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# Recorder

VOTING STILL OPEN!



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PonteVedraRecorder.com

Not your average newspaper, not your average reader

## A GRAND OPENING

the link invites public to view unique Nocatee facility



Raghu Misra, son Rohan Misra and wife Gurpreet Misra cut the ribbon on the link during grand opening festivities Wednesday, July 14. Local elected officials and representatives of the St. Johns County Chamber were also in attendance. For more on this story, go to page 5.

Photo by Susan Griffin



### INSIDE: CHECK IT OUT!

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



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## Send us your news

We welcome submissions of photos, stories, columns and letters to the editor. Let us know what's happening. Email submissions to [pvrecorder@opcfla.com](mailto: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.

Visit our website at [www.pontevedrarecorder.com](http://www.pontevedrarecorder.com)



Find the Recorder on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ThePVRecorder](https://www.facebook.com/ThePVRecorder)

### ADOPT A PET

#### CAT OF THE WEEK

Hello, my name is Evie. I am a 2-year-old female domestic short-hair cat. I am very friendly and good with other cats and children. I am also litter-box trained. When you meet me, you will notice I love head scratches and chin rubs. I recently had a beautiful litter of kittens who have all found loving families. Now it's my turn. I am looking forward to a new home and a family I can call my own. Come see met at the Pet Center today! # 58848



#### DOG OF THE WEEK



Hi! My name is Butch Cassidy and just like the real Butch Cassidy — I am ready for adventure. I am a 4-year-old male plott hound mix. I am house-trained and the shelter is working with me every day to be better on a leash! I am really sweet and I come out my shell when given the chance to run around. I would do best with a fenced yard. Come visit me at the Pet Center today! # 59101

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

#### State Rep. Cyndi Stevenson releases mobile office hours for August

For the convenience of residents of District 17, state Rep. Cyndi Stevenson will be hosting "Mobile Office Hours" throughout House District 17 during August. To set an appointment, contact Frank DiMarco at [frank.dimarco@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:frank.dimarco@myfloridahouse.gov).

Dates, times and locations are as follows:

- 10 a.m.-noon, Aug. 18, Ponte Vedra Branch Public Library (101 Library Blvd., Ponte Vedra Beach)
- 10 a.m.-noon, Aug. 19, Bartram Trail Library Branch (60 Davis Pond Blvd., Fruit Cove)
- 10 a.m.-noon, Aug. 23, St. Johns County Convention Center at World Golf Village (500 South Legacy Trail, St. Augustine)
- 10 a.m.-noon, August 24, Anastasia Library Branch (124 Sea Grove Main St., St. Augustine Beach)
- 10 a.m.-noon, Aug. 25, Saint Johns County Main Library Branch (1960 N. Ponce De Leon Blvd., St. Augustine)

#### U.S. Reps. Rutherford, Murphy reintroduce right whale legislation

On July 18, U.S. Reps John Rutherford (FL-04) and Stephanie Murphy (FL-07) introduced the Scientific Assistance for Very Endangered

(SAVE) Right Whales Act. This bipartisan plan would invest \$5 million annually in grants that states, nonprofits and members of the fishing and marine shipping industries can use to fund research and efforts that restore the North Atlantic right whale population.

"The North Atlantic right whale is in desperate need of our help," Rutherford said. "With their calving grounds right off the First Coast, this legislation seeks to prevent another tragedy of a right whale washing up on our shores. I'm encouraged by the widespread support this bill has received in the past and I'm thankful to Representative Murphy for joining me as we work together to rescue the North Atlantic right whale from extinction."

Fewer than 400 North Atlantic right whales currently exist in the wild, and only 41 calves have been born since 2017. Additionally, there are fewer than 100 breeding females left in the world. Experts unanimously agree the biggest threats to the right whale are ship strikes and fishing gear entanglements.

"The North Atlantic right whale is critically endangered, with less than 400 left as a result of fishing gear entanglements and ship strikes," said Murphy. "Floridians pride ourselves on our diverse wildlife and these whales can often be seen off the coast of our state with their young. I'm proud to join Congressman Rutherford in this bipartisan effort to protect these majestic creatures."

### PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

E	C	A	S	H		P	A	L		C	U	B	E	
M	E	R	C	Y		O	B	I		H	O	R	U	S
S	P	I	R	E		S	A	M		A	R	G	O	T
		S	L	I	N	K	Y		B	A	R	N	E	Y
			P	A	Y			I	O	T	A			
B	O	P		S	O	F	T		E	S	C	H	E	W
E	A	R	S		T	O	A	D		S	H	A	M	E
A	T	O	P		O	W	L	E	T		A	V	O	N
R	E	V	U	P		L	I	A	R		R	E	T	D
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		S	T	R	E	E	T		A	R	C	A	D	E
W	H	E	A	T		I	T	D		C	R	A	P	E
A	O	R	T	A		C	O	D		A	C	H	E	S
G	E	M	S			A	M	Y		S	H	L	E	P

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

Solutions correspond to last week's puzzles.



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# Voting open for Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra contest

The Ponte Vedra Recorder is holding its third annual Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra contest, covering ZIP codes 32082 and 32081.

Readers currently have the chance to vote for their favorite businesses, professional services, organizations and more in nearly 250 categories online. From best new business to best charity event, best real estate agent to best personal trainer and best seafood to best boutique, the categories run the gamut and are sure to include your favorite things.

Votes can be made on the website at [pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2021](http://pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2021).



Voting will take place until July 26, during which each person can vote once per day in as many categories as he or she wants. The nominees who receive

the most votes will be named 2021 Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra. Nominations and voting are completely free and open to the public.

The Best Of platform on The Recorder's website will feature lists of nominees in an easy-to-use format.

Winners will receive a free framed certificate and a Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra window cling. Each winner will also be listed in our Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra special section and on the winner's website.

Winners will be notified by Recorder staff after votes are counted.

Nominees can participate in advertising packages that promote their entry by expanding their listing to feature additional details on the business.

For more information or to find out how to get your nominated business or product involved in promotions that will be going on throughout the contest cycle, email [susan@opcfla.com](mailto:susan@opcfla.com) or call (904) 686-3938.

**Vote for your favorite business, service, person, restaurant or product now at [www.pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2021](http://www.pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2021).**

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**Ideally Located in Sea View Park**  
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**Ultimate Atlantic Beach Lifestyle**  
Live the ultimate beach lifestyle in this midcentury modern on double corner lot just one block from the ocean and only 6 blocks from Atlantic Beach Town Center. Large open great room and kitchen with barn door pantry looks onto private backyard with pool and outdoor kitchen. Spacious master, 3 additional bedrooms & bathrooms plus laundry upstairs. **4 Bedrooms, 4 Bathrooms, 1 Half Bathroom. \$3,600,000**

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# Project would protect beaches along county's northern shore

## Available public parking key to Ponte Vedra's inclusion

By Shaun Ryan

A plan to renourish Ponte Vedra's beaches or protect them from erosion in some other way may ultimately depend upon how much access the public has to the sand.

That's because the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which is studying the possibility of such a project, cannot spend federal tax dollars on what might be considered private beaches.

Thursday, July 15, a Corps Jacksonville District panel gave a pair of public presentations on the proposed project. These virtual meetings served as one of the first steps in the process of ensuring the project would satisfy mandates set forth in the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA).

Residents and beachgoers can expect to see survey crews on the beach soon.

The district entered into a cost share agreement with St. Johns County on April 19; this will authorize the Corps to evaluate implementation of what it terms "coastal storm risk management opportunities" over a 50-year period.

That means if Congress authorizes and funds the federal share of the project, strategies could be implemented to protect the beach from erosion, including storm-driven erosion, starting as early as April 2026 and extending over the following 50 years. One of the possible strategies could be a renourishment, or the placement of tons of sand — dredged from offshore — along the beach.

Other possible strategies include dune vegetation, groins and breakwaters, rock revetments or some combination of these.

The purpose of the project is to manage coastal storm risk, enhance existing habitat and protect State Road A1A,

which is a hurricane evacuation route.

Regardless of whether the NEPA study permits the project to move to the next step, poor public access to the beach and inadequate parking for beachgoers could interfere with the project's implementation.

While northern Ponte Vedra Beach does have several public access points, there are really only two places where adequate parking is available on "a free or reasonable basis within practical walking distance," as mandated by the Corps.

These are Mickler Beach and the area around Corona Road. Each eligible access point allows inclusion of a half mile of beach in the project — a quarter mile north and south of the access point. However, no stretch of the coast shorter than one mile would qualify for the project because it would be cost-prohibitive.

To make at least a mile — or the entire 8.7 miles — of the northern Ponte Vedra Beach shore eligible, either adequate parking would have to be established or public transportation to access points would have to be provided.

If those conditions are not met, northern Ponte Vedra Beach could be excluded from the larger project, which encompasses the coast from the Duval County line south to the South Ponte Vedra Beach area in the vicinity of the Serenata Beach Club.

Still, project manager Jason Harrah cautioned that, "It's very, very important for folks to understand that we're very early in this process."

The NEPA study does not address parking and access concerns, but rather considers a long list of environmental factors.

The study must be complete within three years and cost no more than \$3 million. That cost is spread over those years and is equally borne by both the Corps and the county. Each partner will spend \$500,000 on this year's portion of the cost.

Part of the environmental study segment of the project



Photo provided by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

**This aerial photo shows the coastline that would be protected if a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project goes forward.**

is to solicit public comment relevant to the NEPA focus. Members of the public may submit comments as late as July 29.

These may be submitted by email to [PonteVedraBeachCSRMS@usace.army.mil](mailto:PonteVedraBeachCSRMS@usace.army.mil), using "Ponte Vedra Beach CSRMS NEPA Scoping Comments" in the subject line.

They can also be submitted by U.S. mail to: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 701 San Marco Blvd., Jacksonville, FL 32207, Attention: Mr. Darren Pecora.

Information on the study will be available at [go.usa.gov/x6AgA](http://go.usa.gov/x6AgA). For information about district studies and projects, go to [www.saj.usace.army.mil](http://www.saj.usace.army.mil).

## State Board of Education adopts new student performance standards

On July 14, the State Board of Education adopted new student performance standards that will strengthen Florida's already nationally recognized education standards. The standards approved include Holocaust Education, Civics and Government, Character Education and Substance Abuse Prevention.

"The standards adopted today will ensure that every student has the skills and knowledge necessary to be a great student, a great citizen and a lifelong learner, ready to fulfill the responsibilities of citizenship and healthy living," said Gov. Ron DeSantis. "As parents of three children, First Lady DeSantis and I are grateful to the state Board of Education for their actions today that will enable Florida's students to become tomorrow's leaders."

Highlights of the standards adopted are:

### CHARACTER EDUCATION STANDARDS

While Character Education has been required for years in Florida statutes, these are Florida's first standards for Character Education, setting clear expectations

for students and teachers. The Character Education standards provide opportunities for students to learn how character contributes to the overall civic health of a society and understand the importance of resiliency, responsibility and respect.

### SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION STANDARDS

Substance Abuse Prevention instruction has been a component of Florida's education standards for mental health and an element of required instruction. Adoption of these standards means Florida will now have clear expectations for students and teachers that are specific to substance abuse prevention. The standards will give students an opportunity to develop an awareness of the dangers associated with the use and abuse of harmful substances and develop essential knowledge and skills that promote a drug-free lifestyle. Educators will find support and guidance in the teaching of substance use and abuse education in Florida's schools and assist them in developing more resilient and healthy students.

