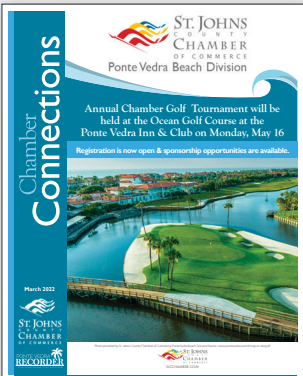


PONTE VEDRA RECORDER

March 31, 2022
Volume 53, No. 22
75 cents

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PonteVedraRecorder.com



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LACROSSE TAKES CENTERSTAGE

Photo by Anthony Richards

Lily Mosser fires a shot on goal between a trio of converging Bartram Trail defenders during the Second Annual Rivalry on the River Lacrosse Tournament hosted by The Bolles School March 26. Read the story and see photos inside on page 28.

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Send us your news

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BRIEFS

COVID-19 testing site to reduce hours of operation

The St. Johns County COVID-19 testing site located at the Wind Mitigation Building is now open from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The site has reduced its hours of operation from five days a week to three days a week due to a decrease in testing demand. For further information, call the Nomi Health call center at 904-295-0562.

Mystery author to speak

Northeast Florida Sisters in Crime will meet 10:15 a.m. Saturday, April 2, at the Ponte Vedra Beach Library, 101 Library Blvd. The guest speaker will be mystery author Michael Wiley. His topic: "Writing Killer Dialogue."

Wiley is the author of three mystery and thriller series — the Shamus Award-winning Joe Kozmarski mysteries, the Daniel Turner thrillers and the Sam Kelson mysteries, as well as standalone fiction and nonfiction books. His short stories appear often in Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine, anthologies and "Best Mystery" collections. His latest mystery is, "Head Case."

Wiley teaches literature and creative writing at University of North Florida.

Democratic Club to discuss Florida politics

The Ponte Vedra Democratic Club will hold its monthly meeting on April 19 at Christ Episcopal Church, Room 106, 400 San Juan Blvd., Ponte Vedra Beach. Chat & Chew at 6 p.m. The meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. The featured speaker is political columnist and frequent WJCT guest A.G. Gancarski. The topic will be: What's Ahead in Florida Politics. For further information, email janetkary@gmail.com.

Registration open for 2022 Bailen Basketball summer camps

Nease High boys basketball coach Josh Bailen will hold five sessions of basketball camps this summer with the dates being June 6-10, June 13-17, June 20-24, July 11-15 and July 25-29.

Each session will be Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. to noon. Boys and girls third to ninth grade are welcome and a registration fee of \$150 is required for one session. Parents can register at joshbailenbasketball.com or Venmo with their child's name and session @Josh-BailenBasketball.

Event to help fight Crohn's disease and colitis

The one-mile Jacksonville Take Steps Walk and festival will be held April 23 at the Beachwalk Club on County Road 210. The event benefits the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of Northeast Florida. To register, donate or volunteer, go to cctakesteps.org/jacksonville2022. For further information, call 301-904-5996 or email lwilliams@crohnsandcolitis-foundation.org.

Guana Reserve offers guided exploration hike

A guided exploration hike will be held from 9 to 11 a.m. Saturday, April 2, at Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve. Participants will learn about the Guana peninsula's natural biodiversity, expansive cultural history, vital estuarine resources and current efforts to protect these resources.

The hike starts at GTM Research Reserve Trailhead Pavilion (west of Guana Dam), 505 Guana River Road, Ponte Vedra Beach.

To participate, register online at bit.ly/36uHxYL.

Hikers should wear comfortable, closed-toe shoes. The event is free, but parking is \$3 per vehicle.

Woman's Club to meet

The Ponte Vedra Woman's Club will have its April general meeting from

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Briefs

Continued from 2

noon to 1:30 p.m. April 20 at Southern Kitchen & Bar, 831 1st St. North in Jacksonville Beach. The topic for the meeting is basic safety practices for women, and Cpl. Richard Miller of the Jacksonville Beach Police Department will be the speaker. The meeting will be inside, and the club supports people's choice to wear a mask and social distance. Registration is on the club's website under Events at pontevedra-womansclub.com.

Everyone will order off the lunch menu.

Guana Reserve plans volunteer orientation

Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve will conduct a volunteer orientation from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Friday, April 1. Learn about the background and history of the reserve, volunteer opportunities and the benefits of volunteering at the reserve. This will be held at the GTM Research Reserve Visitor Center, 505 Guana River Road, Ponte Vedra Beach.

For a volunteer application, go to form.jotform.com/60673918208158. After completing it, contact volunteer coordinator Shannon Rininger to ensure that it was received. Her email is Shannon.Rininger@FloridaDEP.gov.

Free concert at Ponte Vedra library

Three ensemble groups will perform at the Ponte Vedra Beach Library on April 12. Admission is free.

- The Flagler College Chorale is a non-auditioned mixed choir that performs a wide variety of concert and multicultural repertoire.

- The Flagler College Chamber Choir is an auditioned mixed choir. They perform a wide variety of music.

- The Flagler College Cabaret and Acapella Ensemble is also an auditioned mixed ensemble, and they perform a wide variety of musical theater, pop, jazz and contemporary music.

Doors open at 6 p.m. The concert begins at 6:30 p.m.

The concert is part of the Friends of the Ponte Vedra Beach Library concert series.

