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PONTE VEDRA



Recorder

October 7, 2021
Volume 51, No. 101
75 cents

PonteVedraRecorder.com

Not your average newspaper, not your average reader



FULL STEAM AHEAD

Da'Von Patterson and the Nease offense are rolling along as they head into a week seven home matchup against county rival St. Augustine.

Photo by Anthony Richards



INSIDE: CHECK IT OUT!

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



Connections

Pages 9-24



In The Arts

Page 27



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One of Us

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Send us your news

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



Visit our new website at www.pontevedrarecorder.com

Plus, find the Recorder on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ThePVRecorder

ADOPT A PET

Prince

Hi, I'm Prince! I am a one-year-old male Labrador/boxer mix with a sweet disposition. Per his previous owner he is good with



kids and other dogs but not cats. He is heartworm-positive, but because he is so young, it is easily treatable. His fee is sponsored by the Friends of the St. Johns County Pet Center, and they offer a \$250 voucher toward heartworm treatment. He is truly a Prince.



Tabitha

Tabitha the Tabby, oh the Pet Center Staff is so clever! I am a one-year-old domestic shorthair female tabby. I was brought to the shelter as a stray by a kind man who thought he could care for me, but alas, I am here, so it did not work out.

I am sweet but shy as I would rather sit in someone's lap in a nice cozy home instead of the shelter and have a family to call my own. Please stop in and meet me. I think you will see that I would be a great addition to your family!

St. Johns County Pet Center

Cat adoptions at the St. Johns County Pet Center are \$30 for males and \$40 for females. Dog adoptions are \$45 for males and \$60 for females. Adoption fees include microchipping, neutering/spaying, rabies vaccinations and shots. The pet center is located at 130 N. Stratton Rd., off US 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

Christ Church Creative Academy presenting musical revue

Christ Church Creative Academy is presenting a musical revue Thursday-Saturday, Oct. 7-9, at 400 San Juan Drive, Ponte Vedra Beach, in the second floor Westbury Hall performance space. On Thursday, the premier party begins at 7 p.m., the performance at 8 p.m. Performances on Friday and Saturday will be held at 6 and 8 p.m. Tickets are available at christepiscopalchurch.org.

The show celebrates 10 years of musical theater productions at Christ Church. It will feature selections from "Godspell," "Fiddler on the Roof," "Music Man," "Children of Eden," "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" and more. The revue is directed by Lee Hamby, with musical direction by Tim Root.

Minorcan heritage topic of lecture

Michelle Reyna of City Gate Productions will present a free lecture titled "Minorcan Heritage in St. Augustine" at 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 7, at Trinity Parish Church, 216 St. George St., St. Augustine. It

is the final lecture in the Trinity Parish Bicentennial Celebration series that started in May.

A short reception will follow at the Ximenez-Fatio House Museum, 20 Aviles St., St. Augustine.

Free concert at Ponte Vedra Library

The Lisa Kelly/JB Scott Quintet will give a concert at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 12, in the Ponte Vedra Library FOL room. Admission is free.

Featured performers are Lisa Kelly, voice; JB Scott on trumpet; Bill Prince on sax; Scott Giddens on piano; Dennis Marks on bass; and Jeremy Smith on drums. Each musician is musically connected to University of North Florida jazz program. The program will include songs from the Great American Songbook to traditional songs of New Orleans, in the styles of swing, Bossa Nova, ballads, waltzes, light groove, St. Beat and more.

The library is located at 101 Library Blvd., Ponte Vedra Beach.

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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15-17
22-31**

Atlantic Beach Arts Market topic for Newcomers Alumnae luncheon

Newcomers Alumnae held its first monthly luncheon after a long summer hiatus on Sept. 1 at Marsh Landing Country Club, 25655 Marsh Landing Parkway, Ponte Vedra Beach. Attendees were entertained by two members of Atlantic Beach Arts Market, owner Gloria Moore and Jeannie Gabrynowicz.

Moore is originally from Boston and moved to the Jacksonville area in 1984. After a career as a nurse midwife/practitioner, she retired with the opportunity to set up her own pottery studio. She part-

nered with her daughter and son-in-law to open the Atlantic Beach Arts Market – a 5,000-square-foot creative space and vintage market open seven days a week and located at 1805 Mayport Road. The Market has more than 90 local artists and vendors and a learning studio. It also sells art, jewelry, paintings, pottery, glass, fine art and handmade gifts.

Moore's assistant, Jeannie Gabrynowicz, is a lifelong resident of Atlantic Beach but lived overseas several times during her husband's naval career. While working in

administration at Jacksonville University, she enjoyed taking numerous art classes as part of employee benefits. Her art concentrations are print-making and painting. She shares a corner at the Market with her husband, who sells natural surrounding photographs.

The speaker at Newcomers Alumnae's Oct. 6 luncheon will be Allison Misora, with a guest from K9s for Warriors. K9s for Warriors is the nation's largest provider of trained service dogs to military veterans suffering from PTSD, traumatic

brain injury or military sexual trauma.

The cost for this luncheon event is \$23. Reservations for lunch must be made by contacting bartshar@comcast.net as soon as possible in order to reserve a seat.

Newcomers Alumnae is a social group comprised of women who live in Ponte Vedra Beach, Nocatee, Jacksonville Beach, Atlantic Beach, Neptune Beach, Jacksonville and St. Augustine. Contact brookemeister@msn.com for more information about this club.



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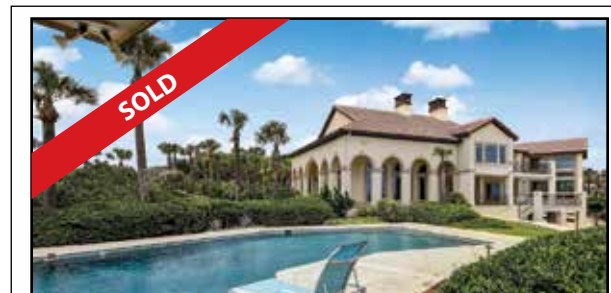
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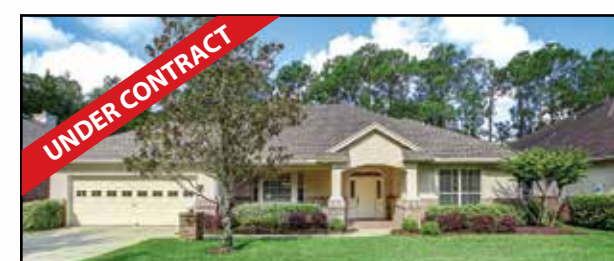


Ponte Vedra Boulevard

An idyllic home in Old Ponte Vedra just steps from the Ponte Vedra Inn and Club across from the ocean on the Boulevard. The 3,300 sq. ft. residence is one of the last originals and sits on .54 acres on hole #3 of The Ocean Course. Huge front and back yards, circular paved driveway, and a separate guest suite. The possibilities are endless! **Main House: 5 Bedrooms, 4 Bathrooms, Guest Suite: 1 Bedroom, 2 Baths. \$4,500,000**



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11th annual Pin Up Paws party set for Oct. 28

"Paws Across America" is theme for 2022 calendar

The 2022 Pin Up Paws pet calendar will be unveiled at the St. Augustine Humane Society's annual fundraising event on Oct. 28. The 11th annual Pin Up Paws (PUP) party will be held from 6 to 9 p.m. at 1665 Old Moultrie Road, St. Augustine.

Organizers have announced a location change from the Embassy Suites by Hilton in St. Augustine Beach Oceanfront Resort to the Humane Society facility.

Also, there is reduced ticket pricing, new entertainment and revised food and beverage menus for the fundraiser.

Admission to the event and a copy of the "Paws Across America" calendar will be available for a donation of \$48 per person.

All proceeds from tickets sales, calendar submissions with pets, sponsorships, silent and online auctions and calendar sales will benefit the programs and services of the St. Augustine Humane Society, the veterinary clinic and numerous resources available to



the community.

The fundraiser also supports the nonprofit's mission of promoting healthy long-term pet ownership and reducing the rate of relinquishment to shelters.

Guests will be offered dinner and dessert, complimentary wine, cash bar for cocktails, beer and non-alcoholic beverages, a wine pull, silent auction and live music with Rob Peck and the Matanzas Allstars.

According to Carolyn Smith, St. Augustine Humane Society's executive director,

in recognition of social distancing considerations, the event will be held onsite at the Humane Society as an indoor and outdoor event to accommodate guests. She added that each guest will receive an Americana-styled gourmet picnic basket filled with individually sealed portions of foods and desserts. Gourmet picnic baskets will be packaged in advance for COVID-19 and Delta variant safety. Festivities include complimentary wine, music by ProShow DJ Service, a silent auction, a wine pull and a free copy of the 2022 "Paws Across



Contributed photo

The 2022 Pin Up Paws calendar cover pet, Kilo, does not mind getting dirty.