### CIVICS AND GOVERNMENT STANDARDS

House Bill 807 in 2019 required the Florida Department of Education to complete a review of the statewide civics education course standards. The public was invited to evaluate then-current civics and government standards through an online review system; the responses were analyzed and a workgroup — comprised of Florida teachers, the Florida College System and specialized subject area experts — was formed to propose revised standards. After a series of public workshops and webinars, civics and government standards were drafted, critiqued, improved upon and finalized to ensure Florida students have the highest quality civics education standards in the nation. These developmentally appropriate standards are clear and concise so students, parents and teachers understand the learning expectations. Students will learn about the principles of the United States Constitution and other founding documents, and attain a well-rounded knowledge base to understand how to become great citizens.

### HOLOCAUST EDUCATION STANDARDS

The 2020 Legislature directed the Department of Education to prepare and offer Holocaust Education Standards, prepare a roadmap for Florida to be the model state for Holocaust Education and include teacher experts, state and national organizations, the public and the Commissioner's Task Force on Holocaust Education (HB 1213), with the goal of creating comprehensive and in-depth standards that facilitate both high quality instruction of Holocaust education and antisemitism. These developmentally appropriate and historically accurate standards support the teaching and learning of Holocaust education in Florida, including providing students with a deep understanding of antisemitism. The standards are designed to assist teachers, school and district leaders with implementation of high quality Holocaust education instruction.

For more information about the Florida Department of Education, go to [www.fdoe.org](http://www.fdoe.org).





Photos by Shaun Ryan

Nease High School band members entertain visitors to the link during grand opening festivities on Wednesday, July 14.



ABOVE: Entrepreneur Raghu Misra speaks during grand opening festivities for the link on Wednesday, July 14.



Flagler Health+ President and CEO Jason Barrett cuts the ribbon on the Flagler Health+ Immersive Studio during grand opening festivities for the link on Wednesday, July 14.



LEFT: St. Johns County Commissioner Christian Whitehurst, School Board member Beverly Slough and state Rep. Cyndi Stevenson at the grand opening festivities for the link on Wednesday, July 14. Photos by Susan Griffin

# The link officially opens its doors

Public invited to view unique facility in Nocatee

By Shaun Ryan

Members of the public had a unique opportunity to see firsthand the next step in the evolution of working July 14-16 during the grand opening festivities at the link.

The \$7 million, 22,500-square-foot co-working space, multi-use innovation incubator and membership-based venue in Nocatee Town Center has been in the works since 2018. It is the creation of visionary entrepreneur Raghu Misra, founder of Wired2Perform, a talent-growth platform that's building workforce agility for the future, and the nonprofit Sapna Foundation, which helps displaced workers sync their talents with employment opportunities.

Ground was broken in June 2020 on a featureless plot of land at 425 Town Plaza Ave. Thirteen months later, Misra and his family cut the ribbon on a facility where people of all ages can go to "learn, play, think, do" under one roof.

"We want to be the link that makes things happen," said Misra during the ribbon cutting ceremony.

The link concept allows tech entrepreneurs to launch their businesses and

To read more about the day of arts and performance that took place Thursday, July 15, at the link, see the story on page 26

flourish while balancing career, family and recreation.

Though permanent offices have been quickly snapped up, the link offers a variety of office-space solutions, including desks, meeting rooms, virtual office space and a mail service. There are audio and podcast recording studios, free high-speed WiFi and the Costa Coffee Smart Café, which can vend more than 200 flavors of coffee drinks.

But the link is more than a place to work.

For members, there is an emphasis on lifestyle, as well, with recreational and educational activities for children and families.

Four robotic camps will be offered this summer, and the Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach is offering seven arts camps. STEAM week is planned for August, and Sapna is planning additional courses. Classes in martial arts, including kickboxing and jiu jitsu, physics, fencing and dance are also in the works.

In addition, the link has special rooms dedicated to yoga and other activities.

One of the most popular amenities for those attending the grand opening was the

Flagler Health+ Immersive Studio. The meeting room's walls form a 360-degree environment that puts people inside videos from all around the world and images from webcams. The studio is useful for virtual travel, demonstrations, training, education, design visualization, team collaboration or simply relaxation.

## SMART BUILDING

"This building is unique in a lot of regards," said Matt Taylor, executive vice president of The Angelo Group, which built the link. "I wouldn't say there's another building like it. There are a lot of special systems in the building, including low-voltage lighting and the fire suppression systems. The data, computer, IT systems are all unique to this building."

Project Supervisor Greg Howell pointed out the vast spiral ductwork, which is exposed, giving people a look at the inner workings of the HVAC system in keeping with the link's approach to technology: It's something to be appreciated.

To keep members safe and healthy, the link partnered with Kognition, a developer

of artificial intelligence software that uses data from cameras, video analytics, sensors and connected Internet of Things devices to detect health and security violations.

In response to COVID-19 and similar health concerns, it offers touchless access controls and contact tracing software.

The link has also partnered with Flagler Health+ for wellness programming and other services.

The facility also attends to energy conservation with technology holding the building's energy use to as near net-zero as possible.

Sensors control the indoor temperature and air quality. The low-voltage lighting, created by WTEC, varies the brightness according to the ambient light coming through the windows. What other comparable buildings pay for electricity in one hour, the link pays for an entire day. That's because there is no line voltage; it's powered by the computer network.

In addition, 90% of the furniture at the link is made from recycled products. Eco Relics of Jacksonville built tables and other furniture from salvaged wood.

"We're thankful that Raghu trusted us to build the building for him," said Taylor. "And we're excited about the project."



*Jennifer W. Jordan is working on her next book, the second edition of “Veggin in St. Augustine” due out this holiday season. The book will feature new restaurants, food trucks, bed-and-breakfasts, and focus on historic recipes of St. Augustine.*

## Jennifer W. Jordan

As told to Anthony Richards

### Can you tell us about your background?

I have an eclectic background, full of quite different and unique experiences which perfectly culminated into creating “Veggin in St. Augustine.” Examples include a bachelor of arts in advertising photography from Rochester Institute of Technology, being a photojournalist for a newspaper in Pennsylvania, working in the communications department for the Pennsylvania State House of Representatives and Senate and managing marketing at the Lightner Museum and the Ponte Vedra Cultural Center.

On a personal note, I love to travel and photograph environments and the people in them.

### What inspired you to write a book?

Shortly before the pandemic, my husband, my son and I went to Barnes and Noble in St. Augustine. It had been a long time since I stepped inside a bookstore. Mostly, these days, I read books on my Kindle or listen to audiobooks on my iPhone, but I still love to hold a cookbook in my hands. I have a whole collection. I love to go over them on a Sunday morning and plan something to make. I love the earmarked pages, the food splatters, and the little notes I’ve made myself.

A specific cookbook caught my eye on this trip. It was “The Forest Feast Mediterranean” by Erin Gleason. In the book, she documented her family’s trip to the Mediterranean, including beautiful pictures along the way and recipe inspirations from the restaurants they visited. I thought, wouldn’t it be great if I could make a similar book featuring St. Augustine and include original restaurant recipes? It was a seed I stored away in my brain.

### What did you enjoy most during the process of writing your book?

Several things really. As I write my second book, I am struck by how many relationships I have made on this journey. I knew St. Augustine on an intimate level prior to writing my first book, but it has just grown deeper with every restaurant and business owner I connect with. It is really something magical.

Because I chose to self-publish through Amazon, I was able to maintain complete creative control of my book. I wrote, photographed, and designed it. This gave me great satisfaction.

### What are some of the challenges that you have faced as a vegetarian?

I was pretty much born a vegetarian. I’m a thinker. I couldn’t process the idea of eating a dead animal. I don’t like the smell of meat, I don’t like the taste of meat, and I don’t like to look at meat. That has always been true. So for me, I am not missing anything. When people ask me how to transition to becoming vegetarian, I don’t know how to advise them, but I am pleased it is something stirring in peoples’ consciousness.



Contributed photo

Jennifer W. Jordan holds a copy of her book “Veggin in St. Augustine.”

### What is the most difficult and the most rewarding part of your job?

Putting myself out there and asking restaurants to trust me with their recipes was a real education. This did not always go well. Now that I have a finished product, this year’s book is easier to connect to the restaurant community moving forward.

I am not a salesperson, so I am learning how to broach local retail establishments to sell my book. My dream is to have it available in local Publix grocery stores.

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

Water everywhere. Outside all year long. Really friendly people. Less hustle. I could go on and on.

### What do you like to do in your free time?

What’s fun is that some of my work time and free time have collided in a lovely way. For instance, I love spending time with my husband and son and we love to go out to eat. So, I am able to experience those book-related activities with them much of the time.



# Marvin Lee brings comedy show to Nocatee

By Anthony Richards

The Nocatee community is about to get a little funnier when comedian Marvin Lee visits the area to do three shows in one night on July 31.

The shows will begin at 5:30 p.m., 7 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. at the Nocatee Room. Tickets to see Lee perform are available for Nocatee residents only and will be sold for \$10 per show online beginning at 6 p.m. July 19.

Attendees must be 21 years or older, as Lee's material is considered a clean comedy show for adults.

According to Lee, although his discussions are not dirty, they do deal with adult scenarios, such as marriage, that children and even college students may have trouble associating with.

"They just won't be able to relate with being in a 20-year marriage," Lee said.

Being edgy with his content while also remaining clean can be a challenge at times, but it is something that just comes natural for Lee.

"I don't believe in political correctness at all, but I do believe in respecting people," Lee said. "That's always been my mantra."

An example of this is when he talks about marriage during his show and makes sure to point out the strange and senseless things that both men and women do in a relationship.

By pointing out the quirks of both sides and the varying perspectives he hopes to create discussion that would have otherwise not existed. If he can make people not only laugh but think about life and why they do the things they do, he feels like he has accomplished something.

"Out of everything I do, I love that part of it more than anything else," Lee said.

One of Lee's new talking points of late focuses on vegetarians and the way they sometimes act around those who are not vegetarians.



Photo provided by Marvin Lee

**Comedian Marvin Lee will be performing three shows on July 31 at the Nocatee Room. The show will be for Nocatee residents only and attendees must be 21 years or older.**

He first came up with the topic after spending some time dating someone who was a vegetarian and experiencing certain things firsthand.

"Hypocrisy sets me off more than anything else," Lee said.

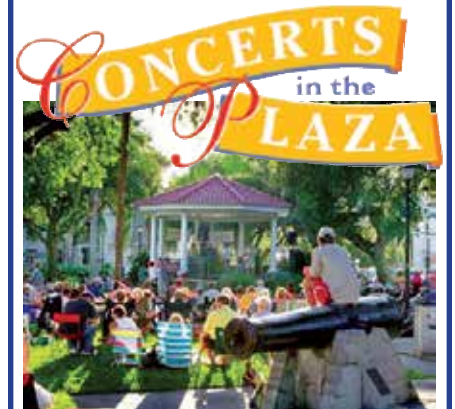
Although he has certain topics he often talks about, he approaches every show with an understanding of being adaptable with his material.

"A lot of times, a comic show is like a tree," Lee said. "You start with a base and then as you feel out your audience, the show can branch off into different directions."

Lee was born and raised in Birmingham, Alabama, and performed a comic routine on stage for the first time in 1993 and

COMEDIAN continues on Page 9

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# NOCATEE FARMERS MARKET OFFERS ISLAND EXPERIENCE



It was an island experience at the Nocatee Farmers Market on Saturday, July 17. Prince Pele's Polynesian Revue performed three different fun and interactive shows throughout the day, and there was shopping from more than 70 local vendors selling fresh produce, crafts, jewelry, herbs, unique foods and more.