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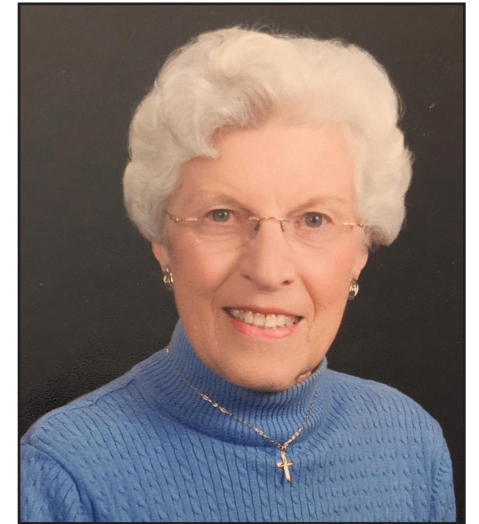
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OBITUARIES

Phoebe Joan Rector

Phoebe Joan Rector, 87, passed away peacefully on March 1, 2022. She was at Ponte Vedra Gardens Memory Care surrounded by her family. Joan was born on April 13, 1934, in St. Louis, MO, to the late Charles and Elsie Bortz. Joan met her husband, Harlan Rector, in 1951 when they attended Cleveland High School together in St. Louis. They were married for 64 years raising 5 children. Throughout her life, Joan was an avid lover of nature. Fascinated by clouds, she published a wonderful book about them titled, "As The Clouds Roll By." Phoebe Joan Rector is survived by her husband Harlan Rector, her children, Jeffrey Rector, Jerry Rector, Douglas Rector, Dana Rector, Amy (Rector) Flinchbaugh; and her granddaughters, Amanda and Lauren Flinchbaugh. A memorial celebration of her life will be held Tuesday, April 12, 2022, 4 p.m., a day before her 88th birthday, at Nocatee Crosswater Hall, 245 Nocatee Center Way, Ponte Vedra, FL, 32081, (904) 924-6863. A reception will immediately follow, also at Nocatee Crosswater Hall in Ponte Vedra. In lieu



of flowers please send donations in her honor to Chets Creek Church — Nocatee — 4420 Hodges Blvd., Jacksonville, FL 32224.



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Ponte Vedra Beach Rotary Club seeks Local Heroes nominations

The Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach and The Ponte Vedra Recorder are seeking nominations for the 30th Annual Local Heroes Awards.

Presented each year, the Local Heroes Awards recognize individuals who give back to the community and reflect the spirit of the Rotary Club's motto,

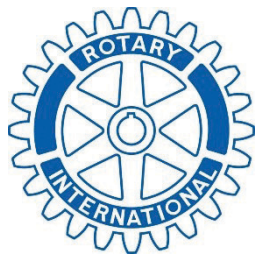
"Service Above Self."

From volunteering with local charities to giving back through the arts, education, environmental protection activities and more, the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach and The Recorder seek to recognize the "unsung heroes" who make Ponte Vedra such a special

place to live, work and raise a family.

Residents who know of an individual they believe is deserving of recognition as a Local Hero are encouraged to complete the nomination form on this page and email it to Rotarian Steve Crosby at stevecrosby101@gmail.com. Nominations may also be mailed

to: Local Heroes Awards Committee, Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach, PO Box 70, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32004. To submit a nomination online, go to pvbrotary.org and click on the link on the home page. The deadline for submission of nominations is April 15, 2022.



The Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach
in cooperation with The Ponte Vedra Recorder

2022 Local Heroes Awards Nomination Form

The Local Heroes Awards recognize individuals who give back to the community and reflect the spirit of the Rotary Club's motto, "Service Above Self." From volunteering with local charities to giving back through the arts, education, environmental protection activities or doing your job in an exemplary way, we seek to recognize the "unsung heroes" who make Ponte Vedra such a special place to live, work and raise a family.

Please complete this nomination form and return it to the address below by April 15, 2022. For more information or any questions, contact Ponte Vedra Beach Rotary Club member Steve Crosby at stevecrosby101@gmail.com.



Nomination Deadline:
April 15, 2022

Email entries to:
stevecrosby101@gmail.com

or mail to:
Local Heroes Awards Committee
Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach
P.O. Box 70
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32004

Or submit your nomination online at:
pvbrotary.org

Nomination Submitted By:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Nominee Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Title/Organization (if applicable): _____

Nominee's activities and/or contributions to the community:

Please provide sufficient details so the nominating committee may give your nominee every consideration! Feel free to attach additional pages as well as a resume, articles or other supporting materials (optional).

Thank you for your nomination!

Conner Battreall enjoys the changes he sees in people's daily lives and in the way they feel as the owner of fit20 in Nocatee. He has experienced the unique approach to fitness as both a member and trainer prior to owning a business himself.

Conner Battreall

As told to Anthony Richards

Can you please briefly tell us about your background?

I have a bachelor's in business administration from the University of North Florida in business management and human resources. After graduating in 2019, I began working with my mom in her shipping franchise as a logistics consultant and account manager.

What led you to get involved with fit20?

I got involved in fit20 because of my mom. She (Cathy Battreall) is the regional developer for fit20 in the Jacksonville area and already had opened two studios.

I was training part-time at the studios, and I loved working with the members and learning about the importance of strength training. When it was time to open a third studio, my mom approached me and asked if I was interested in owning my own business. I jumped at the opportunity and haven't looked back.

It is neat to hear about the family connection that led to your path to owning the fit20 in Nocatee. Do you try to reflect that family atmosphere in your business?

Absolutely! Ponte Vedra is a very close-knit, family-oriented area. We try to keep the atmosphere of the studio as friendly and comfortable for trainers, members and everyone in our fit20 family.

What are the most rewarding parts of owning the business?

The most rewarding part of owning a fit20 studio is seeing the changes made in people's everyday life, and the improvements they see from the added strength they achieve.

What are your goals for the business?

I would love to make fit20 a household name and easily recognized in the Jacksonville area.

What are some of the challenges that you face with your job?

The biggest challenge we face is getting people in the door to try our unique program.

I think skepticism and curiosity is sparked when someone hears that you can get fit in just 20 minutes once a week.

We offer a free introductory session to anyone who wants to see what fit20 is all about, where we will perform a detailed health assessment, go over goals the individual may have and try the workout firsthand.

Do you feel like being a member at fit20 prior to owning a location gives you a unique perspective of how your current members view things?

