

Your Community Voice for 50 Years

PONTE VEDRA



# Recorder

February 25, 2021

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75 cents

Not your average newspaper, not your average reader

PonteVedraRecorder.com



## MARDI GRAS!

BELOW: The Ponte Vedra Wellness Center celebrates its fifth anniversary of its Nocatee location during the Nocatee Farmers Market.



ABOVE: Punita Patel of Palm Valley-based Backyard Buffalo is going to be a regular vendor at the Nocatee Farmers Market.



The Nocatee Farmers Market held its Mardi Gras celebration Saturday, Feb. 20, at Nocatee Station Field. There was live music by Let's Ride Brass Band, a stilt walker and more than 60 vendors on hand.

Photos by Susan Griffin



### INSIDE: CHECK IT OUT!

The Recorder's Entertainment EXTRA featuring TV listings, streaming information, puzzles and more!



### First Coast Register

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### Real Estate Showcase

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**Hugh Osteen**  
Florida Market Manager  
hugh@opcfla.com  
(904) 285-8831

**Susan Griffin**  
Publisher  
susan@opcfla.com  
(904) 686-3938

**Paris Moulden**  
Page Designer/Reporter  
paris@opcfla.com  
(904) 285-8831, ext. 3943

**Shaun Ryan**  
Reporter  
shaun@opcfla.com  
(904) 285-8831, ext. 3941

**Holly Tishfield**  
Reporter  
holly@opcfla.com  
(904) 285-8831

**Don Coble**  
Contributor  
don@opcfla.com  
(904) 686-3939

**Ed Johnson**  
Senior Account Executive  
ed@opcfla.com  
(904) 285-8831, ext. 3940

**Kristin Flanagan**  
Account Executive  
kristin@opcfla.com  
(904) 285-8831, ext. 3950

**April Snyder**  
Sales Assistant  
aprils@opcfla.com  
(904) 285-8831, ext. 3937

**Jonathan Bueno**  
Circulation Manager  
jonathan@opcfla.com  
904-463-4407

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## Send us your news

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

## NOTES TO READERS

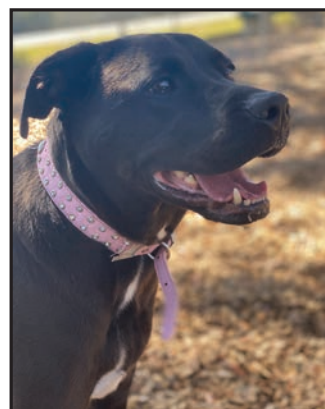
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**Weekly newsletter:** The Recorder offers a weekly newsletter every Monday that outlines some of the top stories of the week, as well as providing access to our E-Edition and Entertainment EXTRA! To get the newsletter emailed for free, email [don@opcfla.com](mailto:don@opcfla.com). We'll add you to the list.

## ADOPT A PET

### CAT OF THE WEEK

Hello, my name is Nova. I am a 2-year-old female domestic shorthair. I am shy at first, but I do love to be hugged and cuddled. I am looking for a family that can show me attention and love me just as much as I will love them. Come in to the Pet Center for a meet-and-greet with me. You will see why I'd be a great fit! #57495



### DOG OF THE WEEK

Hi there. My name is Sasha and I am a 5-year-old female, spayed, lab/terrier mix. I like long walks and curling up next to you as you read a good book. Older children are great — as long as they have their own books. A quiet home is what I need, where I can be queen of my castle with no other pets to compete with. Come on in to the Pet Center and see just how compatible we can be. #57460

children are great — as long as they have their own books. A quiet home is what I need, where I can be queen of my castle with no other pets to compete with. Come on in to the Pet Center and see just how compatible we can be. #57460

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 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 in St. Augustine, 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.**

## BRIEFS

### Man injured in shooting that authorities believe was self-inflicted

The St. Johns County Sheriff's Office is investigating an apparent self-inflicted shooting that occurred Thursday evening at The Shoppes of Ponte Vedra.

According to a Sheriff's spokesman, the victim was alone in a vehicle in the parking lot

when his long gun was discharged, hitting him. A witness reported seeing the shooting.

The victim exited the vehicle and ran to a restaurant nearby, according to the Sheriff's Office. He was airlifted to a hospital where he was last reported to be in stable condition, according to media reports. As of Monday morning, investigators had not had an opportunity to interview the man.

BRIEFS continues on Page 3

## PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

C	H	I	C		B	B	C		E	W	E			
H	O	B	O		D	A	R	E		P	A	G	A	N
A	V	E	R		E	L	A	N		E	V	A	D	E
		E	X	P	O	N	E	N	T		C	E	D	E
			S	K	I	R	T		G	A	R			
S	P	H	E	R	E		Z	O	N	A	L	L	Y	
O	R	E		A	R	C	H	E	D		G	A	I	A
L	O	A	D	S		O	E	R		R	E	I	C	H
I	S	L	E		S	T	R	O	D	E		R	I	O
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7	9	1	5	2	8	6	4	3
4	8	6	7	3	9	1	2	5
8	1	2	3	6	4	7	5	9
6	4	7	9	5	1	8	3	2
5	3	9	2	8	7	4	1	6
1	7	5	6	9	2	3	8	4
9	2	4	8	7	3	5	6	1
3	6	8	1	4	5	2	9	7

Solutions correspond to last week's puzzles.

## CALLING ALL EXPLORERS

Spring Zoo Camp registration now open!



Register today at [jacksonvillezoo.org](http://jacksonvillezoo.org)



# Briefs

Continued from 2

## St. Johns County School District to begin early registration March 1

The St. Johns County School District

(SJCSD) will begin early registration for the 2021-22 school year March 1. This registration is only for children new to the school district, including those entering kindergarten.

Early registration can be completed online or by visiting the student's as-

signed school website. To find the assigned school, enter your street address on the Attendance Zone Locator.

To be eligible for public kindergarten in the SJCSD, children must be 5 years old on or before Sept. 1 and must reside in St. Johns County.

Other requirements for registration:

- Birth certificate/Guardianship documents
- Documentation of a health examination performed within one year of enrollment
- Proof of completed required immunizations on Form DH680
- Proof of residence per the residency and guardianship policy

For more information on registration, contact the Student Services Department at (904) 547-7598 or the assigned school.

## Bartram Trail Branch Library will be temporarily closed

The Bartram Trail Branch Library will be temporarily closed beginning March 8 for a roof replacement project. The project is scheduled to be complete in approximately seven weeks and the facility is scheduled to reopen to the public in April.

Beginning March 16, a curbside service library annex will be open for patrons to pick up requested items from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays at 725 Flora Branch Blvd. Returned items will not be accepted at the annex, however; no items previously checked out from the Bartram Trail Branch Library or checked out from the annex will be due. In addition, patrons will not accrue late fees during the closure.

# LUXURY COLLECTION





**3010 TIMBERLAKE PT. | PONTE VEDRA BEACH, FL | 4 BED | 4.5 BATH | 4,477 SQFT | \$2,399,000**

Spectacular lakefront home in the heart of Sawgrass Country Club. Situated on one of the largest lots in Sawgrass, this updated 4-bedroom home offers an upstairs bonus room, sunroom, home office, and amazing southerly views of the lake and golf course beyond. The chef of the house will enjoy the large kitchen with top-of-the-line Viking appliances and gas stove-top. Enjoy formal dinners in the dining room and more casual meals in the breakfast area or on the screened lanai. The 3-car garage has tons of storage space and room for a golf cart too! MLS 1085794

**For more information, contact Murray & Elise Beard: 904.465.2784**

# County launches new COVID-19 vaccination appointment pre-registration system

St. Johns County launched a new COVID-19 vaccination appointment preregistration system on Feb. 22.

Individuals who are interested in receiving the COVID-19 vaccine may now preregister for an appointment by going to <https://sjcvaccineappointment.sjcfll.us>. Individuals who preregister with the St. Johns County's vaccination appointment system will receive an automated phone call from (904) 295-3711 when CO-

VID-19 vaccination appointments become available, and will be provided the opportunity to do one of the following:

- Accept the assigned appointment
- Decline the assigned appointment
- Request removal from the registry
- Ask for a phone call from a vaccine call center operator

Individuals who choose to decline the assigned appointment will remain preregistered and will receive a subsequent phone

call with an alternative appointment date and time. The appointment preregistration system will remain open until 6,000 preregistrations are received, and will be made available again once new vaccines are received. Applicants must be 65 years of age or older or be a health care provider with direct patient contact to be eligible to preregister for an appointment at this time.