Photos by Susan Griffin



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# Humane Society celebrates Pin Up Paws midway point

By Anthony Richards

The Pin Up Paws pet calendar is the largest annual fundraiser for the St. Augustine Humane Society, and 11 years since it started, raising awareness is still the main goal.

That was evident during a special promotional event for the contest at Palm Valley Outdoors Bar and Grill.

According to St. Augustine Humane Society Operations Manager Jeannie McLain, it is important to never lose the reason for why the calendar exists. That mission is to keep pets in their homes for life.

“Inside every calendar is our mission statement and that’s super important,” McLain said. “The dogs and the cats are precise, but what really matters is the mission.”

To fulfill the ultimate goal, the Humane Society uses unique and thoughtful methods that go beyond the adoption process.

“We’ve decided you can’t adopt your way out of overpopulation, so it’s best to provide services that decrease the surplus population, such as providing low-cost spay and neuter and our low-cost veterinary clinic.”

Other services include a pet food pantry where, McLain said, “food is flying off the shelves” and providing tips from dog trainers.

“Anything that it takes to keep your pet in your home is what we want for you,” McLain said.

This year’s theme is “Paws across America,” which means that a famous national landmark or destination will be the backdrop behind each featured pet.

“We watched our country go through so much last year that we decided to celebrate it this year in our own special way,” McLain said.

The calendar began with the theme “Vintage St. Augustine” and coincided with the Humane Society breaking away



**ABOVE: Many were on hand to help promote the Pin Up Paws calendar contest during a promotional event at Palm Valley Outdoors Bar and Grill on July 16.**

**LEFT: A table was set up inside Palm Valley Outdoors Bar and Grill with voting boxes for the top contenders so far in this year's contest.**

Photos by Anthony Richards

from the county’s Animal Control.

“We’re not like any other humane society around that usually partners with animal control,” McLain said. “We just

celebrated a very big milestone with our 10,000th client (owners not pets). That is amazing.”

The idea for a calendar was originally presented by St. Augustine Humane Society Executive Director Carolyn Smith, who thought that having a contest would be an interesting concept. It has been widely received by the community since it was first introduced.

“The first year we did it we made about \$7,000 and each year it gets a little better,” Smith said. “We’re up to about \$25,000.”

Hosting the event at Palm Valley Outdoors Bar & Grill was another strategic example of getting the word out.

“We’re midway with the contest right now, so this is just to get people a little more involved early on,” Smith said. “We’ve always concentrated on St. Augustine proper and never really reached out to the northside and to Ponte Vedra.”

The St. Augustine Humane Society is located at 1665 Old Moultrie Road in St. Augustine.

The top contenders were promoted during the events with participants having their own ballot boxes where votes could be collected.

Although the contest primarily consists of cats and dogs, this year’s 70-plus pets also feature a pygmy goat named Jameson and Jake the African Grey parrot.

**CALENDAR** continues on **Page 10**

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# the link

Continued from 5

## GRAND OPENING

The grand opening festivities began Wednesday, July 14, with a pair of ribbon-cutting ceremonies, one for the link and another for the Flagler Health+ Immersive Studio. The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division hosted the ceremony.

Misra described how difficult it was to get the necessary funding for this new concept.

“Name a big bank,” he said. “I talked to everyone in town. Everybody said, ‘Phenomenal; who else has done it? Can you give us comparables?’ My philosophy has always been: If somebody has already done it, I don’t want to do it. I am doing this because nobody has done it.”

But he found someone who understood his vision, Peter Hayes, vice president of business services with 121 Financial Credit Union. Though small, the lender agreed to back the project.

“Sitting down and hearing the story of what he wanted to do in bringing people together in the community to work, to learn, all of those things, sold us on this project,” said 121 Financial President and CEO David Marovich.

“It’s very rare that you get a chance to celebrate imagination realized,” said Flagler Health+ President and CEO Jason Barrett. “This is truly something substantial.”

Speakers included PARC Group Director of Planning and Development Michael Osteen, Chamber CEO and President Isabelle Renault, state Rep. Cyndi Stevenson and Deputy County Administrator Joy Andrews. County Commissioners Jeb Smith, Paul Waldron and Christian Whitehurst, School Board members Beverly Slough and Anthony Coleman and Board Chair Dr. Erika Hamer were among the many who attended.

The ceremony also included a video showing how some of the sculptures featured at the link were created by Ocean



Photo by Shaun Ryan

**The link team includes Director of Operations Jeff Tawney (from left), marketing expert Blake Wisz, Director of Customer Experience Elaine Raby, Gurpreet Misra and Raghu Misra.**

Sole and a cake celebrating the 200th anniversary of St. Johns County.

On Thursday, July 15, the Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach held a full day of arts and performance, featuring a variety of musicians, poets, artists and more. The Cultural Center has partnered with the link to offer a wide range of arts and cultural events to children, adults and families at the facility.

It will produce exhibitions of local, regional, national and international artists, classes, lectures, workshops, camps, after-school programs and more.

On Friday, July 16, the link held a series of presentations on entrepreneurship and innovation. Misra gave a “TED Talk”-style presentation, followed by entrepreneurial neuroscientist Maarten Rotman on innovation in health care, LASIK surgeon and inventor Dr. Arun Gulani, innovation and strategy executive Carlton Lamar Robinson, Marcia Corner on removing hurdles to achieve goals, 4FRONT Vice President of Innovation Brian Gainor on innovations in sports and more.

## MEMBERSHIPS

Individual and family memberships to the link are available to anyone in the community. To learn more, go to [thelink.zone/membership](http://thelink.zone/membership).



Photo by Susan Griffin

**Donna Lueders and link Director of Customer Experience Elaine Raby at the facility's grand opening celebration on Wednesday, July 14.**

# Comedian

Continued from 7

after working for a radio show and doing comic routines on the side, he eventually dove into comedy full-time in 1999.

He remembers staying up late to watch the comedians on “The Tonight Show starring Johnny Carson” and knew at an early age that he had what it took to be in their shoes one day, and it seemed to run in the family.

“My dad was more of a prankster, but my mom had the smart aleck attitude,” Lee said.

One of the things he has learned over the years is that to get recognized in the business he needed to branch out and make a name for himself as an actor as well.

He moved to Atlanta, which has become a prominent spot to film movies in the South in recent years.

Since then, he has been cast for several roles, including having a recurring part as “Kyle” on the past five seasons of the TV series “The Walking Dead.”

Acting and performing on stage are very different skill sets.

“When I do comedy, it’s me, my thoughts and the audience,” Lee said.

“When you act, you have to try to be true to the writer’s words and actions. It can be a challenge at times.”

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

## KATHY'S GARDENING GUIDE

*"Perhaps the butterfly is proof that you can go through a great deal of darkness and still become something beautiful."*



**Kathy Esfahani**  
Columnist

### BUTTERFLY GARDENS

Butterfly gardens are a beautiful and colorful way to attract butterflies into your landscaping!

When designing a butterfly garden, keep the following in mind:

- Plant both larval host plants and adult nectar sources for butterflies in all stages of life.
- Garden in full sun and partial shade.
- Select a variety of plants that bloom at different times.
- Use quality top soil to ensure plants and flowers are enriched.
- Include sweet-smelling plants, such as sedum and lavender.
- Plant in groups. Butterflies are more likely to land in a bunch vs. a single plant.
- Choose plants of mixing heights, colors, shapes and sizes.



Photos provided by Kathy Esfahani

■ Adding a shallow dish with water, rocks and even fruit will encourage butterflies to land.

**Some of the most popular plants for caterpillars and butterflies:** Butterfly bush, fennel, milkweed, lantana, pentas, purple passion vine, black-eyed Susan, porterweed, sage, gaillardia, firebush, sunflowers and more.

**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.**

**Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery is located at 196 N. Roscoe Blvd. in Ponte Vedra Beach. (904) 655-7373.**

## Calendar

Continued from 8

One of the top vote-getters to this point is a long-haired Chihuahua named Little Bear who made an appearance at the event, along with his owners April and Barry Peckham, in hopes of persuading voters with his cuteness.

"We belong to the Humane Society's newsletter and heard that it was their biggest fundraiser, so we thought we should support them," he said. "The Humane Society does so much good for so many dogs and people, too."

Little Bear is one year old, but it did not take long for him to become part of the family.

"When we got him, he looked like a little bear cub," Barry Peckham said. "He loves people. The way he acts . . . it's almost as if he's a human being."

Each vote is another dollar raised and the voting will end Aug. 7 at 8 p.m.



Photo by Anthony Richards

**Little Bear was on hand during the promotional event. He has been one of the top vote-getters midway through the contest.**

Residents can vote by going to [www.gogophotocontest.com/pupcalendar22](http://www.gogophotocontest.com/pupcalendar22).

The calendar reveal party will be held Oct. 21 at a location that is still being determined.

## OBITUARIES

### Iris Irene Cook

Iris Irene Cook, 92, known to family and friends as Irene or Tootie, died July 4th – just her style, she loved holidays. She was surrounded by her loving family.



**Iris Irene Cook**

She went through school in Newberry, Michigan. In her early years, she loved her time working as an operator at the phone company. After she married the love of her life, Gene, in 1952, she spent her life being a wonderful homemaker, wife and mother. She always enjoyed friends and loved to have parties and get-togethers. She loved water aerobics and was especially fond of her time living in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida. Irene had a wonderful personality and was always kind and enjoyable to be with. She had many fabulous friends throughout her life.

She is predeceased by her husband of 64 years, Gene Cook; her parents, Lloyd and Lula Roach, and her brother, Bud Roach. She is survived by her daughters, Patti Cook and Donna Roach; her son, Mike Cook; her grandson, Cody Cook; her great-grandson, Ryker Cook; her granddaughter, Sarah Daluisio; her grandson-in-law, Gary Daluisio; her beloved great-granddaughter, Gigi Daluisio, who she would sing "I love you a bushel and a peck" with; and many relatives and friends in New Jersey, Florida, Vermont, Michigan and Virginia.

Her family will hold a private celebration of her life.

### Elaine Ruth Simone

Elaine Ruth Simone, Ponte Vedra FL, passed away July 9th surrounded by her two daughters and friends. Elaine was born in Long Island N.Y., she was preceded in death by her husband of 64 years Carl Simone, and survived by her two loving daughters Wendy Moran and Schuyler Simone-Siefker, sons in law Shane Moran and David Siefker, and her four grandchildren who she loved deeply, Carl Siefker, Paul Siefker, Shane Moran Jr, Simone Elaine Siefker. Elaine was a loving wife and mother who always put her family and love for God above all else.

Elaine had degrees in Psychology and Special Education and worked with Developmentally Disabled people throughout her career. Her passion for serving led Elaine and Carl to start a school and residential program in upstate New York. In 1979 they move to Ponte Vedra Florida to build the St Augustine Center

for Living with her nephews Craig and Scott Greiner. After retiring, Elaine continued to serve by supporting hundreds of charities throughout the world. This mission was a very big part of her life.

Elaine loved flowers, painting, tennis, exercising, dancing with her husband, studying the bible, traveling, boating and most of all spending time with her children and grandchildren. Elaine was an excellent example of being a true partner and wife to her husband, extraordinary mother, and grandmother to all her children, friend and Steward of her church and community. Her beauty, exceptional taste and grace will be remembered by all that knew her.