Doing the workout firsthand and experiencing it as an owner and trainer definitely helps under the unique training program we offer. All of the trainers at fit20 also do their workout once a week, so we can share our experience with the members and better understand the pro-



Photo courtesy of Conner Battreall

Conner Battreall strives to reflect the close-knit environment of the Ponte Vedra community at his fit20 business.

gram as well. I often work out with some of my members so they see how much I and my trainers enjoy it.

For those who are not sure about the fit20 approach, how would you best describe it?

It is a very unique and intense, but safe, workout. That is why we offer the free introductory training, so someone can come visit a studio and experience fit20 firsthand.

What do you enjoy most about living in Northeast Florida?

First and foremost, my family is here, and I enjoy being so close to them. I also enjoy the change in seasons we get unlike most of the state of Florida.

Of course, being so close to the beach is a perk as well!

Flagler Health+ appoints DeVooght president and CEO

On Monday, March 28, Flagler Health+ announced the appointment of Carlton DeVooght as president and CEO of the St. Johns County-based health enterprise.

DeVooght has been serving as interim president and CEO since former President and CEO Jason Barrett left the organization earlier this month. DeVooght previously served as senior executive vice president, chief administration officer and general counsel.

The Flagler Health+ Board of Directors made the decision to forgo an external CEO search and move forward with the permanent appointment during its regular board session on Thursday, March 24.

“Carlton is a trusted leader who has played an integral role in setting the orga-

nization’s strategic direction and ensuring the highest level of care is delivered to our patients and the broader community throughout his time at Flagler Health+,” stated Todd Neville, chair of the Flagler Health+ board of directors. “In addition to Carlton’s impressive career achievements and education, he most importantly embodies the organization’s core values of quality, integrity, innovation and service. Our board is looking forward to seeing Flagler Health+ flourish even more under Carlton’s leadership.”

Prior to his current appointment, DeVooght directed enterprise-wide strategy, operations and administration functions with an emphasis on growth and partnerships.

“This is a pivotal time in Flagler Health+’s history, and I am honored that the board of directors has placed their trust in me to lead us through it,” stated DeVooght.

DeVooght joined Flagler four years ago after serving as senior vice president of operations for Coastal Community Health. In that role, he oversaw operations of the regional affiliation, interactions with governmental agencies and coordinated all legal actions.

Prior to joining Coastal, DeVooght served as vice president and general

counsel for Southeast Georgia Health System. In this role he led the organization’s legal, real estate, medical staff services, compliance, risk management and government relations matters, as well as the cancer centers for the health system.

He has a B.A. from the University of Georgia and earned his juris doctorate from the University of Georgia School of Law. He also has an MBA with a certification in health care management from Brenau University, where he received the Leadership Award.

Program focuses on issue of autism

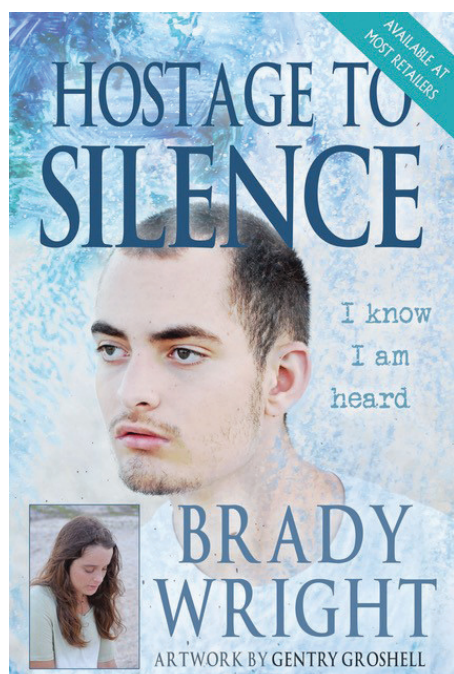
April is National Autism Awareness Month, and a special forum on Wednesday, April 6, will give the public a better understanding of the issue.

Ponte Vedra has become the center for several influential autism-related services. Speakers representing four local institutions will provide informational overviews for those affected by or interested in autism.

Speakers will include Amy Groshell, cofounder of Peace of Heart Communities Home and Enrichment Center; Leslie Weed, founder of HEAL (Helping Enrich Autistic Lives) Foundation; Marcus Sowcik, educational director of BridgeHaven Academy and Communication Clinic; and Danielle Wright, parent of Brady Wright, the 18-year-old autistic and nonverbal author.

In addition, members of the Wright and Groshell families will share how the memoir “Hostage To Silence: I Know I Am Heard” by Brady Wright and featuring artwork by Gentry Groshell was published.

Copies of “Hostage to Silence” will be available for purchase through sponsorship by the Ponte Vedra Beach Friends of



“Hostage To Silence: I Know I Am Heard” was written by Brady Wright and features artwork by Gentry Groshell.

the Library.

The program begins at 6:30 p.m. at the Ponte Vedra Beach Library and is free to the public. The library is located at 101 Library Blvd., Ponte Vedra.

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Refugees share stories to create deeper community connection

By Anthony Richards

Everyone has stories to tell that help describe how they got to where they are in life.

Some stories may be positive and others negative, but regardless of the details, the stories remain major parts of that person's life and play a role in who they are.

However, for some it can be difficult to get their stories out there for others to hear, especially in the cases of refugees that have come to America as a way of escape from their previous situations in other countries.

WeaveTales is a unique initiative that helps shed light on this issue and create avenues for refugees to open and share their stories with those in the new communities they call home.

"It is important to make sure that the stories are told in their voices," said Basma Alawee, executive director and co-founder of WeaveTales.

The Jacksonville-based nonprofit was recognized as a charity of the day at this year's THE PLAYERS Championship.

According to Alawee, it meant a lot to have an event like THE PLAYERS and Grant Thornton teaming up to show their support, especially since the organization is still relatively young compared to other nonprofit in the area, having been founded in 2019.

"It has been a blessing to see that the community is now reaching out to us," Alawee said. "I invite all of Ponte Vedra's educational spaces and museums to reach out as well."

