p>Yoga at the church Grab a mat and enjoy a weekly yoga session at St. Paul's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church each Wednesday at 11:30 a.m. All ages and skill levels are welcome. St. Paul's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church is located at 465 11th Ave. N. in Jacksonville. Call (904) 249-4091 Ext. 103 for more information.</p> <p>Music by the Sea concert This free weekly concert series at the St. Johns County Pier features a wide variety of musical genres. On Aug. 29, Duffy Bishop Band will perform from 7 to 9 p.m. Visitors are encouraged to bring a beach chair or blanket along with a favorite beverage. This event will take place at 350 A1A Beach Blvd. in St. Augustine Beach.</p> <p>St. Paul's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church Eucharist Join St. Paul's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church for a Wednesday morning Eucharist service Aug. 29 at 10:30 a.m. The church is located at 465 11 Ave. N in Jacksonville. For more information, call (904) 249-4091 Ext. 103.</p> <p>Wednesday Market at St. Augustine Beach The St. Augustine Beach Wednesday Market offers oceanfront shopping at the St. Johns County Pier Park every Wednesday starting at 8 a.m. Approximately 60 to 80 vendors can be found at the market selling locally grown produce, baked goods, prepared foods, arts, crafts and more. Visit www.sabca.org for more information.</p>	<p>Junior PLAYERS Championship at TPC Sawgrass The 2018 Junior PLAYERS Championship tournament will start Aug. 30 on the TPC Sawgrass Stadium Course at 9 a.m. For more information, visit www.ajga.org. This event will take place at 110 Championship Way in Ponte Vedra Beach.</p> <p>Throwback Thursday: 'Mrs. Doubtfire' at the Corazon Cinema and Cafe After a bitter divorce, an actor disguises himself as a female housekeeper to spend time with his children held in custody by his former wife. The film is showing at the Corazon Cinema and Cafe Aug. 30 at noon. Admission costs \$10. The Corazon Cinema and Cafe is located at 36 Granada St. in St. Augustine.</p> <p>Free Rich Dad Education workshop Discover strategies to build wealth the "Rich Dad" way with Robert Kiyosaki Aug. 30 at 12:30 p.m. at 6 p.m. Guests will learn how to move from an "employee" to "entrepreneur" mindset, create a long-lasting cash flow from real estate, make money from stocks, spot market opportunities and the right stocks to trade, design an auction plan and more. This event will take place at Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa, located at 1000 PGA Tour Blvd. in Ponte Vedra Beach. All attendees will receive Kiyosaki's Philosophy of Cash Flow book as a gift. Call (800) 570-2050 to register.</p> <p>Books and Bites: Indian Summers Enjoy culture, history and culinary delight Aug. 30 at 2 p.m. with this Books and Bites Series on Indian Summers. Journey back to 19th century India at this cooking demonstration, presented by St. Johns County Librarians, and enjoy samples of dishes steeped in Indian flavors while learning about the decline of the British Empire and the birth of modern India. Space is limited. Call (904) 827-6950 to register. The Ponte Vedra Library is located at 101 Library Blvd.</p> <p>Free calendar listings for community groups and nonprofit organizations are published at our discretion on a space-available basis. Send your event at least 10 days before publication. Submit events to ben@opcfla.com or call (904) 686-3939.</p>

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Architecture trends in Ponte Vedra

By Mark Macco, AIA
 President, Mark Macco Architects
 Special to the Recorder

Ponte Vedra has seen a building boom happening with regard to single family residential projects. It seems the entire town of Ponte Vedra is moving from renovations of beach cottages to new larger homes. Entire city blocks that had original homes on them in Old Ponte Vedra are disappearing and turning into entirely new neighborhoods. But what is the new face of these neighborhoods? To explore this question, we have to look at a few drivers.

Long gone are the over-fussy, large “McMansions.” Though still on average large custom homes, overall square footages have reduced. Some residents after the erosion on Ponte Vedra Boulevard, for example, have decided to move a few blocks inland and create a smaller version of what they had before.

The overall square footages have decreased, as well as the trend of cleaner, simpler lines. The “bones” of the home have to be designed well and purpose-



Renderings courtesy of Mark Macco

Renderings display projects that Macco currently has under construction in Ponte Vedra.

ful because they are not hidden with a lot of ornament as in decades past. The beach contemporary home style has really

become mainstream. We see these modern homes once only seen in places like Miami, pop up here on the First Coast.

Another popular trend is the cedar shake “Hamptons” look. This has become so prevalent in Ponte Vedra, it’s starting to resemble the “Hamptons south.” Bermuda shades, architecturally interesting brackets and standing seam metal roofs have become very popular elements as well. While you don’t see too much of the Mediterranean look anymore, done correctly with proper attention to purposely placed corbels and stone accents, this style can remain timeless.

Along with the “cleaner, simpler lines” comes the need to design around art. The art becomes the focus and a hallway becomes a gallery space with proper lighting and thoughtful design. Self-contained foyers with feature walls offer privacy for the resident. Whatever the design vernacular, art is a critical piece of the design puzzle early on. Good design does not have to cost a lot, it just needs to be well considered.

Another trend is that homes are designed around the pool, where the pool becomes an integral piece of the design, not an afterthought. Proceeding through the space and having the architecture engage the pool area is a common trend.

While trends may come and go, they are born from the economy, local circumstances and the general public being able to embrace the trend. Just a few years ago contemporary homes were a special client. Now these modern showpieces have become mainstream.

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How to employ staging to impress buyers

Homeowners must consider a variety of factors when putting their homes on the market. One of the more important things to remember is the benefits of making a strong first impression on prospective buyers. That's why many homeowners rely on staging when selling their homes.

Staging requires more than just clearing out clutter or baking a batch of cookies to create a welcoming aroma. Staging helps potential buyers visualize the potential of a home and see themselves owning and

living in the property.

While homeowners can effectively stage their own homes, sometimes it is well worth the investment to call in a professional designer or stager. Stagers often work their magic on vacant properties or those that have been sitting on the market awhile. A stager conducts careful research into the market of a particular area and learns about the neighborhood before deciding how to appeal to likely buyers. For example, when staging a coastal home,

a stager may go with nautical themes and create the impression of a relaxing and laid-back property for entertaining by the beach.