Upon arrival at the vaccination site, appointment holders will be required to

provide proof of age or proof of health care employment and proof of Florida residency. The new appointment preregistration system replaces St. Johns County's previous Eventbrite vaccine registration program, and is only for individuals who are receiving their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Call (904) 295-3711 for more information or to request assistance with preregistration.

## THE PLAYERS announces return of Every Shot Live

THE PLAYERS Championship has announced the return of Every Shot Live for the 2021 event, showcasing more than 32,000 live golf shots over 72 holes from a field of 144 players.

All of the coverage will be available to PGA TOUR LIVE subscribers on NBC Sports Gold, with opening-round play free to everyone for the first time.

In addition, for those who purchased tickets for the 2019-20 PLAYERS, the PGA TOUR has worked with its partners to offer a one-week trial of PGA TOUR LIVE so that fans who would have otherwise been able to attend the event can follow all the action throughout the duration of the week.

Past ticket purchasers who qualify for the free one-week trial of PGA TOUR LIVE will be notified via email on March 8 with directions on how to sign up.

PGA TOUR Entertainment and NBC Sports Group will accomplish the monumental task by using nearly 120 cameras positioned throughout THE PLAYERS

### PGA TOUR RELEASES STATEMENT AFTER TIGER WOODS ACCIDENT

PGA TOUR star Tiger Woods was injured in a single-vehicle crash Tuesday morning near Los Angeles. According to multiple reports, the two-time winner of THE PLAYERS Championship was removed from the wreckage by emergency workers and underwent surgery on injuries to his legs. "We have been made aware of Tiger Woods' car accident [Tuesday]. We are awaiting further information when he comes out of surgery. On behalf of the PGA TOUR and our players, Tiger is in our prayers and will have our full support as he recovers," PGA TOUR Commissioner Jay Monahan said in a statement released Tuesday.

Stadium Course, with each group having its own dedicated stream.

Every Shot Live debuted at THE PLAYERS Championship 2020, but only one round of play was contested as the tournament was canceled due to the onset of COVID-19.

"THE PLAYERS has developed a tradition of innovation where we've been able to deliver new technology to golf, and we are excited to welcome Every Shot Live back for the 2021 event," said Executive Director Jared Rice. "With a limited footprint of fans onsite this year, we want to

ensure those closest to this event — our friends and neighbors here in Northeast Florida — feel engaged with us. We know the impact of Every Shot Live as well as the various opportunities our partners are offering throughout this community will allow for everyone to feel as though they are part of the action taking place onsite."

THE PLAYERS also unveiled new fan engagement opportunities for the Northeast Florida community with the 2021 event hosting a limited number of ticketed spectators onsite given the current COVID-19 climate.

THE PLAYERS, which sold out earlier this week, returns to TPC Sawgrass the week of March 8-14.

In addition to Every Shot Live, THE PLAYERS will partner with area restaurants and golf courses to bring the tournament to the community in the spirit of providing PGA TOUR golf for those unable to attend.

ABBQ, Hoptinger (Five Points and Jacksonville Beach locations), Margaritaville Beach Hotel and V Pizza (Palm Valley location) will feature weeklong promotions in conjunction with the 2021 event. The restaurants will feature nightly food and drink specials as well as opportunities for fans to win PLAYERS merchandise.

Area golf courses have signed up to enhance THE PLAYERS fan experience in 2021, with Blue Sky Golf Club, Eagle Harbor Golf Club, The Yards, Windsor Parke Golf Club and Deercreek Country Club offering various contests, PLAYERS takeovers, PLAYERS Days at the course and merchandise giveaways.

## St. Augustine renames street Carrie Johnson Way

The City of St. Augustine unveiled a new name for Bravo Street in honor of the late Carrie Johnson, a St. Augustine native, known affectionately as "the Voice of Lincolnvillle."

The name — Carrie Johnson Way — was unveiled Saturday, Feb. 20, at the corner of Bravo and Weeden streets in Lincolnvillle.

St. Augustine Mayor Tracy Upchurch delivered opening remarks, followed by Vice Mayor Nancy Sikes-Kline. Keynote speaker was David Nolan, St. Augustine community historian. Family and friends of Johnson were invited to offer remarks or share stories as part of the ceremony.

Among her many volunteer activities during her life, Miss Carrie — as she

was referred to by all who knew her — organized an annual Christmas Caroling Galore, which started in 1995. Johnson established The Miss Carrie Foundation for Homeless Students, assisted with establishing the Lincolnvillle 150th anniversary celebration, helped found the Anniversary to Commemorate the Civil Rights Demonstrations (ACCORD) organization and served as vice president of the Fort Mose Historical Society.

The Lincolnvillle Museum and Cultural Center, located at 102 ML King Ave., offers a Miss Carrie Johnson exhibit for anyone who would like to learn more about Johnson's life in Lincolnvillle.

The museum is open from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

### BLACK HISTORY MONTH BROADCAST HONORS MULTIGENERATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

Teen influencers in the I'm A Star Foundation will host "Young, Gifted & Black," a broadcast highlighting young changemakers.

The special will take place from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27. It will be streamed to YouTube Live at [Youtube.com/ImAStarFoundation](https://www.youtube.com/ImAStarFoundation).



In honor of Black History Month, I'm A Star students ages 12 to 18 produced the program to celebrate the achievements of African-Americans across generations, locally and nationally.

One featured guest is Christa Kennebrew, a local third grader who started Reading Divas Book Club at 7 years old. The group, which brings mothers and daughters together for discussion and sweet treats, is praised for strengthening bonds and creating a village to navigate tween life.

Teen servant leaders will also highlight the journey of special guest Dr. Laurence Morse, a Jacksonville native and former student at then-segregated Matthew Gilbert High School, who is

now chairman of Howard University Board of Trustees.

Additional special guests will be announced as the event nears.



Contributed photo

For Adam Lassonde's Eagle Scout project, he managed the construction of a bridge over a concrete spillway for St. Johns Paul II Catholic Church.

## Scout from Troop 288 earns Eagle rank, project benefits St. John Paul II Catholic Church

Adam Lassonde's journey to the highest rank attainable in the Boy Scouts of America — Eagle Scout — began in the first grade.

A Connecticut cub scout in Troop 390, Adam and his family moved to Florida, and he became a member of Troop 288 when he was in the fourth grade. He achieved the highest rank in scouts, Eagle, in his 10th-grade year on Dec. 2.

On this journey, Adam held several leadership roles, contributed more than 150 hours of service to his community, attended numerous trips — including the high-adventure Philmont, earned 23 merit badges and organized and completed an Eagle project.

Adam's project benefited St. John Paul II Catholic Church, where he managed the building of a 20-foot-long by 8-foot-

wide bridge over a concrete spillway. This bridge is the first part in creating a walking path around a retention pond for prayer, meditation and the Stations of the Cross.

The building of the bridge was achieved with 230 service hours and 24 helpers. Adam raised more than \$7,800 for the project, donating back \$5,000 to the church.

Adam's Eagle Court of Honor, recognizing his new rank was held on Feb. 5. In attendance were his parents, current and former scout masters and fellow scouts.

Chartered in 1989, Troop 288 has been home for 115 scouts to earn the Eagle ranking. Ponte Vedra United Methodist Church is home to Troop 288. Additional information on Troop 288 is available at [www.troop288PVB.org](http://www.troop288PVB.org).



Contributed photo

Scouts earning the Arrow of Light are, from left, top row: Ben McLaughlin, Colin Alberts, Caitlin Alberts, Gavin Vickers, Sam Mead and Donovan Goddard; bottom row: Tyler McLaughlin, Julianna Meyers, Christopher Thompson and Mohamad Issa. Adults are Bill Vickers (left) and James Streit. Not pictured: Liam Somerville, Boaz Anderson and Brendan Browsers.

## Cub Scouts receive awards during Blue and Gold Banquet

Cub Scout Pack 277, sponsored by Christ Episcopal Church in Ponte Vedra Beach, recently held their Blue and Gold Banquet.

The banquet is a celebration of the birthday of Scouting and recognizes scouts for all they have done throughout the year.

This year's celebration was different due to COVID-19 and was much more limited in size. The celebration was held at Christ Episcopal on Feb. 5.

Younger Scouts enjoyed Cub Scout-themed birthday celebration cookies at a drive-through ceremony. The boys and girls in first through fourth grade also were recognized with the awards and accomplishments that they have earned throughout the year.

The fifth-grade scouts had an in-person celebration as they earned the highest

award in Cub Scouts, the Arrow of Light. These scouts had a pizza party and cake to celebrate before having a cross-over ceremony.

Thirteen scouts were recognized with the Arrow of Light and made the transition into Boy Scouts. The boys were led by adult leader Bill Vickers and the girls were led by adult leader Cordes Lindow.