Having been a refugee herself, Alawee had a deep understanding of what other refugees go through as they attempt to be accepted into their new society.

She realized that the resistance of communities to embrace refugees could often be traced back to a lack of understanding by both sides.

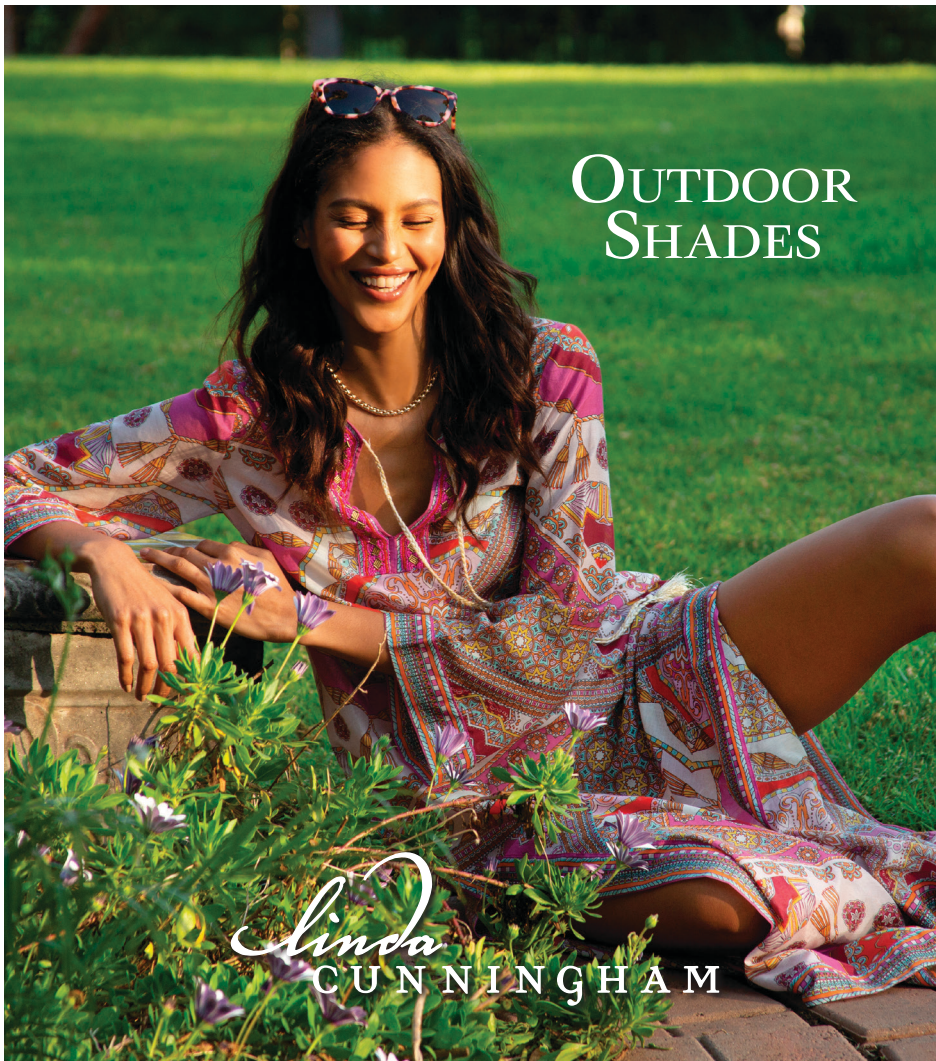
"It's all about creating a space for people to connect," Alawee said. "As a refugee myself, it is a way for us to feel empowered and a part of this country."

REFUGEES continues on Page 10



Photo courtesy of WeaveTales

THE PLAYERS and Grant Thornton partnered to name WeaveTales one of its charities of the day during the 2022 tournament.



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Ponte Vedra-based RedDress sends medical help to Ukraine

Company's cutting-edge wound-care product to treat injured civilians

A Ponte Vedra-based Israeli medical company is shipping revolutionary blood-clotting wound-care systems to Ukraine to help with serious injuries and severe trauma wounds, RedDress announced in a press release.

RedDress began shipments of 400 of their ActiGraft systems this week to multiple hospitals in Ukraine to help treat civilian casualties as a result of the indiscriminate Russian attacks.

In addition to donating the FDA-cleared wound care product, RedDress is

coordinating with their partner medical specialists from GraftIn and SlavaMed to help with delivery into Ukraine, while another partner, Dr. Arkadiy Savchenko, a leading expert and Department Surgery No. 2 of Danylo Halytsky Lviv National Medical University, will lead the charge to teach Ukrainian nurses, doctors and aid workers to use the systems.

"We're grateful we're in a position to not only have a cutting-edge product that has a far greater success rate than traditional wound care treatment options, but also that we have the ability to be financially capable to donate these resources to help so many people in need," said Robert Mueller, general manager of RedDress.

According to RedDress, this is the first

time their technology will be deployed and used in a war zone. However, their experts believe it will not be the last.

ActiGraft is a new, proprietary and patented technology solution used to help with wound care that enables health care providers to produce — in real time — in vitro blood clots from a patient's whole blood. Once applied, the blood clot supports wound management and naturally occurring processes in the patient's body.

While still considered new technology, ActiGraft is quickly becoming a preferred treatment option, especially by doctors who treat complex wounds like those often seen in amputations, post-surgical patients, diabetic patients, vascularly compromised patients and patients suffering from chronic and traumatic wounds.

Showcasing the broad use, just last year, RedDress's ActiGraft was recognized as one of the year's Top 10 Innovations by Podiatry Today, a medical trade journal.

The systems are expected to be delivered to Ukraine this week and could be used in the field as early as next week.

RedDress is a privately held, Israel-based company with a U.S. subsidiary, RedDress Ltd., located in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Founded in 2009 with the goal of developing more effective, natural and economically viable treatments for chronic wounds.

The company's website is reddress-medical.com.

