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ABOUT THIS MAGAZINE

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Hugh Osteen, COO/VP

Susan Griffin, Publisher

Amber Anderson, Page/Graphic Designer

Lisa Murphy, Ad Designer

Shaun Ryan, Editor

Anthony Richards, Staff Writer

Kristin Flanagan, Account Executive

Adele McGraw, Account Executive

April Snyder, Sales Assistant

Joe Wilhelm, Circulation Manager

Contributors:
Leigh Cort, Jennifer Logue

FIRST COAST REGISTER
1102 A1A N., Unit 108
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082
904.285.8831

ON THE COVER



The cover features a bride and groom in front of the Castillo de San Marcos in St. Augustine.

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United Way Givers Gala honors those who inspire

by JENNIFER LOGUE

Inspiration was the theme of the 5th Annual United Way of St. Johns Givers Gala, as community leaders and partners gathered to support and celebrate the agency's service during challenging times.

More than \$200,000 was raised at the black-tie gala held Jan. 28 at the Embassy Suites by Hilton St. Augustine Beach Oceanfront Resort. In addition to both live and silent auctions, the evening featured cocktails, dinner and dancing to the sounds of the Bold City Classics band. But the focus of the evening was on honoring those who provide the inspiration for all United Way of St. Johns does for those in need.

"There's no denying the past couple of years have added some new challenges for so many of our neighbors," United Way Campaign Vice Chair Dick Williams told attendees. "Tonight, we want to shine a light on those that have given us strength and inspiration to meet those challenges. You know, very often it's the people around us that raise us up – the people who challenge us to do more and give more."

Kelly Green, chairman of the United Way board of directors, agreed. "Tonight, this very room is filled with those whose generosity inspires us and fuels our belief that together we can do so much more," she said, noting that in the past fiscal year, the



PHOTO BY JENNIFER LOGUE
United Way CEO Melissa Nelson and the evening's
guest auctioneer, state Sen. Aaron Bean

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7 ■



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Tell us about Episcopal Children's Services and how it carries out its mission.

Our mission is simple: We want every child to enter school ready to learn and succeed. We carry out this mission by not only helping our children, but also helping and providing resources for their families as well. Our future is focused on our commitment to growing our services so that low-income and at-risk children are not left behind.

How important are these services to the children in the region? Is there a way you can see firsthand the positive effect they have on the children?

Our academic success is seen by our results in children demonstrating proficiency in the age-appropriate developmental benchmarks for each learning domain — social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy and mathematics. The positive effect is felt throughout our families and the success they achieve. Financial stability success is demonstrated by the fact that 100% of the families we serve received childcare assistance, which is crucial because childcare costs rival or exceed housing costs in our communities. Our work means that low-income families can direct their limited budgets to necessities including nutritious food, health care and housing.

If readers are inspired by the work of Episcopal Children's Services and want to help out, how can they do so?

Please, volunteer! We would love to have members of the community join our army of volunteers that help us do the great work in our community. Log on to www.ecs4kids.org/volunteer for

more information on both virtual and in-person volunteer efforts.

Tell me about your role as the chief executive officer. What are your duties? What is a typical day like?

As CEO of the second largest nonprofit (according to the Jacksonville Business Journal, 2021) in Northeast Florida, my duties and primarily my responsibilities have grown considerably over the last several years, just as the agency has grown. I have a very capable executive team who works with me, however, so that on any given day, each different area of the agency is “covered,” so to speak, by one of the teams’ chiefs who have expertise in their area. I am ultimately responsible for the nonprofit at the end of the day, but any strong leader knows that you can’t do everything yourself and you must surround yourself with those who know each content area and who are good leaders themselves. A typical day can bring anything that you least expect when you are serving in 14 very diverse counties and over 2,500 preschool children, employing 780-plus staff members! Most currently, since the pandemic hit, we are very happy if we have low COVID numbers and do not have to close any classrooms. We want to be open, serving our children and families, preparing our children to enter school ready to learn — that’s who we are!

What do you like best about what you do?

I would simply say that I love to live out our mission — preparing our children to enter school ready to learn! Otherwise, I would have to say helping families get to a better place than when they first start with us. Many families come to us in dire circumstances, and we give them a “hand

up” to help them get to a better place. We provide free childcare, of course, but more than that we help parents find jobs, obtain their GEDS, find apartments or homes if they are homeless, obtain food if they are hungry — we meet them where they are! We do not judge them; we just care about them and love them and they feel that love and know this about Episcopal Children’s Services. In every testimony I’ve ever heard from parents, they say that they “felt loved at Episcopal Children’s Services” from the moment they walked in our doors — I hope that never changes and that, in the end, is the ultimate goal and compliment.

Tell us about your background. How did you get to where you are today?

I started to work at Episcopal Children’s Services many years ago just after graduating high school. I knew the then-executive director, Nancy Reddy. I worked off and on and came back a few times to help out over the years as I married and had my two children. Dr. Reddy told me one day that she could see me being in her shoes and “running the place one day.” I smiled and thanked her and just told her I wasn’t planning on that. That was in the 1970s that she told me her prediction and when I was elected by the board as CEO in 2003, Dr. Reddy’s was the first call of congratulations I received. God surely has an interesting sense of humor, I must say!

What do you like best about living here on the First Coast?

I was born and raised in Jacksonville and only moved to Fernandina Beach four years ago. I love the area and can’t see myself living anywhere else.

UNITED WAY

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

organization had a \$2.37 million impact on the local community. “Because of you, we celebrate the givers.”

Receiving the organization’s annual Corporate Award was The St. Augustine Distillery and its co-founders Phil McDaniel and Mike Diaz.

“A real community partner from its founding, this company has contributed greatly to the revitalization of one of the most historic sections of St. Augustine,” United Way CEO Melissa Nelson said. “By working together with the residents they serve, the distillery shows us that a generous company and a successful company are not mutually exclusive.”

MasterCraft Founder and CEO Chris Shee received the Nancy Burns Trailblazer Award that recognizes an individual who creates

new opportunities for “Living United,” while the Legacy Award was presented to David and Nancy Hutson, whose son, state Sen. Travis Hutson accepted the award on their behalf. The Hutson Companies was the presenting sponsor for the gala.

The John and Peggy Bailey Sr. Community Leadership Award, meanwhile, was presented to Len and Jean Tucker in recognition of their fundraising efforts for both public and private schools throughout the Southeast and military.

“Len and Jean have made a mark not just on this community, but on a far larger scale,” Nelson said. “Because of their leadership and enthusiastic support for an extended list of causes and organizations, our community will be positively impacted for years to come.”



The 5th Annual United Way of St. Johns Givers Gala was held at the Embassy Suites by Hilton St. Augustine Beach Oceanfront Resort.