Certain rules should be followed when staging a home. Furniture, decor and other amenities in the home should not detract from the house itself. Instead, such items

should complement the architecture and feel of the space. Here are some additional staging suggestions.

- Remove personal effects. Homeowners are urged to replace personal photographs with neutral artwork and remove

STAGING continues on Page 27



Photo courtesy of metrocreativeconnection.com

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RE/MAX Hall of Fame

Ponte Vedra and the Beaches: Chosen relocation destination

Where do buyers come from?

By Clare Berry

Realtor, Berry & Co. Real Estate
Special to the Recorder

I'm often asked, "Where will our buyers come from?" Well, they come from everywhere, but they are almost entirely domestic.

Many are local. Growing families step up to larger homes or building opportunities, and empty nesters scale back to more manageable quarters. For many years, families on the mainland have had beach homes; that tradition continues today, as our strand of beach is still recognized as one of the prettiest around.

Jacksonville has also been blessed with a strong inflow of workers from other parts of the country. As our health care, transportation and financial sectors have expanded, Jacksonville has seen more and more transfers from all corners of the

United States. Our business community is drawing top talent to Jacksonville, and those transferees are often drawn to the beauty of the waters and the natural terrain that surround us. We are blessed to have so many acres in preserve status, such as the GTM Reserve and Hanna Park.

What about international buyers? Statistics show that Northeast Florida is not a large market for buyers from other countries. These buyers are prevalent in other areas of Florida, especially the Miami and Orlando Metropolitan Statistical Areas, due to ease of travel (check out their international flight schedules), as well as proximity to South America. The Northeast Florida Multiple Listing Service (NEFMLS) tracks the nationality of buyers as closings take place. NEFMLS statistics show that the number of foreign buyers in Northeast Florida is quite limited. This is true for all neighborhoods, including oceanfront, which logically would have the most appeal to interna-

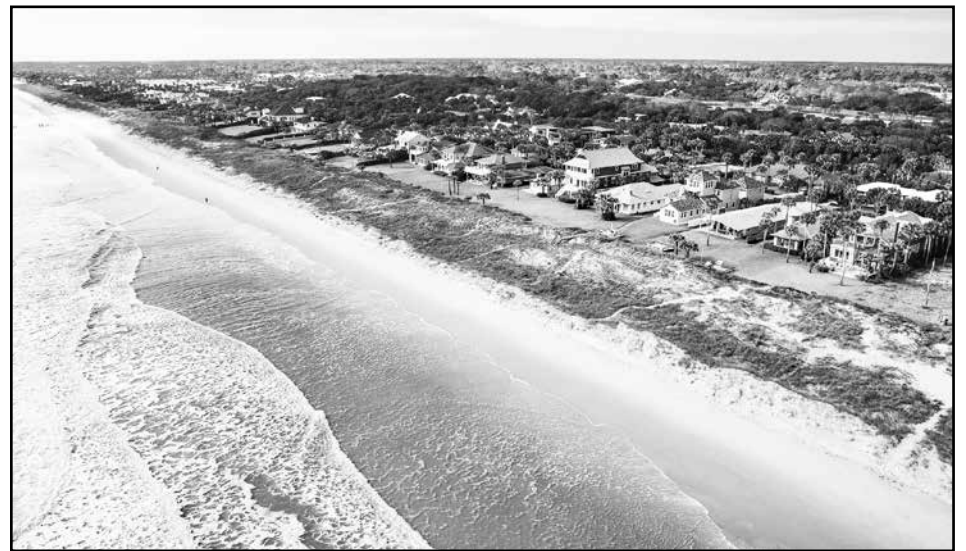


Photo courtesy of Wally Sears Photography

tional buyers. The Beaches statistics from NEFMLS show only a couple of handfuls of international buyers in the past eight years, since NEFMLS started collecting these records.

People move to Northeast Florida for jobs, family and a variety of other reasons. Frequently they cite the highly-regarded school system, and those who can work from anywhere are free to select their home on that basis. We've always seen a feed of buyers from the Northeast, and that interest is stronger than ever. This week, I talked with a potential new resident from New York who is eager to escape the crushing taxation in his state. These buyers make their buying decisions

based on information locally available. Their initial research is from one of two sources, the internet or friends and potential co-workers.

I've worked here in Northeast Florida for all of my 30-plus-year real estate career. Our communities have grown over that time, and changed, but in a good way. Great restaurants and shopping are now within our boundaries, plus a vast variety of options are within 20-minute drives from here. More than one customer has said, upon spending a little time here, "I can't believe that you live like this every day!" We are truly blessed with an abundance of natural beauty that creates the basis for a low-stress lifestyle.



Shearwater invites public to grand opening event for new neighborhood

Shearwater, a master-planned residential community off County Road 210 in St. Augustine, is inviting First Coast residents to attend the official grand opening of the community's newest neighborhood, The Falls.

To be held Saturday, Aug. 25 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., the free event will allow attendees to tour Shearwater's next community phase and its new amenities, as well as model homes by D.S. Ware Homes, Drees Homes, David Weekley Homes, Lennar Homes, Richmond American Homes, MasterCraft Builder Group and Dream Finders Homes, which will be showcasing their new model. The Falls features nature trails, a four-acre activity park and Shearwater's first community garden and dog parks.

Activities at the grand opening event will also include free hot air balloon rides (time and weather permitting), a frisbee dog show performance, farmers market, live music, rock wall, free giveaways, face painting, a juggler and stilt walker and more.

The event will be held at 100 Kayak Way in St. Augustine. RSVP at www.shearwaterliving.com.



ABOVE: Shearwater is inviting First Coast residents to the Aug. 25 grand opening of its newest neighborhood, The Falls, which will allow guests to tour model homes in the community.

LEFT: The Falls features Shearwater's first community garden and dog parks.

RIGHT: The grand opening event will feature a frisbee dog show performance.