America" calendar.

The silent and online auction will include gift baskets, Columbia Restaurant gift certificates and locally sourced items. To view online auction items, go to www.PUPauction.org. For more information, call 904-829-2737 or go to www.PUP-party.org.

The Winner

This year's calendars will portray winning pet photos in the theme "Paws Across America." Each pet is fitted with accessories to match the 12 unique personalities in an Americana costume and background motif.

Sam and Pam Williams of Ponte Vedra Beach campaigned and won first place for Kilo, their Siberian husky, who will be the 2022 Pin Up Paws calendar cover pet. Kilo received more than 2,800 votes.

According to Sam Williams, Kilo loves to chase his toys, as well as squirrels and lizards. One of Kilo's favorite activities is being the sous-chef while Pam Williams is fixing dinner, by laying in the middle of the kitchen floor. Kilo also loves to dig deep holes and does not mind getting dirty. Kilo received a professional photo shoot with photographer Addison Fitzgerald, a \$200 Columbia Restaurant gift certificate, two free copies of the 2022 Pin Up Paws calendar and two free tickets to the PUP Party.

The calendar contest initially started in June with donors who submitted photos of their pets to be featured in the calendar. There was a \$5 entry fee per pet to submit the photos, then friends placed votes for the pet in order for owners to win prizes.

This year, the calendar portion of the fundraiser yielded more than \$23,000. Calendars can be purchased for \$10 each starting in November. They will be available online, by phone and at the Humane Society.



NOTICE OF CERTIFICATION OF TAX ROLL

**Pursuant to Sections 193.122 and 197.323, Florida Statutes,
Notice is Hereby Given that the Tax Roll for
St. Johns County was Certified to the St. Johns County Tax
Collector on the 7th day of October, 2021, for the
Collection of 2021 Taxes Pending Value Adjustment Board
Changes.**

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Melissa M. Gotfredson is co-founder of the Ladies Amateur Golf Association and committee member of the First Coast Women's Amateur Championship. She got involved with both organizations in hopes of growing the game of golf and creating opportunities for females in the sport. She has played in FCWAC competitions herself, and it is that love for the game that fuels the passion for what she does.

Melissa M. Gotfredson

As told to Anthony Richards

Tell us a little about yourself and your background.

Tell us a little about yourself and your background.

My husband and I moved here from Dallas, Texas, in 2016 looking for better weather and the beach. There is a big contrast between the big city and the laid-back beach feel...we prefer the sand.

I have been an entrepreneur all my life, beginning as a young professional show horse trainer, interior designer of movie theaters worldwide and presently CEO of IonLoop bracelet company, co-founder of the Ladies Amateur Golf Association and committee member of the First Coast Women's Amateur Championship, which is an annual golf championship in Northeast Florida that features the top female golfers across amateur, senior and super senior divisions.

What led to you getting involved with the First Coast Women's Amateur Tournament? After playing in my first FCWA event at Timuquana Country Club, the committee chair, Susie Fonde, asked me if I might be interested in being a part of the committee. At that time, I was looking for a little something to get involved in and felt that with my organizational skills, business background and passion for golf (especially promoting female participation in the game!), I had something to offer the FCWA committee.

What are the primary goals of the tournament? To build FCWA into a premier women's amateur championship that promotes, showcases and supports the growth of women's and junior girls' golf in Northeast Florida.

Raising funds for local charities is another goal for the tournament. This past year, our three charitable recipients were Moore-Myers Children's Fund, the JAGA Scholarship Fund and North Florida Junior Golf Foundation.

What do you enjoy most about the work you do with the event?

We have an amazing committee, and it is rewarding to work with such dedicated women who care so deeply about empowering more women to play this great game and giving women of all ages the opportunity to tee it up and compete.

Watching an event be successful and have the players enjoy the competition is very rewarding.

Not to mention, presenting the checks to our respective charitable recipients...warms my heart!

How has the community support been?

We are so grateful to have Brooks Rehabilitation as our presenting sponsor for the past six years. Their support is crucial in ensuring the operational success of the tournament.

We are also grateful for the support of the Jacksonville Area Golf Association, which assists with various aspects of the event.

Last but not least, our annual championship would not be possible without the host courses who believe in our



Photo courtesy of Melissa Gotfredson

Melissa Gotfredson has hopes of building the First Coast Women's Amateur Championship into a premier event that promotes, showcases and supports the growth of women's and junior girls' golf in Northeast Florida.

mission!

Hosting the 2021 FCWA at Sawgrass Country Club this past June was such an honor. To see the entire club – from the golf team to the food and beverage staff and the club members – embrace this championship from start to finish was so incredible. Everyone played a big role in making the 2021 FCWA a success. Not to mention, the golf course is one of the top courses in Florida.

How have you seen the tournament grow through the years?

I am going on my fourth year on the committee, and in just that short time we have raised double the funds

for our charities. Not to mention, the field continues to strengthen each year. It's so exciting to see more local, national and international talents compete in this championship.

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

I love seeing sunshine every morning and being close to the beach. I might not go every day, but just knowing it is there is a comfort.

What do you like to do in your free time? Golf is my passion, along with training my Jack Russell terrier, Ace, and giving back to the golf community.

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 \$4,500,000 - 200' Oceanfront

SOLD 1st Day - \$100k over asking

945 PONTE VEDRA BLVD.
 \$5,100,000 - Oceanfront Lot

800 HAWKS NEST CT.
 \$2,749,000

SOLD - 0 Days on Market

4983 MARINA SAN PABLO PL. W.
 \$1,309,000

SOLD

292 COBBLER TRAIL
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200 DEER COLONY LN.
 \$1,899,000 - Marsh Landing Lot

200 DEER COLONY LN.
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24308 MOSS CREEK LN.
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Presented by Kelley Pierce

SOLD

719 PONTE VEDRA BLVD.
 \$3,750,000

Presented by Madeline Ossi

Under Contract

12162 RIDGE CROSSING WAY
 \$539,000

Presented by Kelley Pierce

SOLD

608 IBIS COVE PL.
 \$2,500,000 - Marsh Landing

Presented by Kelley Pierce

SOLD

75 SAN JUAN DR.
 \$2,350,000

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SOLD over asking

25505 MARSH LANDING PKWY.
 \$1,620,000

Presented by Kelley Pierce

SOLD

173 LINKSIDE CIRCLE
 \$1,525,000

Presented by Kelley Pierce

New Listing

1930 TARA COURT
 \$TBD - Neptune Beach

Presented by Kelley Pierce

SOLD

8126 SEVEN MILE DR.
 \$1,495,000 - Sawgrass Country Club

Presented by Kelley Pierce

SOLD over asking

3556 HERON DR. S.
 \$515,000 - Riptide

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New Listing

111 25TH AVE. S. UNIT M11
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Haunt Nights coming to Adventure Landing

Haunt Nights 2021 at Adventure Landing in Jacksonville Beach began Oct. 1 and run through Halloween night, and this year will feature two haunted attractions with over 40 actors.

A much-anticipated Haunt Nights favorite is back with the "Payn Manor," which is everyone's dream until they step inside, and the nightmare begins.

The maid, butler and grounds men are out for revenge, and you are the guest of honor. Once the spell is cast there is no stopping it. You can run but you can't escape.

The second attraction will be "Dark Fables 3D," which is touted as Jacksonville's largest 3-D Haunt.

Fairy Tales aren't what they seem in "Dark Fables 3D," as creepy characters lurk and wind their way through narrow passages trying to reach you and evoke thoughts of fear.

Although there will be plenty to fear at Haunt Nights, parking is not among them, as all parking is included with the purchase of a ticket.

Tickets start at \$24.99 and includes access to both haunted attractions, while those interested can add an attraction to their night for \$27.99.



The attractions include go-karts, miniature golf or the MaxFlight Virtual Rollercoaster.

Guests can save \$1 off any ticket when they purchase them online at www.haunt-nightsjax.com.

Hours of operation vary depending on the day, and those times can also be found on the website.

Group rates are available at a discount by contacting the park group sales manager at groups@adventurelanding.com.