A funeral service will be held at Our Lady Star of The Sea Catholic Church on July 23rd at 2:00 pm. In lieu of flowers please make donations to St. Augustine Youth Services -[www.sayskids.org](http://www.sayskids.org) or Mission House. Arrangements are under the direction of HARDAGE-GIDDENS FUNERAL HOME, 1701 Beach Blvd, Jacksonville Beach, FL



### Cynthia Jenkins

Cynthia Jenkins, 79, of Jacksonville, Florida, died July 11, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – (904) 285-1130 – [www.pontevedravalle.com](http://www.pontevedravalle.com)

### Jayne Kohler

Jayne Kohler, 98, of Jacksonville, Florida, died July 13, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – (904) 285-1130 – [www.pontevedravalle.com](http://www.pontevedravalle.com)

### Robert Maddux

Robert Maddux, 59, of St. Augustine, Florida, died July 7, 2021. Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home, Cremation Center & Cemetery – (904) 285-1130 – [www.pontevedravalle.com](http://www.pontevedravalle.com)

### Richard Probst

Richard Probst, 72, of Neptune Beach, Florida, died July 14, 2021. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre. (904) 249-1100 [www.quinn-shalz.com](http://www.quinn-shalz.com)

### William Harold Sexton

William Harold Sexton, 90, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died July 15, 2021. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre (904)249-1100 [www.quinn-shalz.com](http://www.quinn-shalz.com)

### Ann M. Weatherford

Ann M. Weatherford, 86, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, died July 5, 2021. Arrangements by Quinn-Shalz Family Funeral Home & Cremation Centre, [www.quinn-shalz.com](http://www.quinn-shalz.com), (904) 249-1100





# HEALTH CARE PROFILES

Ascension St. Vincent Health Center in St. Johns County celebrates project's progress

New research shows reviews of medication could benefit those with high blood pressure

Cyclist completes cross-country trek benefitting Chemo Noir

Tips for contact lens wearers when it comes to summer weather

Healthy habits to make part of your daily routine

JULY 22, 2021



# Recorder





Market CEO for Ascension Florida and Gulf Coast Tom VanOsdol speaks during the topping out ceremony on July 14 for Ascension St. Vincent's Health Center being constructed on County Road 210 in St. Johns County.

# Right on schedule

## St. Vincent's tops out St. Johns County facility, set to open next summer

By Anthony Richards

The light at the end of tunnel is beginning to shine in the construction of the Ascension St. Vincent's Health Center on County Road 210 in St. Johns County.

Although the project is not scheduled to be completed until July 2022, a topping out ceremony was held July 14 to mark a significant point in the building process.

"It's when we set our last beam or pour our last section of concrete for the structure," said Eric Sharpe, division manager with Brasfield & Gorrie General Contractors. "It's a milestone in our industry that we celebrate, because we've reached the peak of the mountain, so to speak. Now it's about traveling down the mountain, and you'll begin to see more of the interiors built out."

According to Sharpe, the project remains pretty much on its original scheduled finish projection, which is a feat because so many factors can play a role in delaying progress.

"It is a tremendous accomplishment by our project team and subcontractor partners to overcome not only COVID at the start of the project, but also labor shortages," Sharpe said. "It is a true testament to the

team working together."

Once built, the facility will be very similar to the Ascension St. Vincent's Clay County Hospital in Middleburg that was completed in 2013.

However, the new hospital will be adapted to help meet the needs of the St. Johns County community as part of Ascension St. Vincent's hospital ministry.

"This day is St. Vincent's delivering on a promise," Market CEO for Ascension Florida and Gulf Coast Tom VanOsdol said. "It is an honor to be here serving you. I can't wait to be here just under a year from now, blessing and dedicating this facility."

The ministry was mentioned throughout the presentation and is at the root of everything Ascension St. Vincent's does.

"It's just so important to us, and we've been providing care for the underserved communities here (St. Johns County) since 2014 with our mobile help outreach ministry," said Virginia Hall, president and chief development officer of Ascension St. Vincent's Foundation. "We've served over 9,000 patients, and there is such a need for care and access to health care."



**ABOVE:** Monsignor Keith Brennan, pastor of Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church in Ponte Vedra Beach, blessed the structure's final beam.

**LEFT:** St. Johns County Commissioner Henry Dean and SJC Chamber President Isabelle Renault attend the July 14 ceremony.

Photos by Susan Griffin



# Finding balance for high blood pressure patients: New research shows importance of medication review



**Anthony Magnano, M.D.**  
Ascension St.  
Vincent's Riverside

A recent study presented at the American College of Cardiology's Annual Scientific Session underscores the importance of reviewing your medications regularly with your care team. This research found that nearly one-in-five patients with high blood pressure also take medications that can elevate blood pressure.

This finding raises concerns, since even a small increase in blood pressure can significantly impact risk of cardiovascular disease.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nearly half of all Americans have high blood pressure. These patients are at an increased risk for life-threatening conditions like heart attack, heart failure and stroke. If you or a loved one have high blood pressure or may be at risk, it is important to consider the possible effects of medications on your heart.

## LINK BETWEEN HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE AND CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

High blood pressure, or hypertension, is a condition where the force of blood flowing through your blood vessels is consistently too high. This damages blood vessels and can increase risk of cardiovascular disease, along with other serious health problems. Because it is most commonly an asymptomatic condition, hypertension is often referred to as the "silent killer."



Photo provided by metrocreativeconnection.com

Excess strain and damage from high blood pressure causes the body's arteries, including the coronary arteries, to harden with plaque. Stiff arteries coupled with an unstable inner arterial lining can result in gradual narrowing (stenosis) or sudden occlusion. In the brain, arterial occlusion can lead to stroke. Hypertension is a particularly important risk factor for stroke, with three out of four stroke victims having high blood pressure. In the heart, arterial occlusion can lead to myocardial infarction (heart attack) and, in turn, arrhythmias and heart failure.

## MEDICATIONS THAT CAN ELEVATE BLOOD PRESSURE

Unfortunately, some common medications may have the unintended side effect of raising blood pressure, leading to adverse effects on our heart health. These include both over-the-counter and prescribed medications. The

most common classes of drugs identified in the study were antidepressants; nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen and naproxen; and oral steroids used to treat conditions such as gout, lupus, rheumatoid arthritis or after an organ transplant. Other medications that can sometimes raise blood pressure include antipsychotics, certain oral contraceptives and some decongestants, such as pseudoephedrine.

Many patients have multiple health issues and need multiple medications to address all of their various non-cardiac conditions and symptoms. That said, it's important to be aware of potential side effects and to review all medications you take with your doctor. That includes prescription, over-the-counter and herbal medications.

## CHANGES YOU CAN MAKE TO LOWER HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

While there is no cure for high blood pressure, using medications as prescribed and making lifestyle changes can enhance your quality of life and reduce your risk of heart disease.

You can lower your blood pressure by eating a heart-healthy diet and avoiding high-salt foods. Alcohol intake and elevated body weight can have a particularly significant impact on raising blood pressure. Therefore, I recommend that you exercise for at least 30 minutes per day. Quit smoking, and if you drink, do so in moderation — that means 0-1 drinks per day and never more

MAGNANO continues on Page 14

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# Hospital

Continued from 12

Hall is excited to not only open the new hospital next summer but also continue the mobile outreach already in place.

“We’ll be able to provide it on a much larger scale,” Hall said. “I feel very blessed to be able to work for an organization where I believe in the mission so strongly and know that what I’m doing is making a difference for people.”

More than 300 employment positions will be filled when the hospital opens.

According to St. Johns County Commissioner Henry Dean, the hospital will help as the county’s population has reached 265,000 and only continues to grow.

He also sees the hospital’s location helping to fill a void in health care options in the “underserved” northern portion of the county.

“The response has been overwhelming because folks are so glad, not just to have a hospital that’s accessible and convenient for them, but specifically to have Ascension St. Vincent’s here because they know our quality, exceptional physicians and passionate care,” VanOsdol said. “It’s our first core value to care for those who are poor and vulnerable.”



**ABOVE: A rendering shows what the facility will look like once it is completed in July 2022.**

**LEFT: St. Johns County Sheriff Robert Hardwick and Director of Patrol Scott Beaver attend the Ascension St. Vincent’s topping-out ceremony on July 14.**

Photos by Susan Griffin

Those in attendance signed their names on the beam that was going to be final beam of the structure, and it was blessed by Monsignor Keith Brennan, pastor of Our Lady Star of the Sea

Catholic Church in Ponte Vedra Beach.

The ceremony took place on the cement slab that will be the site of the hospital’s emergency wing once completed.

# Magnano

Continued from 13

than two drinks. Losing as little as 10 pounds can help dramatically. If you are overweight, research suggests that losing 10% of your body weight can make a truly life-changing impact on your blood pressure and overall health.

Finally, diagnosing and treating sleep apnea can really improve your blood pressure. It can also decrease your chances of stroke and arrhythmias, such as atrial fibrillation.

It is also important to remember that you and your physician are partners in your care. You are a very important part of your own health care team, which means that you should keep your doctor informed of all medications you are taking. Your doctor can help you find the best balance to manage your non-cardiac symptoms while mitigating cardiac risk. Specifically, your doctor can identify alternatives to any medications that might be worsening your hypertension, or prescribe additional blood pressure medications as needed. Most patients need more than one medication to reach their blood pressure goal.

With proper treatment and management, you can control your blood pressure and live a long, healthy life. If you have questions about your medications, don’t wait. Schedule an appointment with your physician today.

**Dr. Anthony Magnano is a Ponte Vedra resident and the Chief of Cardiology at Ascension St. Vincent’s Riverside. For more information on Dr. Magnano and his specialty treating Atrial fibrillation, visit [Healthcare.ascension.org](http://Healthcare.ascension.org).**

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# Summer tips for contact lens wearers

By **Dr. Christian P. Guier, O.D., F.A.A.O.**  
Florida Eye Specialists

Boating, gardening, going to the beach — some of our favorite outdoor summertime activities can unfortunately pose risks for our eyes. For patients who wear contact lenses, this time of year can come with dryness, irritation and blurry vision. This is especially an issue for those who also suffer from dry eye.

The good news is you can still enjoy all the fun of your favorite summer activities and find relief for your eyes.

## RISKS FOR CONTACT LENS WEARS DURING SUMMER MONTHS

During the summer months, we experience increased exposure to the sun and ultraviolet rays, or UV. Despite the increased sun from long summer days outside, many of us don't wear sunglasses. Without sunglasses or the proper UV-blocking contacts, UV exposure can lead to long-term damage to our eyes, such as accelerating cataracts.

Without sunglass protection, trips to the beach and pool can also expose eyes to possible irritants like sand, chlorine and wind. Contact lenses need lubrication to work properly, but outside elements like wind cause dryness, leading your

eyes to feel sore and tired.

For contact lens wearers with dry eye, eyes can get especially dry and uncomfortable under these conditions. You might experience blurred vision, stinging, burning, or a scratching sensation in the eyes. Eye redness and eye fatigue are also common after being forced to squint due to dry eye.

## TIPS FOR CONTACT LENS HYGIENE AND COMFORT

First, it's important to remember to never wear your contacts when swimming or showering. Ocean water, ponds, pools and tap water can contain an organism called *acanthamoeba*. Though very rare, if this organism gets trapped between your contact lens and your eye, it can cause a painful infection that can lead to blindness.

Good contact lens hygiene is important all year round, but especially during summer months when there's increased exposure to irritants. Don't be tempted to fall asleep in your contacts after a long day outside. Use the contact lens solution recommended by your eye care professional, and never rinse or store your contacts in tap water. Remember to wash your hands with soap and water and dry them with a lint-free towel before han-

dling your contacts. Keep your contact lens case clean and replace it regularly as well, ideally once per month.