Photos courtesy of Shearwater



Nocatee to host grand opening event for The Settlement at Twenty Mile

Nocatee will celebrate the opening of The Settlement at Twenty Mile on Saturday, Aug. 25.

From 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., builders from ICI Homes and Toll Brothers will be on site to assist and share updates on newly available home designs. Event activities and attractions will include builder-guided tours of designer-decorated model homes, food trucks and builder giveaways. The event is free and open to all interested in the new neighborhood.

The Settlement at Twenty Mile features one- and two-story single-family homes

ranging from 2,100 to 2,900 square feet of living space. ICI Homes and Toll Brothers will offer new homes starting in the mid \$300s.

“Toll Brothers at The Settlement at Twenty Mile is ideal for home buyers who enjoy the region’s exceptional lifestyle,” said Steven Merten, President of Toll Brothers’ Northeast Florida division. “It’s exciting to be a part of Twenty Mile and we look forward to welcoming home buyers to our community.”

Visit www.nocatee.com for more information.

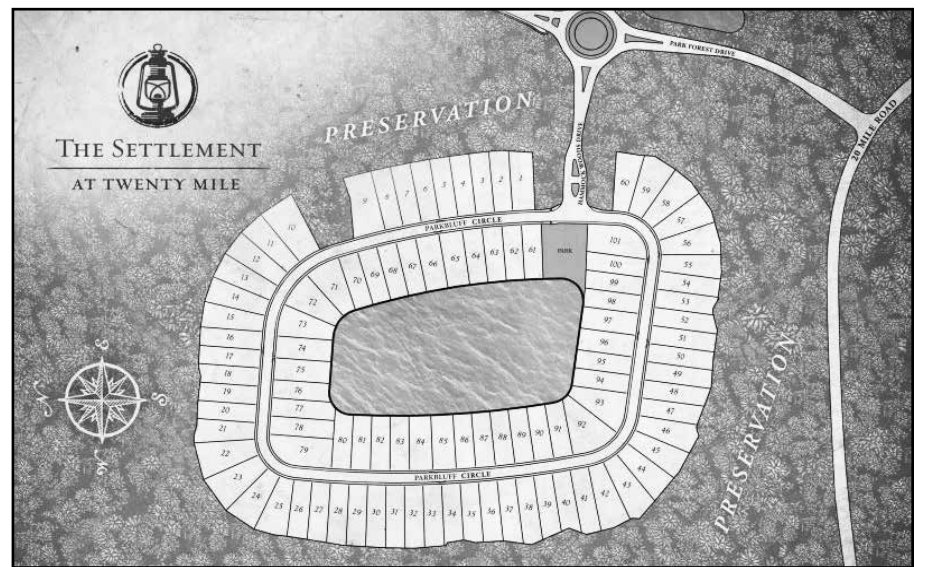


Photo courtesy of Nocatee Ponte Vedra www.nocatee.com

The public is invited to a grand opening event for the Settlement at Twenty Mile Aug. 25.



Photo courtesy of metrocreativeconnection.com

Staging

Continued from 25

other decorative items that reflect their personalities. As an example, an avid outdoorsman probably will want to remove hunting trophies. The goal is to help buyers see themselves in the home, and that can be difficult if existing residents’ personal effects are everywhere.

■ **Put away nonessential items.**

Staging helps homeowners create dream spaces. Coffeemakers, backpacks hanging on the wall and dishes in the drainboard may be part of daily living, but they can make it hard for buyers to see a home’s potential. Store such items before holding an open house.

■ **Maximize lighting.** Whenever possible, take down or open window treatments to display architectural moldings and let in as much natural light as possible.

■ **Opt for neutral colors and furnishings.** Use neutral taupe and gray paint to keep homes prime for buyers. Homeowners who have more eclectic or colorful tastes can put their items in storage and rent neutral furnishings until the home sells.

Staging can improve the chances that a house sells quickly. Staging helps potential buyers see themselves in the space without distractions from the previous owners’ decorating or belongings.

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12
13						14				15			
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65						66	67			68			
69						70				71			
72						73				74			

THEME: ENGINEERING 101

ACROSS

- Monument to Buddha
- “Slippery” tree
- No-win situation
- *Relating to unit of electrical resistance
- Actress Thompson
- Garlic mayo
- Capital of Morocco
- Anthem author
- City-like
- *Biologically inspired
- *Electricity-producing device
- “___ la la!”
- Restaurant handout
- Army bed
- Rudolf Hess, e.g.
- *Unit of electric current flow
- Avian wader
- Rock opera version of “La Bohème”
- First President to resign
- Julia Louis-Dreyfus’ HBO role
- Lock of hair
- Keyboard key, pl.
- Trojan War epic
- Like traditional storytelling
- Every which way
- Door frame part
- Like Mohave
- Farm pen
- Experience emotion

- Bert and Ernie, e.g.
- *___ breaker
- *Amount of mass in a unit of volume
- Bruce Wayne’s Batman, e.g.
- Step on it
- Core of personnel
- Marked ski run
- Opposite of yang
- Like a neon sign
- Pouches
- English course
- Necessities

DOWN

- Acidic kind of apple
- Bangkok native
- Rounded elevation
- Baby grand
- Director’s order
- Lodge fellows
- Wrangler alternative
- Noncommittal response
- Inside scoop
- RBG’s garb
- Having wings
- Heady and intoxicating
- Keats’ “season of mists and mellow fruitfulness”
- *Pie display
- Nurses’ org.
- Rock component
- *Engineering relating to roads and bridges
- Plural of obelus
- Make a logical connection
- *-273.15 Celsius, or absolute ___

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

Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

- Mediterranean sandwich component
- SAT and ACT
- *Automatically moving mechanism
- Glorify
- Quarrel
- Ivan the Terrible, e.g.
- Slip ‘N ___
- Deactivate a bomb
- Oahu greeting gift
- Classic yo-yo maker
- Ethanol, a.k.a. ___ alcohol
- Missouri River tributary
- A and B, e.g.
- Pelvic bones
- *CISC alternative
- A. L. Webber musical
- Fender-bender damage
- *Run a vehicle’s engine when not in motion
- Walked on
- Evergreens
- Junior’s junior

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Business Weekly

PAGE 29 THURSDAY, AUGUST 23, 2018

Gov. Scott discusses unemployment rate at visit to local business

Page 30

www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

Double J's hosts retirement party for longtime owner

By Benjamin Naim

Double J's small engine repair shop hosted a retirement lunch party for longtime owner Jerry McCoy on Friday, Aug. 17 to celebrate his contributions to the business.