Henry Stevenson and wife, state Rep. Cyndi Stevenson, with Brad Nelson



Doug and Vanessa Langenbahn



Delinda and Dave Fogel

PHOTOS BY JENNIFER LOGUE

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Wine & Dine

ON THE FIRST COAST

PAGES 8-12



by LEIGH CORT

TABLE TALK

New restaurant grew out of idea by twin sisters

The new Ancient City Brunch-Bar in St. Augustine is definitely a “family affair” that is causing a media stir for its unique concept and incredible story about the creatively clever teenage twin sisters, Emily and Sophia Schroeder, who brought their ideas to life while still enrolled in Ponte Vedra High School. As 2022 has unfolded with a plethora of new restaurants in Northeast Florida, themed food trucks everywhere and ingenious food concepts on every corner, it’s a testament to the Schroeder Family that they have been singled out and featured in one of the premiere travel and dining publications in the world — Fodor’s! The recent headline is “How Two Florida Girls Cooked Up the Best Brunch Idea since Mimosas.” And I had to see what the excitement is all about.

Tucked away on the quiet side of south St. George Street across from Trinity Church Parish, the intimate little café offers guests one of the most personal dining experiences that presents all of its artisan foods as charcuterie, that is, on a beauti-

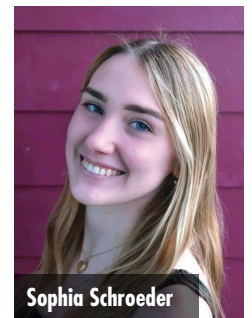
ful olive wood board. Today’s popular charcuterie is a far cry from the Merriam-Webster definition of “... a delicatessen specializing in dressed meats and meat dishes.” Thus, Emily and Sophia have mastered the art of combining the most perfectly orchestrated foods for breakfast, brunch, lunch and mid-afternoon pick-me-up coffees and sweets.

When the sisters signed up for a senior internship class, they used every experience from their childhood, school life and family memories to brainstorm THE PLAN. Originally, all they were concerned with was earning an “A” in the class. But the plan developed much further than school. And after a year of hard work, and creating the term ‘brunchcuterie’ that now belongs to them, they continued their research and the Ancient City Brunch-Bar was born! Their mother Melissa was totally onboard, having owned a restaurant previously. Raising four children who had distinctly different eating habits (one ate no meat, one had food allergies, another had a modest palate and

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



Emily Schroeder



Sophia Schroeder

the fourth child ate everything), it became apparent that the genius of presenting meals on a board was tempting enough to keep everyone happy with at least some of the charcuterie items. Melissa recognized that when she took the individual plates away from her family (and now her café guests), they all participated in the family-style board of dishes.

Only a few months after conceiving the idea of brunchcuterie and gourmet coffee bar, Emily and Sophia realized their mother had confidence in their plan, as she provid-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9 ■

RESTAURANT

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

ed the financial backing for their venture. The twins were taught how to negotiate the building's lease, locate distributors and vendors, create all of the recipes and design the little shop. Then off they went to college — now returning on weekends to work and enjoy the popularity of their project.

Even the menu has been designed to be healthy, balancing the boards with protein, fruit, vegetables, breads, cheeses, meats and grains. All artisan items are baked, not fried, and guests love the freedom of choice from the seasonally changing menu. There are three private chefs in the community that provide the internationally themed empanadas, French pastries and island-inspiration plus their sourced produce from a farm in Gainesville.

At Ancient City Brunch Bar, the choices for a personalized Brunchcoterie are practically endless. From quiches and empanadas to buttery croissants, gourmet muffins, steaming waffles with whipped butter and syrup, jumbo fresh berries, hummus,

gourmet whipped cream, sandwiches, gluten free pastries, chocolates, datil pepper salsa and Minorcan spiced potato, mini pancakes and Applewood maple bacon, it's a blackboard of irresistible combinations that might lure you back the following day. Emily, Sophia, Melissa and the entire team enjoy what they are creating with every order. They are flexible to customize orders with certain colors, seasons or celebrations. And, oh, the final touch ... a beautiful heartfelt message written in chocolate on every board!

As a cappuccino lover, imagine the excitement of being served a cup that has the artistry of a cat, tiger or llama in the steamy milk. And since it's a family-inspired café, the sideboard of cups and mugs are from the Schroeders' own family collection — perfect for every guest's individual pleasure. The freshly roasted coffee beans, all from local vendors, feature honey and spices for the most discerning coffee lover.

The setting of Ancient City Brunch-Bar is impeccably designed for individual or communal dining. Their long tables are comfy for a group of eight but perfectly casual for a solo meal, whether craving a happy time



alone or to meet others over a tirami su and coffee. With a few umbrella tables on the vintage sidewalk and seating for a total of 25 guests, don't hesitate to visit with haste. Tourists are discovering this charming café every day and local residents are falling in love with the personal connections while having an authentic caring family experience. It's the detail and presentation that is wowing their fans. Knowing the story of this amazing family who have fallen in love with St. Augustine's sense of history plus their pride in excellence, while astonishing guests with bursts of culinary treats, will make your brunch a memorable moment!

For further information, go to ancientcitybrunchbar.com.

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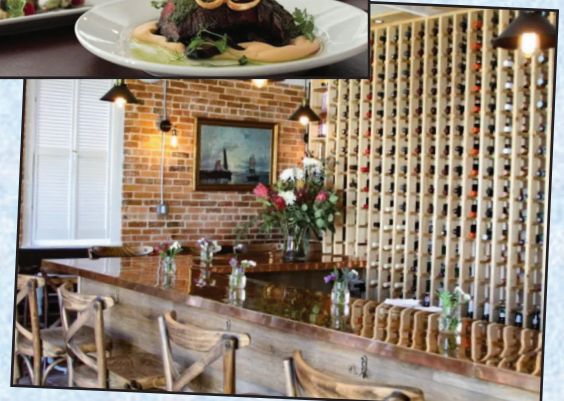
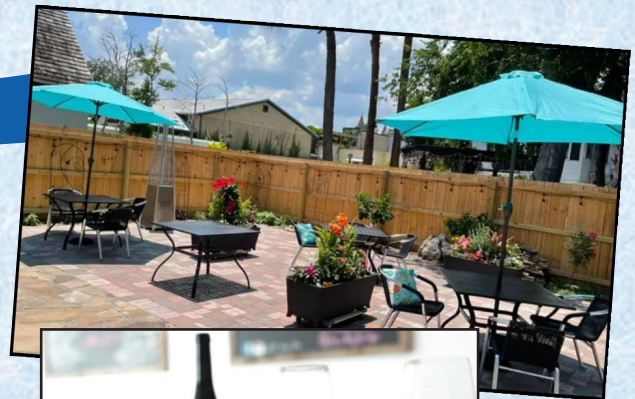
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Coastal Wine Market

HOSTS RED-CARPET GALA TO MARK WINE LABEL LAUNCH

by JENNIFER LOGUE

A taste of Hollywood glamor came to Nocatee in December, when Coastal Wine Market & Tasting Room hosted a red-carpet gala to celebrate the launch of its first exclusive wine label.