Additionally, replace your contacts per recommended guidelines, or even consider switching to a daily replacement contact lens in the summer. Using dailies ensures you will always wear a clear, clean lens, with no leftover debris from sand or wind to irritate your eyes. If you have dry eyes, or if you experience a sandy, gritty feeling in your eyes, daily contact lenses could be a great option to find relief.

## CHOOSE THE BEST CONTACT LENSES FOR DRY EYE

Daily contact lenses are the best option for dry eyes. Single-use contact lenses do not require overnight soaking. That eliminates the need for disinfecting chemicals that can contribute to your irritation. Replacing your contact lenses every day will also limit the formation of deposits that make your eyes feel uncomfortable.

In addition to a daily replacement schedule, newer contact lens materials offer several other benefits. The latest lenses are designed to make it easier to place and remove your contact lens. The most recent contact lens technology also

binds your natural tears longer to keep more moisture on the surface of your eyes.

## KNOW WHEN IT'S TIME FOR TREATMENT

If you are still experiencing dry, irritated eyes this season, it may be time to visit an eye doctor. There are many treatments for dry eye patients that can help reduce your symptoms and improve comfort. When you visit your eye doctor, you may discuss options including artificial tears, gels, prescription eye drops or plugs inserted in the tear ducts. At Florida Eye Specialists, we offer LipiFlow Thermal Pulsation, which uses warm temperature and gentle massaging to open blocked glands and provides immediate results for dry eye sufferers.

Don't miss out on the best sights of the season. If your contact lenses or dry eyes are impacting your daily life, you don't need to compromise your vision or your comfort. Make an appointment with an optometrist today.

**Dr. Christian P. Guier, O.D., F.A.A.O., is a board-certified optometrist at Florida Eye Specialists. For more information on Dr. Guier and his specialties in general optometry, laser refractive surgery, glaucoma, retina and oculoplastics, visit [FloridaEyeSpecialists.com](http://FloridaEyeSpecialists.com).**



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# Cyclist Greg Taylor returns home as 'hero'

## Cross-country ride raises roughly \$120K for Chemo Noir

By Anthony Richards

Greg Taylor never really considered himself a cyclist, but that all changed after he arrived back home to Jacksonville to complete an 11,500-mile cross-country trip on July 17.

He returned to Southern Swells Brewing Company in Jacksonville Beach to a large group of family, friends and people who had heard about his trip and just wanted to be there to congratulate him.

Taylor went into his journey hoping to raise money for local Ponte Vedra Beach-based nonprofit Chemo Noir to help in its fight against cancer.

"I wanted to be able to give back to Jacksonville in a big way, that I felt like a lot of people couldn't," Taylor said. "I kind of just wanted to give myself the challenge to see if it could get done."

According to Taylor, he has a history of cancer in his family, so the meaning of the ride was personal on many levels.

He was able to accomplish his goal in



Photos by Anthony Richards  
**Greg Taylor and Chemo Noir founder and Chairman Katrin Casey ride alongside each other during the home stretch of Taylor's cross-country bike ride to fight cancer on July 17.**

a big way, as Chemo Noir raised roughly \$120,000 throughout the ride.

"Someone like Greg is indescribable," Chemo Noir Founder and Chairman Katrin Casey said as she began to tear up. "He's got it all, and he did this completely

selflessly. He's a hero to me."

The ride started when Taylor left Crucible CrossFit on Vine Street in Jacksonville on Feb. 20 and began heading west to San Diego.

It took just less than five months to



**Taylor and Casey partnered to raise roughly \$120,000 for Ponte Vedra Beach-based nonprofit Chemo Noir.**

complete the trip, which was ahead of his estimated timetable of six months.

"Believe it or not, I wasn't a cyclist before at all," Taylor said. "I was a CrossFit

**BIKE RIDE continues on Page 17**

# Running is a family affair for Kyle and Rosie Scott

By Anthony Richards

You can say athleticism literally runs in the Scott family, especially after the husband-and-wife tandem of Kyle and Rosie Scott each won their respective races during the Chemo Noir 1 Mile and Wine Tasting event on June 26.

Although both had competed in the event since it began a handful of years ago, it was the first time both had taken home winner's trophies.

Rosie was the top finishing woman in the race for the third straight year on the beach (last year's event was virtual), while Kyle reached the top spot in the men's class and overall, after being runner-up twice in the past.

"Kyle calls me the GOAT of Chemo Noir," Rosie Scott laughed.

Despite the past success, she was not overly confident going into this year's event.

"I had a baby three months ago, so I was really sure what was going to happen," Rosie Scott said. "There were a couple of girls right on my tail and one actually went in front of me at some point, but your competitive juices get going and I had enough energy to hang on."

What made the moment even more special for the two of them was that their 2-year-old daughter Sydney was there to share it with them for the first time.



Photo provided by Katrin Casey/Chemo Noir  
**Kyle and Rosie Scott celebrate their race wins with their daughter Sydney following the Chemo Noir 1 Mile and Wine Tasting event on June 26.**

"It was really cool to see her cheering for us, and as a mom it just warmed my heart," Rosie Scott said. "It was great to have her there to witness that moment."

However, after the race she had her focus on getting a trophy of her own in the form of cake.

"She collected a lot of trophies," Kyle

Scott chuckled.

According to Kyle Scott, it was a different aspect for Sydney to be standing at the finish line watching, because she is usually in the stroller and going along with her parents when they go on club runs.

Kyle is from Arizona and Rosie is from Maryland, but the two moved to Neptune

Beach about six years ago and they got into running at that same time.

"It's such a great community vibe going on here," Rosie Scott said.

The Scotts are part of the First Place Sports running team and run about four to five times a week.

"Health and fitness have always been a focus for us," Rosie Scott said. "Our friends always call us crazy, because we're those people that aren't afraid to get up early and run or lift weights."

According to Kyle Scott, being part of the club is also a great way to meet people and get to know others socially in the area.

The couple has gotten to know Chemo Noir founder and chairman Katrin Casey with their involvement and support of the nonprofit organization over the years.

"She's just such a magnetic person," Rosie Scott said.

Having been involved since the beginning, the Scotts can see growth in the interest around Chemo Noir.

According to Rosie Scott, they had friends that wanted to be a part of it but were unable to because the event sold out so quickly with it being capped at 500 people due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I think between the cause, what she's raising the money for, and just the type of person she (Casey) is, it really is a great compliment to each other," Kyle Scott said.



# Bike ride

Continued from 16

athlete, but it seemed something that was easily transferable.”

A bike ride that long does not come without its share of adversity along the way, and Taylor experienced plenty of that.

“You name it,” Taylor said. “Mountain climbs for four hours going straight up hill and hail, sleet, snow and wind. Whatever you can think of to come across, I promise you that I hit it.”

Taylor performed the trip solo, which is a remarkable feat considering the magnitude of the ride.

However, he would get local cyclists along the way that heard about his story and rode along with him at times.

“The mental choice was made before I left, so if I wasn’t good with it day one, I knew I wasn’t going to be good with it day 150,” Taylor said. “Once you commit to that goal and isolate it, it kind of just turns into a day-by-day battle more than anything else.”

One of the reasons he was able to carry on even through the difficult times, was the fact that he knew he had the support back home from his wife and the Chemo Noir family.

“It’s really been the entire network that has been involved,” Taylor said. “It’s a thank you to everybody connected with the Chemo Noir name.”

*“Someone like Greg is indescribable. He’s got it all and he did this completely selflessly. He’s a hero to me.”*

**Chemo Noir founder Katrin Casey**

On Greg Taylor, who went on a cross-country bike ride to raise money for the nonprofit

During Taylor’s ride he also was able to see a lot of states he had yet to have been to.

“I had never been north of San Diego and had not seen a lot of the Northeast,” Taylor said. “It was mind-blowing to put into perspective the things you read about after seeing them in-person. It was cool just to broaden my own horizons.”

Taylor rode 94 miles on the final day after starting in Brunswick, Ga., and Casey rode alongside him for the final 10 miles.

“The poor guy was cramping, but he just muscled through it those last 10 miles,” Casey said.

After months of planning and prep work prior to Taylor leaving in February, the two could not help but have their emotions take over as they headed down the home stretch.

“The second that Greg and I turned onto Beach Boulevard it was water works,” Casey said. “He is a rare human being.”



**ABOVE:** Janis Rasmussen, Kenneth Rasmussen and Daniela Madotta were among the group of supporters at Southern Swells Brewing Company to welcome Taylor home.



**LEFT:** Taylor drinks a beer to celebrate finishing his 11,500-mile bike ride. Photos by Anthony Richards

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# Paintings created by Art with a Heart in Healthcare artists for Nemours Children's Health System features new program

Art with a Heart in Healthcare artists, in partnership with Nemours Children's Health System Specialty Care, pulmonology department, have created paintings for the clinic on the eighth floor of the Nemours building, located at 807 Children's Way in Jacksonville.

The paintings for patients, their families and the staff of Nemours highlight the flora and fauna in the local environment and ecosystems of the St. Johns River.

Art with a Heart in Healthcare artists-in-residence and volunteers Dylan Bauer, Teresa Graham, Lisa Miyares, Brooke McKinney, Matt Richards and Jill Swanson created more than 20 paintings for the project which are in 16 exam rooms, and treatment and triage areas in the children's pulmonology unit.

Formally named the Arts and Healing Project, the artwork includes descriptions, in English and Spanish, of plants and animals depicted in the paintings which are displayed next to each creative piece.

Corresponding coloring pages created for each work of art are provided for patients to color during their wait at the clinic or at home. The project aligns with Art with a Heart in Healthcare's mission of enhancing the healing process for patients and their families through a fine art experience.



Photos provided by Art with a Heart in Healthcare



# Sulzbacher receives \$50K from Partnership for Mental Health

The Partnership for Mental Health, a project of Baptist Health and the Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Fund at The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida, awarded Sulzbacher \$50,000 to fund a child psychiatrist at its Pediatric Health Center.

The grant will enhance Sulzbacher's behavioral health services for children, providing critically needed psychiatric care to children with emotional, behavioral and developmental problems.

"Every child deserves high-quality healthcare services, no matter where they

are from, and mental health is so important for a growing child," said Cindy Funkhouser, president and CEO of Sulzbacher. "We are so grateful to The Partnership for Mental Health, The Community Foundation, Baptist Health, and to Delores Barr Weaver for this gift — it will provide expert care to children in need."

Opened in 2018, the Pediatric Health Center at Sulzbacher Village can serve any child in the community, and its services include primary care, vision care, behavioral health, dental care, developmental screenings and referrals to specialists. As

a Federally Qualified Health Center, Sulzbacher's pediatric services are provided on a sliding fee scale, and no child is turned away due to the lack of ability to pay.

Every child in Northeast Florida is eligible to receive healthcare at Sulzbacher Village, located at the corner of 44th St. and Pearl St., 5455 Springfield Blvd., in the Brentwood neighborhood of Jacksonville.

Sulzbacher operates its Pediatric Health Center in partnership with Wolfson Children's Hospital and together both organizations are highlighting the community-wide

mental health stigma reduction campaign for youth, "On Our Sleeves," a program of Wolfson Children's Hospital and Baptist.

One in five children is living with a significant mental illness, and half of all lifetime mental health issues start by age 14. Because kids don't wear their thoughts on their sleeves, it can be difficult to tell when a child is struggling with mental health.