The event, which was a surprise engineered by family, friends and Double J's employees, featured barbecue from Bono's, drinks, and a special retirement cake. As McCoy and his wife Ronda arrived, they were greeted with a warm welcome by guests who offered congratulatory remarks for the veteran shop owner. The retiree thought he was headed to a routine lunch outing with a friend, but instead found himself at a retirement party.

Double J's, founded by Jerry McCoy (nicknamed "Little Jerry") and Jerry Gray (nicknamed "Big Jerry"), has been in business since 1986. The two were bass fishing buddies who had retired from the Navy and decided to start their own business.

"It's different, I've been 32 years here," McCoy said. "I met new people, made lots of friends and a lot of acquaintances, a lot of good people."

Not coming to work every morning will be an adjustment, McCoy added. He noted that the community has treated him great, and he has enjoyed every bit of his 32-year tenure with the repair shop.

New owners Karen and Hal Still, who

also work in the telecommunications industry, have been best friends with the McCoy's for years. They recently purchased Double J's and plan to operate the business for the foreseeable future. The Stills also own and operate Syncworks, which offers network synchronization to the telecom, utilities and cable industries.

"We share a lot of the same values," said Hal Still. "(The McCoy's) take care of people. They have the same customers over and over, they treat people like family."

For more information on Double J's, visit www.doublejrepair.com or call (904) 285-4573. The repair shop is located at 111 Canal Blvd. in Ponte Vedra Beach.



ABOVE: Jerry and Ronda McCoy pose for a photo at Jerry's surprise retirement party held at Double J's in Ponte Vedra Beach on Friday, Aug. 17.



DOUBLE J'S CUSTOMERS POSE FOR A PHOTO WHILE ENJOYING LUNCH AT THE SURPRISE RETIREMENT PARTY FOR LONGTIME OWNER JERRY MCCOY.



ABOVE: GUESTS ENJOY FOOD FROM BONO'S PIT BAR-B-Q AT THE RETIREMENT PARTY.



LEFT: A RETIREMENT CAKE FOR MCCOY WAS ON DISPLAY AT DOUBLE J'S.

Photos by Benjamin Naim

Our brain is a yes-man (woman), telling us only what we want to hear



Harry Pappas
Columnist

By Harry Pappas

Any time I address investors, clients, advisors or planners, I am speaking first to ME. There is no condescension or judgment here, just a call for something better. Furthermore, I argue that virtually every directive has an exception, especially this one. Nevertheless, if you are easily offended, I encourage you to please stop reading now, as this is one of the times that I heed the

words of wisdom from British novelist Kingsley Amis, "If you can't annoy somebody, there is little point in writing."

Okay, enough of the chitchat, away we go! If you believe you are an independent thinker, you are not. In fact, after we form our worldviews, we only embrace information that confirms our opinions while ignoring, or rejecting data that suggests that we might be mistaken. In the final analysis, we simply do not distinguish information objectively. Moreover, if I cannot persuade you that my observation is spot on, then perhaps you are guilty of the so-called confirmation bias phenomenon.

So what is confirmation bias? Since this

is my column and I am in a curmudgeon mood, I will describe it my way: Folks see what they look for and hear what they listen for. In other words, people resist factual information that contradicts one's deeply held values and beliefs. When we fall prey to confirmation bias, the last thing on our mind is "disconfirmation." Stated more simply, one-sided folks have essentially no interest in seeking evidence to disprove their feelings. Sadly, our ego takes over and we are more concerned about being right instead of arguably learning the truth. No facts or convincing evidence will likely ever be enough to persuade peeps to change their opinion. Yes indeed, confirma-

tion bias has an inescapable grip on these questionable tunnel vision people and it won't let go!

I would rather cover myself with the fleas of a thousand camels than partake in a conversation where confirmation bias is present, which regrettably happens too often for me. I find this type of dialogue incredibly, indescribably and excruciatingly nauseating. It makes me physically sick. To some degree, we are all guilty of the confirmation bias behavior wonder, regardless of if we believe it or not. All that we have to do is journey over to the political and

PAPPAS continues on Page 33

Gov. Scott visits local business to announce Florida's lowest unemployment rate in more than a decade

By Jon Blauvelt

Gov. Rick Scott visited St. Augustine-based business Solar Stik last week to announce Florida's lowest unemployment rate in more than a decade.

Dropping to 3.7 percent, the unemployment rate is the lowest it's been since April 2007. Scott also revealed at the local business that the private sector added more than 26,000 jobs in July in Florida. The candidate for U.S. Senate noted that the state has added 211,000 jobs in the last 12 months and nearly 1.6 million private sector jobs since December 2010.

"This state is the best state to do business in," Scott declared at the event on Friday, Aug. 17.

The governor also presented Brian Bosley, Solar Stik CEO and co-founder, with the Governor's Ambassador of Business Award. The medal is given to individuals for their efforts in creating jobs and opportunities for Florida families. According to Solar Stik, the business has added four new hires to its now 35-member team during the past three months. Solar Stik is a manufacturer of portable hybrid power systems for military applications in the 1 to 15 kW power spectrum.



Gov. Rick Scott gathers with the team at Solar Stik in St. Augustine, where he announced Florida's lowest unemployment rate in more than a decade on Aug. 17.

"This award is a reflection of our commitment to revive American manufacturing starting here, in St. Augustine," Bosley said in a statement sent to the

Recorder. "The most amazing parts of this entrepreneurial journey called Solar Stik are the relationships that we have built along the way. Our team members

are amazing! They are what make this life worth living!"