The black tie-optional event was attended by more than 50 guests who came to congratulate owners Steve and Shaun Lourie on the launch of Stone to Crystal, a 2016 Napa Valley cabernet sauvignon. As guests walked the red carpet in tuxedos and evening gowns, many expressed their happiness for the Louries and the success they have achieved with Coastal Wine Market.

“I want to tell Steve and Shaun, ‘I knew you when,’” said Kelly Hofelt, who attended the gala with her husband, Dan.

Kim Tokarz and Amber Roach said they have been coming to Coastal Wine Market since the shop opened. “We’re ‘the regulars,’” Roach quipped. “We’re really happy for them!”

Stewart Moore, meanwhile, joked, “Steve, you’re the only man I would wear a suit for!”

That type of customer loyalty and support, Steve Lourie said, made the

PHOTO BY JENNIFER LOGUE

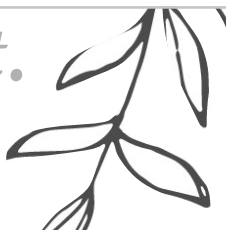
Coastal Wine Market owners Shaun and Steve Lourie celebrate the launch of their Stone to Crystal cabernet sauvignon at the red-carpet gala.

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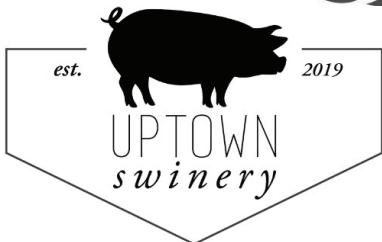
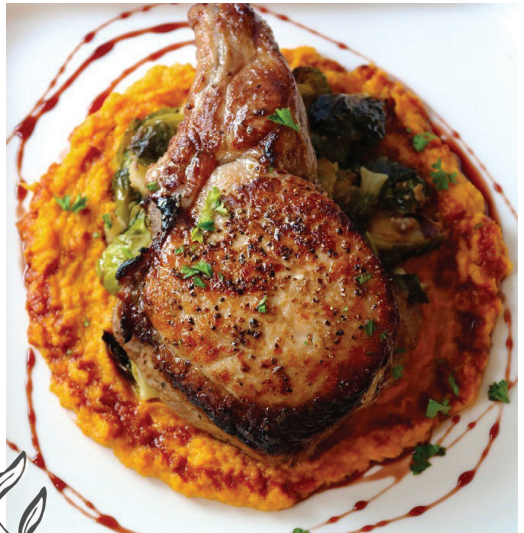
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COASTAL WINE

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

gala event possible.

“The people here (in Nocatee) have been so supportive of us,” he said. “It’s such a great crowd.”

Lourie said the idea for the wine label began about a year prior when Bryan Page of Napa-based Page Wine Cellars suggested it.

“The idea of creating a wine just really fit in with our vision,” he said.

The name of the wine, Lourie said, refers to the focal piece of Coastal Wine’s recently expanded space: a 2,000-crystal chandelier representing intertwining grapevines custom-designed by Oregon artist Jonquil LeMaster, who traveled to Ponte Vedra to attend the gala.

“The name not only refers to the chandelier and to our space – which features exposed brick and stone – but also to the growth of our business,” Lourie said.

In addition to a tasting of Stone to Crystal, guests enjoyed complimentary pours of numerous other wines presented by certified sommeliers from some of Coastal Wine’s partners. Coastal Wine chefs James Wargo and Tim Smith, meanwhile, presented a menu of gourmet hors d’oeuvres that included filet and lobster skewers, veal-stuffed mushrooms with ricotta, tuna tartare, goat cheese and fig crostini, crab cakes with caviar and more.

As guests sampled the wines and culinary delights beneath the sparkling chandelier, Lourie once again thanked the Nocatee community for the support that enabled Coastal Wine to host such an event.

“We feel like this is a first for Nocatee: to have an exclusive wine based here,” he said. “As small business owners and local residents, we are just thrilled.”



PHOTO BY JENNIFER LOGUE
Chandelier designer Jonquil LeMaster and Coastal Wine Market Owner Shaun Lourie



PHOTO BY REBECCA OLSON
Shaun and Steve Lourie celebrate the launch of their Stone to Crystal cabernet sauvignon.

-Top 5 Restaurants by Travel Awaits - Top 50 Restaurants by JAX Luxury Mag
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SPRING *Bridal*

PAGES 13-17

Barn wedding venue offers modern, rustic mix

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KELLY FARM EVENTS

by ANTHONY RICHARDS

Weddings can be held in a variety of settings, from a church to a beach and even an authentic barn.

Kelly Farm Events in St. Augustine is making the latter of those happen for couples on the First Coast of Florida.

According to Erin Kelly, her father-in-law Vernon Kelly came up with the initial idea to transform the five-stall barn on their farm into a desired wedding venue in 2019.

A couple of years later and the idea has turned into a valid and unique way for the working farm to make money.

“They really wanted to share what the property has to offer with others,” Kelly said.

Vernon Kelly worked alongside Pete Dye as project manager in the construction of the TPC Sawgrass stadium course has done his share of creative projects over the years, but never turning a barn from a place that houses horses to one that hosts weddings.

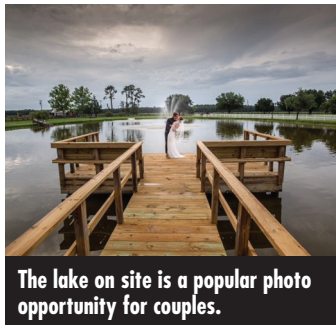
“He knew some great people to help out,” Erin Kelly said.

One of the key parts of the transformation process was making sure there were enough electrical outlets in the barn to power the necessary lighting.

“We put extra money and time to make sure there were plenty of outlets to plug into throughout the space,” Kelly said.

It was a fine line, but despite adding those modern touches, the goal was for the barn to maintain its rustic charm, which Erin Kelly believes they were able to accomplish.

“It was very satisfying to see after know-



The lake on site is a popular photo opportunity for couples.

ing where it came from and what it took to make it happen,” Kelly said.

Another barn on site is used to hold the bridal suite.

After the long process, the transformation was made official when Kelly Farm Events held its first wedding in March 2021.

According to Kelly, a popular comment from brides is that they appreciated that the venue creates its own setting, which means less time had to be spent decorating and getting it ready prior to the big day.

“It’s nice because you don’t have to do a lot of décor,” Kelly said. “There is also a lot of outdoor space.”