"On Our Sleeves" is a national movement to break stigmas around children's mental health. For more information about this campaign, go to [www.wolfsonchildrens.com/onoursleeves](http://www.wolfsonchildrens.com/onoursleeves).



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# Being alone and being happy about it



**Harry Pappas**  
Columnist

Being lonely sucks. We all have been there; we crave social and emotional needs but can't find it, so we feel empty, which makes us feel lost and afraid. Yep, it sucks! What makes loneliness worse is that our society applauds extroverts, which gives shame to people who are alone.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created countless articles talking about how loneliness is at an all-time high, which is understandable and should not be taken lightly, as the effects can lead to depression, suicide, insomnia and social anxiety. According to neuroscientist John Cacioppo, who has made a career out of studying loneliness, "The absence of social connection triggers the same primal alarm bells as hunger, thirst and physical pain." Put simply, "Humans don't do well if they're alone."

What I find interesting, but not surprising, is researchers are finding that loneliness has little to do with social interaction and more to do with how people see themselves. In other words, just adding people to our lives won't necessarily take away our loneliness, as loneliness is not quantified by the amount of time we spend alone, but rather by how we feel about the time we are alone. For example, too often, when I am by myself, I choose to be unhappy and not being grateful for the good in my life. Why do I do this? Can someone please tell me? We must get our thoughts right, as loneliness is the battlefield in our mind.

This might be a good time to share an arguably funny quote from an unnamed source that I suggest is spot on, "Loneliness is dangerous. It's addicting. Once you see how peaceful it is, you don't want to deal with people." Yep, our thoughts create our destiny. They are that powerful!

As someone who is single (divorced) and often alone, I can confidently say that I prefer solitude over "noise." Although I consider myself an introvert, I can be talkative and inquisitive, but I get

incredibly exhausted by human contact. Perhaps this is a bit weird for many, but that's me, warts and all. I crave isolation, as this is where my thoughts and dreams energize me. I often say that secret is in the silence. While reading "Paul: A Man of Grace" and "Grit" by Charles R. Swindoll, I found the author's comment about the Academy Award-winning actor Tom Hanks, who starred in "Castaway," remarkably thought-provoking.

"It was one of those films with few words but an enormous amount of emotion. He plays the part of an executive with FedEx, whose fast-paced work took him on flights all over the world. While flying aboard a freight-heavy 747, he experiences the worst of this fears. The plane crashes in the Pacific Ocean not far from a tiny, uninhabited island. He is the lone survivor and he washes ashore bruised and shaken, but thankfully, alive. He will live-totally alone-on that remote piece of land for four years.

The changes that occur within him are slow, but ultimately, extensive. He goes thorough great bouts within himself, struggles too deep for words, and finally learns to live on the bare essentials of island existence. Back home in the States, there's a burial in his honor and life speeds on without him. How he escapes is fascinating, but the good news is he is picked up by a ship and is, at last, returned safely to the now unfamiliar work of life as it used to be. And he doesn't fit in at all.

The changes that transpired within him are so radical, so all-consuming, he finds himself a different man — much deeper, much more observing, much less demanding — all because of the lessons learned in solitude, quietness and obscurity.

For those of us that find being alone problematic, allow me to suggest four simple and easy, but life-changing things to do to help break us out of our loneliness. It works for me and I am confident that it could work for you.

**1. Quit complaining:** Complaining makes us forget our many blessings. Moreover, nobody likes being around a chronic complainer.

PAPPAS continues on Page 21



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# Local dentist provides options for patients with migraines, headaches

Dr. Stephanie Kinsey, owner and founder of Palencia Dental in St. Augustine, provides options for patients with migraines and help with understanding the causes and triggers.

According to Kinsey, the term “migraine” and “headache” are often interchangeable, however, almost every headache is some form of migraine.

“When we talk about migraines, it’s not just the aura-producing monster that leaves you calling in to work to seek out a dark room and a forehead wash cloth. It can also be the nagging head throb that hits you at any time of day, or all day for seemingly no reason,” she said. “The debilitating discomfort can be a sharp pain in the front, back or side of the head. These are all migraines and patients should not have to suffer.”

Kinsey added that usually periodic attacks of severe headaches on one or both sides of the head may be accompanied by nausea, vomiting, increased sensitivity of the eyes to light called photophobia, increased sensitivity to sound called phonophobia, dizziness, blurred vision, cognitive disturbances and other symptoms.

“Migraines can be a brutal, life-changing experience that touches every part of a person’s existence from work life to home life to recreation, and they can feel like they’re not able to enjoy life to the fullest because of a constant throb, dull ache or all-out assault that migraines present,” Kinsey said.

According to the American Migraine Foundation, migraine is not just a bad headache, it’s a disabling neurological disease with different symptoms and different treatment approaches compared to other headache disorders. The foundation research shows that at least 39 million Americans live with migraine, but because many people do not get a diagnosis or the treatment they



Contributed photo

**Dr. Stephanie Kinsey, owner of Palencia Dental in St. Augustine, works with a patient to alleviate and treat migraines.**

need, the actual number is probably higher. The nonprofit organization further states that migraines can be classified as episodic or chronic.

People with episodic migraines have 14 or fewer headache days per month. People with chronic migraine experience more than 15 headache days per month (for three or more months) with at least eight that include migraine features. In some people, episodic migraine can become chronic, which may occur if the disorder is not recognized and treated correctly.

“When people think about migraines the first thing that typically comes to mind, if you are even able to concentrate at all with a migraine, is pain killers. That is the immediate remedy, but like most immediate remedies, it’s very temporary. And worse yet, it typically gets to the point where over-the-counter pain killers won’t even touch a mid-level migraine, much less a four-alarm mi-

graine,” said Kinsey. “At our dental practice, we recommend eliminating environmental causes. Some people claim that coffee triggers their migraines, and some people say it wards them off. Some people think allergies are to blame, and some think it comes down to sleep. Still others think it is all about computer posture or lack of sleep.”

Kinsey believes the true cause of migraines is almost always deeper than environmental factors. Environmental factors like food and allergies are called triggers for a reason because they trigger a patient’s migraine, but they don’t cause it. Instead, the problem often lies with imbalances in the head and neck area.

“Everything in the head, neck and jaw needs to be in symmetry, and when it isn’t, the temporomandibular (TMJ) joint where the jaw connects to the skull will start to act up,” she said. “When that happens, all sorts of issues may arise like dizziness, brain fog, pain and migraines. The effect that this joint has on the surrounding areas cannot be understated.”

Palencia Dental patients have experienced solutions for migraines, which includes fixing the imbalances with one or more simple procedures. The process starts with an assessment that includes a painless head scan. The scan will show where the imbalances are causing issues, then Kinsey will use one or more types of treatments to make corrections such as muscle stimulation therapy to balance the strength of the jaw from side to side. Whether the solution is simple or more involved, a scientific approach can remove the guesswork for migraine treatment. Kinsey specializes in migraine therapies and has cured migraines that patients have experienced for decades.

“The whole process is comfortable, caring and customized to treat you as an individual,” Kinsey said.

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# Healthy habits that can become part of daily routine

A person's habits can have a strong impact on his or her overall health. Unhealthy habits like smoking and living a sedentary lifestyle can increase a person's risk for various conditions and diseases. On the flip side, healthy habits like eating a nutritious diet and getting enough sleep can bolster a person's immune system and reduce his or her risk for various ailments.

Some healthy habits, like daily exercise, can be time-consuming. Busy adults may not have time to exercise vigorously each day, though the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services urges men and women to find time for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week. But not all healthy habits take up

time. In fact, adults can incorporate various healthy practices into their daily routines without skipping a beat.

■ **Take the stairs.** Taking the stairs instead of the elevator can have a profound effect on overall health. According to Duke University, climbing just two flights of stairs combined per day can contribute to six pounds of weight loss over the course of a single year. In addition, a study from the North American Menopause Society found that stair climbing can help postmenopausal women reduce their risk for osteoporosis and help them lower their blood pressure.

■ **Drink more water.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that water helps the body maintain a normal

temperature, lubricates and cushions joints, protects the spinal cord and other sensitive tissues, and helps to rid the body of waste through urination, perspiration and bowel movements. Adults who are thirsty can choose water over soda or other sugary beverages. The CDC notes that sugary beverages like soda and sports drinks contain calories but little nutritional value, making water a healthier way for individuals to quench their thirst.

■ **Go for daily walks.** Walking benefits the body in myriad ways. For example, the Harvard School of Public Health notes that women who walk 30 minutes per day can reduce their risk of stroke by 20% and potentially by 40% if they walk briskly.

In addition, researchers at the University of Virginia Health System found that men between the ages of 71 and 93 who walked more than a quarter mile per day had half the incidence of dementia and Alzheimer's disease as men who walked less. A 15-minute walk around the neighborhood each morning coupled with a 15-minute walk after dinner can help adults dramatically improve their overall health.

■ **Eat more greens.** Eating more greens is another healthy habit that doesn't require a major overhaul of an individual's lifestyle. The U.S. Department of Agriculture notes that dark green leafy vegetables,

HABITS continues on Page 22

## Pappas

Continued from 19

**2. Be grateful for what we have:** If we are attached to how things should be, we are going to feel depressed. With depression comes loneliness.

**3. Serve others:** Such an easy path to joy and happiness! Altruism is arguably the secret to living a happier, healthier and more meaningful life.

**4. Feed our faith and our loneliness will starve:** Silence is a way to know

God. We might be single but let's remember that the Spirit of God lives inside of us, so, we are never alone!

I will allow Henry David Thoreau to give you my closing argument on the notion that we can be alone and be happy about it. "I love to be alone. I never found the companion that was as companionable as solitude."

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# Emergency Nurses Association recognizes Wolfson Children's Emergency and Porter Family Trauma Center

Minutes matter when a child's life is on the line. The care provided immediately following a serious injury or onset of illness can mean the difference between a lifetime of health or a catastrophic outcome.

To recognize the world-class, life-saving care provided at Wolfson Children's Hospital of Jacksonville, the Emergency Nurses Association selected the Wolfson Children's Emergency and Porter Family Trauma Center as one of only 33 emergency departments nationwide to receive the Lantern Award. Just seven children's hospitals in the country received this prestigious emergency nursing honor.

The ENA bestows the Lantern Award on emergency departments that exemplify exceptional practice and inno-

vative performance in the core areas of nursing leadership, practice, education, advocacy and research.

"It's exciting to see a record number of emergency departments being recognized for their incredible work," said Emergency Nurses Association President Ron Kraus. "Each and every emergency nurse at these EDs should be proud of elevating the profession, their hospital, and their care for patients."

Emergency departments that receive the Lantern Award are given an emblem to display as a visible symbol of commitment to quality, safety, a healthy work environment and innovation in nursing practice and emergency care.

"The men and women on this pediatric emergency nurs-

ing team work hard every day to provide the best care to children when they need it most," said Karen Grissinger, director of Wolfson Children's Emergency Services. "The Wolfson Children's Emergency and Trauma team rose to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, and their commitment to our young patients never wavered."

Dr. Anthony Pohlgeers, chief of Pediatric Emergency Medicine for Wolfson Children's Hospital of Jacksonville, said, "The nurses in the Emergency and Trauma Center provide both medical and emotional support for not only the patients, but the parents, as well. This national recognition is confirmation of what I have always known: this team is special, and we are lucky to have them here in Jacksonville."

# Wolfson Children's Terry Heart Institute expands pediatric cardiovascular services

The July 1 opening of Wolfson Children's Cardiology is part of an expansion and enhancement of pediatric heart services for infants and children by Wolfson Children's Hospital of Jacksonville and the Wolfson Children's C. Herman and Mary Virginia Terry Heart Institute.