Ponte Vedra woman makes teddy bears for children with cancer

By Shaun Ryan

Cancer is a scary thing for anyone, but especially for young children. Even the treatments, often mysterious and incomprehensible, are a source of much fear.

It's something four-time cancer survivor Jacqueline Reimann understands all too well.

"I can relate to them: the misery, the scariness, the discomfort," she said.

So, finding herself at home during the pandemic with little to do, she sought a way to brighten the lives of children suffering with cancer by using her knitting and crocheting skills.

She began to make soft, fluffy teddy bears to be donated to the young patients of the Wolfson Children's Hospital oncology department.

Each was unique and, once people saw them, they began to ask whether they could buy one. At first, Reimann agreed, selling a dozen before realizing she'd gotten away from her original idea.

"I got mad at myself," she said. "That was not the purpose. That was not why I wanted to make them. So I didn't sell

them anymore."

She remained true to her goal after that, making 23 more teddy bears over the next two-and-a-half years.

Though designed for children ages 1-6, she said the 18-inch bears are not meant to be toys, per se.

"It's really a buddy, a friend to hug when you're scared and you want to cry," she said.

Once they were finished, Reimann reached out to her contacts with the hospital and arranged to deliver the stuffed bears in February. They were an immediate hit with the Wolfson staff.

"They gave them to the children one at a time, right when they received their chemo treatments, which I thought was a great idea," Reimann said. This gave the children something to hold onto during that critical time. The children were allowed to keep their teddy bears and take them home with them.

Reimann is self-taught, learning a lot about crafts from her mother. Growing up in Switzerland, she had instruction in knitting and crocheting in home economics class.



Photos provided by Jacqueline Reimann

Each of the teddy bears is unique and handmade by Jacqueline Reimann.

She moved to the United States in 1977 and to Ponte Vedra in 1994. When THE PLAYERS Community Senior Center opened in the early 2000s, she was among the first to teach there. That ended when she was diagnosed with cancer, though today she still teaches one on one.

Reimann is also an artist and has also donated several of her encaustic, watercolor and acrylic paintings to be displayed at Baptist Medical Center Beaches, The Cove at Marsh Landing and Ponte Vedra Valley Funeral Home.

Though she made the first round of



Jacqueline Reimann, left, and Julie Butler, chief life specialist at Wolfson Children's Hospital, hold up some of the teddy bears Reimann made for the children in the oncology department.

teddy bears herself, Reimann — who has arthritis in her hands — now has 10 volunteers to help her.

She encourages anyone who would like to volunteer and make these teddy bears to email her at jacquelinereimann@yahoo.com and put "Teddy Bears" in the subject line.

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Photo courtesy of WeaveTales

The Journey to Jacksonville exhibit presents refugee and immigrant stories to the public.

Refugees

Continued from 8

It became apparent that the most natural way to create understanding was through communication and that meant allowing refugees to tell their stories and explain their experiences.

Although the basis of WeaveTales is a story-telling outlet, it also continues to grow and add new services for refugees and immigrants, including the New American Speaker's Program, which is a program designed to teach English and improve public speaking skills.

One of the ways the organization shares refugee stories with the public is through an exhibit called "Journey to Jacksonville," which was first held in 2019 and got its start in the Jacksonville International Airport before moving around town to various locations, such as the University of North Florida and the Museum of Science and History in downtown Jacksonville.

According to Alawee, the stories refugees have written have not just helped them feel connected, but they have also opened doors to opportunities that did not exist before.

"Many immigrants and refugees have begun to flourish and succeed in their jobs and daily lives," Alawee said. "They've even wanted their stories to use in their bios when looking for a job."

Report shows BEAM's contribution in critical services

Beaches Emergency Assistance Ministry (BEAM) has published its 2021 Annual "Gratitude" Report to showcase its collective impact last year within the Beaches community. The report provides comprehensive data on BEAM's wrap-around emergency services and the demographics of the clients they assisted in 2021.

Major 2021 milestones include the BEAM Food Bank distributing more than 1.1 million pounds of food, or 924,608 meals, to local neighbors in need. More than 1,150 households received food

pantry assistance and BEAM serves 513 families each month through five different mobile pantry sites at high-need areas, like Mayport, which is considered a "food desert" by the USDA.

BEAM Food Pantry appointments increased by 33% since 2019, with 11% representing military veterans and 33% of food pantry clients having at least one senior residing in their home.

"Despite the ongoing challenges of the COVID pandemic, BEAM continues to experience exciting progress and growth," said 2021 Board Chair Janice

Kiernan. "We pride ourselves on meeting our clients where they are and finding innovative ways to address their greatest needs. But the work of BEAM could not continue without the support of our partners, especially our volunteers and our donors. Our community provides the backbone for all that BEAM is able to accomplish."

BEAM also subsidized more than \$1.1 million dollars in overdue rent and utility bills, keeping 1,011 families from losing their homes last year. Forty-three percent of financial assistance clients in 2021

sought out assistance for the first time, 35% received more than one month's assistance (with proof of loss of income due COVID-19) and 19% were single mothers.

"In just two years, BEAM's median rent assistance payment increased from \$515 to \$1,000," said Executive Director Lori Richards. "We are incredibly grateful to all of our donors, volunteers and community members who have stepped up to help us meet this significant need over the last two years."



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Chamber Connections



Annual Chamber Golf Tournament will be held at the Ocean Golf Course at the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club on Monday, May 16

Registration is now open & sponsorship opportunities are available.



March 2022



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Photo provided by St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division/Source: www.pontevedra.com/things-to-do/golf

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO



Isabelle Renault
President/CEO
St. Johns County
Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber is proud to present the **Leadership St. Johns Program**. The 2022 class joins 20 other cohorts of leaders making a difference in our community. This group of community leaders has already met for a planning retreat and several days of meetings. Many more meeting days are planned for 2022 and they are planning their class project.