Cub Scout Pack 277 has been active in Ponte Vedra Beach since 1977. They currently have approximately 60 active youth, including both boy and girl dens. Activities that they have participated in include camping, a pinewood derby, overnight trips to the Jacksonville Zoo, Kennedy Space Center and Sea World, and beach cleanup projects. The cubmaster for Pack 277 is James Streit.

For more information, go to [www.beascout.scouting.org](http://www.beascout.scouting.org).

## OBITUARIES

### Richard Michael Serafini, Sr.

Richard Michael Serafini, Sr., 72, of Ponte Vedra Beach, FL passed away peacefully, February 17, 2021.



Richard Michael Serafini, Sr.

Richard was born January 1, 1949 in Quincy, Massachusetts to the late Dorothy M. Serafini and Nello Serafini. He grew up in Wollaston, Massachusetts and graduated North Quincy High School. He went on to college at Suffolk University in Boston, where he graduated with a degree in Accounting and MBA in Finance.

He began his successful career in banking and finance as an Internal Auditor with the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. He later worked for Atlantic Bank in Jacksonville, Florida, Maryland National Bank in Baltimore, Maryland and Shawmut Bank in Hartford, Connecticut. He later joined Deloitte and Touche, LLP as partner in 1996 and retired in 2011. He also was a member of the Institute of Internal Auditors and a Board Member of Bon Secours Health System.

He is survived by his loving wife of 49 years, Susan Stenberg Serafini, daughter Nancy Croft (Kent) of Baltimore, son Richard Serafini, Jr. (Karrie) of Jacksonville, four grandchildren, Dylan, Austin, Eliza and Angelina. He also leaves behind sisters Linda Mason (Doug), Weymouth, Massachusetts, and Laura Jones (Richard) Pembroke, Massachusetts and many nieces and nephews.

In retirement, Richard loved playing golf with friends, traveling and spending time with his grandchildren. He will be missed by the many friends who enjoyed his company and his sense of humor.

A memorial service to celebrate his life will be held at a later date.

Contributions in his name may be sent to the Tim Tebow Foundation. Please visit the online Tribute at [www.quinn-shalz.com](http://www.quinn-shalz.com). Arrangements by Quinn Shalz Family Funeral Home.



Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre  
3600 Third Street South, Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250  
Phone: 904.249.1100 Fax: 904.241.7554

### Carolyn Amoret Evans

Carolyn Amoret Evans, 86, of Atlantic Beach, Florida, died Feb. 15, 2021. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family

Funeral Home & Cremation Centre.  
(904) 249-1100 [www.quinn-shalz.com](http://www.quinn-shalz.com)

### Richard Michael Serafini, Sr.

Richard Michael Serafini, Sr., 72, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died Feb. 17, 2021. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre.  
(904) 249-1100 [www.quinn-shalz.com](http://www.quinn-shalz.com)

### Ronald Soder

Ronald Soder, 86, of Atlantic Beach, died Feb. 18, 2021. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre,  
(904) 249-1100, [www.quinn-shalz.com](http://www.quinn-shalz.com)

### Pamela Thompson

Pamela Thompson, 74, of Jacksonville Beach, Florida, died Feb. 13, 2021. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre.  
(904) 249-1100 [www.quinn-shalz.com](http://www.quinn-shalz.com)

*Troy Smith of Ponte Vedra Beach is the 2021 Tournament Chairman for THE PLAYERS Championship. He is a successful attorney, having been named a Florida and Top 100 Super Lawyer, a Florida Trend Legal Elite attorney and one of the Best Lawyers in America for Construction Law. This is his 11th year as a volunteer at THE PLAYERS.*

## Troy Smith



Photo provided by Troy Smith

As told to Shaun Ryan

### What are your duties as chairman of THE PLAYERS Championship 2021?

Along with my vice chairs, we are responsible for all of the volunteers, the volunteer committees and the volunteer divisions to help produce THE PLAYERS Championship.

We have about just under 50 different committees. On a normal year, we have between 2,200 and 2,500 volunteers. This year, of course, with limited capacity we have fewer volunteers, but still a significant number.

### How do you manage it all?

I've got five vice chairs who work with me. Each is responsible for a different division of committees. Each committee is headed by a chairman and an assistant chairman. And the work flows in that manner.

### Tell me about this large group of volunteers who make THE PLAYERS Championship happen each year.

Everyone is an ambassador for this game, but no one plays a more pivotal role than our volunteers. They devote countless hours to this championship every year to make sure it's a top-notch experience. They're truly the backbone of the tournament. You can't say enough about them, and I thank each and every one of them.

### How did you first become involved in THE PLAYERS' volunteer leadership?

My good friend Andy Baggs convinced me to come out and work in general parking 11 years ago. There was a lot of friendship and camaraderie, so I decided to come back, and they gave me a promotion to ecology that next year. Assistant chair of ecology is a nice way of saying "picking up trash." [laughs]

### What are some of the positions you've held on the various committees?

I started as assistant chair in general parking, and then assistant chair in ecology, commissary, VIP parking, benefactor venue, volunteer shuttle, and then started moving up into the vice chair.

You start out with volunteer services. We have a facilities division, spectator services, players services and then first vice chair. The first vice chair is the one who really runs the logistics of the tournament, and the chairman is just doing presentations and consulting with the first vice chair and making critical decisions on the tournament and volunteers and getting this championship set up so that it's presented in a safe and responsible manner.

### How has this experience prepared you for your role as tournament chairman?

It's been different. Everyone's heard by now that we have limited capacity:

20% of maximum expected occupancy during the week. And that's because of the uncertainty surrounding COVID and our attempts to present it in a safe and responsible manner.

So, there's not a whole lot that can prepare you. We had a system we developed over years for how our volunteers would be staffed and what their functions were. And it was refined every year to make it better.

But this year, we basically had to start over.

For example, we've added safety ambassadors who will be roaming the course and providing positive reminders for folks to wear their masks and socially distance while they're on the course.

We started meeting in March and had multiple meetings leading all the way up to the tournament. Beginning in January, we started meeting every week. But the meetings this year have been, instead of one-hour meetings, four- and five-hour meetings. Just trying to figure out what we haven't thought of. What scenario have we not prepared for?

It's just a lot of precautionary planning to make sure we present this championship responsibly.

### What is the most rewarding part of being involved with THE PLAYERS Championship?

The charitable aspect of it. The players, together with the partners, the volunteers,

the patrons and fans in the Northeast Florida community, have been able to generate over \$100 million for local charities since 1974.

And as a red coat, I get to do what's called Red Coat Rideouts, an annual tradition where we go out and we present checks to charities and local nonprofits in our Northeast Florida area that are doing so much good in the community.

### Tell us about your background.

I'm from Palatka. Born and raised there. Went to Palatka High School. Played baseball at St. Johns River Community College. Went from there to the University of Florida. From there, I went to law school at Stetson University College of Law in St. Pete, Florida.

### Tell us about your profession as an attorney.

I work at Burr Forman, a regional firm. We're all over the Southeast with almost 400 attorneys. Primarily what I practice in is construction, so anywhere from contracts and negotiations to problems that develop during a project all the way through litigation on the tail end.

### How do you like to spend your free time?

Since COVID hit, we really spend most of our time in the back yard. We go boating. We go fishing. We go golfing a lot as a family.

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

### KATHY'S GARDENING GUIDE

*"Love is the flower of life, and blossoms unexpectedly and without law, and must be plucked where it is found, and enjoyed for the brief hour of its duration." – D.H. Lawrence*



Flower of the Week: *Gazania*

#### GETTING READY FOR SPRING



**Kathy Esfahani**  
Columnist

The groundhog says spring is not coming early; but, never fear ... there are still ways to get your yard or lovely garden ready for the spring season.

First, it's important to know our zone and what is best to plant locally. We are located in the 9A zone here in Northeast Florida, so you'll need to ensure items you purchase can thrive in zone 9A.

- Don't forget the next step — an early spring cleanup. Clean up the mounds of plant debris that may be in your garden beds, including any annuals you failed to remove last fall.

- This time is also great for transplanting any plants or trees you've been dying to relocate. The cooler, wet months of late is ideal for finally making the transfer.

- Be sure to prune all of your plants and trees in the next few weeks, or as long as temperatures don't go below freezing in the forecast of at least 32 degrees or less, just to ensure the majority of cold nights

are over for the season. This will not only aid in producing maximum growth in the next few months, but the effort will be more than worth it come spring.

- Fertilize flowers and plants, including all sodding during the month, most especially before the heat sets in.

- Weed and mulch to refresh your flower beds or postings. Mulch discourages weeds, and moderates the soil temperature. It also creates cohesion for your landscaping pageantry.