The new clinical space at Baptist Medical Center South will enhance access to outpatient care for patients with congenital heart defects, rhythm disorders and other cardiovascular conditions.

In addition, the Wolfson Children's Terry Heart Institute will offer new collaborative space that will house

pediatric cardiologists, cardiothoracic surgeons, cardiac intensivists and other subspecialists providing outpatient and inpatient cardiovascular services on Wolfson Children's downtown Jacksonville campus.

This new 20,000-square-foot space, which will involve a major renovation on the second floor of the 841 Building (formerly called the Aetna Building), is expected to open in early 2022.

For information about services provided at Wolfson Children's Hospital and Wolfson Children's Terry Heart Institute, go to [wolfsonchildrens.com/heart](http://wolfsonchildrens.com/heart).

## Habits

Continued from 21

such as spinach, are rich in vitamins A, C, E and K. The Mayo Clinic notes vitamin E alone can help people maintain their vision and promote a healthy reproductive system while also improving the health of the blood, brain and skin. The USDA also notes green vegetables contain very little carbohydrates, sodium and cholesterol. Adults won't have to reinvent the dietary wheel to incorporate more greens into their diets, and the results of doing so can have a significant, positive effect on their overall health.

The right habits can help people live healthier lives, and such habits need not require any major life changes.

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# Business Weekly

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Real estate company donates money, food to local charities

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Matt Price (from left), Raghu and Gurpreet Misra, Dr. Erika Hamer, Timothy Miscovich and Chamber CEO and President Isabelle Renault at the Chamber at Noon event on July 14 at the link.

## Link is subject for Chamber at Noon event

The link was the subject of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division's Chamber at Noon event on Wednesday, July 14.

The speaker was link founder Raghu Misra, and the meeting was held at the facility.

Misra spoke about the genesis of his idea for this new 22,500-square-foot facility in Nocatee Town Center and how his plan was realized.

The link is a co-working space, multi-use innovation incubator and membership-based venue. A grand opening celebration was held July 14-16.

Food was catered for the Chamber at Noon meeting by McFlamingo.

Sponsors were Fields Auto Group and wtec.



Brittney Schmid, Michelle Smith, Jackie Smith and Jaelyn Taylor stand behind a sculpture of a grizzly made by Ocean Sole entirely of discarded flip-flops. The sculpture is one of several at the link.



Sheriff Robert Hardwick and Trudy Toche at the Chamber at Noon event on July 14 at the link.



Lucia Miller (left) and Jennifer Servello and at the Chamber at Noon meeting on July 14.

Photos by Susan Griffin

## Homebuilder names president of new Northeast Florida division



Tony Nason

PulteGroup, Inc., the nation's third largest homebuilder, recently announced Tony Nason has been promoted to president of its newly established Northeast Florida division, effective July 1. Nason will have full operational and financial responsibility for PulteGroup's homebuilding activities in the Jacksonville market.

Prior to being named division president, Nason

served as vice president of operations overseeing Jacksonville and as vice president of finance for the company's North Florida Division, which previously managed the market. Nason's promotion is in conjunction with the company's strategic decision to separate Jacksonville into its own division. Having already grown to delivering more than 500 homes annually, the new structure

will allow the operations team to further expand its business and focus on opportunities to serve new homebuyers in the market.

"Thanks to Tony's leadership, our Jacksonville team has achieved tremendous growth and customer satisfaction and controls a land pipeline ex-



# St. Augustine Distillery hosts Local Appreciation Day

On April 15, a new tradition began at St. Augustine Distillery with the first-ever Local Appreciation Day. In an effort to give back to its city and community, St. Augustine Distillery offered all residents of St. Johns County a free, full-sized cocktail mixer with the purchase of any 750-milliliter bottle of spirits.

For the last three months, St. Johns County residents have embraced the opportunity to shop local and claim their free

mixer, choosing from varieties including Old Fashioned, Florida Mule, Grapefruit Hibiscus, Tropical Tiki and Essential Tonic Mix.

With the event's success, St. Augustine Distillery will host Local Appreciation Day every month. On the 15th of each month, St. Johns County residents can visit St. Augustine Distillery's retail shop at 112 Riberia St. in St. Augustine and take advantage of the promotion. The shop



Photo provided by St. Augustine Distillery

**The St. Augustine Distillery is holding a Local Appreciation Day on the 15th of each month. St. Johns County residents can get a free mixer by visiting the retail store during the event.**

is open from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. (bring St. Johns County ID).

St. Augustine is not just a part of the distillery's name, but an integral piece of the company's identity. Founded in 2013, St. Augustine Distillery creates world-class whiskey, rum, vodka and gin by hand inside a historic ice plant, which was repurposed to continue serving the community. Their company has also built partnerships with Habitat for Humanity, The Lincolnville Museum and Cultural Center and other local initiatives.

St. Augustine Distillery is also a partner of Sing Out Loud Festival, a music and

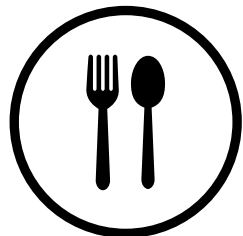
arts festival showcasing local talent, which will take place in September around St. Augustine. This year's lineup features superstars like TLC, Mayday Parade and Bone-Thugs-N-Harmony, and St. Augustine Distillery will host a free event with cellist Ben Sollee on Friday, Sept. 17.

For more information about Local Appreciation Day, go to [www.staugustinedistillery.com](http://www.staugustinedistillery.com).

The St. Augustine Distillery is a locally founded and community-owned craft distillery. For more information about the distillery, call (904) 825-4962 or email [info@staugustinedistillery.com](mailto:info@staugustinedistillery.com).



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Photo provided by Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty

**Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty collected food and monetary donations for local charities during community shredding events. Representatives of the MuraBella at World Golf Village office Jennifer Lawrence (from left), Tracy Glochau, Laura Kelly, Ruth Seibert and Haley Slightom raised money and collected food for two St. Johns County food pantries.**

## Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices FNR donates food, funds to charities

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty recently donated nonperishable food items and more than \$1,000 to four nonprofit organizations — Feeding Northeast Florida, Pace Center for Girls-Clay, Pie in the Sky and Our Lady of Good Counsel in St. Johns County. The food items and monetary donations were collected during community shredding events at the company’s branch offices in Fleming Island, Mandarin and MuraBella at World Golf Village.

The Mandarin branch office collected 571 pounds of food and \$308 for Feeding Northeast Florida, providing an estimated 2,323 meals to Northeast Florida families.

The Fleming Island branch office collected \$425 for Pace Center for Girls-Clay.

The MuraBella at World Golf Village office collected food items for the Pie in the Sky and Our Lady of Good Counsel food pantries in St. Johns County. The office also collected \$175 for each organization.

“Our company is passionate about assisting charitable organizations that make a positive difference in our local neighborhoods,” said Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty CEO Kevin Waugaman. “We are grateful for the support we received from our team and the community who helped make our events a success.”

For more information about Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty, go to FloridaNetworkRealty.com.

## Homebuilder

Continued from 23

ceeding 4,000 lots,” said Richard McCormick, PulteGroup Florida area president. “His operational experience, financial background and team-forward approach makes him the ideal leader to further our success in this thriving market.”

Prior to joining PulteGroup in 2018, Nason worked at Beazer Homes and PricewaterhouseCoopers. He earned both a B.S. in management and a master of accounting from Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan.

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# In the Arts



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## Cultural Center features artists, poets, musicians and more at link opening

The Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach and the link in Nocatee recently hosted the “Grand Opening of the Arts” at the facility some have called “the building of the future.” The event was held from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Thursday, July 15, at 425 Town Plaza Ave.

According to Donna Guzzo, Cultural Center president and executive director, the nonprofit organization coordinated poets; fine artists; live art demonstrations; musicians on cello, saxophone and violin; artist talks and demonstrations; a live salsa band; dancers; opera singers; a guitar player; a cultural fashion show and more.

The Cultural Center has served the community as a gathering place to learn, experience and appreciate the arts and culture in its many forms. It provides opportunities for adults, children and families through classes, exhibits, programs, services, activities and memberships open to the local community and beyond.

During the morning and afternoon sessions, poetry readings were held each hour with local PAM Jam poets including Carolee Bertisch, Tesi Wong, Carol Folsom, Susan Calfee, Sharon Scholl, Shutta Crum, Patricia Krause and Anne Sterling. The poetry was paired with paintings by local artists.

Arts instructor Marisa Yow demonstrated her work in oils, drawings and figurative work. A robotic introduction of Simon and Echo with Todd and Theresa Rykaczewsky included interactions among children from Cultural Center’s Summer Arts Camp.

Featured musicians included Jeremy Bertisch, Shari Little, Teal Cabana Club, The Connors Project, Sharon Scholl, Daniel Birch and Janine Newfield. Violin students circulated among attendees.

The afternoon sessions also featured the nonprofit’s master artist Ellen Diamond and her Tuscan-themed artwork in the Flagler Health+ Immersion Room while accompanied by opera singer Regina Torres.



Photo by Shaun Ryan

Poet and painter Carolee Bertisch (bottom) and painter Ellen Diamond teamed up for the PAM Jam portion of the Cultural Center’s ‘Grand Opening of the Arts’ at the link on Thursday, July 15.

Throughout the evening portion of the event, additional artists and painters were featured, including Midge Scelzo, Marla Kanehl, Marleen Scheer, Zena Groover, Deborah Lightfield and Sharon Warner. Pet portraits by Anna Washington were also highlighted.

CULTURAL CENTER continues on Page 27

## Author, historian to sign books at local bookstore

Historian and New York Times-best-selling author Les Standiford will be at The BookMark in Neptune Beach at 7 p.m. Friday, July 23, to sign copies of his new book, “Battle for the Big Top: P.T. Barnum, James Bailey, John Ringling, and the Death-Defying Saga of the American Circus.”

Standiford is the author of several critically acclaimed books, including “Last Train to Paradise,” “Meet You in Hell” and “Bringing Adam Home.” His book, “The Man Who Invented Christmas,” was a New York Times Editors’ Choice and was made into a feature film starring Christopher Plummer and Dan Stevens in 2018.

In “The Battle for the Big Top,” Standiford brings to life a remarkable era when three circus kings — James Bailey, P. T. Barnum, and John Ringling — all vied for control of the vastly profitable and influential American Circus. Ultimately, the rivalry of these three men resulted in the creation of an institution that would surpass all intentions and, for 147 years, hold a nation spellbound.

For more information this event, go to [www.bookmarkbeach.com](http://www.bookmarkbeach.com) or call (904) 241-9026.

## Butterfield Gallery’s annual ‘Garage Sale’ to be held in August

The 19th Annual Butterfield Garage “Garage Sale” opens Saturday, Aug. 1, and will continue throughout the month.

Well-known member artists will have their older work, art with slightly damaged frames, experimental work that has never been shown and even works of other artists from their own private collections on display at Butterfield at “garage sale” prices.

This annual event is always heavy attended as 31 well-known local artists offer high-octane art at sometimes steeply discounted prices. There is a wide variety of art mediums, including paintings, sculpture, photography, prints, textiles, glass, jewelry and more.

Also beginning Aug. 1, Butterfield Garage Gallery will resume its regular hours from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily.

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# Cultural Center

Continued from 26

Susanne Schuenke, Theresa Rykaczewsky and Eloy Castroverde presented artist talks.

Cultural Center master artist Enrique Mora's paintings were installed in the link's reception lobby entrance, where the massive art pieces by Schuenke are hung on two-story walls.