The members of the 2022 Leadership St. Johns Class are: **Erika Alba**, Foley & Lardner LLP; **John Choi**, Northrop Grumman; **Ryan Clark**, Code Ninja franchise owner; **Darrell Clarkson**, Pivot CPAs; **Skip**

Cole, St. Johns County Sheriff's Office; **Cory Darling**, Ascension St. Vincent's; **Julie Hindall**, JAXUSA Partnership; **Wayne King**, St. Johns County School District; **Jackie Kotos**, Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation; **Melissa Lime**, St. Johns County School District; **Scott Maynard**, St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce; **Shane McKay**, St. Johns County Government; **Teresa Mercurio**, RE/MAX 100 Realty; **Sharon Mitchell**, Florida Power & Light; **Berta Odom**, REMAX 100 Realty; **Corey Sakryd**, City of St. Augustine; **Gretchen Saunders**, St. Johns County School District; **Nadyne Sneyd**, St. Johns County Sheriff's Office; **Beth Tate**, The Kesley Group, LLC; **Meredith Tekin**, IBCCES; **Mary Anne Thomas**, Ascension St. Vincent's Foundation; **Cindy Walker**, City of St. Augustine; **Rich Warner**, City of St. Augustine; and **Josh Woolsey**, Woolsey Morcom, PLLC.

If you are interested in the 2023 class, watch for the nomination announcement in the fall and or reach out to bob.porter@sjcchamber.com

Growth — We know that the northwest section of St. Johns County is growing at a phenomenal rate. To fulfill our mission, we are hosting an open house on March 31 at Mattamy Homes' River House in Rivertown. We are inviting new businesses in this region, and current board members will explain the many benefits of Chamber membership.

Influencing Policy to benefit businesses is a key component of St. Johns County Chamber's mission. Proud to announce that the Chamber's effort, led by VP, Public Policy Bob Porter and the members of the Public Policy Committee, looks to score some significant wins at the state level in 2022. While the governor has line-item veto authority over the state budget recently submitted by the Florida legislature, it is anticipated that the multi-year reauthorization and 2022-23 \$50 million appropriation for Visit Florida will be approved. Other issues the Chamber engaged with include: Workforce housing funds (received \$363 million — most in 16 years) and the ultimate elimination of that sales tax on commercial leases (on track to decrease from 5.50% to 2% in 2022).

A robust array of events filled with networking opportunities and educational programs is under way. More on our website at www.sjcchamber.com. Just click on Events. See you soon.

Stay safe, connected and informed!

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

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Karen Everett
Director, PVB Division
St. Johns County
Chamber of Commerce

Happy spring!

What a busy three months! Packed with Chamber Before Hours, Chamber at Noons, Chamber After Hours and the Chamber After Hours at THE PLAYERS came roaring back with a sold-out crowd of Jax Chamber and St. Johns Chamber members March 3!

And, the annual St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament is scheduled for Monday, May 16, at the Ponte Vedra Inn and Club. Mark your calendar and watch for more information.

The Chamber of Commerce is led by many intrepid volunteer leaders. Board members and ambassadors attend events, ribbon cuttings and provide guidance on the future of this organization. The election process is approaching in May — please consider running for a position. More information coming.

Remember, the Chamber operates the Ponte Vedra Beach Visitor Information Center at 200 Solana Road, Ste. B in Ponte Vedra Beach. Stop by for a map, brochure, magazine, etc. We also have information about Chamber businesses on display.

Hope to see you soon,

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

CHAMBER UPCOMING EVENTS

PVB Division Chamber Before Hours

When: 8-9 a.m. Tuesday, April 5

Where: Ponte Vedra Wellness Nocatee, 205 Marketside Ave., Ste. 200, Ponte Vedra

Sponsor: Ponte Vedra Wellness

PVB Division Joint Chamber at Noon with JAX Chamber

When: 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursday, April 14

Where: Casa Marina Hotel, Jacksonville Beach

Speaker: Harold Crow, EVP, general manager, Jax Jumbo Shrimp

Sponsor: Fields Auto Group

Annual Legislative Breakfast

When: Friday, April 22

Where: Renaissance World Golf Village, 500 S. Legacy Trail, St. Augustine

PVB Division Chamber After Hours

When: 5:30 to 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 27

Where: First Horizon (formerly known as Iberia), 250 A1A North, Ponte Vedra Beach

Sponsor: First Horizon Bank

Annual Chamber Golf Tournament

When: Monday, May 16

Where: Ocean Course at Ponte Vedra Inn and Club

For further information and to register at The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce website, go to sjcchamber.com.



THE PLAYERS vice president and executive director Jared Rice was the guest speaker at the Jan. 12 joint Chamber at Noon event at Casa Marina Hotel and Restaurant in Jacksonville Beach.



Charlie Tramazzo with USO, **THE PLAYERS** vice president and executive director Jared Rice and tournament chairman Matt Welch at the Jan. 12 joint Chamber at Noon.

Photos by Anthony Richards

Rice talks **THE PLAYERS** at joint Chamber at Noon

By Anthony Richards

Weeks into 2022, the focus began to shift to Ponte Vedra Beach's most marquee event, **THE PLAYERS**.

Tournament vice president and executive director Jared Rice was the guest speaker at the Jan. 12 Chamber at Noon event, which was hosted by both the St. Johns County and Jacksonville Chambers of Commerce.

He talked to the crowd in attendance at the Casa Marina Hotel and Restaurant in Jacksonville Beach about the excitement surrounding the plan for the event.

"This tournament is the flagship and the gold standard for our tour," Rice said.

Despite the viewing audience remaining steady throughout the pandemic, with 215 countries and territories receiving event programming, Rice acknowledged that the last couple of years were rough and presented unique challenges for all involved.

It started with the 2020 championship, which was taking place when many sport leagues across the nation began shutting down due to the concern revolving around the COVID-19. As a result, that year's event was cancelled.

"I think everyone knows where they were on March 12, 2020," Rice said.