- Tools. Please ensure that you purchase or clean and sharpen any gardening tools you need to ensure you're ready for spring.

- Although warm weather may be later than normal this year, it's still time to get prepared with the materials you'll need, especially to be prepared for a freeze or two before the coast is clear.

Happy planting!

**Email Kathy at [kathys.creative.gardens@gmail.com](mailto:kathys.creative.gardens@gmail.com) for any questions or gardening tips you would like to see in the future.**

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#### "Model" Home in Alta Lakes

Lightly lived-in and beautifully maintained, this house looks and feels like a model home with tall ceilings, a neutral palette, and an open floor plan ideal for everyday life. Featuring water to woods views along with smart home features and premium upgrades.

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[Elizabeth@ElizabethHudgins.com](mailto:Elizabeth@ElizabethHudgins.com)  
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# Kids springin' for fun guide

## Library offers activities, events to keep kids entertained

By Holly Tishfield

In a society that was constantly morphing to adapt to the effects of the global pandemic, local libraries were faced with creating a safe and responsible way to bring events back to the community.

At first the solution to this was to host virtual events. As the stay-at-home order was slowly lifted, librarians and other team members at the Ponte Vedra Branch Public Library pulled together their resources to host events over Zoom, the popular video-calling website. They hosted kids Lego clubs, dance classes, artist talks and more. The library still continues to host events this way, but recently they tested out a new method of community activities.

On Feb. 11, the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Public Library hosted its first in-person event since the start of the pandemic, which was called “Family Storytime at Bird Island Park.”

As the name suggests, the library partnered with the St. John’s County Parks and Recreation team to host an in-person storytelling at the amphitheater located inside of Bird Island Park in Ponte Vedra Beach.

The event gathered together more than 25 excited families to hear Lisa Calvert, new youth services librarian at the Ponte Vedra Branch, read a story aloud. The library followed a safety protocol, which involved putting a capacity on the event by asking parents to RSVP, and



Photo provided by the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Public Library  
**New Youth Services Librarian Lisa Calvert hosts book clubs for the Ponte Vedra Beach Branch Library and recently read to kids and their families for “Family Storytime at Bird Island Park.”**

socially distancing the seats within the amphitheater.

“It is great that we can adapt what we used to provide,” Calvert said.

The Ponte Vedra Branch is hoping to continue working with the St. John’s County Parks and Recreation team to

bring more socially distanced and outdoor events to the amphitheater throughout the summer.

For now, the “Family Storytimes” will continue at Bird Island Park. Its next event, on Feb. 25, is already full but Calvert said that there will be two more readings at 10:30 a.m. on March 11 and March 25. Parents can reserve tickets for by calling the Ponte Vedra Branch Public Library.

For parents who want to involve their children with the library but would prefer not to be in a small crowd, virtual events are still happening daily.

Book clubs, such as the Erin Hunter Book Club, hosted by Calvert, will have its next Zoom meeting Feb. 25.

Ms. Kimberly, another librarian at the Ponte Vedra Branch, offers a “Crafternoon” twice a month, where she puts together craft kits filled with necessary items and offers an online video for families to follow at home as they craft with their children. On March 8, Ms. Kimberly will distribute a leprechaun-themed kit, and on March 22, it will be river otter-themed.

The librarians at the Ponte Vedra Branch Public Library feel fortunate they can now utilize the amphitheater in Bird Island Park to host in-person events. The library itself is also open five days per week, and librarians recommend stopping by to pick out a new book or ask for recommendations at any time during their library hours, which are 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Tuesday; 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Wednesday, Thursdays and Friday; and 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday.

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# Real Estate SHOWCASE



Some outdoor improvements that can boost home values

GreenPointe Communities win Laurel Awards

New realty office opens at Nocatee Town Center

Spring signifies busy season for real estate business

FEBRUARY 25, 2021



# Recorder



# Ground broken for new Seven Pines community

Master-planned community near Butler Boulevard and I-295 coming soon

The Skinner family recently joined two home builders, ICI Homes and David Weekley Homes, and Jacksonville city leaders to mark the groundbreaking of Seven Pines, a new master-planned community in Jacksonville's south side near the St. Johns Town Center and just south of the University of North Florida.

"The groundbreaking is an important milestone for the Seven Pines community," said Mori Hosseini, chairman and CEO of ICI Homes and the managing partner of the Seven Pines partnership. "Our new Southside Jacksonville development is one of the most notable new projects in Northeast Florida, and we are thrilled construction of our brand new master-planned community is underway."

Seven Pines is located at the southeastern quadrant of the I-295-Butler Boulevard interchange on the southern extension of Kernan Boulevard south of Butler Boulevard. The name, Seven Pines, pays tribute to the seven Skinner brothers who have a long and rich family history with the property and the city of Jacksonville.

"While the location speaks for itself, we are enthusiastic about the plans for Seven Pines, which we believe will create a



The Skinner family, ICI Homes and City of Jacksonville leaders recently marked the groundbreaking of Seven Pines, a new master-planned community in Jacksonville. Pictured from left are Mary Virginia Skinner Jones; Mori Hosseini, chairman and CEO of ICI Homes; David Weekley, chairman of David Weekley Homes; Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry.

unique experience for our future residents and a lasting legacy to the Skinner family," said David Weekley, chairman of David Weekley Homes. "The community design will bring Seven Pines residents closer to nature while creating a strong sense of community."

The property is the last large parcel of land of the Skinner family's original holdings, which included the St. Johns

Town Center and the University of North Florida and will be designed and developed consistent with the family's vision. Once completed, Seven Pines will include approximately 1,600 single-family homes, apartments and more than a million square feet of commercial and retail space.

Seven Pines will have distinctive new home designs in walkable neighborhoods, a village center, parks, trails, lakes and green

spaces. Plans for the community include a 34-acre Central Park with a lake and a variety of architectural styles and home sizes in interconnected neighborhoods, built by both ICI Homes and David Weekley Homes.

Seven Pines residents will have access to many amenities.

Central Park and a 7,900-square-foot Residents Club will be located alongside a lake. Two miles of multi-purpose trails will circle the lake, with other trails and sidewalks throughout the community connecting the residential neighborhoods and amenities.

The Residents Club will offer a resort-style pool, a lap-lane pool and children's sprayground with interactive water features and slides as well as a party cabana.

The clubhouse will provide nearly 3,000 square feet of fitness space that will include a group fitness area and a cardio workout area in addition to meeting and event space. Plans for the amenity area include an outpost building for canoes and kayaks as well as other lake-centered activities.

There will be markers within the community honoring and paying tribute to the Skinner family heritage.

The main entry to the community is currently planned to be an extension of Kernan Boulevard.

Go to [www.sevenpines.com](http://www.sevenpines.com) for more information.

Contributed photo

## 5 outdoor improvements that can boost home value

Whether home improvement projects are designed to improve the interior or exterior of a house, focusing on renovations that make the most financial sense can benefit homeowners in the long run. The right renovations can be assets if and when homeowners decide to sell their homes.

So how does one get started? First and foremost, speak to a local real estate agent who is knowledgeable about trends in the community. While a swimming pool may be something coveted in one area, it may impede sales in another. It also helps to

study generalized trends and data from various home improvement industry analysts to guide upcoming projects.

The following outdoor projects are just a few renovations that tend to add value.

■ **Fire pit:** A fire pit is a great place to gather most months of the year. Bob Vila and CBS news report that a fire pit realizes a 78% return on investment, or ROI.

■ **Outdoor kitchen:** Many buyers are looking to utilize their yards as an extension of interior living areas. Cooking, dining and even watching TV outdoors

is increasingly popular. Outdoor living areas can be custom-designed and built. In addition, prefabricated modular units that require a much smaller commitment of time and money are available.

■ **Patio:** Homeowners who do not already have a patio will find that adding one can increase a home's value. Patios help a home look neat, add useable space and may help a home to sell quickly. The experts at Space Wise, a division of Extra Space Storage, say refinishing, repairing and building a new patio offers strong ROI.

■ **Door update:** Improve curb appeal with a new, high-end front door and garage doors. If that's too expensive, a good cleaning and new coat of paint can make an old door look brand new. These easy fixes can improve a home's look instantly.

■ **New landscaping:** The National Association of Realtors says an outdoor makeover that includes well-thought out landscaping can net 105% ROI. Installing a walkway, adding stone planters, mulching and planting shrubs are ideas to consider.

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Kristin and Quinton Doakes cut the ribbon for their independent brokerage, Driftwood Realty Group.