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THEME: HOCKEY

ACROSS

1. Instagram handle, e.g.
6. Faux one
9. Floor cleaner or haircut, pl.
13. No such thing as a free one?
14. Middle-earth dweller
15. Like Halloween night
16. Binary digits code
17. Biathlon glider
18. Take without asking
19. *Hockey's ____ Cup
21. *Start of play
23. End of White House URL
24. 1,000 grams
25. Spot for a massage
28. Chemistry Nobel Otto ____
30. *The oldest U.S.-based team in NHL
35. Bar bills
37. Denials
39. Thin Mints group, e.g.
40. Just one of British Isles
41. Low landform
43. Not in favor of
44. Slap landing
46. Dutch cheese
47. Property right
48. Kismet-related
50. "All for one, one for all" sword
52. Shed tears
53. Old in Scottish
55. Time period
57. *Sandler as hockey player
61. **The Great One"
65. Radio show host: "Hello, you're ____"
66. Sea in Spain
68. Witchy woman
69. Pore in a leaf
70. *1980 Olympic "Miracle" winner
71. Ringworm

72. Gardner's gear
73. Dashboard acronym
74. Same as sakis

DOWN

1. "Sad to say ..."
2. A deadly sin
3. Ancient Peruvian
4. Breezing through
5. Civil War battle
6. Nosegay
7. Biblical boat
8. "The Terminator" genre
9. Dole out
10. Black and white treat
11. "La Vie en rose" singer
12. Ego's domain
15. Bodyguard, e.g.
20. *14-year NHL player, coached Whalers to playoffs, Jack ____
22. Priest's vestment
24. Worked the dough
25. *Hockey club
26. Ottoman title
27. More competent
29. *Great Gordie
31. Europe/Asia mountain divide
32. Not Doric nor Corinthian
33. Post-it user
34. Like a sea urchin
36. Give an impression
38. * ____ shot
42. Arabian chieftain
45. "Hats off," in New Zealand (2 words)
49. Mixed breed puppy
51. Builds
54. Madagascar primate
56. Skylit lobbies
57. "Geel"
58. Keen on
59. Cambodia's neighbor
60. Marcel Marceau, e.g.
61. 1/1000 of #24 Across

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			8	9	6			
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Chamber Connections

October 2021



ST. JOHNS COUNTY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Ponte Vedra Beach Division



The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division Board of Directors 2021-2022

Front Row: Susan Griffin, Matt Price, Felica Cox, Lori Adams and Emily Tillo. *Back Row:* Kathleen Floryan, Pamela Bomba, Peter verDorn, Jennifer Servello, Mark Allen
(*Not pictured:* Marla Buchanan)



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Isabelle Renault
President and CEO,
St. Johns County
Chamber of Commerce

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO

Chamber welcomes new members of leadership

Happy New Year! The Chamber's new fiscal year began Oct. 1 and I want to congratulate the Chamber's new volunteer leaders for the 2021-22 year. Their terms began Oct. 1, 2021.

The officers of the Chamber of Commerce board of directors were recently selected and are: Jim Bush, FP&L, chairman; Beth Sweeny, Flagler College, vice chair; Berta Odom, RE/MAX 100, treasurer; Orville Dothage, Northrop Grumman, secretary; Isabelle Renault, St. Johns County Chamber, chair of the chamber's economic development council executive committee; Mike Koppenhafer, Fisher Koppenhafer; and Dr. Erika Hamer, owner of Ponte Vedra Wellness Center, immediate past president.

The newly elected Chamber of Commerce board directors are: David Rice, Flagler Health+; James Machado, ACHE, Ascension St. Vincent's; Meg Zabijaka, Constangy Brooks,

Smith & Prophete LLP; and Chris Heibel, American Roll-on Roll-Off Carrier (ARCO).

They join those previously elected, including Carol Burns, Vista Hospitality; Michael Scine, Scine CPA Advisors; Melissa Morin, Wells Fargo; Melissa Rowe Benes, Puroclean Emergency Restoration Services; Stephen Hudson, Digital Mark Company LLC; and Chris Pokrivnak, VyStar Credit Union. The Chairs of the Ponte Vedra Beach Division and the Chamber Councils are: Matt Price, Regions Bank, Chair, Ponte Vedra Beach Division; Meghan Holder, Mudflower Media Creative, Chair, Agricultural and Environmental Council; Patti McRoberts, Sebastian Hotel, Chair, St. Augustine Historic Area Council; Donna Lueders, INKI, Chair, North Business Council; Trudy Padilla, Keller Williams, Chair, Small Business Council; William McBroom, St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra and The Beaches Visitors and Convention Bureau, Chair, Tourism & Hospital-

ity Council; and Julie Fuller, FastSigns, Chair, Women with Vision Council.

Leaving the board are: Kathy Fleming, St. Augustine Lighthouse and Maritime Museum; Darnell Smith, Florida Blue; and Gary Wheeler, Constangy, Brooks, Smith and Prophete, LLP, as they ended their three-year term Sept. 30, 2021.

Additional information and photos of the members of the 2021-2022 board of directors for the Ponte Vedra Beach Division are listed in this edition. Congratulations and thank you to all! Please join us for our thank you reception in November as we gather to thank our leaders and look ahead to our new year. Watch for details! Thanks for your continued support!

Regards,
Isabelle Renault
President and CEO, St. Johns County
Chamber of Commerce

Leadership St. Johns class holds project completion, ribbon cutting

The 23 members of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce's Leadership St. Johns Class of 2021 began its class year on April 9 and selected a nonprofit beneficiary as part of the program responsibilities. Class members are professionals from all sectors of industry, commerce and public service in St. Johns County.

This year, the group selected SEA Community Help Resource Center Inc., a 501(c)3 that was formally established in 2013 but began as an outreach ministry with the neighboring First Baptist Church of Armstrong in 2005. The charitable organization began meeting in a dirt parking lot to help those in need to enrich their lives from sub-standard housing, homelessness and hunger in the Spuds, Elkton and Armstrong communities.

SEA is located at 6408 Armstrong Road in Elkton, 13 miles southwest of St. Augustine.

Members of class, the Chamber, community leaders and local government officials celebrated the completion of the Leadership St. Johns project and donated property improvements at SEA with a formal ribbon cutting Oct. 13 at the Elkton property.

Classmates contacted local businesses to donate a new 30-by-30-foot concrete pad, picnic tables, signage, landscaping and yardwork, along with a screened area for food distribution to the community. Local donors include FASTSIGNS, Marker 38 Investments, Mudflower Creative Media and TBL Construction Inc.

As part of the Leadership St. Johns activities for this year's class, participants also conducted a back-to-school backpack and supplies giveaway at SEA for children



Photos provided by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Leadership St. Johns 2021 Class members and SEA Community Help Resource Center staff.



Leadership St. Johns 2021 Class members help SEA Community Help Resource Center provide backpacks and school supplies.

and families in need of many required items to begin school.

In October 2017, SEA purchased a run-down cement block building at 6312 Armstrong Road to house a potential com-

munity center and public rest station along the Palatka-to-St. Augustine State Trail.

An improved structure and property alongside the bike and pedestrian paved pathway would help the underserved rural

community receive additional funds to better their quality of life while providing trail followers a place to rest and refresh.

The project is still in progress and needs volunteers and donors to complete the facility.

SEA has been operating in a single-wide trailer alongside the First Baptist Church of Armstrong and holds its food pantry — free to anyone — with daily bags of groceries and 150 to 800 hot meals each month.

The nonprofit also distributes 150 to 250 turkeys and hams each year during the holidays along with year-round field trips, clothes, shoes, books, toys, book bags, school supplies, computers and blankets.

A summer children's camp, lunch program and afterschool program are also offered. Services are also provided by North Florida Community Action Agency clients, FEMA, Toys for Tots and Empty Stocking.

Community activities and events hosted by SEA include a St. Vincent Mobile Outreach Unit, which provides medical services, and visits from the St. Johns County bookmobile; plus, biking events with the North Florida Bike Club and Bike Florida; the Annual Rails-to-Trail Festival, which includes a celebration of the area's Gullah Geechee ancestry; the MENDE Film Festival; Gullah Geechee Festival; and tables and chair rentals for third-party events.

A humanitarian outreach program to Haiti is also in place.

The class initially requested donations

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Karen B. Everett
 Director Ponte Vedra
 Beach Division,
 St. Johns County
 Chamber of
 Commerce

Fall is in the air along with new fiscal year

Isabelle Renault and I are both wishing everyone a Happy New Year! The Chamber's new fiscal year began Oct. 1.

And, it does feel like a change! Pumpkin has been added everywhere and I caught a whiff of fall air the other morning.

The members of the Ponte Vedra Beach Division board of directors held its annual strategy session the other week at the link in Nocatee and reflected on successes and challenges facing our business community.

Many intriguing new ideas—more to come. Their group photo is on the front and short bios and photos are contained in this issue. Thank them for their service when you see them out and about in our community.

We also have a full month of ribbon cuttings. Our Chamber Ambassadors and Board members faithfully attend these events and congratulate the new businesses.

We gratefully bid adieu to the Chairman of the

Board of Directors for the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce, Dr. Erika Hamer, owner of Ponte Vedra Wellness Center.