For more information on Solar Stik, visit SolarStik.com.

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Photos by Jon Blauvelt
Brian Bosley, CEO and co-founder of Solar Stik, Scott and Stephanie Hollis, COO and co-founder of Solar Stik

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Ponte Vedra Beach UPS Store hosts party to thank community

By Benjamin Naim

The UPS Store at Tournament Plaza in Ponte Vedra Beach hosted a party on Thursday, Aug. 16 to thank the community, celebrate the upcoming 25th anniversary of the location on A1A and recognize store manager Erica Vona for winning a top award within the company.

The event featured drinks, desserts, snacks and more as members of the community and UPS employees gathered together for an evening of fellowship.

“The main reason we’re having this party is we built this business around loving the customers,” store owner Brett Duncan said. “The customers have loved us back. I know that sounds a little cheesy but that’s how we built this business is loving on the people.”

During the event, Duncan recognized Vona for receiving the Center Associate Excellence Award at a UPS convention in Las Vegas. The Ponte Vedra UPS store manager received the award out of 5,000 managers nationwide.

“Everybody is crazy about (Vona) and the fact she won the award” Duncan said. “People have written into the corporate office about the customer service so we’re definitely celebrating that.”

Additionally, Duncan said the store is coming up on its 25th anniversary in Ponte Vedra Beach. The owner said he “never in a million years” dreamed the store would hit the quarter-century milestone, and he noted that Ponte Vedra has seen exponential growth over the last two decades. According to Duncan, there were nothing but pine trees in the area when the UPS Store opened in 1994.

Above all else, Duncan emphasized the importance of quality customer service



ABOVE: Jordan McCormick, UPS Store owner Brett Duncan, manager Erica Vona, Nina McLeod, Leigh Hopkins and Andrew Bass gather at a party Aug. 16 at the UPS Store in Ponte Vedra Beach on A1A.

LEFT: Duncan poses for a photo with Vona, who is donning her trophy.

Photos by Benjamin Naim

and showing compassion toward everyone who walks into the store.

“Our goal is whenever somebody hits that front door that when they leave they’re changed,” he said. “We want people’s lives to be changed because they’ve come here. People don’t find love anymore. People don’t find love at home, people don’t find love at church sometimes, people don’t find love at work, they don’t find love at the grocery store. When people come to the store we want them to know that they’re highly valued.”

Duncan went on to explain that the customers are like family, and sometimes people come to the store just to hang out.

“I get a little emotional sometimes when I start thinking and talking about it,” he said. “But that’s truly what we’re all about, man.”



Duncan addresses attendees at the UPS Store community party in Ponte Vedra Beach.

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Recorder hosts Chamber 'Before Hours' event

The Ponte Vedra Recorder hosted a "Before Hours" event for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce on Wednesday, Aug. 8 at the paper's office in the Overlook Building.

Event attendees had the opportunity to meet with the Recorder's staff, network with others and enjoy breakfast treats and coffee. In addition, guests of the event had a chance to view a new collection of art by the First Coast Artists adorning the walls of the paper's office.

In addition to the Recorder, the event was sponsored by Gloria Dongara of AAA Ponte Vedra. The Ponte Vedra Recorder is located at 1102 A1A N. in Unit 108, just north of the intersection of Mickler Road and A1A.



Photos by Susan Griffin
Toni Boudreaux, Jon Blauvelt, Ed Johnson, April Snyder, Susan Griffin, Samantha Logue and Kristin Flanagan King



Toni Boudreaux, Susan Griffin and Gloria Dongara



Denver Cook, Malcolm Anthony and Brian Anderson



Bonnie Hayflick and Cyndi Stevenson



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Chamber at Noon event features discussion on Facebook marketing



Social media expert Paxton Hare discusses his three secrets to Facebook marketing at the Aug. 15 Chamber at Noon event hosted by the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce.

The Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce hosted social media expert Paxton Hare at its most recent Chamber at Noon event to discuss Facebook marketing.

Held Aug. 15 at the Sawgrass Golf Club, the event featured discussion on Hare's three secrets to Facebook marketing that he said will deliver 100 leads. Fields Auto Group sponsored the event.

For more information on the Chamber, visit sjcchamber.com.



ABOVE: Josh Hull and Lindsay Hardy

LEFT: Suzan Lupton, Dr. Erika Hamer and Sarah Alexander

Photos by Susan Griffin

Pappas

Continued from 29

investing arena where confirmation bias is rampant!

What I find remarkable is that most peeps truly do not believe they are demonstrating confirmation bias, but amazingly, these same people have no problem accusing the other side of exhibiting prejudice. I put forth that the reason politics are chaotic and disturbing at times and people are impulsive and illogical comes down to one displaying confirmation bias. No matter what is said or presented will convince me otherwise! Did you catch that? I just demonstrated an example of my confirmation bias!

During the 2016 presidential election battle between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton, you probably found yourself in a political "debate" with friends. Those who loved Trump and detested Clinton, or vice versa, felt so strongly in their position that nothing could alter their position. Frankly, debating different views regarding politics or religion is seldom a debate, as most folks have their mind made up beforehand, regardless of the facts. Disturbingly, both sides avoid, undervalue or disregard any opposing views regardless of the relevancy. In the end, the debate is akin to ludicrous behaviors demonizing the other side instead of trying to better understand it.

The same goes with the media. We only watch the channels that favor our views and opinions while essentially ignoring all stations that will present a different viewpoint. This is confirmation bias in action. In the final analysis, regardless of whether we are on the right or left, we argue that the other side is biased and absurd in their thinking.

While I am regrettably guilty of having strong, stubborn convictions, and yes, I regrettably fall prey to confirmation bias, I am obsessed with searching for different perspectives. In other words, I seek out qualified people who disagree with me to

find out why. I want to know what I don't know. Where could I be wrong and why? What am I missing? Who else should I speak with to deepen my knowledge?