The championship was back in 2021, but procedures were in place with safety in mind including having a limited capacity of fans. Despite the challenges, the tournament went off as usual and was a success.

"Internally, it was widely viewed as our finest hour," Rice said.

However, Rice was anxious for what 2022 would hold and it would start and end with the inclusion of more fans.

"We all trust it will be an uncapped environment," Rice said. "But we have also shown we are flexible, and health and safety will always be in mind."

According to Rice, the festivities dur-

ing the week leading up to tournament play would once again take place this year, with military members honored Tuesday along with a concert starring a country musician.

Rice said he expected the championship to provide the local economic impact that had become accustomed before the pandemic.

The pre-pandemic economic impact figures on Northeast Florida included \$212 million brought in annually to the area, as well as \$115 million of off-site spending from event attendees.

"We expect to get back to those levels," Rice said.

From a business perspective the tournament brings an array of opportunities with more than 500 businesses on-site seeking to reach out to local, national and international markets.

Tournament Chairman Matt Welch was also on hand to speak to the Chambers about the initiatives **THE PLAYERS** does

to give back to local charities.

"It's much more than just a golf tournament," Welch said. "The money it raises stays within the five-county area."

According to Welch, since its inception **THE PLAYERS** has helped support 300-plus charities that benefit local residents.

The amount of money donated is one of the things he is most proud of from all the success the tournament has had.

"We don't just write checks but go out and help the charities get where they want to be," Welch said. "By coming out to the tournament and supporting it, you are playing a part."

One of the neat changes this year was the implementation of allowing up to two children ages 15 and under with a ticketed adult.

According to Rice, the goal behind it was to continue to promote the game of golf to the next generation.

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After-Hours at THE PLAYERS

After-Hours at THE PLAYERS Championship, an annual networking event, was co-hosted Thursday, March 3, by the JAX Chamber and the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce. It was held in the Stadium Village at TPC Sawgrass.

Photos by Susan Griffin



Nancy and Gary Hallett



Felicia and Mel Cox



Jacksonville Beach Mayor Chris Hoffman, Cory Nichols and Kortney Webb.



Ruth's Chris Steak House had some tasty offerings at the event.



Ember & Iron



The crew from the Ponte Vedra Wellness Center had a table at the event.



Joe Wilhelm, circulation manager for The Ponte Vedra Recorder, brought a supply of the Insider's Guide.

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Chamber golf tournament set for May 16

The annual St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament will be Monday, May 16, at the renowned Ocean Golf Course at Ponte Vedra Inn and Club.

Registration for golfers is now open on the Chamber's website. Go to www.sjchamber.com and click on events and then May 16. A few sponsorship opportunities remain. Contact Ericha Gore at Ericha.gore@sjchamber.com regarding sponsorships.

"This annual event draws hundreds and we're pleased that this year's event will be at the recently renovated and beautiful Ocean Golf Course," said Isabelle Renault, president and CEO, St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce. "Called

'The Premier Ponte Vedra Golf Experience,' the Ocean Golf Course was recently enhanced by golf course architect Bobby Weed."

The many enhancements include modern turf grasses on the greens, fairways and tee boxes, design improvements to course playability with the addition of a new hole, expansion of the practice and teaching facilities and upgrades to golf course infrastructure.

The Ocean Course captures the essence of a modern seaside design with expansive fairways, strategically placed bunkers and lagoons with newly designed green complexes.



Photo provided by St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division/Source: www.pontevedra.com/things-to-do/golf

Patty dives into county finance guide at Chamber luncheon

By Anthony Richards

Since Brandon Patty was elected as St. Johns County Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller and appointed in Dec. 2019, he has been thinking about how to better inform the public regarding tax dollars.

The result was the creation of the "Tracking Your Tax Dollars," which serves as a guide to St. Johns County's

finances.

Patty expanded on the venture and his goals behind it as the guest speaker at the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division luncheon at Ruth's Chris Steak House Feb. 16.

"In many ways our office is the backbone of the county, because we're involved in so many things," Patty said. "The clerk's office works as the checks and balances and ensures that trust of a

community and its government is maintained."

The county finance guide is one of the ways he seeks to preserve that trust and rekindle it for others.

It is the first year such a guide has been created and Patty already has plans to have an annual edition come out each fiscal year.

The guide consists of 18 pages of information designed to break down and sum

up where the taxes that residents pay are going, which is information that does not always come across clearly to the public.

"We tried to make sense of it all," Patty said.

Several forms of economic research are part of the guide, including statistics pertaining to local businesses, the housing market, property taxes and the county's

PATTY continues on Page 16

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Workforce discussion at EDC breakfast

A full crowd attended the Chamber's Economic Development Council Quarterly Breakfast on Feb. 25 at the Renaissance in World Golf Village. Scott Maynard, economic development director, St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce, at the podium, facilitated a workforce panel discussion with, from left, Nick Solomon, Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind; Kyle Kramer, EmployU; Doreen Lund, CareerSource Northeast Florida; and Chris Force, First Coast Technical College. The panel focused on expanding the pool of applicants and identifying additional recruiting methods.

Contributed photos



Photos by Anthony Richards

County clerk of circuit court and county comptroller Brandon Patty was the guest speaker at the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division luncheon at Ruth's Chris Steak House Feb. 16.

Patty

Continued from 15

budget trends over the past four years.

Patty explained that not only does the information come in handy for residents, but it can also be used as a tool for businesses when trying to promote the area.

"We want it to be a tool that stakeholders in the community can use and it's an avenue to use when you speak with your commissioner," Patty said.

Public safety is the highest expenditure year in and year out by the county government, with roughly \$180 million spent toward the category in 2020.

On the other end of the spectrum, property taxes continue to trend higher each year with roughly \$200 million of revenue brought in during 2020.

According to Patty another role of his office is to make sure that the county's standards are being met and constantly evaluated to match the changing times.

"It's important to stay at the forefront of change, which would also help prevent the risks of fraud," Patty said.