She began her Chamber career in the Ponte Vedra Beach area; she remains on the Chamber's executive committee as immediate past Chairman. Thank you for your service during an interesting year!

Please join us for our many events in the Ponte Vedra area and throughout the county in October, November and December and come visit the Chamber's Ponte Vedra Beach office at 200 Solana Road, Suite B. We are also a visitor information center and welcome your questions.

Thanks for your continued support!
 Regards,

Karen Everett
 Director, Ponte Vedra Beach Division
 St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



SEA Community Help Resource Center
 Executive Director Malinda Peoples

Leadership

Continued from 10

from the community to help complete the nonprofit's improvement project with short- and long-term plans and worked to start renovations at the existing space for safety, comfort and security for recipients, residents, visitors and SEA staff.

The class envisions more work at the site including additional construction services, more concrete, patio and picnic tables, outdoor fans, lighting, gardening, landscaping, perishable and non-perishable items and in-kind services.

Leadership St. Johns Class of 2021 members are Trish Becker, Anastasia Mosquito Control Board; Randy Bradley, Northrop Grumman; Jason Caban, St. Johns County Sheriff's Office; Jennifer Michaux, St. Augustine Police Department; Diane Denholm, Supporting Strategies, Northeast Florida; Melissa Derrick, St. Augustine Youth Services; Tres Edenfield III, St. Johns County Sheriff's Office; Melissa Cecil, Flagler Health+; Whitney Kersey Graves, St. Johns County Tax Collector; Bonnie Hayflick, Bonnie Hayflick PR Counsel; Meghan Holder, Independent Agent, Primerica; Dawn Infanti, United Way; Lauren Howington, Herbie Wiles Insurance; Heidi Jameson, JAXUSA Partnership; Gurpreet Misra, self-employed entrepreneur; Vicky Ann Oliveri, St. Johns Title LLC; Dianne Pittman, Watson Realty; Jennifer Ravan, St. Johns County Tax Collector; Christina Parrish Stone, St. Johns County Cultural Council; Josh Underwood, St. Johns County Sheriff's Office; Greg Wells, K9s for Warriors; Meredith Breidenstein, City of St. Augustine; and Casey Woolsey, Woolsey/Morcom PLLC.

For additional information on Leadership St. Johns, go to sjcchamber.com/leadership-st.-johns.

ST. JOHNS COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PONTE VEDRA BEACH DIVISION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Matt Price Chairman

Matt Price was born and raised in Albany, Georgia, and graduated from Georgia Southern University in 2001. Currently, he is Vice President of Commercial Banking for Regions Bank. He was hired by Regions in 2006, and has built a successful career in banking for the past 20 years. Price has served as Chair for the Division's Ambassador program and was also recognized as Ambassador of the Year in 2017. He is married to his wife Paige, has a student at Ponte Vedra High School, and you can regularly find the entire family on a local tennis court.



and Georgia. She previously served on the board as a director and as Chairman. She has been actively involved with the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce since 1997. She also serves on the board of directors of the Overlook V Office Condominiums and is on the board of directors for the Florida Media Association.

Felicia Cox Secretary

Felicia has over 35 years of retail banking experience in North Florida. She started her career in banking with Barnett Bank, while attending high school in a school work program. She became part of the IBERIABANK team six years ago with the acquisition of Florida Bank. Currently, she is the Retail Banking Center Manager for the Ponte Vedra branch. She joined Florida Bank in 2007, 14 years ago and is a native of the North Florida market. She actively serves as a volunteer in the community where she grew up and is a past two-term Chairman of the St Johns Chamber of Commerce, Ponte Vedra Division. Felicia has a bachelor's degree in Business Management from Edward Waters College in Jacksonville.



Administration and Masters of Accountancy from the University of North Florida. She has always lived in Northeast Florida and now calls Palm Valley home. While she has a strong background in all areas of taxation, Pamela primarily specializes in consulting and compliance for large, multi-state corporations, partnerships and their owners. She has extensive experience with different tax sectors including local, state and federal taxation and financial accounting. Pamela is a member of the Florida Institute of Certified Public Accountants. In the community, she serves on the finance committee of The Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach. Pamela is a mentor with the Jacksonville Women's Business Center and is a member of the Accounting and Financial Women's Alliance. She also actively volunteers with Junior Achievement.



Kathleen Floryan

Kathleen Floryan has been successfully selling properties and helping people buy homes as a consistent "Top Producer" year after year. She works full-time in real



Susan Griffin Vice Chair

Susan Griffin is publisher of the Ponte Vedra Recorder, the community paper of record serving Ponte Vedra and the Beaches since 1969 and now Nocatee. She also serves as publisher of the bimonthly First Coast Register magazine. She has been with the Recorder for 25 years, joining the paper as an advertising account executive and becoming sales manager before being named Publisher. Prior to joining the Recorder, Griffin owned travel agencies in Florida



Forson gives overview of St. Johns County Schools during Chamber event

Superintendent describes how district is meeting challenges

By Shaun Ryan

In many ways, it is a new era for Florida schools – and nowhere is it more apparent than in St. Johns County, where

district officials are working to address challenges in the aftermath of COVID-19, security following the tragedy at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School and elimination of the Florida Standards Assessments (FSA).

Tim Forson, superintendent of St. Johns County Schools, addresses members of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division.

Forson continues on Page 13



Photos by Shaun Ryan

St. Johns County Schools Superintendent Tim Forson addresses members of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division.

Board

Continued from 11

estate and has through the toughest real estate markets since 2006. Kathleen lists and sells residential real estate within all of the communities and in all price ranges throughout the St Johns County and Beaches area. Her average day on market is less than 45 days. Kathleen's passion is specializing in luxury homes in Ponte Vedra Beach that includes oceanfront, golf courses homes and condos, gated and non-gated neighborhoods to other waterfront such as marsh front, intra-coastal, or river-front properties. She also sells in the newest community west of Ponte Vedra Beach called Nocatee. She is a certified Luxury Home Marketing Specialist, a certified short sale specialist, a certified residential resort and 2nd Home Specialist, certified Nocatee Realtor, certified Doctors Agent and Certified Express Offers Agent. Kathleen is proud to be a Broker Associate currently with eXp Realty.

Peter verDorn

Peter verDorn is the Director of Membership at TPC Sawgrass. Peter, his wife, Erin, and two-year-old daughter, Penny, moved to Ponte Vedra from New Jersey to be closer to family and enjoy a new lifestyle. He has an extensive background in golf and hospitality, with over 11 years of experience both in the public and private sector. He specializes in business development and believes that relationships are the key to success in any industry. Peter and his family are extremely happy to call Ponte Vedra home and he looks forward to continually helping people in the community.



Marla K. Buchanan, Esq.

Ms. Buchanan is the Chief Executive Officer and General Counsel for Blue Ocean Title, a full-service real estate law and title company with four office locations in Northeast and Central Florida. In addition, she also serves as Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel for GreenTechnologies, LLC, a product development and manufacturing company that focuses on the development and manufacturing of sustainable fertilizers derived from recycled nutrients from the water and wastewater treatment process. Ms. Buchanan earned her undergraduate degree and law degree from the University of Florida. She has been recognized with the Pro Bono Attorney of the Year and has served on the Board of BEAM and the Women's Board for Wolfson's children's hospital. In addition, Ms. Buchanan was a Founding Member and Board Member for the not for profit, The Missing Link, formed to assist victims of domestic violence.



Mark Allen

With decades of setting records as an innovator and leader in the automotive industry and at one point operating the largest dealership in the U.S., he also managed a successful auto racing and driver training career. Mark Allen founded All Florida Safety Institute in 2014 and now serves as the President and CEO of the largest driving school and third-party licensing agent in Florida covering over two-thirds of the State. A graduate of the Chamber's Leadership St. Johns Class of 2019, Mark, while keeping the headquarters in Ponte Vedra Beach is committed to their mission of saving lives and growing the organiza-



tion to expand their driver's education platform with over 30 school locations statewide and growing. A near native, Mark attended school in Northeast Florida from Kindergarten through 12th and attended the University of North Florida as a founding father of the current Sigma Chi Fraternity Chapter. Allen has served on the CEO Advisory Board for UF Health and Shands Hospitals and as a Prior Trustee for Daniel Kids and most recently was serving on one of the HOA Boards for Marsh Landing and a varsity soccer coach in Ponte Vedra. Drive Safe!