Features of the venue include a built-in bar on the east veranda area, which is a popular spot for dancing.

The bridal suite has several mirrors and is equipped for brides to prep on site, while the groom’s room has several games, such as darts, cornhole and ring toss to help pass the time.

Being on a 95-acre farm allows for plenty of unique photo opportunities for couples



Kelly Farm Events offers an outdoor option for a wedding ceremony.

both before and on the wedding day.

Popular photo spots are beneath “Lover’s Oak” and by the gazebo or the lake on the property.

According to Kelly, the location is a prime spot just 15 minutes from both St. Augustine and World Golf Village.

“Its convenience is a big plus,” Kelly said.

Although they have a lot of weddings booked for the next year, Kelly hopes to expand the barn’s capability by hosting more community events.

“We would like to use it for more than just weddings,” Kelly said. “Possibly even corporate or team building events.”

Thirteen weddings were held at the venue in its first year, which has increased to 33 on the books in 2022 and some weddings already being reserved for 2023.

“We may even book more (in 2022),” Kelly said.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
A view of the outside area of the Palm Valley Barn.

PALM VALLEY BARN is the place for small weddings and other events

by SHAUN RYAN

Those seeking a cozy place with lots of atmosphere for a wedding reception or other event may want to consider the Palm Valley Barn.

The venue is nestled in a natural, quiet setting with live oaks and plenty of space to spread out in case social distancing is a concern. Because the capacity is about 75, the barn is ideal for small gatherings such as micro weddings, which are popular at a time when COVID has prompted people to steer away from large gatherings.

The décor is rustic with authentic, repurposed barn wood. There is a lighted outdoor area, and lights shine up into the trees' canopies, adding to the festive ambiance after dark.

The barn started out as Huntington Farms, an equestrian center that provided stables, riding lessons and a gathering space for local horse owners and families. But over two decades, the character of the Palm Valley-Ponte Vedra area has changed. Horses and horse owners few these days. So owner and event planner Deb Chapin decided to make a change.

"It made sense to open the space for private events," she said.

One benefit of holding an event at the Palm Valley Barn is Chapin's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15 ■

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BARN

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

relationships with vendors, caterers and DJs.

“We cooperate with other people in the event industry to put together whatever the vision is that the customer wants, whatever the host wants,” she said. “That can vary, whether it’s a party for teenagers or a retirement party or a wedding.”

Indeed, the barn is a blank slate, so people can bring in whatever ideas they have to decorate for their event.

One type of event Chapin said she’s been hosting is the celebration of life.

“That is something that is very near and dear to my heart,” she said.

Celebrations of life must be organized and set up quickly, as opposed to a wedding, which may be planned months out. And Chapin is able to have everything ready despite the truncated lead time.

“It’s really important to me,” she said.

For further information about the venue, email info@PalmValleyBarn.com or go to palmvalleybarn.com. The Instagram is [Instagram.com/palmvalleybarn](https://www.instagram.com/palmvalleybarn).



PHOTOS BY SHAUN RYAN
The Palm Valley Barn is just right for small gatherings. It is a blank slate, so the customer has an opportunity to create the desired environment.



Live oaks can be seen outside the Palm Valley Barn.



The Palm Valley Barn’s prep area reveals the rustic ambiance of the venue.




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PHOTOGRAPHER LOVES CAPTURING THOSE *special moments*

by SHAUN RYAN

When photographer Wayne Guest shoots a wedding, he makes a day of it.

He is there when the bride and bridesmaids are getting their hair done or putting on make-up. He's there when the groom and his men are getting ready. He's there throughout the wedding ceremony. And he's there throughout the reception, providing a comprehensive photographic record of the big day.

He's mindful of the best ways to provide the happy couple with pictures that will forever evoke special memories.

He's also open to destination weddings, which he said is usually discounted because the couple will be paying for his airfare, accommodations and food – essentially paying for him to have a vacation.

"I don't care where the wedding is," he said. "I will do destination weddings whether they're in Missouri or New York or Canada or Bahamas. I'll go anywhere."

He doesn't mind offering this discount because, he said, "I'm not trying to make a living at it. It's just something I love to do."

Guest discovered a love of photography as a boy watching his aunt, who was an avid photographer herself. He bought his first camera in 1994 and taught himself the art of photography.

To better understand how the mechanism of the camera worked, and thus how best to manipulate it when needed, he actually disassembled the camera and put it back together.

At one point, he owned a

photo lab while living in Hiram, Georgia. Today, however, he shoots in digital and has transformed his developing skills into editing skills, adapting to new technology.

Experimenting with different kinds of surfaces, he has discovered that photos infused into glass or a tin plate – rather than paper – really bring out the details, so he offers to do customers' favorite photos that way.

He emphasized the difference between simply taking snapshots and having the photos done by a pro.

"When you hire a professional photographer, you're getting quality," he said. "You're getting clarity. You're getting so much more of a photograph."

He said photographers look at things differently than other people do.

"When you're shooting a wedding, you're really looking at the beauty of things," he said. "When you're shooting that sunrise, that sunset, you're looking at the beauty of things. You're always wanting that picture where somebody goes, 'Ahhhh.'"

Of course, Guest doesn't limit himself to wedding photography. He also shoots landscapes and portraits and more.

"I do all photography," he said. "I love doing photography."

Those wanting to see examples of his work will find it on Instagram at [brightstarsranch1](https://www.instagram.com/brightstarsranch1).

Potential customers can call or text him at 720-527-1632 or email him at brightstarsranch1@gmail.com.



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY WAYNE GUEST

TOP LEFT: **Wayne Guest likes to photograph a diverse selection of topics and scenes.**

TOP RIGHT: **When Wayne Guest photographs a wedding, he takes the time necessary to capture the big day.**

LEFT: **Wayne Guest has had a lifelong love of photography.**

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Unique business creates picnics and more for wedding parties

by SHAUN RYAN



Leslie Diaz

Luxe Picnics by Les offers alternatives to the traditional wedding reception, something that can be especially desirable for an elopement.

“We are unique,” said business owner Leslie

Diaz. “We are one of a kind.”

The luxury pop-up picnic and grazing company offers a variety of options for couples. Among the selection, perhaps the Bohemian-style picnic best suits wedding parties of a dozen or fewer people.

These can be set up indoors or outdoors, at the beach, at a park, in the backyard or in the living room. Included are grazing boxes for the guests. Depending upon the location, add-ons are available, including wine

from Amelia Liquors, a sunset couples’ horse ride, a limousine ride to the picnic, a photographer to capture the event, games, French sodas, rose petals and more.

“It’s a pretty cool concept,” said Wayne Guest, who provides horseback rides and photography.

Luxe Picnics by Les offers four packages but also can accommodate special themes and colors.