Questions like these help to protect me from the danger of this behavior phenomenon. For investors, confirmation bias is a dangerous predisposition that I witness far too often. We are the biggest risk to our long-term wealth creation, as our emotions repeatedly make us strangers to common sense. I believe the major mistakes investors make today are behavioral, especially during times of fear and greed where one often disputably does not make decisions based on facts. Instead, one is guided by their emotions and deeply held beliefs (biases).

In closing, the fact of the matter is that we repeatedly dismiss and blatantly ignore opinions of others if they do not conform to our self-constructed worldviews. Yes indeed, our brain is a yes man (woman), telling us only what we want to hear. Nevertheless, perhaps there is hope that with more education and awareness, there will be less of this annoying behavior trait in the future. However, I suggest that the immortal words of Dr. Phil state this probability more accurately, "It simply ain't gonna happen!"

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Managing Director-Investments
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PUBLIX OPENS NEW LOCATION IN PALENCIA



Photo by Susan Griffin

Publix recently opened a new location at the Shoppes at Palencia Commons in St. Augustine. Located at 7462 U.S. Highway 1 North, the new store is managed by Casey Wooten Smith. For more information, call (904) 826-3537.



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Art with a Heart in Healthcare partners with Cultural Center to showcase pediatric patient artworks

Art with a Heart in Healthcare (AWA-HIH) is featuring a special exhibition of artwork by pediatric patients from Wolfson Children's Hospital at the Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach through Sept. 22.

The exhibition, entitled "Another Side Revealed," offers an opportunity for families and friends of the young artists to gather and connect in a moment of creative community. Young patients participating in the program are from Palm Coast, St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra, Jacksonville and beyond.

"Art with a Heart in Healthcare celebrates the healing power of the creative process," said Christy Ponder, executive director and artist in residence of Art with a Heart. "It is our honor to share the works of these talented young artists with the community."

The new Ponte Vedra exhibition gives artists a chance to answer questions about themselves. In answering the questions, each patient renders their self-portrait as they are and as they would be. By painting on canvas, patients can explore their personalities, stories and identities

in two-dimensional form. "Another Side Revealed" presents a vast variety in how these artists would alter their world.

"I am so fortunate to spend part of my day creating art with these very special kids along with our artists in residence who develop very special bonds with patients during difficult times in their young lives," said Ponder. "Each patient that we work with does such a great job expressing their vision on the canvas."

Artwork in the exhibit includes "Mito Warrior" by 11-year-old Eliana Nanni, whose portrait relates to her diagnosis of mitochondrial disease.

"I like superheroes and I don't like seeing people hurt or sick," she said. "My superpower would be to heal."

Nanni painted a cape because she'd like to fly. She also enjoys art and hopes to visit London someday.

"I feel relaxed when I am creating art," said 11-year-old Jonathan Cepeda, whose preferred medium is graphite. "I like to do hands-on experiments."

An untitled piece by 4-year-old Rue Andeer shows the spunky side of the artist who says she would love to be a swim-



Photos courtesy of Bonnie Hayflick
"Mito Warrior" by Eliana Nanni

ming teacher or a cook. The right side of her painting reflects these dreams, while the left side shows her usual tutu-wearing self. Andeer has embraced her illness and hopes to be a role model to those who know her.

Art with a Heart in Healthcare is a non-profit organization providing personalized fine art experiences to enhance the healing process for patients and families at Wolfson Children's Hospital. Each patient is partnered with an artist in residence of AWAHIH, bringing out their natural talents, while promoting self-confidence and self-awareness during their hospital experience.



An untitled piece by Jonathan Cepeda



An untitled piece by Rue Andeer

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Jacksonville Symphony to hold auditions for 'First Coast Nutcracker' Aug. 24-25

Auditions for the Jacksonville Symphony's annual "First Coast Nutcracker," presented by VyStar Credit Union, will take place Friday, Aug. 24 and Saturday, Aug. 25.

Auditions will be held at the Douglas Anderson School of the Arts, located at 2445 San Diego Road, and dancers are to report to the Dance Building 30 minutes prior to the date and time of their assigned age group.

Audition times on Aug. 24 will take place from 4 to 6 p.m. for advanced dancers (male and female, ages 15 and older), and from 6 to 8 p.m. for intermediate dancers (male and female, ages 11-14). Advanced dancers must have at least five years of classical ballet training and females must have strong pointe work.

On Aug. 25, auditions will be held from 10 to 11:15 a.m. for dancers age 11 and older (females not on pointe and males), and from 11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. for

dancers age 9 to 10 (males and females).

Registration will be in the lobby of the Douglas Anderson School of the Arts Dance Building 30 minutes prior to the date and time assigned to each age group. Participants must also fill out the 2018 audition registration form, found at www.jaxsymphony.org, and bring a completed copy to the audition. There is a \$20 audition fee.

Female dancers must be dressed in pink tights, black leotards and pink pointe or ballet shoes, with their hair secured in a bun. Male dancers under 12 may wear black gym shorts and a white tee shirt and black or white ballet shoes.

Performance dates are Dec. 14, 15 and 16, and will be in addition to school performances on Dec. 13 and 14. There is a costume fee of \$80, plus \$20 for any additional parts played.

All inquiries should be directed to the Nutcracker office at (904) 358-3716 or nutcracker@jaxsymphony.org.

St. Augustine Record Fair to be held Oct. 21

The Fall 2018 St. Augustine Record Fair, presented by local record store ToneVendor, returns to the St. Augustine Amphitheatre Sunday, Oct. 21, 2018.

The biannual affair is a free, family-friendly event that is open to the public and will be held from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Music lovers and collectors are invited to shop thousands of music-related items including new and used vinyl records, CDs, cassettes, posters, turntable equipment and supplies, memorabilia, collectibles and more. This year, over 25 music vendors from across the Southeast United States will be on-site, offering shoppers the chance to choose from nearly every type of musical genre to grow their collection.

DJ sets by DJ Dorian Lopez will take place throughout the day. Food and beverages will be available for purchase from several on-site food trucks as well as the Amphitheatre Concessions. Fun activities for the entire family include the new Vinyl Care Clinic and the return of the popular “DJ 101 Session for Kids.”