Jennifer Servello

Jennifer Servello is the Practice Manager of Flagler Health+ Village at Nocatee, an all-inclusive medical destination bringing comprehensive, multi-disciplinary care to where families live, work and play. A proud Navy wife, Jennifer has lived and worked all over the U.S., including Hawaii, Virginia, Tennessee, Maryland and Rhode Island, before settling in Nocatee in 2019. Her background in pediatric nursing led her to Flagler Health+ where she started as the Clinical Supervisor of Flagler Health+ Pediatrics while playing a lead role in the development and opening of the Health Village in 2020. Jennifer has a passion for helping patients access the care they need while helping her team members achieve their professional goals. Jennifer is active in the local military community.



Emily Tillo

Emily Tillo is the PR and Community Outreach Manager for THE PLAYERS Championship. She oversees the year-round public relations, messaging and community outreach plans for



the PGA TOUR's flagship event. Tillo joined the PGA TOUR in 2016 and graduated from Boston University, where she studied finance and journalism, competed on the school's Division 1 golf team and also became the first student-athlete in Boston University history to be named a Top-30 honoree for the NCAA's Woman of the Year Award. She continues to stay involved with her alma mater, currently serving as Chair of BU Athletics' Young Alumni Council. She lives in Ponte Vedra Beach and enjoys everything about the beach lifestyle. You have probably spotted her biking to the beach or walking to work at the PGA TOUR's new Global Home. Tillo is also active in the Northeast Florida community, serving as a board member of North Florida Junior Golf Foundation and committee member for the First Coast Women's Amateur Championship.

Lori Adams

Lori Adams is the Operations Manager for Harbor View Advisors, an investment banking firm located in Ponte Vedra Beach. She has 35 years of experience in the financial services industry with specialization in client service, operations and compliance. Her "can do" spirit creates positive energy among the team members. She has been employed at Harbor View Advisors since 2010. She also has been a cabi independent fashion stylist since 2010 and has been a part time employee of TPC Sawgrass since 2000, where she works as a Sales Associate in the golf shop. Lori has served as an Ambassador for the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce, Ponte Vedra Division and also served as Secretary on the Board. She received the Grace Hayes Ambassador of the Year Award for 2014-2015, as well as 2015-2016. She also is a member of the Ponte Vedra Women's Civic Alliance.



Forson

Continued from 12

County Schools, spoke about these and other issues Sept. 15 during the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division's Chamber at Noon event. The luncheon and presentation were held at the link, a new facility in Nocatee.

The coronavirus pandemic may have had more impact on the schools than any other issue in the last couple of years. It has affected the district's ability to find qualified applicants for jobs, acquisition of supplies needed to construct new schools and classroom attendance.

"Last year, we never had more than 200 students (test) positive at any given time," Forson said. But on a single day in the first week of this month, 846 students tested positive.

That resulted in a lot of absences – not only those who had contracted COVID, but also anyone who needed to be quarantined due to propinquity. However, the district has found that the need for such quarantining is reduced from 2020. In part this is due to older students receiving the vaccine, but also due to a shortening of the necessary quarantine period and a reduction of social distancing requirements.

Pine Island Academy, the new K-8 school in Nocatee, experienced a shortage



Pictured from left at a recent St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division event are Karen Everett, Tim Forson, Matt Price and Kari Zerrahn.

of flooring materials due to COVID-impacted supply-line disruptions. As a result, incoming students and staff found some floors to be exposed concrete.

It has also been difficult to fill many positions, as there are more jobs than available workers.

This has impacted the transportation and food services departments, as well as instruction.

At the same time, enrollment is up 8% over last year. Currently, it stands at 43,293. Forson said enrollment rose this

academic year equal to the student population of two entire schools.

Because the district has only one school planned to open next year, rising enrollment continues to be a concern.

Forson expressed optimism at the announcement on Sept. 14 by Gov. Ron DeSantis that Florida would be replacing the FSA with progress monitoring.

"We want the students to perform well," Forson said, "but I think we lost instructional time faced with the depth and the magnitude of some of the standardized



St. Johns County Schools Superintendent Tim Forson speaks about the school district at the link in Nocatee during a St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division event.

tests."

Still, he expressed some concern for accountability in education.

"When we lose something that everybody sees as a measuring tool, we just have to be prepared to replace it with something else that gives us confidence with what we're doing, that we're doing the right thing," he said.

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Painting with a Twist hosted 'After Hours' event

Painting with a Twist was an after hours event hosted Wednesday, Aug. 25 by the Ponte Vedra Beach Division of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce. After hours events are held monthly.



Photos By Susan Griffin
Libbi Poole, Leonard Vitel, Lesley Vitel, and Karen Everett.



An array of edible arrangements was available at the Painting With a Twist event.



Karen Patino, Libbi Poole, Lesley Vitel, and Jade Smith.



Painting With a Twist had a variety of food samplings on display.



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Photo courtesy of The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Economic Development Council Quarterly Breakfast

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce held its Economic Development Council Quarterly Breakfast on Aug. 13, and Mark Lamping, president, Jacksonville Jaguars, far right, was the keynote speaker. Joining him behind a life-sized foam jaguar on loan from Ocean Sole are, from left, Andy Jackson, Jacksonville Law Firm and Chamber Economic Development Council chair; Isabelle Renault, president and CEO, St. Johns County Chamber; and Dr. Erika Hamer, owner, Ponte Vedra Wellness Center and Chamber Board of Directors chair.

Ribbon cutting welcomes Hudson & Grace to Chamber



Photos by Susan Griffin

Kellyann Costanzo cuts the ribbon with her husband Tommy Costanzo during a ceremony on June 25 to welcome Hudson & Grace Consignment Boutique as a member the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce.

The Hudson & Grace Consignment Boutique is located at 10440 U.S. Highway 1 N. Suite 115 in St. Augustine and opened its doors with a ribbon cutting on June 25 to signify its membership with the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce. It focuses on offering clothes,

shoes, toys and various other items for infants to children 14-year-olds. Owner Kellyann Costanzo has big plans for the shop in the future, including holding a prom dress drive in April 2022 for girls and families that are looking for a less expensive options.



Photo courtesy of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Amason Aesthetics Med Spa holds Chamber ribbon cutting

St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce ambassadors join staff, family, friends and clients to mark the ribbon cutting for Amason Aesthetics Med Spa on Sept. 15. Amason is Located at 1515 County Road 210 West, Suite 104 near the County Road 210 and Interstate 95 interchange. An appointment with Amason can help you look your best.



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Photos courtesy of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce



Le Dental Spa in Nocatee hosts Chamber 'Before Hours'

Above: Le Dental Spa in Nocatee sponsored the Sept. 8 St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce "Before Hours" event. It allowed this group of Chamber members and Le Dental Spa staff to network and learn more about services provided by the chamber member. It was the perfect location for coffee and networking at a busy business.

Left: Dr. Pauline Le, center, gathers with two of her friendly staff at Le Dental Spa in Nocatee during a September Chamber "Before Hours" event.



Photos by Susan Griffin

Jackie Smith, Commissioner Jeremiah Blocker and Isabelle Renault.

Blocker speaks at Chamber at Noon event

County Commissioner Jeremiah Blocker was the guest speaker at the St. Johns County Chamber – Ponte Vedra Beach Division Chamber at Noon luncheon on Aug. 18 at Ruth's Chris Steak House. Members and guests enjoyed lunch and the opportunity to network at the event, which was sponsored by Fields Auto Group.



Judge Kenneth Janesk and St. Johns County Commissioner Jeremiah Blocker

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Photo courtesy of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Monica Ketterman cuts the ribbon for Halo Spa in Nocatee on Oct. 1

Halo Spa holds grand opening, joins Chamber

Halo Spa in Ponte Vedra had its grand opening Oct. 1 and has also become a new member of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce. Halo Spa offers a full range of services and products, such as, a salt room, red light therapy, vitality booth, Glo Skin Beauty mineral makeup, facials, waxing and even more to come. Halo Spa is located at 320 Town Plaza Avenue, Suite 110. To book an appointment or schedule a private tour please call 904-789-HALO (4256).

Right: Halo Spa is owned by Monica and Ryan Ketterman.



Photo by Susan Griffin

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce welcomed Code Ninjas to Ponte Vedra Beach with a ribbon cutting ceremony Sept. 30.

Chamber welcomes Code Ninjas with ribbon cutting

Code Ninjas had a ribbon cutting celebrating its membership with the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Sept. 30. The business is located at 258 Solana Road in Ponte Vedra Beach. Code Ninjas is the nation's fastest growing kids coding franchise. The center will offer children ages 5 to 15 years old the opportunity to learn to code in a fun, non-intimidating way by playing and building video games they love.

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Chamber helps the link mark grand opening 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 celebration began with a pair of ribbon-cutting ceremonies, one for the link and another for the Flagler Health+ Immersive Studio located within the facility.

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division hosted the ceremony.

The link is a \$7 million, 22,500-square-foot co-working space, multi-use innovation incubator and membership-based venue in Nocatee Town Center that had 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

flourish while balancing career, family and recreation.