In addition, Luxe Picnics has an arrangement with several vendors who can help make the day special. These include a nondenominational wedding officiant, gowns, rings and jewelry, hats, flower arrangements, bouquets and boutonnieres, videography, wedding cake and desserts, a personal chef and hair and make-up artists.

But the service is not limited to picnics. Luxe Picnics by Les also does event cater-



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY LESLIE DIAZ
A romantic arrangement by Luxe Picnics by Les provides a unique setting for intimate wedding parties.

ing with grazing cups, cones and glasses, grazing tables and charcuterie boards.

Beyond these services, Luxe Picnics can offer private wine and whiskey pairings, ‘build a board’ parties and more.

Though Luxe Picnics by Les is headquartered in Nassau County and some services are limited to the Amelia Island area, it serves residents of St. Johns, Duval, Clay and Nassau counties in Florida and Camden and Glynn counties in Georgia.

For further information about the business and its offerings, go to luxepicnicsbyles.com or call 904-430-3928.

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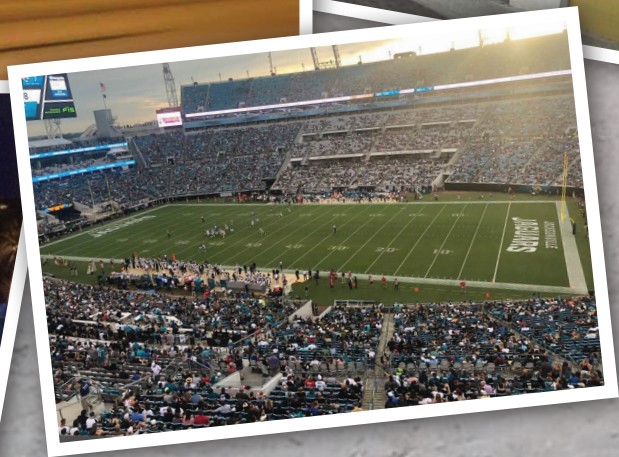
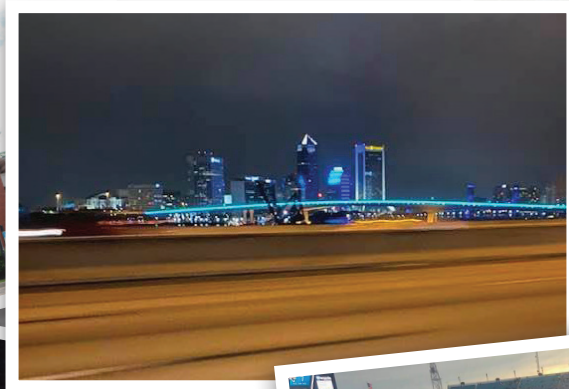
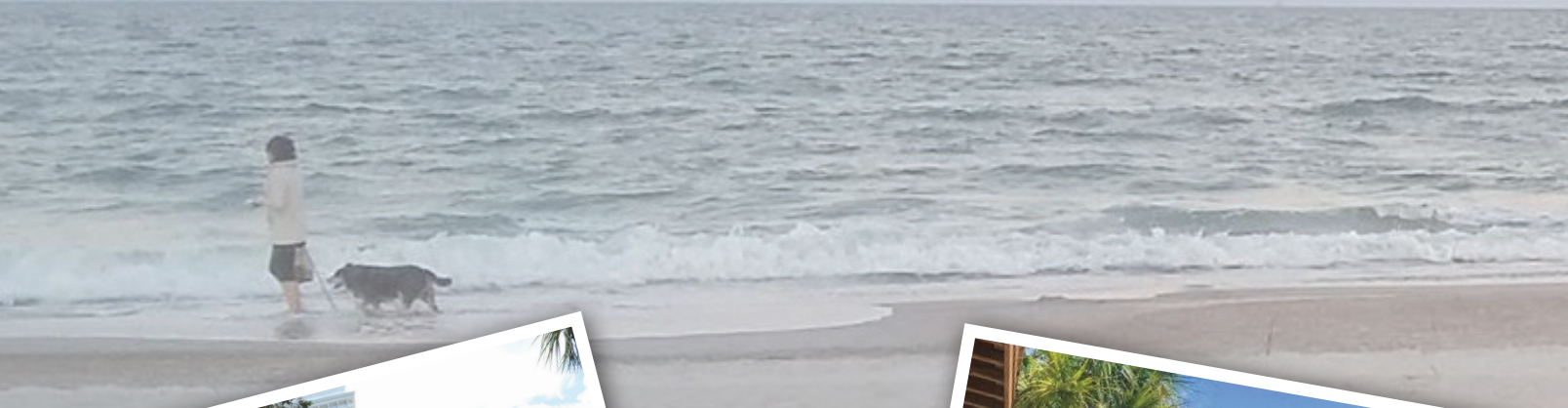
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SPRING fashion PREVIEW

PAGES 20-23



Jump into spring with the right look

by ANTHONY RICHARDS

Spring is upon us and that means seeing what the latest and greatest clothing fashions have in store.

As we prepare to head out of winter, not only does the weather warm up but the clothing choices go through a visible transition as well.

“At this point, we are getting tired of the winter season and are ready for a change,” said Brittney Patty, owner of B Social Boutique in St. Johns.

According to Patty, discussions and creations of a season’s trends often take place in the season before.

“It’s funny to see trends develop so far in advance of when they will be worn,” Patty said. “The spring and fall are just so different from the seasons

they follow.”

Bright and bold colors are usually the case when it comes to spring fashion and that is no different this year.

The focus of certain colors more than others can change from year to year, and the color for 2022 seems to be Kelly green, as well as lilac.

Trends are also known to play off the past and Patty believes the next example of that will be the comeback of styles associated with the year 2000, such as low-rise jeans.

However, the trends are not always applicable to the area you live in or your style preferences.

“We have to pick and choose what

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21 ■



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JUMP

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

trends we focus on,” Patty said. “Bold prints and floral dresses are definitely among those. That’s what you’ll see at TPC (THE PLAYERS) this year.”

According to Patty, the clothes people wear are often a reflection of how they feel and the mood they are in.

People have not gotten out and done as much the past two years as they normally would have done because of the pandemic, but that has changed, and the trends are following suit.

“People just want to have fun again and they are showing that with their look,” Patty said. “It’s just great to see.”

Clothes made from gingham is another trend Patty has seen coming this spring; and floral patterns will remain a popular look this Easter.

Something Patty has noticed from owning boutiques in Florida over the years is that the state is a little later to adopt new trends than other places in the country.

“We’re not as edgy as some of the larger



Kelly green will be a popular color worn this spring.



Clothes made of gingham will be a trend.



Style and functionality is what Patty looks for when selecting spring fashion inventory.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF B SOCIAL BOUTIQUE

cities, such as Los Angeles and New York City,” Patty said.