Hosted by DJ Dorian Lopez, the “DJ 101 Session” is a 30-minute tutorial on how to DJ. After the tutorial, this hands-on event will provide the opportunity for kids of all ages to test their newfound DJ skills on a real DJ setup. Stop by the DJ booth early in the day to register for this unique opportunity.

Max Weinberg, the drummer for Bruce Springsteen and The E Street Band, will perform Friday, Oct. 26 at The Ponte Vedra Concert Hall.



Photo courtesy of Danya Markovits

Drummer for Bruce Springsteen and The E Street Band to perform at Ponte Vedra Concert Hall

The Ponte Vedra Concert Hall, in partnership with the Florida Theatre, will present Max Weinberg — the Rock and Roll Hall of Famer and drummer for Bruce Springsteen and The E Street Band — live on stage Friday, Oct. 26.

Fresh off the “River Tour 2016-2017” of Bruce Springsteen and The E Street Band, Weinberg announced a new touring concept entitled “Max Weinberg’s Jukebox.” An interactive experience, Weinberg invites the audience to determine the set list in real time during the concert. Performing songs from the glory days of rock and roll, fans will get a chance to choose from a video menu of over 200 songs including the Beatles, the Rolling Stones and more.

Weinberg is also known to millions of fans for his 17-year stint as the bandleader and comedic foil to talk show host Conan O’Brien. Additionally, he is the only musician in history to make the leap from a starring role in an iconic rock group to leading his band on NBC’s “Late Night” and “The Tonight Show.”

Throughout his 50-year professional career, Weinberg has played with some of the biggest and most diverse names in music including James Brown, Paul McCartney, Bob Dylan, BB King, Tony Bennett, Ringo Starr, John Fogerty, Stevie Winwood, Sheryl Crow and Isaac Hayes. Weinberg has performed Hayes’ legendary “Shaft” with a 30-piece orchestra on the “Late Night” broadcast.

In 2009, Springsteen and The E Street Band performed at the halftime show at Super Bowl 43 to the largest audience ever recorded for that event — over 100 million people. Weinberg also has the distinction of being the drummer on the two biggest selling rock albums in history — Bruce Springsteen’s “Born In The USA” and Meatloaf’s “Bat Out Of Hell.”

Weinberg’s show in Ponte Vedra starts at 8 p.m., with doors opening at 7 p.m. For more information on this event and to purchase tickets, visit www.pvconcerthall.com. The Ponte Vedra Concert Hall is located at 1050 A1A N.

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Furyk picks first 8 members of U.S. Ryder Cup team

By Kathy Bissell

Special to the Recorder

The first eight members of the 2018 U.S. Ryder Cup team were recently solidified on points at the end of the PGA Championship.

They are Brooks Koepka, Dustin Johnson, Justin Thomas, Patrick Reed, Bubba Watson, Jordan Spieth, Rickie Fowler and THE PLAYERS Championship winner Webb Simpson, listed in order of points. Four members of the team so far — Koepka, Watson, Thomas, and Spieth — have played the site of the tournament, Le Golf National, and know what to expect.

“I’m excited, and I know these eight players are excited as well,” said Ryder Cup Captain Jim Furyk, a Ponte Vedra Beach resident. “I’ve been waiting 18 months to get a touch, to get a feel for who our qualifiers would be.”

The team will eventually have 12 members. The remaining four will be selected by Furyk in upcoming weeks. On Sept. 4, he will make his first three picks, and on Sept. 10, he will decide the final player to make the team. The Ryder Cup is Sept. 25-30.

On the minds of most Ryder Cup fans is will Furyk pick Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson to round out the team. Furyk was non-committal on that subject.

“Going through the list, you know, Webb Simpson, I’m sure had a tough week,” Furyk said. “It’s always tough to be that No. 8 spot. I’ve been close to that 7 or 8 before. It can be a little sleepless. You look at a guy here that’s won THE PLAYERS Championship, and when I was trying to pick out golf courses on our tour that were similar to Le Golf National, TPC at Sawgrass was one of those. He was a runaway winner there at THE PLAYERS, and I think the golf course really suits his game well.”

As of now, Furyk has one Ryder Cup rookie, Justin Thomas. Though he’s a Ryder Cup rookie, Thomas is hardly a PGA Tour rookie any longer, having won the 2017 PGA Championship and four other events that season.

“PGA champion last year, PGA Tour Player of the Year, this guy’s got a lot of experience,” Furyk said. “Loved to watch him in the Presidents Cup last year. And more than anything, he’s a great kid, but I love the way this guy plays the game. He plays it the right way and fun to watch.”

Koepka, who led in points, sat out The Masters with a wrist injury that nearly sidelined him for THE PLAYERS Championship.



Photo courtesy of Empire State Realty Trust

U.S. Ryder Cup Captain and Ponte Vedra Beach resident Jim Furyk holds the Ryder Cup trophy in the Empire State Building Aug. 14 as part of the ceremonial lighting of the building to kick off the 2018 Ryder Cup Trophy Tour.

“I mean, this guy started out the year injured,” Furyk said about Koepka. “So, as a captain, I’m scratching my head, and I’m worried, you know, how can you not have Brooks Koepka come to Europe with you?”

Koepka played his college golf at Florida State but failed to get through PGA Tour Q-School. Instead, Koepka went to Europe to hone his skills where he won four times on their Challenge Tour and once on the European Tour before making his way back to the U.S.

“He talked to me about making this team, and I know his No. 1 goal this year was to get healthy,” Furyk added. “Fierce competitor. He carries himself with a swagger that everyone talks about. Love having him on the team.”

Watson has three victories this season, but in 2016, he failed to make the team.

“What a great story,” Furyk noted. “He was ninth in Ryder Cup points, left off the team, and the first thing he asks Davis Love, ‘Can I be a vice-captain? I know you have an extra spot, and I want to help this team in any way I possibly can.’ I thought it was a touch of class. I think he gained a lot of respect from his teammates, and I also know how much game this guy has and came back and won three times this year.”

Johnson also has three victories this season, starting at the Sentry Tournament

of Champions and adding two more over the summer.