Though permanent offices were 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 highspeed 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.

One of the most popular amenities for those attending the grand opening was the Flagler Health+ Immersive Stu-



Photos by Shaun Ryan

Raghu Misra, son Rohan Misra and wife Gurpreet Misra cut the ribbon on the link during grand opening festivities July 14.

dio. 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.



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 July 14.



Flagler Health+ President and CEO Jason Barrett cuts the ribbon on the Flagler Health+ Immersive Studio during grand opening festivities.

GRAND OPENING

Speakers at the grand opening celebration 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.



Flagler Health+ President and CEO Jason Barrett chats with entrepreneur Raghu Misra during grand opening festivities.

The ceremony also included a video showing how some of the sculptures featured at the link were created by Ocean Sole and a cake celebrating the 200th anniversary of St. Johns County.

On July 15, the First Coast Cultural Center (formerly the Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach) held a full day of arts and performance, featuring a variety of musicians, poets, artists and more.

On 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.

Chamber of Commerce hosts annual golf tournament

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce held its annual golf tournament at Slammer & Squire Golf Course in World Golf Village Monday, Sept. 27.

Golfers were treated to beautiful weather for playing golf and pristine course conditions.

The full field enjoyed competing, meeting members, interacting with sponsors and eating a barbecue lunch at the awards ceremony.

Although the 2021 tournament just ended, attention has already gravitated to the planning of next year's event.



Much appreciation goes out to the many sponsors that offered their support of the event, such as the team at Ponte Vedra Wellness Center, which includes owner and 2020-21 Chairman of the Chamber Board Dr. Erika Hamer, left, Janine Parker and Isabelle Renault, president and CEO, St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce.



Photos courtesy of St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce

Welcome to the 2021 St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament sponsored by SouthState Bank.



The putting green, sponsored by Blue Ocean Title, was enjoyed and began the golf tournament.



The golfers begin the day.



Mark Nighbor and Jim Bush competed with their team during the event.



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Guests mingle during the Before Hours showcase at Amara Med Spa.



Greg Wolff and Robin Handy at the Before Hours event.

Photos by Susan Griffin

Amara Med Spa joins Chamber during Before Hours event

Amara Med Spa was welcomed to Ponte Vedra Beach by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce during a before hours social event held on July 21. The med spa is the result of a shared vision and partnership of founders Lindsay

Terranova and Greg Smith. It is the first of three locations that will be in the Northeast Florida area, with the other two currently being constructed in Jacksonville in the Avondale area and at the St. Johns Town Center.



Fred Seely and Lori Adams at the event.



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The Morris Center hosts Chamber After Hours

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Division hosted an After Hours event Sept. 22 at The Morris Center. The Morris Center is a trans-disciplinary learning center that works with children and adults with learning disabilities, such as Dyslexia, Dysgraphia,

Dyscalculia and other learning disabilities. They offer an intensive learning experience to include in our location, a speech pathologist, occupational therapist, psychologist and tutors that interact with the clients on an individual basis.



Photos by Susan Griffin

Dr. Tim Conway with The Morris Center's Chamber After Hours event Sept. 22.

Karina Coryell, Donna Guzzo and Lesley Vitel at the After Hours event.

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Entrepreneurs, start-ups invited to register for 'Pitch Factory'

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce has announced a partnership with the Jacksonville Women's Business Center and the link to bring the "Pitch Factory" entrepreneurial training program to the county.

Inspired by the JAX Bridges program, the Pitch Factory training course will help entrepreneurs and new start-ups elevate their businesses through an intensive training program designed to assist with developing and refining the entrepreneur's value proposition.

The free course will meet at the link, 425 Town Plaza Ave. in Nocatee Town Center, with the opportunity for individuals to join the sessions virtually as well. It kicks off Oct. 21 from 4 to 6 p.m. Classes will be held on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 4 to 6 p.m. on Oct. 26 and 28, and Nov. 2, 4 and 9.

Following the scheduled classes, aspiring entrepreneurs will connect with certified entrepreneur mentors through the "Network of Trust" virtual network to further refine their value proposition, develop their portfolio and hone their pitches.

At the conclusion of the program, rising entrepreneurs will share their value propositions with each other in a "Peer Pitch" platform to prepare for the live,

in-person pitch competition during the EnterCIRCLE 2021 entrepreneurial summit at the link on Nov. 18.

Each participant will be invited to present his or her entrepreneurial idea to key Northeast Florida investors and business leaders.

"The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce is excited to partner with the Jacksonville Women's Business Center and the link to bring local entrepreneurs together for this invaluable training and pitch opportunity," said Isabelle Renault, Chamber president/CEO. "The Pitch Factory is one more way St. Johns County is business ready."

Participants must complete each of the six live, interactive modules — in-person or virtually — in October and November to be eligible to participate in the live pitch event. The modules will not be recorded.

The Pitch Factory is available to residents of, and students studying in, St. Johns County as well as residents and students living in the neighboring counties within Northeast Florida. Space is limited and pre-registration is required. Registration closes at 5 pm. Oct. 14.

For further information, contact the Chamber at info@sjcchamber.com or by phone at 904-829-5681. Register online

at jaxcoc.centerdynamics.com/workshop.aspx?ekey=390410174.

The Commerce is the premier business and community organization in St. Johns County. It seeks to deliver continuous value-added service to members and the community, resulting in a business environment and quality of life where existing businesses have the opportunity to prosper and new businesses find it attractive to locate in the county. For more information, go to www.sjcchamber.com.

The Jacksonville Women's Business Center endeavors to create a new level

of innovation and ignite the enterprising spirit through advanced entrepreneurial development, education, extensive resources and dynamic networking.

Consisting of volunteer opportunities and a redeveloped suite of programs, the center provides an innovative and valuable educational experience that enables women in business to make sound decisions and develop the infrastructure to facilitate business growth and prosperity. For more information, call 904-366-6633 or go to jaxchamberfoundation.org/jacksonville-womens-business-center.



Photos courtesy of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Chamber board

Owner of the link, Raghu Misra, speaks briefly to the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Division during its board of directors meeting on Sept. 28.

The link hosts Chamber board of directors meeting

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Division held a board of director's meeting at the link in Nocatee Sept. 28. Discussion included some of the organization's emerging goals, which included topics, such as, re-

aligning council/division and ambassadors to reflect market segments and county growth, as well as streamlining communication channels and expanding outreach to Jacksonville and young professionals.



The board of directors met and discussed strategy at the link.



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Photos by Anthony Richards

Christopher Brown (with scissors) was joined by his family and members of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce during a ribbon cutting ceremony Friday, Sept. 17.



Brown and his family moved down from Georgia to open the new Geico location in St. Augustine.

New Geico in St. Augustine joins Chamber of Commerce

By Anthony Richards

For Christopher Brown opening a Geico location in St. Augustine was too much to pass up for the Georgia-native and his family. Brown's family was on hand when the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting ceremony for the business on Friday, Sept. 17.

"Florida is where I want to be at, and I can see raising my family and living my life here," Brown said. "My family has been extremely supportive, from my par-

ents to my wife and my children Striker and Tatum. They are all really excited for a new adventure."

The business is located at 224 Florida 312, St. Augustine, 32086 and had not even been open for a week when the ribbon was cut.

The shopping center the business is in has several other stores, and Brown has already reached out in many cases to build the foundation for relationships with his neighboring business owners.

"The people in this shopping center are really friendly and accepting, which makes a big difference," Brown said.

Brown is very familiar with Geico, having worked at the corporate office for nine years prior to making the move.

"I got this amazing opportunity, and I couldn't think of a better place to be than in St. Augustine and St. Johns County," Brown said. "Geico saw the potential and I jumped on it. We don't just want to be a company, but we want to be a pillar in the

community."

According to Brown they are already partnering with Habitat for Humanity and other nonprofits in the area.

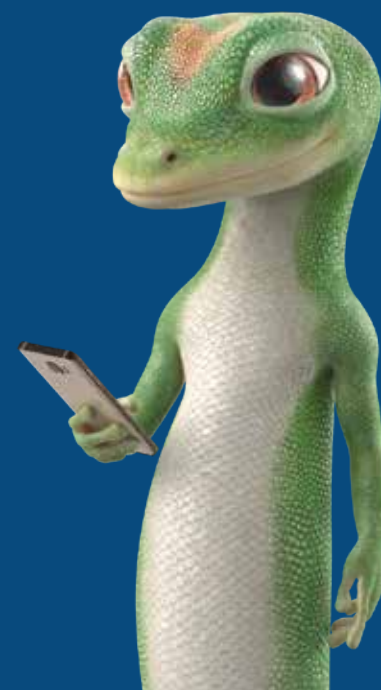
"Where Geico is a little different than other insurance companies is that we're open pretty much six to seven days a week," Geico said. "If something happens and you need insurance, your local agent may not be open, but Geico will be, and that's the one thing that we pride ourselves on."