Stores will also differ in the product they sell, and which trends are best for what they are looking for, while keeping in mind that the trends and styles shift, sometimes drastically every handful of years.

“I remember five or six years ago, rompers were becoming popular, and they started

taking off elsewhere, but it was a year later when people around here really started wanting them,” Patty said.

Style mixed with functionality is a major aspect that Patty looks for when selecting products for her store’s inventory.

“Even though we want to look good, you still have to feel good as well,” Patty said.

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Put your best foot forward with spring shoe trends

by ANTHONY RICHARDS

A fashion ensemble is not complete without shoes, and when it comes to spring wear, comfort and casual are words that come to mind.

“The leisure trend is definitely continuing,” said Joanne Long, owner of Carla Shoes & Accessories in Ponte Vedra Beach. “We’re seeing a continuation of fashion sneakers still being a big play in the fashion world for spring.”

Platform shoes are also going to be big this spring, that even includes platform sneakers.

“A little bit of that ‘70s vibe,” Joanne Long said.

Platforms are a nice way to get lift on a shoe without creating



The mix of comfort and casual is the combination that spring shoe trends often pursue.

PHOTOS BY ANTHONY RICHARDS

a pitch. It is a way to get the height they are looking for without sacrificing comfort.

“Trends do come back around, but there’s always some where that they tweak it just so,” Long said. “It’s current but still has the reflection of a different time.”

Similar to the interest in platforms, one of the trends this spring compared to previous years that Long has seen is an increase in thicker and uni-button sneakers and sandals.

“You go through some seasons where everything is more minimal

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23 ■



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Platform shoes are popular this spring, giving a modern and retro look.



Getting outdoors is what people look forward to about spring. On Cloud sneakers are designed with running in mind.



White shoes have been popping up as a trend this spring.

SHOE TRENDS

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22

with flats and things like that,” Long said. “Now we’re seeing a little more embellishment when it comes to a shoe’s sole.”

When it comes to colors, a nice selection of white shoes are in this year.

“People are asking for them because they look fresh,” Long said.

According to Long, dress shoes had not been at the forefront of the trends the past couple of years due to the COVID-19 pandemic and weddings and social events put on the back burner.

However, there has been a resurgence in

dress shoes this spring and it is a great sight to see for Long because it means things are truly getting back to the way they had been prior to the pandemic.

“It’s exciting to see because people are going out more to events and they want to look good,” Long said. “People are even dressing up again just to go out to dinner by putting a pair of dress shoes with a pair of jeans. We’re all coming out after being in our homes for a couple of years and we just want to enjoy life again.”

Many of the customers at Carla’s are looking for shoes they can wear immediately, but they have also gotten a lot who are interested in finding shoes for a future getaway or event planned.

“We’ve got a lot coming in for spring this month and next and are really going to put our best foot forward,” Long said.

Springtime also brings with it the return of consistently warmer weather, which means getting outside more and being active.

On Cloud is the main brand of sneakers sold at Carla’s, which is designed as a lightweight running shoe and is a popular seller all year but especially during the spring with the active lifestyles along the First Coast.

“Fashion can turn quickly, so you always have to be ready to move with it,” Long said. “We try to bring merchandise in that is geared toward the Northeast Florida area.”

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by LEIGH CORT

FIRST COAST TRAVELS

Finding *peace* at the Riverview Hotel



The Riverview Hotel's second-story verandah offers a view of the St. Marys River and Cumberland Island.

PHOTOS BY LEIGH CORT

Yes, it's quiet in St. Marys, Georgia! This tiny hamlet with a very unique historic district on the St. Marys River has been the gateway to Cumberland Island — “American’s Most Beautiful Wilderness Beach” — for decades. This is a “picket fence” kind of town that was established in 1787 when a group of 19 men bought four blocks of land each at a cost of \$38. The town’s original name was Buttermilk Bluff. Then, and still today, all of the streets in St. Marys’ historic district are named for these men — and by 1790, there were 305 residents when they took the first census. The picket fences, popularly used since America’s earliest colonial era, are abundantly dotted around St. Marys. They still symbolically depict an ideal “family homestead” that surround gardens and landmarks.

It’s easy to imagine this being the “jewel in the crown” of the Colonial Coast of Georgia. Newcomers and visitors confess, “I have found peace here.” It’s a feeling that is within your grasp during the hush of eventide or morning serenity, when you can take a lazy stroll down to the waterfront without any concern for traffic or noise. The tranquil river offers dolphins dancing in the distance and the Cumberland Princess ferry that transports visitors toting coolers, wearing backpacks and some preparing for overnight camping on the National Seashore of Cumberland Island.

A small town that continues to represent Colonial-era American history since its birthright established in 1787, it’s had its share of post-war recoveries, rebuilding when one of its major industries shifted to shipping by rail instead of ships, reveling in progress until the Great Depression, papermills bringing new people and jobs and the Navy establishing Kings Bay Submarine Base — a visit to St. Marys is fascinating and heartwarming. By 2004, HGTV selected the town as the site to build its 2004 “Dream House” — following on the heels of being named “The No. 1 Boom Town in America” in 1996 by Money Magazine.

Step into the vintage lobby of the 1916 Riverview Hotel and feel the timeless heartbeat of its past long before you delve into its history. There’s a lengthy saga from a century ago whose pedigree is apparent as you gaze around the lobby — from the Old-World front desk to the ancient photos and heart pine staircase leading to 18 bedrooms on the second floor. It’s a hideaway to a place where you can leave today behind as you climb the polished staircase and enter a bedroom that pays homage to visitors from yesteryear. Imagine Andrew Carnegie, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, Admiral Chester Nimitz or weatherman Willard Scott sleeping here long before you discovered the Riverview; it’s fun to enter a cozy room with antiques of the era that captures your imagination.

When the Riverview Hotel was purchased by the three Brandon sisters in 1920, Sallie, Miss Semara and Miss Ethel, their reputation as Southern hostesses drew guests to their dining room tables and caring hospitality. True entrepreneurs at that time, they operated the hotel, their restaurant, a pharmacy, antique shop and beauty parlor

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30 ■



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FIRST COAST
ARTS

Artist paints on the largest of 'canvases'

M.J. Hinson produces murals and more using mathematical proportions

by SHAUN RYAN

When M.J. Hinson sees a blank wall, she sees an opportunity.

That's because she is, among other things, a painter of murals. While many of them are at Naval Air Station Jacksonville and thus not accessible to the public and others have been painted over to accommodate new building owners, Hinson's largest mural to date can be found in the St. Nicholas neighborhood of Jacksonville.

"Shorebirds of Florida," measuring 125 by 17 feet, is at 2624 Atlantic Blvd. She painted it in three weeks in 2021, using about 135 cans of paint.



M.J. Hinson is seen in front of one of her large paintings.