“I played alongside him as a partner in his first Ryder Cup,” Furyk said about Johnson. “He really loves the team atmosphere. He loves hanging with the guys. He loves being a part of it. And when one of your most talented players is a leader in that respect and loves that team atmosphere, it’s a feather in a captain’s cap.”

Reed is this season’s Master’s champ and the last Ryder Cup’s star with a 4-0-1 record in 2016. Reed and his partner Spieth have never lost a Ryder Cup match although they have tied two. Reed is undefeated in singles play.

“This guy’s been a bulldog,” Furyk said. “I mean, a bulldog for us in 2014 and 2016. He’s fierce. When you talk about going into a crowd that is going to be loud and boisterous, I feel like the bigger the challenge, the louder the crowd, the more attention you need to pay to Patrick Reed. He loves that atmosphere. I guess I’m proud to be the United States captain, but Patrick Reed’s been Captain America for the last two Ryder Cups. So happy to have him.”

And finally, Fowler and Spieth are two very popular players to make the team on points.

“I think Rickie’s biggest strength is he has no weaknesses,” Furyk said. “He’s a very well-rounded player, well liked in the team room. He’s an easy guy for any

captain to pair. He can go with a number of different players. He’s a huge asset to the team.”

And that leaves Spieth, who of all the team members, has had the worst season, but Furyk is not worried about him.

“When Jordan speaks, everyone listens, and he has something to say, whether that’s kicking everyone in the rear end, whether that’s kind of being the calm in the middle of the storm,” Furyk explained noting Spieth’s maturity. “Jordan is one of those guys that is wise beyond his years. He’s very mature. He’s a leader at a young age.”

Furyk’s next challenge is to make his final four picks. The next four PGA Tour players on the Ryder Cup points list are Bryson DeChambeau, Mickelson, Woods and Xander Schauffele, who won last season’s Tour Championship. Matt Kuchar is in 13th place.

“We’re trying to identify the four players that fit with these eight,” Furyk said. “So, when I look at my captain’s picks, I’ll be looking at guys that have had a great body of work this year, guys that are playing well and maybe hot players at the time. I’m looking at pairings. I’m looking at who fits in well with these eight players.

“I’m also looking at the golf course,” Furyk added. “I mean, Le Golf National is a wonderful golf course, in my opinion, but it suits a certain style of player, and I’ll be looking at that.”

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PONTE VEDRA RESIDENT AND BOLLES STUDENT EARNS SILVER AT WORLD JUNIOR ROWING CHAMPIONSHIPS



Photo courtesy of USRowing

Ponte Vedra resident and Bolles student Chase Haskell (center) stands victorious with his teammates after taking home a silver medal at the 2018 World Rowing Junior Championships in Racice, Czech Republic Aug. 10 in the men's 4+. Along with coxswain George Doty (Corte Madera, California/Marin Rowing Association), Michael Fairley (Saratoga Springs, New York/Saratoga Rowing Association), Owen King (Montclair, New Jersey/Montclair High School) and Henry Bellew (Bethesda, Maryland/Harvard University), Haskell was a part of the United States' best performance in the event since 1998. Haskell was named to the United States' Under 19 National Team on July 20 while participating in the U19 Men's Selection Camp in Chula Vista, California, throughout June and July.

Harlem Legends to play St. Johns County All Stars Sept. 29 in Ponte Vedra Beach

On Saturday, Sept. 29, fans of all ages will be treated to an evening of basketball entertainment when the Harlem Legends Basketball Entertainers take on the St. Johns County All Stars at Ponte Vedra High School (PVHS).

The Harlem Legends are led by former Harlem Globetrotter Michael Douglas, who has traveled to over 100 countries entertaining crowds. The team consists of various professional athletes, including former players of the Harlem Globetrotters, NBA and NFL, as well as former Olympians and other athletes. Along with Douglas, the Legends who will participate are Larry "Shorty" Coleman, Tyrone "Hollywood" Brown, Trey Moore, DJ Henley, Antron Pippen, Antoin Jones, Elbert "Tree" Gordon, Tyrone Randolph, Robert Wilson, announcer Mike Glenn and referee Jimmy Bolden.

The St. Johns County All Stars will include PVHS Principal Fred Oberkehr, PVHS Athletic Director Eric Frank, St. Augustine High School Assistant Principal Travis Brown, Corey Yates of Stellar Concepts, Phil Tensley,

Antwain Conerly and Paul Stallings of the YMCA, Kasey Yates of Frito Lay, Edward Houston of St. Johns County Fire Rescue and others.

There will be a basketball clinic beginning at 3 p.m. and a VIP Meet & Greet at 4 p.m. The game begins at 5 p.m. General Admission is \$15, VIP tickets are \$25 and the basketball clinic costs \$25, including a show ticket. Youth ages 7-14 may register for the basketball clinic at www.harlemlegends.com.

Tickets are available at the Ponte Vedra YMCA, Ponte Vedra High School Athletic Department or through all of the St. Johns County All Stars and on the Harlem Legends website. A portion of the proceeds from this event will benefit the Ponte Vedra High School Athletic Department, Ponte Vedra YMCA and the Michael Douglas Youth Foundation, which helps bring awareness to the importance of incorporating exercise in daily life.

For more information or details on tickets and sponsorships, contact Marianne Sweezer with the Michael Douglas Youth Foundation at (678) 630-8843.



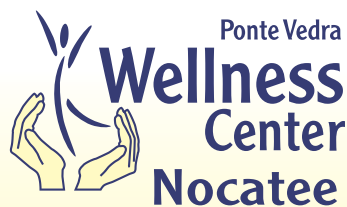
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Nease running back Joe Bradshaw (above) and quarterback Preston Staples (left) helped lead the Panthers to a 36-7 victory against visiting Yulee in the Kickoff Classic on Friday, Aug. 17. Nease racked up 343 yards of total offense, with 134 passing yards and 209 rushing yards. The Panthers open the regular season at home against rival Ponte Vedra at 7 p.m. Friday, Aug. 24.

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