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New \$17M Heart Rhythm Center will be added to Baptist Heart Hospital

Baptist Health is adding a new Heart Rhythm Center at Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville, which will house a team of medical caregivers specializing in the diagnosis and treatment of all heart rhythm disorders.

The new Heart Rhythm Center will be a part of the Baptist Heart Hospital, Northeast Florida's only freestanding hospital for heart-and-vascular care.

Cardiac electrophysiology (EP), a subspecialty of cardiology that focuses on the heart's electrical activity, is a rapidly growing field at the forefront of efforts to find new treatments and cures for arrhythmias. Baptist Health currently offers an advanced and comprehensive EP program.

"With the population growth in Southeast Georgia and Northeast Florida, and the ability to diagnose heart rhythm abnormalities expanding with new technology, the need to treat atrial fibrillation

(Afib) and other heart rhythm abnormalities is increasing," said Nicole B. Thomas, hospital president of Baptist Jacksonville. "Thanks to the expert teams and physicians, the Heart Hospital at Baptist Jacksonville is the epicenter of the highest quality cardiac care in the region, and adding an EP center will help meet our growing community needs."

"Heart rhythm problems can be life-limiting, or life-ending, so the need for treatment is important," said Michael A. Mayo, president and CEO of Baptist Health. "This new Heart Rhythm Center will help Baptist Health meet the growing need for this specialized care and help save lives in our community."

The 14,400-square-foot facility will include three EP labs, staff stations, support spaces, 10 patient rooms and a family lounge. Construction will begin this month and is scheduled to be complete in January 2023.



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THURSDAY, October 7, 2021

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Officers elected to Betty Griffin Center Board of Directors

The Betty Griffin Center Board of Directors has elected new officers for Fiscal Year 2021-22, while three new members have joined the nonprofit's board of directors.

Lisa Payne, a branch manager with Ameris Bank who has served on the board since 2016, was elected board chair. Jayne Evans, the executive officer for the consulting firm Heart Touch, who has served on the board since 2019, was elected vice-chair.



Lisa Payne

Tim Conlan, the vice president of commercial operations for Reliant Roof and Solar, who has served on the board since 2017, was elected secretary, and Melissa

Angulo, a CPA who joined the board in 2020 and currently serves as the chief financial officer at The Plantation at Ponte Vedra, was elected treasurer.

Also, three new members have been elected to the board. These include:

Ponte Vedra Beach resident Saundra A. Jackson, a physician with the SAJMD Inc. Emergency Resources Group

St. Johns resident Rose Marie Preddy, the principal attorney at the Preddy Law Firm, P.A.

St. Johns resident Gloria Staats, an inte-



Rose Marie Preddy



Saundra A. Jackson

rior designer and owner of Peace of Mind Design

"Our new leadership team is committed to our mission, and our new board members are all familiar with our agency and were previously involved in the important work we're doing for survivors of domestic and sexual violence in our community," said Betty Griffin Center CEO Joyce Mahr. "Given the growing need for our services in St. Johns County, their experience will help us maintain and expand the level of service necessary in the coming year."



Gloria Staats

The Betty Griffin Center was founded in 1990 by concerned citizens and incorporated as the Safety Shelter of St. Johns County to develop plans to provide shelter for local victims of domestic violence and their children. Today, Betty Griffin Center shelters more than 420 victims of domestic and sexual abuse annually, operates a 24-hour help line, provides professional counseling for victims of domestic and sexual abuse, provides age-appropriate violence prevention training and operates two thrift stores at Julington Square and Anastasia Square to assist in funding the agency's ongoing operations.

McDevitt joins local realty office

Kathy McDevitt has joined the Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty Ponte Vedra/Nocatee office.

"From the moment you meet her, you'll be struck by her professionalism, 'go-getter' personality and passion she has for helping others," said Holly Hayes, broker and manager of the Ponte Vedra/Nocatee office.



Kathy McDevitt

"Kathy has traveled the world but now

calls Ponte Vedra home, as she has had family living here for over 30 years."

"I love meeting people and I'm passionate about finding them their perfect home that is also healthy," said McDevitt. "I'm passionate about green real estate. From solar panels on the roof, to neighborhoods within walking distance and finding environmentally clean interiors for the immune sensitive, I'm your gal."

McDevitt can be reached by phone at 310-425-9566 or at Kathy.McDevitt@FloridaNetworkRealty.com.

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In the Arts



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www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

Making a clean difference

Ocean Sole receives help from neighborhood children

By Anthony Richards

Ocean Sole is in the middle of gathering its statues that it makes out of recycled flip-flops so that they can eventually create an exhibit at the link in Nocatee.

However, sometimes they pick up the statues from places and they are dirty from being out in the weather for some time.

That was the case when they went and removed the octopus statue that had been on display at McKee Botanical Garden in Vero Beach for the past two years after the garden chose to donate it back to the organization.

Once they bring the statues home the next thing to do is clean them up before they put them back on display elsewhere.

Ocean Sole owners Erin and Jackie

Smith were in the driveway of their home washing and scrubbing the octopus, when suddenly four Landrum Middle School students who also live in the neighborhood showed interest and began helping them clean the six-foot statue.

According to Jackie Smith, she was amazed at how fascinated the children were and delighted that they offered to help.

"They volunteered their time," Jackie Smith said. "It really was a great show of community."

The octopus is just one of several animals that the company has constructed statues of over the years, many of which have been corralled lately and are waiting to go on display at the link.

"We have a full aquarium (of statues) in the garage," Erin Smith chuckled.

Ocean Sole's U.S. headquarters are in Ponte Vedra Beach.

The initiative was started to help solve the problem Kenya has had with used flip-flops piling up because there is nowhere to go with them, many of the discarded flip-flops were winding up along the country's waterways and beaches.

That is when the idea came about to begin recycling flip-flops by creating art and functional products with them.

According to the Ocean Sole website, last year they were able to recycle 750,000 flip-flops through their projects.

"Our business is all about community," Erin Smith said. "Our community engagement is strong and at the core of our business and hearts."

Photo by Jackie Smith

Four neighborhood children and Landrum Middle School students helped Ocean Sole clean a six-foot octopus statue made from recycled flip-flops.



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Apex Theatre Studio to present Fall Performance showcase

Apex Theatre Studio will present its sixth annual Fall Performance Showcase at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 6 at Ponte Vedra Concert Hall.

The production features the talents of 50 young artists in a mixture of musical theater, improv and one-act comedies. Tickets are \$20 for general admission and are on sale now at Ticketmaster.com.

“These young artists all share an affinity for the music of Disney,” said vocal director Isabel Dondero. “We decided it was a great time to explore all the Broadway shows which have come from the most



magical place on Earth.”

Students from the musical theater workshop will perform numbers from a mixture of classic and contemporary Disney musicals, including “Coco,” “The Little Mermaid,” “Hercules” and “Tangled,” as well as two numbers from their upcoming

holiday production of “Frozen Jr.”

The young actors workshop will perform two short one-act comedies: “The Blind Date” by Horton Foote and “Wiley and The Hairy Man” by Susan Zeder. Both shows are set in the South and take a unique look at the way small communities relate to one another.

“Mostly, they are just lots of fun and something families will enjoy,” said teaching artist Jeremy Williams, who is directing one play and appearing in the other one alongside students.

The teen improv troupe, Tomato

Tomato, will create sketches based on suggestions from the audience.

Attendees can avoid ticket fees by purchasing tickets in person. Tickets for Ponte Vedra Concert Hall events are available for purchase at The St. Augustine Amphitheatre box office. Box office hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays and 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturdays. The box office accepts credit and debit card payments only.

The Ponte Vedra Concert Hall is located at 1050 A1A North, Ponte Vedra Beach.



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Dantiel W. Moniz
Class of 2007

Dantiel is the recipient of a Pushcart Prize, a MacDowell Fellowship, the Alice Hoffman Prize for Fiction, and has been named a “Writer to Watch” by Publishers Weekly and Apple Books. Her debut collection, *Milk Blood Heat*, is an Indie Next Pick, an inaugural Roxane Gay Audacious Book Club pick, and has been hailed as “must-read” by *TIME*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *BuzzFeed*, *Elle*, and *O, The Oprah Magazine*, among others. Her work has appeared in the *Paris Review*, *Harper’s Bazaar*, *Tin House*, *One Story*, *American Short Fiction*, *Ploughshares*, *The Yale Review*, *McSweeney’s Quarterly Concern* and elsewhere. Moniz is an Assistant Professor of English at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.