## Driftwood Realty Group opens in Nocatee Town Center

By Shaun Ryan

After more than five years of running a successful residential real estate team based in St. Johns County, Kristin and Quinton Doakes — known as the Doakes Team — have launched their own independent brokerage, Driftwood Realty Group.

“The real estate industry has changed, and your traditional real estate agent is becoming less valuable to sellers and buyers,” said broker Kristin Doakes. “This is due to having multiple online resources at their fingertips. Our advisors guide buyers and sellers through the process, offering resources that extend far beyond the transaction.”

The internet has had a big impact on the real estate landscape. Buyers often go to Zillow or Realtor.com

DRIFTWOOD continues on Page 14



ABOVE: A look inside the business offices of Driftwood Realty Group.



LEFT: A decorated cake was part of the celebration for the launch of Driftwood Realty Group.

Photos by Susan Griffin

## Local real estate market blooms early, but spring signifies busier season



Clare Berry  
Berry & Co. Real Estate

When is the start of spring this year? It depends on who you ask! Spring starts March 1 and runs through May 31 for meteorologists who analyze the seasons by dividing the year in quarters.

According to The Farmer’s Almanac, “The meteorological seasons are based on annual temperature cycles rather than on the position of Earth in relation to the Sun, and they more closely follow the Gregorian calendar.

Using the dates of the astronomical equinoxes and solstices for the seasons would present a statistical problem, as these dates can vary slightly each year.”

For Realtors in Northeast Florida, our traditional “busy season” kicks off as two happenings occur: THE PLAYERS Championship, which this year is the week of March 7, and the March (also known as the Spring or Vernal) Equinox, which for 2021 is Saturday, March 20 at 5:37 a.m. Starting in March, when we in the Northern Hemisphere begin to enjoy more sunlight and longer days as our part of the globe is tilted more toward the sun, we Realtors often have longer days as well! Prospective buyers will schedule seeing homes they are interested in after their work days end, so if sellers can accommodate, some days I will be out until dusk. With summer solstice starting in June, that extended daylight time can add another three hours or so to normal winter work days.

This year, buyers have not been waiting for spring to shop for homes. The pandemic has changed how many corporate employees work; with offices closed, the norm became working from home or perhaps a workspace in a local hotel. This has expanded our buyer profile to include these displaced workers who now can work from anywhere, virtually. Compare Northeast Florida’s quality of life to many other places, and it’s understandable why we’ve had an active real estate sales year already in 2021.

Now that spring is upon us, we will see more locals out and about shopping for their next home, as well as buyers from other parts of the country. It’s a great time to spruce up your home’s curb appeal with spring flowers, whether you’re selling or staying. Here’s to longer days!

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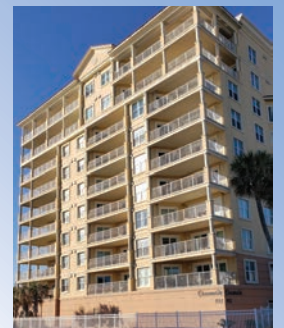
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First showing Sunday, Feb. 28, by appointment! Don’t miss out on this rarely-available Oceanside 932 3-bedroom condo with ocean views. It is move-in ready! The reasonable condo fee of \$611.56/month includes water/sewer, gas for fireplace and balcony grill hookup, private pool & two reserved parking spots. Contact Clare Berry for appointment.



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# Douglas Elliman Real Estate Welcomes The KMF | JMF Group



With Douglas Elliman's recent Florida expansion to Jacksonville's Ponte Vedra Beach, Kim Martin-Fisher, and Jennifer Martin Faulkner, top producing agents in North East Florida, are proud to announce they have joined the brokerage. The KMF | JMF Group has sold over \$230 million since 2019 and is known for its multiple record-breaking sales and vast knowledge of the most prestigious neighborhoods in St. Johns and Duval Counties.\* Contact them today to turn what you love into where you live.

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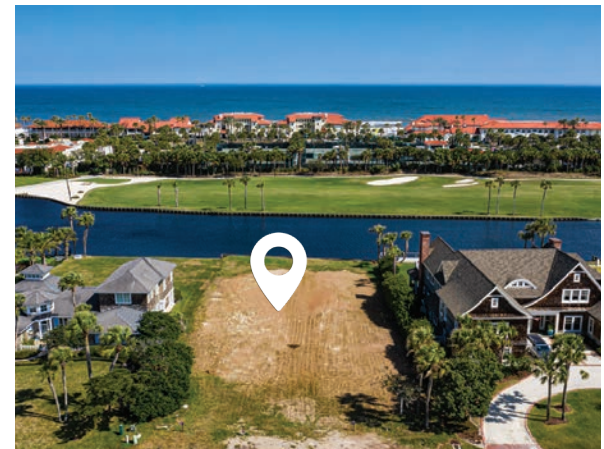
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Ponte Vedra Beach | 8024 Pebble Creek Ln W  
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Approx. 6,734sf | **Web# 1079350**

Ponte Vedra Beach | 714 Ponte Vedra Blvd  
\$1,898,000 | 3 BR, 4 BA  
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Ponte Vedra Beach | 145 Sea Hammock Way  
\$749,900 | 3 BR, 2 BA | Approx. 1,705sf  
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## Driftwood

Continued from 11

to learn about a property before inquiring about it. They can even see what the current owners paid for a house when they bought it.

“They come in with so much information, and we have to really bring market knowledge that only an agent could provide,” said Doakes.

That the brokerage calls its agents advisers is suggestive of a different approach, one that Doakes said has worked for the Doakes Team. These advisers go beyond writing up contracts and showing properties.

“We’re advising them through the entire real estate process,” said Doakes.

The brokerage works with title companies, lenders and others all the way through.

“We’ll be there at the inspection, pointing things out and making sure they see everything,” Doakes said.

The role of the advisers doesn’t end with the transaction.

“It’s a relationship,” Doakes said. “We’re always there.”

This means following up with customers on a regular basis.

As part of this approach to real



Photo by Susan Griffin

**The Driftwood Realty Group team stands outside the business's offices. Pictured from left are marketing coordinator Tyra Key, business owners Kristin and Quinton Doakes and transaction coordinator Lane Graham.**

estate in the 21st century, the brokerage makes use of the latest technology, combining automated systems, a fully developed marketing library and an in-house marketing team.

Driftwood Realty Group announced the new brokerage’s opening in January and the team has

received a lot of positive feedback.

“The agents that we’ve spoken to are really excited about what we have to offer, because Quinton and I have built an excellent brand over the last six years in real estate,” Doakes said.

More information is available at [www.DriftwoodRealtyGroup.com](http://www.DriftwoodRealtyGroup.com).

## Watson names new managing brokers for southside and St. Johns offices

Watson Realty Corp has announced new managing brokers for its southside and St. Johns offices — respectively, Tony Spence and Eddie Cintron.



**Tony Spence**

Spence joined Watson more than five years ago after 20 years in the U.S. Navy. He has been successful as a sales agent in the Watson North Jacksonville office in preparation for this new role.

“Tony is very excited about joining the Watson leadership team and overseeing the southside office,” said Watson President Ed Forman. “We are thrilled for him, and he is a great addition to our team.”



**Eddie Cintron**

Former southside managing broker Eddie Cintron will move to the St. Johns office. He has achieved a high level of status and respect managing the southside office for the past four years.

“Eddie has created and enjoyed substantial success throughout his real estate career, most recently as the managing broker for our southside office,” said North Central Regional Vice President Mark Rosener. “His energy, enthusiasm and passion for the business and our agents has been, and will continue to be, the foundation of his success.”

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# GreenPointe Communities wins 7 Laurel Awards



Photo provided by GreenPointe Communities

**GreenPointe Communities Marketing Director Gaynelle James received seven Laurel Awards, including Marketing Professional of the Year, from the Northeast Florida Builders Association.**

## Marketing director, TrailMark Groove in the Grove recognized

GreenPointe Communities has been honored by the Northeast Florida Builders Association Sales and Marketing Council with seven Laurel Awards.

Marketing Director Gaynelle James was named Marketing Professional of the Year and the company received several awards for its community of TrailMark, including Best Consumer Promotional event award for Groove in the Grove.

“Gaynelle continues to take our company’s marketing excellence to new heights and her contributions have made a significant impact to multiple operating divisions within our organization,” said GreenPointe Regional President Mike Taylor. “Gaynelle is an accomplished marketing executive and recognized by her peers and colleagues for her creativity and spontaneity. I am thrilled for her to receive this honor for her dedication and commitment to GreenPointe.”

James is responsible for creating the marketing vision, producing strategies and executing tactics that consistently communicate the company’s brand message for GreenPointe’s three operating divisions, corporate headquarters and communities throughout Florida.