PHOTO COURTESY OF M.J. HINSON

So, how does one create something that large and in proper proportion while standing just inches from its surface? The secret is in the planning.

"I draw it to scale, and then I put it on a grid," the Jacksonville artist said. "So, my quarter of an inch on the grid might be two feet on the wall."

In fact, her studio work tends to be quite large, as well. "Life Underlying,"

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26 ■

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ARTIST

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

painted across four canvases, is assembled and displayed as an 8-by-16-foot work.

Because she wants the best results, Hinson does not skimp on the materials. Brick is very difficult to work with, so she primes the surface well and then applies the colors with Montana Gold Spray Paint, an acrylic medium. When finished, she sprays it with a sealer.

Even then, murals on exterior surfaces fade in about 10 years.

Hinson's other work spans a number of genres.

"Afternoon Ride," depicts a bicycle beside a field of lavender and sunflowers and was executed during a visit to France. Like her other studio pieces, it was painted in oil. What the trained eye will notice with this and other works by Hinson is the close

attention to proportion and the placement of elements.

"There are rules of design and of composition and of color relationships, and I think those should be followed," she said. In fact, she designs her works according to the theories of perfect proportion established by 13th-century mathematician Fibonacci.

"I'm a math person, which is not what an artist often is," she admits and says she is not a fan of the "banana taped to the wall" style of art.

"Somewhere in my mind, I still believe art should be beautiful," she said.

Another example of her diverse talents is an astoundingly realistic graphite drawing of her beloved horse, Bismarck, which was used on a wine bottle for Quantum Leap Winery in Orlando.

She exhibits her works four

to five times a year, and recently had one at the Jacksonville airport titled "Earth Power." She also does commissions.

But her talents don't stop there. She also does sculpture and has written five books. She is taking lessons in piano and jiu jitsu. She has ridden jumping horses and once was a roller figure skater while living in Virginia.

Her friends call her a Renaissance person, with good reason. Hinson is a First Coast native. As a small child, she took painting lessons and developed a love of art.

"I have some of my abstracts from second grade that I still look at and I think, 'These are pretty good,'" she said.

She continued her studies into her adult years, traveling to places around the world and immersing herself in the various cultures.

PHOTO COURTESY OF M.J. HINSON



"Life Underlying" measures 8 by 16 feet.

She earned a Ph.D from Capella University in Minneapolis in 2005 and went on to teach, first at Laureate University in Baltimore and then at Florida State College at Jacksonville from 1995 to 2020. She left that position to pursue painting full time, though she still teaches at Reddi-Arts and the Ronan School of Music, both in Jacksonville.

Those interested in her work can contact her at brushandoil@gmail.com or by calling 904-315-2777. Her website is brushandoil.com. Her Facebook page is Brush and Oil, and her Instagram is Brushandoil2109.



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Gallery features 92 works by Dali

by SHAUN RYAN

When people think of Surrealism, they think of Salvador Dali. Thirty-three years after his death, his iconic works continue to reach new generations, standing the test of time with their thought-provoking images.

In early February, local Dali devotees had an opportunity to see 92 pieces of his art from a collection that maintains a personal connection to the artist himself.

Gallery 725 in Jacksonville Beach held an opening for “Dali: The Argillet Collection” on Jan. 28. The exhibit was comprised primarily of etchings autographed by their creator and a few originals, including an original study for his famous painting, “The Toreador Hallucinogenic.”

The works were part of a collaboration between Dali and his publisher and confidante, Pierre Argillet. In fact, during receptions on Feb. 5 and 6, visitors had an opportunity to speak via satellite with Argillet’s daughter, Christine, who grew up thinking of Dali as a

sort of uncle.

The etchings were arranged according to Dali’s Suites, including “Mythologie,” “Goethe’s Faust,” “Poemes Secrets d’Apollinaire” and “Les Hippies.” There was also a surprising series inspired by the poems of Mao Zedong. Commentary accompanying each category shone light on Dali’s purpose in creating them.

The exhibition had been in the works since 2019 and had originally been scheduled for August 2020, but the pandemic intervened. Nevertheless, galley owners Shayna and Matt Winghart continued to pursue this show. When conditions finally allowed, they succeeded in bringing it to the First Coast.

“Considering that Jacksonville hasn’t seen

a show like this in nearly a decade, we’re very excited and honored that they chose us to do the show,” Shayna Winghart said.

Gallery 725, located at 1250 Beach Blvd., has become a trusted place to see and buy highly prized art. It is open 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday-Friday and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday.

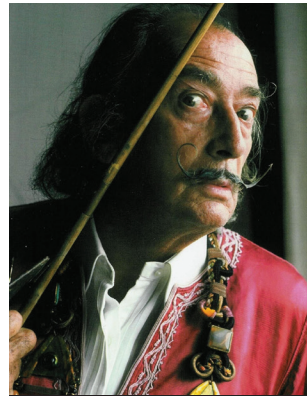


PHOTO PROVIDED BY THE ARGILLET FAMILY VIA RELEVANT COMMUNICATIONS
Salvador Dali



PHOTO BY SHAUN RYAN
“Cosmonaut” by Salvador Dali is one of the etchings in his “Les Hippies” suite.

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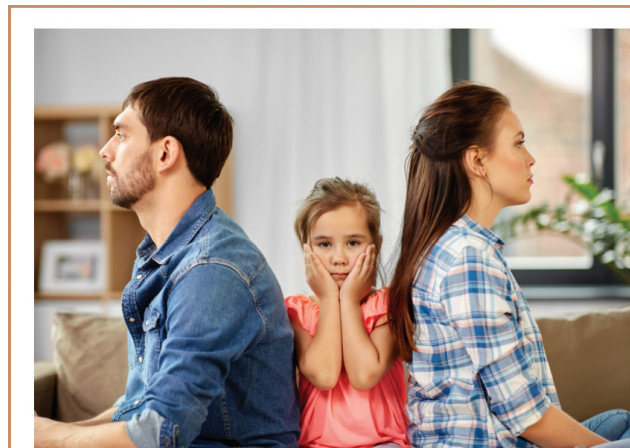
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Hagerty's big plans for The Amelia include name change, extended schedule

The 2022 version Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance has been rebranded as "The Amelia" heading into this year's event scheduled for March 3-6.

It will be the 27th year that the showcase has taken place, and it will once again be at The Golf Club of Amelia Island and The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island.

Hagerty, an insurance company that specializes in collector cars, purchased the event in June and it has quickly left its imprint as their first event since taking over approaches.



PHOTO COURTESY OF HAGERTY

Hagerty has renamed the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance, "The Amelia" heading into the 2022 event and that includes a new logo.

"The Amelia is truly a motoring event like no other and we wanted a logo that reflected its strength and uniqueness," said, Tarra Warnes,

Hagerty's vice president of creative strategy, in a press release.