Jacob Skiles
Class of 2016, Instrumental

Since graduating from DA, Jacob has studied piano under 1997 Van Cliburn silver medalist, Yakov Kasman at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). In 2018, Jacob made his orchestral debut performing with the National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine and gave a recital in the historic house of Romanian composer George Enescu. During college, Jacob participated in and won numerous solo and Concerto competitions in Alabama. In addition to his piano studies, he conducted research on mathematical analyses of rhythm in Baroque dance forms while in the Science and Technology Honors Program at UAB. Since graduating in spring of 2020, Jacob will be continuing his studies at Florida State University, pursuing a Masters in Piano Performance with a graduate assistantship in teaching.

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Sports



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Setting the pace in class, on course

Fasanelli named PVHS September scholar athlete

By Anthony Richards

Nico Fasanelli was named Ponte Vedra High School's scholar athlete of the month for September.

Not only was he proud of being chosen for the honor, but he also took solace in the fact that he was the inaugural winner of the award that athletic director Michael Harrison plans to be a monthly occurrence, along with weekly honors throughout the school year.

The junior ranks at the top of his class academically and is a member of the Sharks cross country and track teams.

He happened to be around several of his teammates in the locker room when he first received word that he had been chosen.

"Me and some of the cross country guys were in the locker room, when someone came in and said that all of us needed to come and see the athletic director," Fasanelli said.

According to Fasanelli, he was not sure what was going on at first, but once he started talking with Harrison, it all became very clear.

"It felt cool because this is the first one and they chose me," Fasanelli said.

He started doing long-distance track his freshman year and then picked up



Photo by Anthony Richards

Nico Fasanelli was named the Ponte Vedra High School's September scholar athlete of the month. The junior is at the top of his class academically and runs track and cross country.

cross country as well as a sophomore.

Being involved athletically is a rule that his parents have, and it has been in place for each of his four older siblings.

According to Fasanelli, the rule is there to encourage playing a sport whether it is school related or as part of a club organization.

"It is mainly for exercise reasons," Fasanelli said.

He played soccer the past two years but decided to focus on cross country and track for this year.

While his sisters ran the shorter disciplines of track, he found that his niche was at the longer distances.

The primary differences between cross-country and even the longer track

racers is the time it takes to complete.

"Let's say you're doing the mile (run), well a track race is about five minutes or so, while cross country is like 18 minutes, which is a really long time," Fasanelli said.

Continuing to perform at high levels both in the classroom and on the course can be a juggling act at times, but Fasanelli has learned to make it work with proper organization and planning.

"I usually have to be doing my homework throughout the day," Fasanelli said. "Time management is a big thing. I've usually already prepped all my stuff the night before with my lunch and clothes packed. Sometimes I'll even go ahead and put my bags already in the car the night before."

Cross country takes place in the fall with morning practices, while the track season is in the spring with afternoon practices. He gets up around 5:50 a.m. to be ready for 6:30 a.m. cross country practice. Fasanelli enjoys math, as well as chemistry and physics, and even takes a college-level math course two days a week at the high school.

He has also been getting more interested in the aspects of computer science.

On top of all that, Fasanelli is also a member of the PVHS Hi-Q Club team, which is an academic trivia competition.

Week 7

FOOTBALL PREVIEW

Big county battles in store

By Anthony Richards

County clashes are everywhere you look this week as Nease and Ponte Vedra host St. Augustine and Bartram Trail, respectively.

Anytime you play county rivals, there are a lot of bragging rights on the line, but that goes up even a few more notches when it's the Yellow Jackets and the Bears, based off years of established success by those programs.

The Yellow Jackets enter Friday's contest against the Panthers with a record of 3-2 and have been explosive to say the least, averaging 36 points per game.

It's rare to have two teams on such equal footing, but the Panthers (5-1) also like to push the pace and connect on big plays and will enter averaging 36 points a game as well.

Expect the scoreboard to get a workout with the amount of times it could change in this game.

With both offenses being so productive, the keys to the game lie heavily with the defense, which favors the Panthers who appear to have the slight edge allowing 18 points per game, compared to 20 points surrendered by the Yellow Jackets.

Sophomore running back Devonte Lyons is a playmaker for the Yellow Jackets, as he leads them in both rushing (488) and receiving (95) yards, while all eyes will remain as it has been in recent weeks on Marcus Stokes and his bevy of dynamic receivers.

The Sharks (3-3) will face a tough test against Bartram Trail, but they are looking to rebound from a frustrating loss a week ago against Fleming Island, and what better way to do it than to beat the 4-1 Bears.

Playing the game at home should help the Sharks, who have been supported all year despite some bad luck in those home contests and still looking for their first win at home on the season.

If the Sharks are to reward their home faithful with a massive win, it will start with excellent defensive play and consistent play from quarterback Nathan Bunkosky, who has shown that ability more than once this season.

Both games start at 7 p.m.

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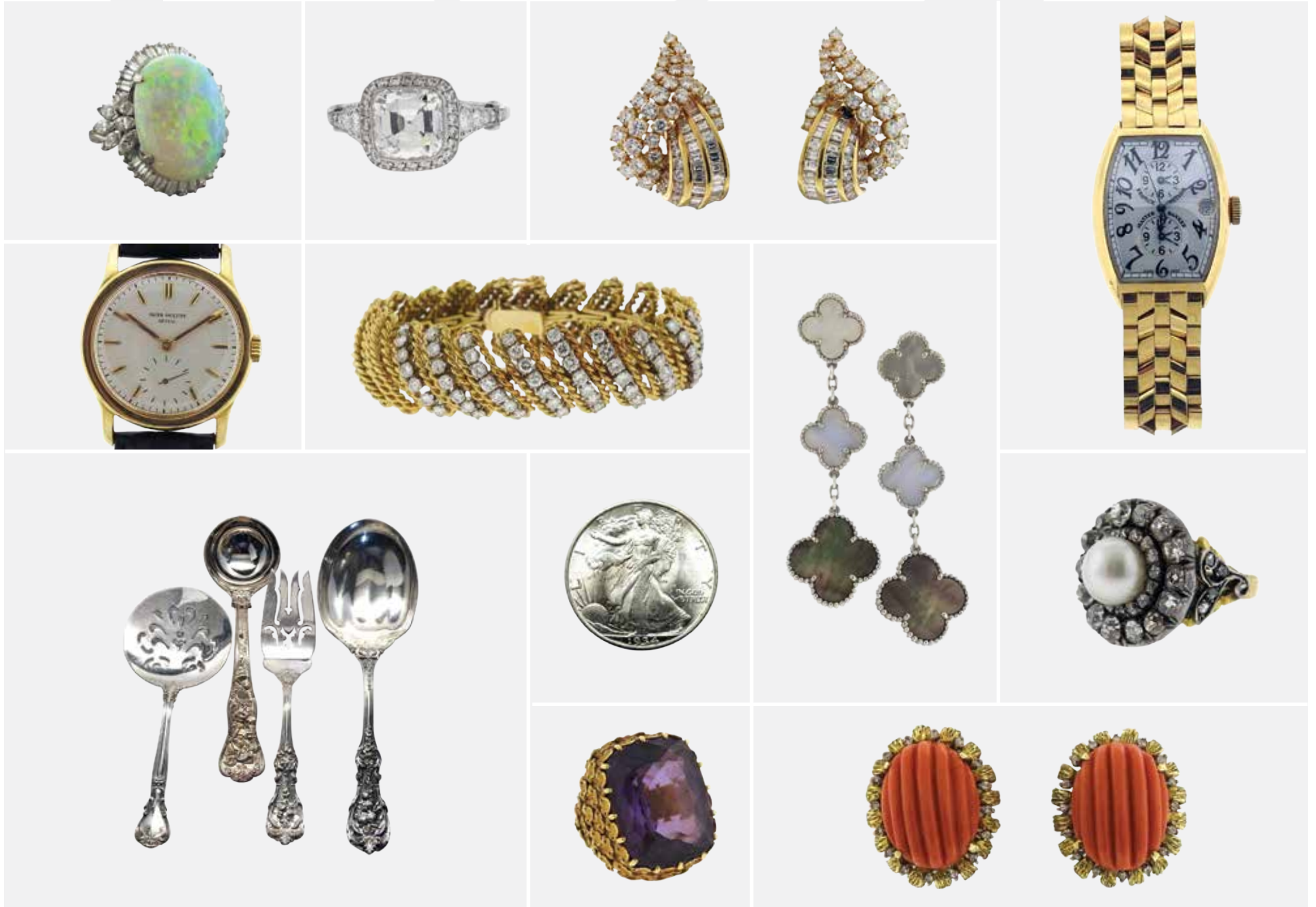
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