Among her achievements during the past year, she developed and managed the marketing and promotion for the launch and opening of Tributary, a new master-planned community in Northeast Florida, and held a high-profile groundbreaking for Tributary Regional Park, a public and private partnership between GreenPointe and Nassau County.

James developed and managed marketing campaigns for on-site promotional events for three different GreenPointe communities.

When the pandemic brought on-site tours by prospective buyers to a halt, James responded by creating virtual tours for five communities throughout Florida. Her efforts have been credited with enhancing GreenPointe’s reputation for innovation and results.

With expansive outdoor common areas, TrailMark provided the perfect location for a free, live music festival, Groove in the Grove. From midday to sunset, a trio of regional bands entertained approximately 2,000 people next to TrailMark’s Lakeside Camp House. Attendees enjoyed popular local bands and a family fun zone with inflatables, face painting, a mechanical bull, 15 vendors and food trucks and more.

The promotion for Groove in the Grove earned Laurel Awards for Best Overall Advertising Campaign and Best Digital Campaign.

TrailMark received the Laurel Award for Best Facebook page. During 2020, GreenPointe shifted its social media strategy to provide rich content since more people are spending time on social media in lieu of in-person socializing. The Facebook page includes TrailMark announcements, builder news, event promotions, lifestyle tips and opportunities to virtually “visit” model homes and the community. It also showcases the community’s amenities. Posts include resident- and realtor-shared content.

GreenPointe’s new community of Tributary was honored with Best Print Ad and Best Logo awards.

“GreenPointe shares these Laurel Award honors with our creative partners, Ruckus Advertising and Cotton & Company, and we thank them for bringing our vision to life,” said James. “I am grateful to work with such talented partners and truly appreciate their many contributions to our success.”

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# Beacon Lake celebrates grand opening of new model homes

The lakefront lifestyle community of Beacon Lake celebrated the model grand opening of Beacon Lake's newest builder, Toll Brothers on Feb. 11.

The grand opening event highlighted Toll Brothers' new two-story, 3,152-square-foot, designer-decorated model home, Roseberry Elite.

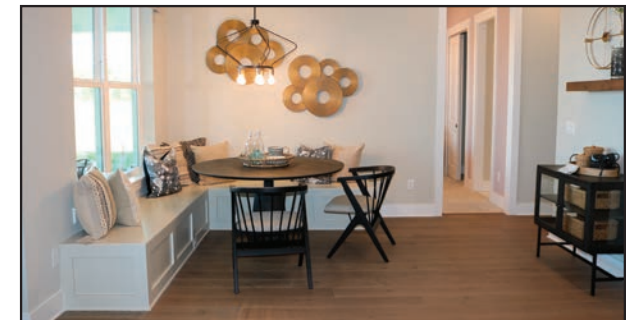
During the event, visitors had the opportunity to tour Dream Finders Homes' three single-family models and three townhome models, and were also able to take an exclusive tour of Lake House, Beacon Lake's amenity and fitness center.

At Beacon Lake, Toll Brothers is offering spacious single-family homes showcasing craftsman, farmhouse, island-inspired and Tuscan home designs to complement the community's coastal-inspired architectural style and lakefront setting.

The Landing at Beacon Lake, a gated neighborhood with views of Beacon Lake and Lake House, offers five innovative home designs on 73-foot home sites. Priced from the mid-\$400,000s, floorplans will range in size from 2,600 square feet to 3,680 square feet.

Beacon Lake is located on the south side of County Road 210 between U.S. Route 1 and Interstate 95.

For more information, go to [www.BeaconLake.com](http://www.BeaconLake.com).



**ABOVE:** Beacon Lake boasts a 43-acre paddle-friendly lake and is nestled within 358 acres of nature preserve.

**LEFT:** A musician entertains guests at the model homes grand opening at Beacon Lake on Feb. 22.

**RIGHT:** Toll Brothers and Dream Finders Homes revealed new model homes at Beacon Lake during the event.

Photos by Susan Griffin

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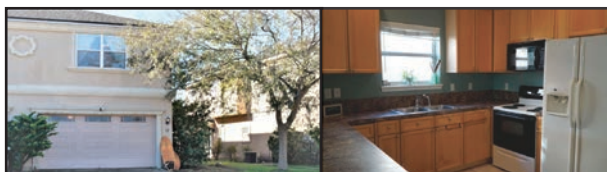
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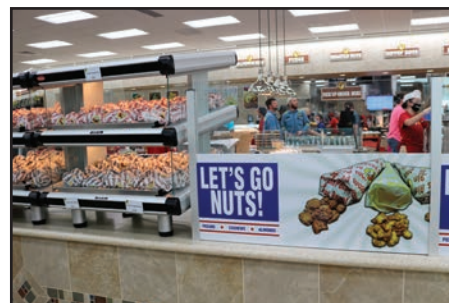
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PAGE 17 THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2021

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Arch "Beaver" Aplin III, co-founder and CEO of Buc-ee's, cuts the ribbon as representatives from Buc-ee's, members of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce and government officials celebrate the grand opening of the travel center's first Florida location on Feb. 22.



Photos by Susan Griffin  
Buc-ee's boasts a large retail center, as well as numerous snack, meal and drink options.

## Buc-ee's opens 1st Florida travel center near World Golf Village

Buc-ee's officially opened its first travel center in Florida at 6 a.m. Monday near World Golf Village. A ribbon-cutting ceremony conducted by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce was held at 11 a.m.

The center at 200 World Commerce Parkway occupies 52,600 square feet and has 104 fueling stations. The gas station and convenience store are open

24 hours, and the latter features thousands of snack, meal and drink options. Signature favorites include Texas barbecue, homemade fudge, kolaches, Beaver nuggets, jerky and fresh pastries.

The opening drew a large crowd of Buc-ee's fans Monday.

"Picking St. Augustine for our first Florida location made sense for many reasons, but its proximity to our other

locations across the South was our initial motivator," said Stan Beard, Buc-ee's director of real estate. "Location aside, our owners fell in love with the rich history and warm hospitality of St. Augustine. With their crystal-clear beaches and walkable atmosphere, St. Augustine is among the most beautiful

BUC-EE'S continues on Page 19

## Jax Spine & Pain Centers, UF Health Jacksonville collaborate on state-of-the-art surgery center

Jax Spine & Pain Centers, in collaboration with UF Health Jacksonville, has broken ground on a state-of-the-art multispecialty surgery center and medical office building. The 19,000-square-foot Centurion Surgery Center will be housed in a new three-story, 54,000-square-foot medical facility with 12 outpatient operating suites and procedure rooms.

Jacksonville is Florida's fastest-growing city according to the May 2019 U.S. Census Report, and this facility is designed with an increasing patient population in mind.

The center will facilitate treatment of back problems, joint pain and osteoarthritis, and spinal disorders, which are among the top 10 reasons people visit their doctor for treatment.

This \$25 million project will be the largest freestanding multispecialty surgery center on the First Coast and will offer patients neurosurgical, interventional pain management, orthopaedic, gastrointestinal, oral, and maxillofacial, surgical and gynecological care.

The facility will operate five days a week, and the aim is to drive down the

cost of health care by safely performing appropriately complex surgeries in an outpatient setting. This is the first of several freestanding surgery centers to open in Northeast Florida and South Georgia with an emphasis on spinal care.

The Centurion Surgery Center is slated to open in spring 2022 and will provide patients with efficient access to help drive down health care costs, decrease the wait time for scheduling procedures and allow participating physicians throughout the First Coast the use of this state-of-the-art facility.

## What's next?



Harry Pappas  
Columnist

I believe that most of us would agree that our world is addicted to a "more is better" mentality, which, not surprisingly, causes far too many folks to repeatedly ask, "What's next?" In other words, what

next thing will scratch our itch?

The ever-increasing craving for an ever-diminishing pleasure is a failed experiment, but trying to understand and apply the concept, that maybe the more is better mantra, is not necessarily out there but right here. Becoming content is incredibly tough, even for the wealthiest man in history, John D. Rockefeller. When asked, "How much is enough?" his famous reply was, "Just a little bit more."

Perhaps we should define what "being content" means. Since this is my column, I will interpret: Being content is being pleased and satisfied with our lives, not needing more. Unfortunately, for most of my life (up until about four years ago), I described contentment as accumulating enough wealth and possessions to make me feel secure even if it meant spending most of my life jumping from one thing to another while believing that life will be better after \_\_\_\_, fill in the blank.

While striving for contentment, I was moving so fast through life that I was under the curse of stress and irritability, which caused me to become what some would say; a curmudgeon! While I had accumulated enough money and things, I never grew rich in the things that matter most, which, ironically, aren't things at all. How sad it is that so many of us fall in love with things that cannot love us back?