Part of the rebranding initiative was not only changing the name but also creating a new logo and an extended schedule of events that extends four days.

While the feature event will remain Sunday beginning at 9:30 a.m., Saturday will now feature "Cars and Community presented by Griot's Garage," which was designed with a family-friendly atmosphere in mind.

The Saturday showcase will feature a variety of cars, including celebrating popular vehicles from '80s and '90s in an exhibit named RADwood and a Concours d'Lemons presentation with a focus on oddball cars throughout history.

A kid zone will also on display Saturday with slot car racing and racing simulators for children to take part in.

Thursday and Friday will be full of pre-event experiences, such as invite-only preview parties and the Reliable Carriers Eight Flags Road Tour that is open to entrants

PHOTO COURTESY OF HAGERTY/DEREMER STUDIOS



The 2022 showcase will include four days of events highlighting an array of historic and collector cars throughout history.

only and will stop at various points along the public roads of Amelia Island with the conclusion including a public display and lunch in downtown Fernandina Beach.

Special classes at this year's event will include anniversary celebrations of the 60th 24 Hours of Daytona, the 70th 12 Hours of Sebring, 75 years of Ferrari, 100 years of Lincoln and the 90 years since the 1932 Ford was introduced.

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Celtic festival set for March

Plans are under way for the St. Augustine Celtic Music & Heritage Festival, which will be held in March.

The festival was first produced in 2011 and has grown in popularity each year while winning multiple awards for best music festival and best food festival in St. Johns County and the Jacksonville area.

Centuries of Celtic heritage will be highlighted during the festival's Highland Games with athletes demonstrating and testing their strength and endurance, and Celtic clans displaying their ancestral pride.

Vendors will offer Celtic cuisine and additional food and beverages, handmade and imported Celtic crafts, workshops, lectures and more. Top touring bands from Scotland, Ireland, Canada and around the United States will play traditional songs and Celtic rock throughout the two-day festival.

Starting on March 11 with a whiskey tasting from 7 to 9 p.m., the festival will continue March 12-13 with events, food and activities from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. All activities will be held at Francis Field, 25

W. Castillo Drive in St. Augustine.

A highlight of the festival weekend includes the only St. Patrick Parade in Northeast Florida, starting at Francis Field at 10 a.m. March 12.

The 2022 Grand Marshal of the parade will be The Sisters of St. Joseph representing the Miguel O'Reilly House, which has been in the care and ownership of the Sisters since 1866.

The unique history of the house and its tradition is an important part of the history of St. Augustine. Father O'Reilly, an Irish priest, was vicar to the Spanish colonists in the city, which was Spain's capital in La Florida.

The Sisters opened The O'Reilly House, known officially known as the Father Miguel O'Reilly House Museum, and the House of Don Lorenzo de Leon as a museum and fundraising site at 32 Aviles St.

For more information, go to celticstaugustine.com.

The St. Augustine Celtic Music & Heritage Festival and the parade are produced



The St. Augustine Celtic Music & Heritage Festival features traditional music and Celtic rock bands.



Celtic clans compete in the Highland Games.

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY ROMANZA-ST. AUGUSTINE by Romanza-St. Augustine Inc. Proceeds of the festival are used to promote the arts, culture and heritage of St. Augustine. For more information about Romanza Festival of Music and the Arts, go to romanzafestival.com.

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RIVERVIEW

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24

— and also started the first telephone company in St. Marys! Notably, their brother George Washington Brandon owned several sawmills in Georgia, exporting hardwoods and providing much of the material for the hotel itself.

Remaining in the Brandon family for 88 years until 2019, the new owners Bert Guy and Chandra Yadav envisioned retaining the building's majestic history while bringing it gently into the 21st Century — room by room. Pairing Guy's career as Superior Court Judge of Glynn County with Yadav's international hotel background, they are today's generation of futurists bringing contemporary progress both to the overnight and dining guests that are very pleasing.

Seagle's, the hotel restaurant, is an oasis for drinking, dining and catching up. It's been a local's gathering place for a century, and today's reincarnation is a major part of the hotel's charm. In less than a year, Guy and Yadav restored the restaurant's front door to its 1916 charm, added pressed tin ceilings throughout, redesigned the bright interior with many inviting seating options and added outdoor tables under a wide awning. Seagle's has recaptured its prominent position as a landmark that boasts an unobstructed view of the waterfront to watch the town's homespun activities, festivals and special events.

If you're searching for a glitzy contemporary vibe, change gears. Antique lovers enjoy vintage photos dotting the walls that depict old days at the hotel, founding families, the 1800s bustling seaport and relics of smugglers and pirates. Adopt a great spot for your nightcap by walking through the old telephone booth that has become a door-



Riverview Hotel owner Bert Guy

way from the restaurant into the speakeasy bar. Indulge in a St. Marys-inspired cocktail that puts you in the mood with Captain Seagle's Cooler, The Buoy or a Tidal Wave!

Chefs Samie Woods and Jose Baez are the key to Seagle's delicious new reputation for dining at the Riverview Hotel. Their combined creativity of Southern Soul plus Puerto Rican Passion tempt guests for lunch, dinner and catered events daily. The menu, offered in the hotel's saloon and Seagle's, is a cornucopia of local seafood prepared in their own unique style. Baskets of oysters, shrimp, scallops — crabcakes to die for — even seafood-stuffed potatoes won't break the bank. Cajun seafood pasta is a rich combination of linguine, creamy Cajun alfredo sauce and topped with any fish on the daily menu. For the lighter appetite, soups are created by Sami and Jose along with crispy salads and sandwiches inspired by the water's bounty. My favorite: juicy grilled scallops with bacon jam! Burger and steak lovers won't be disappointed since the kitchen prides itself on feeding guests with the same attention as satisfying the owners and their families.

If you're a first-time visitor to romantic St. Marys, at first glance it looks so small



Samie Woods (pictured) and Jose Baez are the reason dining at the Riverview Hotel is so popular.

PHOTOS BY LEIGH CORT

that you might wonder how to explore and uncover its hidden secrets. It's easy — stop at the Visitor Center only two blocks from the Riverview Hotel. There won't be a crowd clamoring for information about what to do. Whomever greets you will personally open the door to this picturesque town, offer a superb 20-minute video and present a self-guided tour booklet. (Also see visitstmarys.com.)

Leaving St. Marys and the Riverview Hotel isn't easy. Once again, the quiet morning sounds, images of seagulls taking flight on their way to remote barrier islands and picket fences clicking open to invite the day onto welcoming porches are great memories to take home. Various stewards of the original settlement gave their love and dedication to this tiny hamlet through the centuries. Lucky for us that we can capture its spirit in just a brief moment through its richness of preservation and people.

For further information, go to riverviewhotelstmarys.com.

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