In addition, many artists were featured throughout the building corridors and studios. Artwork will be featured at the link until Friday, October 15.

During the evening, performances featured Maura Delgado on the saxophone; Sabrina Krisberg, cello teacher at the Cultural Center; and music by Avid Smith playing the Indian Sitar with vocals by Lindsey and Loreal Liske of the local Academy of Music and Arts.

Guest speakers during the night included Chris Miller, district director of U.S. Rep. John Rutherford's office; Joy Andrews, deputy St. Johns County administrator; St. Johns County commissioners Jeb Smith and Henry Dean; and Joe Bryant, Cultural Center Board of Directors chairman.

Guzzo and her staff also coordinated a myriad of vibrant evening sessions with partners and Cultural Center members Ruth Van Alstine and the North Florida Poetry Hub, along with poets Sally Wahl Constain and Patricia Krause, who composed improvisational prose that were written, shared and produced on antique



**PAM Jam coordinator Loretta M. Leto (right) reads a poem by Susan Calfee while artist Marlene Scheer shows the art she paired with the poem.**

paper and tied with a red ribbon as giveaways.

Dr. Arun Gulani, Gulani Fashions, and professional model Sally Fit produced a highly detailed cultural fashion show with models dressed in traditional clothing from their native countries on the runway. Live music was provided by the Mi Son Salsa Band, sponsors of the event.

"We are extremely proud to have successfully featured a wide variety of local and regional cultural professionals and volunteers for attendees to experience how combined creativity can tell a beautiful story through visual and auditory presentations," said Guzzo. "The entire day and evening was offered free of charge to the community and to all who enjoyed the

festivities."

She said the event was about "unity, love, the power of art, the sound of music, the spoken word, freedom of movement, creativity, inspiration, cultural awareness, tolerance of other cultures and inclusivity."

"On that night, we went global," she said. "We linked every country in our own backyard. We brought hope to our future and are honored to have featured the opening exhibit at the link."

Artwork is available for sale at the link.

Artist bios may be viewed at [thelink.zone/artists](http://thelink.zone/artists).

For more information, contact Callie Johnson, Cultural Center community connections manager, at (904) 280-0614 ext. 1202 or email [cjohnson@ccpvb.org](mailto:cjohnson@ccpvb.org).



Photos by Shaun Ryan

**Painter Marisa Yow gave a live painting demonstration during the Cultural Center's 'Grand Opening of the Arts' at the link on Thursday, July 15. The painting at left is finished, and the painting at right is a work in progress.**



**Artist Maria Kanehl speaks to a group about her work during the Cultural Center's 'Grand Opening of the Arts' at the link.**

For more information about Cultural Center memberships, classes, programs and services, go to [ccpvb.org](http://ccpvb.org).

The Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach is located at 3972 3rd St. South, Jacksonville Beach. Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, with after-hour appointments available.

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# Sports

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## Nocatee resident Grace Richards to represent First Tee at iconic Pebble Beach

By Anthony Richards

Nocatee's Grace Richards has played the picturesque Pebble Beach Golf Links on a simulator, but now she will get the chance to experience it firsthand after being selected to represent the First Tee of North Florida at the PURE Insurance Championship on Sept. 20-26.

"The journey has been quite a whirlwind, and it's honestly all because of First Tee," Richards said.

Richards was introduced to golf at 11 years old after joining the First Tee of North Florida and taking lessons.

"I didn't really get into it until I started bonding with the coaches and started making friends," Richards said. "I began to think 'I can really see myself doing this,' so in middle school I joined the team and also did all four years of high school."

She graduated from Nease High a couple of months ago and will be continuing her golf career at Flagler College.

Richards remains actively involved with First Tee as a coach with the organization and has made it a point to make sure she provides the same support she received when she was first starting out.

"It's a really good feeling to know that I not only improved their golf game, but also made a positive impact on them as a whole," Richards said.

She submitted her application in early May to the national board of judges,



Photo by Anthony Richards

**Grace Richards of Nocatee will compete in the PURE Insurance Championship at Pebble Beach Golf Links and Spyglass Hill Golf Course on Sept. 20-26. Her home course is Palencia Golf Club.**

which consist of a bunch of coaches and higher-ups at First Tee, a nonprofit organization in conjunction with the PGA Tour that teaches children life skills through the game of golf.

"It took about a month or more to find

out the results, and my (North Florida) chapter knew before I even did," Richards said. "They surprised me with the news when I was taking a tour of the PGA headquarters with a bunch of other First Tee families."

PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan was on hand and broke the news to not only Richards, but also Matthew French and Madelyn Campbell.

**FIRST TEE** continues on Page 29

## Marsh Landing CC hosts Jacksonville Amateur Championship

The 60th edition of the Jacksonville Amateur Championship, conducted by the Jacksonville Area Golf Association gets underway Thursday, July 22, at Marsh Landing Country Club in Ponte Vedra Beach. The 54-hole stroke-play championship will crown its 2021 champion on Saturday, July 24.

First played in 1962, the Jacksonville Amateur is JAGA's showcase tournament. Marsh Landing is hosting the event for the first time since 2014.

The championship features 82 players, with 15 residing outside JAGA's Northeast Florida footprint. Contestants

hail from around the state, plus Colorado, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Ontario, Canada, Argentina and Japan.

The field was increased from 78 to 82 last week due to competitor interest.

The field ranges in age from 18 to 66, with six teenagers and two 66-year-olds — 2006 champion David Anthony and John Milton — competing.

One other past champion is in the field, Duke Butler IV (2009), as is JAGA's reigning Match Play champion Mark Spencer, who claimed that title in May at Queen's Harbour Yacht and Country Club.

The North Florida Junior Golf Foun-

dation will be represented by two of its members, including Jackson Klauk of Jacksonville.

Handicap index eligibility is limited to six. Fifty-seven contestants are registered with handicap indexes of scratch (0) or plus-figures.

2020 champion Cody Carroll of UNF will not be defending his title.

Former UNF All-American Travis Trace won the Amateur when it was last played at Marsh Landing in 2014.

The Amateur is one of three JAGA-conducted events in which the top finishers are awarded World Amateur Golf Ranking

points. The JAGA First Coast Amateur and the JAGA Match Play Championship are the others.

The contestants will face a par-72 Marsh Landing layout that will play approximately 6,800 yards, depending on the placement of tee markers on certain holes.

The first tee time all three days will be 7:30 a.m. A cut will be made on Friday after 36 holes, with the top half of the field and ties vying for the title on Saturday.

The Jacksonville Amateur is JAGA's

**JAGA** continues on Page 29



# First Tee

Continued from 28

“It just blew our mind,” Richards said. “We were just so ecstatic about it. That was one of the best ways we could have found out.”

Richards will be one of 81 First Tee members to take part in the PURE Insurance Championship, which is a PGA Tour Champions event.

The First Tee golfers will be paired with professional players from the PGA Tour Champions circuit and will play 18 holes in groups of four.

“It’s all about building those connections and getting to know the players,” Richards said. “I will be saying hi to as many people as possible.”

Players will not only play Pebble Beach but will also have the opportunity to play Spyglass Hill Golf Course, which is part of the Pebble Beach Resorts family.

“We’re planning to get there a little bit early to get used to the time change and the altitude,” Richards said.

The chance to play Pebble Beach is something Richards has been thinking about for some time now after being



Photo provided by Gwendolyn Richards

**PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan (far left) and PGA Tour Champions President Miller Brady (far right) informed Madelyn Campbell, Matthew French and Grace Richards they were invited to play Pebble Beach Golf Links in September.**

accepted to play it a year ago, but not being able to because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I’ve had a year to process it, and I’m just so ready to go,” Richards said.

Holes seven and 18 are two holes she

is anxious to play after having heard so much about them from others.

“I had a friend go to Pebble two years ago and she said the wind was crazy on those two holes,” Richards said. “I can’t wait to experience it for myself.”

# JAGA

Continued from 28

second-oldest championship, behind the JAGA Senior Amateur (64 years). Co-chairing the championship again this year are JAGA director John Milton (Jax Beach GC) and JAGA president Jeff Adams (TPC Sawgrass). Milton is wearing two hats once again given his competitor status. Veteran rules experts Skip Small and Duke Butler III have collaborated to handle course set-up and rules. Providing leadership from the host club are general manager Chet Stokes and JAGA directors and club members George Halvorsen and John Tancredi.

The Amateur rotates among North Florida’s finest golf courses.

The upcoming schedule is:

2022 – Deerwood Country Club

2023 – San Jose Country Club

2024 – Timuquana Country Club

2025 – Jacksonville Golf & Country Club

2026 – Sawgrass Country Club

2027 – Jax Beach Golf Club.

Jacksonville Amateur results may be found daily at [jax.bluegolf.com](http://jax.bluegolf.com) or via [www.jaxareagolf.org](http://www.jaxareagolf.org).

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## THEME: LEGENDARY ATHLETES

### ACROSS

- \*Baseball’s “The Say Hey Kid”
- TV tube in days of yore
- Proof of age, pl.
- Medicinal succulent
- Toward shelter, nautically
- White heron
- Poet \_\_\_\_ Angelou
- Where a bib is tied
- Taste like grapes
- \*First African American to play in MLB
- Chap or fella
- Do like Etna
- Auction set
- Property defacer
- Italian vermouth brand
- 2nd largest bird in world
- Informal wear
- “The Man Who \_\_\_\_ Too Much”
- Relating to Scandinavia
- Chicken \_\_\_\_ king
- Nearsited one
- Bear in the sky
- The largest Asian antelope
- \*Dolphin great \_\_\_\_ Marino
- Reusable painting pattern
- Stands out
- Cotillion V.I.P.
- Deli item
- Cain’s brother
- \*a.k.a. The Great Bambino
- Oyster gem
- Dwarf buffalo
- Algonquian people
- Body trunk
- Hay spot
- \*“Battle of the Sexes” champion
- A in FANBOYS
- Altitude, for short
- “Comme ci, comme ça”

### DOWN

- Mom in Scotland
- Wing-shaped
- Walk-the-dog toy
- Bottom of the ocean
- Fastener
- Move a plant
- \*Pele or Bob Feller when they debuted
- Armenia’s neighbor
- Cabinet div.
- Dirty dwelling
- Declares invalid
- Encourage, two words
- \*NHL’s “The Great One”
- Very angry
- Type of English course, for short
- Where women are from?
- “To death” in France
- Florence Nightingale, e.g.

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\$1,699

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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.

- Mountain goat terrain
- Opposite of cathode
- Himalayan country
- \*Track and field star of 1936 Olympics
- Frozen rain
- “\_\_\_\_ at ease”
- \*He simultaneously played in MLB and NFL
- Ginger beer in a cocktail, e.g.
- Pen point
- Sea in the Mediterranean
- Yo-Yo Ma’s instrument
- Talks like a chicken
- Overfamiliar from overuse
- Terminate, as in mission
- Same as eon
- Shakespeare, a.k.a. \_\_\_\_ of Avon
- “Ali \_\_\_\_ and the 40 Thieves”
- \*Tinker, Evers and Chance, e.g.
- Egg-layers
- Parent volunteer organization
- Id’s partner

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# Ponte Vedra CLASSIFIEDS

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www.pontevedrarecorder.com

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Ponte Vedra Beach



**Landay Ridaught Group**  
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**Kelly & Wanda**  
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**Elizabeth Parsons**  
Nocatee



**Jennifer Zeiller**  
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**Matt & Naomi Wilkinson**  
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