Regrettably, I was letting the questionable good things to replace the God things. My spirit was willing, but my flesh was weak! Nevertheless, I have been running all my life. I had to stop the craziness! I'm done, over and out! While I believe most of us equate contentment with being happy, we often seek the evasive happiness feeling in all the wrong places and things. I argue that the secret of happiness is found in developing the capacity to enjoy less.

PAPPAS continues on Page 18



# Pappas

Continued from 17

Therefore, happiness is a byproduct of contentment.

Let me say it again but a little louder for those of you in the back, HAPPINESS IS A BYPRODUCT OF CONTENTMENT.

It was the legendary Hindu sage, Ramana Maharshi, who said, “All unhappiness is due to the ego. With it comes all your trouble. If you would deny the ego and scorch it by ignoring it you would be free.”

The problem is that our egos are tenacious buggers, as ego embodies the “after me I come first” way of thinking. What I find ironic is that deep inside most people there is a longing to stop the pushing and striving to get more and be more, but the “world” makes it so darn tempting by inundating us with the things of this world. The enemy’s goal is to create dissatisfaction and unhappiness in us, unless, of course, we make another Amazon purchase, buy more clothes, a new car or a larger home. Sadly, the idea of just slowing down and enjoying what we have in front us repeatedly falls on deaf ears.

Author Henry David Thoreau, who is best known for his book, “Walden,” a reflection upon simple living, encouraged people to simplify. Thoreau went into the woods at Walden Pond (a lake in Concord, Massachusetts) and built a small cabin that had room for only one. He stayed there for two years because he believed that reducing our worldly footprint helps to focus one on truth and beauty.

Living an uncluttered life increases our gratefulness for what we have. He wrote, “Give me that poverty that knows true wealth.”

Thoreau epitomized the notion of resisting the noise and embracing the slowness.

It is said that the primary reason for being unhappy is wanting things to be different from the way they are, which reminds me of what Bob Welch, the author of “52 Little Lessons from It’s a Wonderful Life,” said. “Funny how so many young people desperately want to grow up and how many older people desperately want to grow “down”— go back to a younger age. What’s wrong with being content where you are?”

I put forth that the most difficult part of becoming content is that it is something that cannot be taught; it must be caught! Perhaps the closing lyrics from a 1969 Rolling Stones’ song will help us catch contentment, but more importantly, grasp it and apply its magic: “You can’t always get what you want, but if you try sometimes, you just might find, you get what you need.”

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# Buc-ee's

Continued from 17

cities in Florida. We are excited to offer visitors and residents the experience and convenience of Buc-ee's and can't wait to become a part of the local community."

Construction is underway for a second Florida location in Daytona Beach, which is expected to open next month.

The two Florida "outposts" continue Buc-ee's multi-state expansion across the South, joining stores in Georgia and Alabama. Buc-ee's first travel center in South Carolina is also currently under construction and is slated for opening in 2022.

Buc-ee's continues to operate 38 locations in Texas, where it was founded by Arch "Beaver" Aplin III in 1982. In fact, the world's largest gas station is the Buc-ee's in New Braunfels, Texas, which has 120 gas pumps, 1,000 parking spots and a 67,000-square-foot store.



Photo by Susan Griffin

**Buc-ee's held a grand-opening event Feb. 22 for its new store located near World Golf Village.**

The St. Johns County center will bring approximately 200 new, permanent, full-time jobs to the area.

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# Memoir details local woman's story of overcoming abuse, poverty

Told through eyes of a child, 'Wildflower' offers wonder, inspiration amid struggles

By Holly Tishfield

Two months ago, Jacksonville native Dr. Teresa Van Woy published an inspirational memoir about her childhood struggles with abuse and poverty.

At 7 years old, Van Woy's mother packed her and her siblings into a camper for a cross-country trip, which landed them in the bustling city of San Francisco. But living in this new city turned out to be more of a nightmare than a dream for Van Woy and her siblings as they struggled with poverty and homelessness.

After half of her siblings were sent back to Jacksonville to live with their father, Van Woy and her remaining siblings were left to deal with their mother's mistreatment. In her teenage years, Van Woy moved back to Jacksonville to live with her father, where she paid for tuition out of her own pocket at Bishop Kenny High School, a private, Catholic high school near San Marco.

Van Woy's memoir, titled "Wildflower: A Tale of Transcendence," details her journey from Jacksonville, to San Fran-



cisco, and eventually back to Jacksonville again. At its core, the memoir focuses on overcoming abuse/poverty, being kind and seeing the world in a different light. Told through the eyes of a child, it also includes the adventures and fantasies of a young kid living a better life.

The memoir began as an activity for a motivational class that Van Woy attended, where her teacher encouraged her to write down her story to inspire other people as she had inspired their class. Van Woy was hesitant at first, but now that her book has over 115 positive reviews on Amazon, she knows it was the right choice.

"I am getting a lot of stories from strangers of things going on in their past," said Van Woy. "I even got a message from someone saying, 'Your book inspired me so much... it gave me the strength I need...'"

At her home in the San Francisco Bay Area, Van Woy says the bookstores have her memoir in the window, but they continuously sell out.

"Wildflower: A Tale of Transcendence" is available on Amazon, but can also be purchased by visiting a local bookstore and requesting booksellers to order it.

# Symphony pushes forward with largest fundraising event of season

Even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Jacksonville Symphony will continue forward with plans for its largest fundraising event of the season — The Symphony Gala.

The gala will take place over two nights: the free and open virtual fundraiser March 5, and the live concert in Jacoby Symphony Hall on March 6. The 2021 Symphony Gala is presented by Truist.

## VIRTUAL GALA FUNDRAISER

7:30 p.m., Friday, March 5

- Includes culmination of virtual silent auction
- Includes virtual live auction
- One-hour event highlighting how the Jacksonville Symphony has impacted the community
- Free and open to the public

## LIVE GALA CONCERT

7:30 p.m., Saturday, March 6

- Feature performance by pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Music Director Courtney Lewis and the Jacksonville Symphony

- All funds raised from both evenings will benefit the Jacksonville Symphony and all its programs.

The virtual event will feature performances by symphony ensembles, inspiring speeches by Music Director Courtney Lewis, President and CEO Steven Libman and surprise guests and will showcase how the symphony has continued to stir the soul of the community through these trying times.

As in seasons past, the Symphony Gala will feature a live concert with Lewis and the Jacksonville Symphony. Joining the orchestra this season will be internationally recognized pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet, who will be performing one of his signature piano concertos with roots in America's greatest musical gift to the world — jazz. For more than three decades, Thibaudet has performed worldwide, recorded more than 50 albums and built a reputation as one of today's finest pianists.

For more information or to purchase tickets, go to JaxSymphony.org or call the box office at (904) 354-5547.

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- Theories
- T in Greek
- Tarzan's mom, e.g.
- Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, e.g.
- Ingredient in talcum powder
- Spectator
- 5,280 feet
- Tiny river
- Note taker
- \*Last NCAA basketball winner
- Any day now
- Antiquarian's concern, pl.
- Diana Ross and Michael Jackson movie, with The
- Saw a nightmare
- Caribbean rattles
- Witch's spell
- Flocked-to destinations
- Goo or slime
- Plural of ostium
- Leo mo.

- Eurasian goat-like antelope
- Showing signs of use
- "Yo, \_\_\_\_!"
- \*Nothing but it
- Wrap a baby
- \*\_\_\_\_-elimination
- Outrage
- Fraternity K
- One of the Bridges
- \*\_\_\_\_ 1 schools only
- \_\_\_\_less but pennywise
- Decanter
- In a frenzy
- Threesome
- Turkish monetary unit, plural
- Dumpy establishment
- Common conjunction
- New York time
- Male deer

- Blunder
- Sad, to mademoiselle
- Radio studio sign
- \*Mid-major school that's become major powerhouse
- Kind of ray
- Is no longer
- Arabian sailing vessels
- Restart from seed
- Uncredited actor
- The Wise Men
- Acting as a prompter
- Snow impression
- Eric Heiden's "shoe"
- \*Oklahoma State's super freshman \_\_\_\_ Cunningham
- Mixed breed puppy
- \*2021 NCAA Tournament location
- What Edward Scissorhands does
- Stout relative
- Dream big
- Ancient Celtic priest
- Water nymphs
- Fuzzy fruit, pl.
- Deflect
- Sanders' campaign slogan "Feel the \_\_\_\_"
- "National Velvet" author Bagnold
- Expunge
- Fail to mention
- \*Scotia preceder
- School-related org.
- Liquor store pony

## DOWN

- Singular of #1 Across
- Rikers Island weapon
- Burkina Faso neighbor
- Himalayan mountaineer
- Tarnish
- "\_\_\_\_ fair in love and war"
- \*School with most NCAA basketball titles
- Choir member
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# Sports

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2021 • PAGE 21

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## Sharks fall to Lee in region semifinal

### PVHS boys basketball ends season with team's best-ever record of 22-5

By Jim Moyes

Special to the Recorder

Lee High of Jacksonville ended Ponte Vedra's magical season Tuesday night with a 53-44 victory — a score that was in no way indicative of how tight the contest was. The Sharks led at every stop before Lee outscored the hosts 21-9 to end PVHS' season with an impressive 22-5 record.

Following a Luke Pirris 3-point play with 1:26 left on the clock, the Sharks trailed the Generals by one point, 44-45. However, that would prove to be the final points tallied by the Sharks as missed shots, a key turnover and fouls doomed the Sharks down the stretch.

### PVHS GIRLS SOCCER WINS REGION CHAMPIONSHIP

The Ponte Vedra girls soccer team shut out visiting Gulf Breeze 2-0 in the 5A regional finals on Tuesday night. The Lady Sharks advance to play host Land O'Lakes in the state semifinals at 7 p.m. Friday.

The game marked the end for three seniors — Alex Madson, Jack Polian and Rory Mayer, who played a major role in the Sharks' winning season. However, the Sharks return three of the six players who garnered all the minutes in the Lee contest, including junior Pirris, who led all scorers with 21 points in the losing effort. Sophomore Nathan Bunkosky and junior JT Kelly, who scored 13 points between them, will certainly help form a solid group of returnees for the following season.

Even in defeat second year head coach Kevin Whirity lauded his 2020-21 squad.

"Their work ethic, unselfishness and determination was remarkable," Whirity

said. "Never seen a group of men fight for something they love so hard."

The Sharks earned their third-ever trip to the regional semifinals and a date with Lee after a commanding 60-39 victory over Terry Parker on Feb. 18. The win helped atone for Parker's first-round overtime victory back in 2012 when Parker advanced all the way to the state final.

The visiting Parker squad was held to a single point in the first quarter and only 13 total tallies by halftime as the Sharks roared to a 28-13 lead.

Ponte Vedra may have played its best overall game of the season as the Sharks received balanced scoring from all five of

their starters, as well as playing tenacious defense for all 32 minutes.

Pirris once again was the leading scorer for the Sharks with 16 points, but his other starting teammates were huge contributors.

Jack Polian ignited the Sharks in the opening quarter with five steals and chipped in 11 points, while Bunkosky and Rory Mayer netted 10. Just missing making it unanimous for the starters to hit double figures, but playing an exceptional game, was Madson. The senior guard went 4-for-6 from the field for eight points, but he had no turnovers against the very quick Braves team.

Whirity and his 2021 Sharks team can be proud of the school's best ever mark of 22-5.

"They're leaving behind a legacy that will never be forgotten and I am so proud to be a part of the PV hoop brand," Whirity said. "PV basketball has taken a gigantic step forward tonight with these men."

## Amateur team wins Underwood Cup again

### Captures 9-of-12 matches to earn repeat win over Northern Chapter PGA Professionals

In almost identical fashion to last year's victory, the Amateur team won the Underwood Cup by a 16-8 margin over its Professional counterparts from the Northern Chapter of the North Florida PGA.

This is the team's 16th Underwood Cup victory overall and its fifth consecutive one. The competition concluded Tuesday, Feb. 17, at Timuquana Country Club.

The winning margin, however, did not reflect the competitiveness of the President Cup/Ryder Cup-styled competition that features the elite players among Northeast Florida professional and amateur golfers. All but two of the 12 singles matches were extended to at least the 17th green, and 18 of the 24 matches played reached the 17th.

The final score of 16-8 was the same as last year, as was the Amateurs' 7-5 lead after Monday's storm-delayed foursomes competition was completed early Tuesday morning. Monday's lead-off fourballs matches ended with the pros on top 3½ to 2½. Last February, the pros jumped to a 4-2 early lead.

Andy Purnell captained the Amateurs to victory this year and last, bettering Pablo Creek general manager and director of golf



Contributed photo

**Surrounded by the 2021 Amateur team, tournament sponsor Clayton Bromberg of Underwood Jewelers holds Underwood Cup. Captain Andy Purnell is seated to his right.**

Richie Bryant both years. Underwood Cup veterans themselves, Purnell and Bryant played in the matches 14 and 19 times, respectively.

"Nothing was easy about this week," said Purnell. "The pros fought in almost every match. We never took anything for granted."

"We battled hard," said Bryant. "We had a chance in singles and that hasn't always been the case recently. We just didn't win enough of the close matches."

The Amateurs reeled off wins in the first

five singles matches on Tuesday, which gave them 12 points, enough to retain the Cup. Devon Hopkins, who teed off in the 12th and final match of the day, secured the Cup outright with his convincing 7-and-6 victory over Timuquana director of golf Blanton Tessin.

Hopkins was the only player on either team to win all three of his matches. Matt Kleinrock (2-0-1), Jeff Golden (2-0-1) and Aaron Badz (2-0-1) were next in line with two wins and a tie. Veteran Clint Avret (2-0-1) led the professionals.

It was the Amateurs 10th win in the last 11 Underwood Cups. The Professionals' strongest run in the Underwood Cup was in its early stages when they won the first six playings of the event that consists of six fourballs, six foursomes and 12 singles matches over three sessions.

The Amateurs now lead the competition 16-11-3.

Steve Carter, who has played in the Underwood Cup 22 times, will be the 2022 Amateur team captain. Another 22-time competitor, Tim Peterson, will lead the Professionals.

First played in 1992, all 30 Underwood Cups have been contested at Timuquana Country Club and sponsored by Underwood Jewelers, with Underwood president Clayton Bromberg serving as honorary starter and host of the post-event luncheon and awards ceremony. The matches are conducted by the Northern Chapter of the North Florida PGA and supported by the Jacksonville Area Golf Association and Florida State Golf Association.

Other Underwood Cup partners are: Florida Pension Group, Southern Lumber and Treating Company, V. Wayne Williford, Billy Varn, Cutter & Buck & Devant/Chandler Altman, Titleist/Tina Wiswedel, FJ/Dean Kennedy, Club Car/Danny Eckles, Capital Inventory, IOA/Don Poag and Chip Holcombe Brands.

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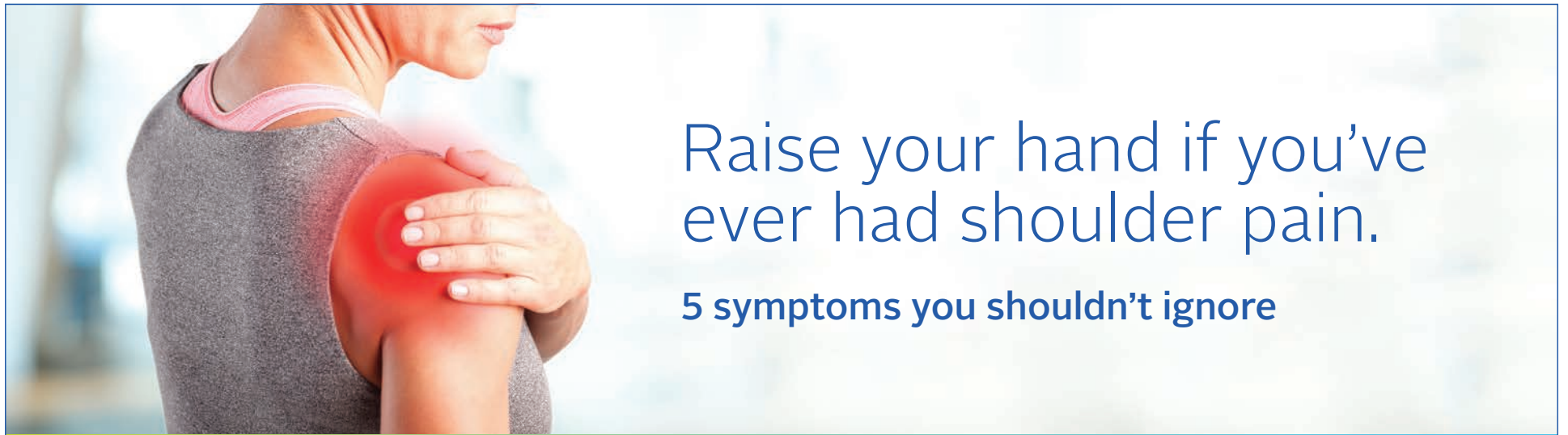
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4. Stiffness and inability to lift your arm over your head
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