He believes that part of the maintaining of standards should include a greater emphasis on the infrastructure of the county's government buildings, many of



Brandon Patty believes the guide to county finances can be a useful tool for local businesses.

which he considers to be outdated.

According to Patty, the county jail was built in the 1980s; the Sheriff's Office building was built in the 1960s and the supervisor of elections is housed in an old potato chip factory.

He also stated that they are exploring the options of opening more clerk offices throughout the county to keep pace with the county's growth and be more convenient for residents.

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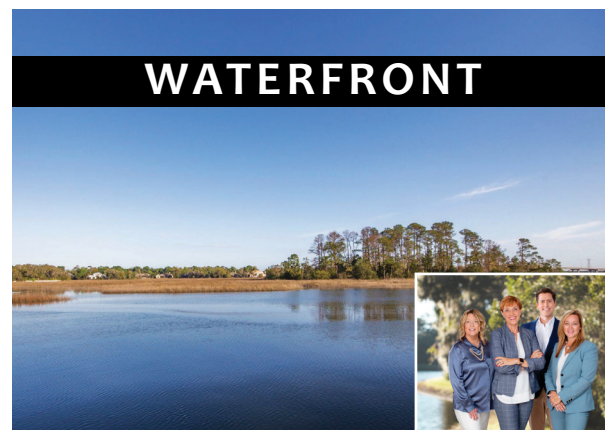
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*Source: Keller Williams Multi-Trend Report & MLS

Board and Brush hosts Chamber before hours

Board and Brush Creative Studio hosted a St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Division before hours event Feb. 9 at its location at 840 A1A N., Suite 150 in Ponte Vedra Beach. The event was an opportunity for Chamber members to network and get acquainted with other local businesses.

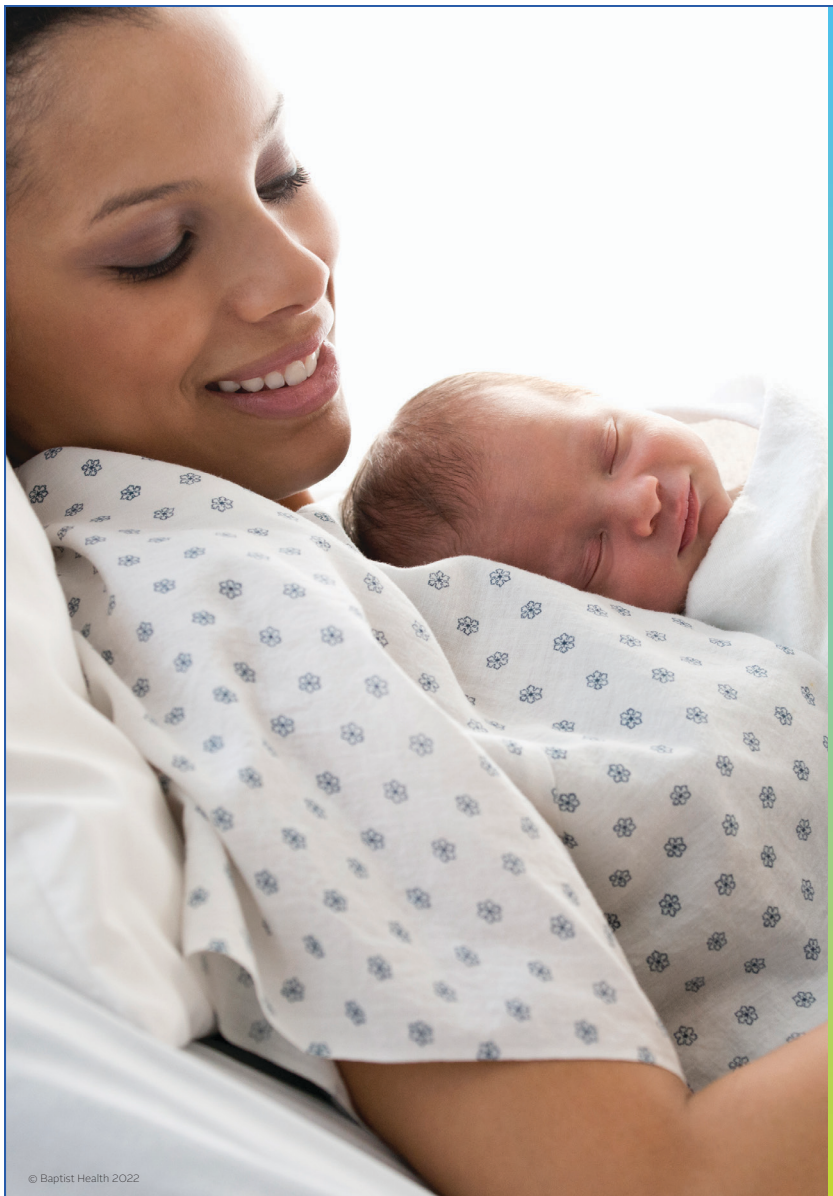
Photo courtesy of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Division



Halo Spa hosts Chamber After Hours

The site of the Jan. 19 Chamber After Hours was Halo Spa, 320 Town Plaza Ave., Ste. 110 Nocatee. In the first photo, Emily Carpenter, left, and Halo Spa owner Monica Ketterman are seen at the event. In the second photo, Cassandra Cotoia and Conner Battreall smile for the camera.

Photos by Susan Griffin



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Richardson offers Chamber members tips on digital marketing

Molly Richardson, owner and founder of TotallyInfused Digital Marketing, presented digital marketing tips to the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce at its Chamber at Noon on March 16 at Pusser's Grille in Ponte Vedra Beach. She provided tips on the way to local domination using a roadmap with directions.

Richardson has been crafting websites and marketing campaigns for businesses for more than 10 years. She founded TotallyInfused Digital Marketing primarily as a website development company. After a few years, many of her clients were increasingly asking about getting customers online through other avenues like SEO, digital advertising, email marketing and social media, which led to the expansion of their services.

TotallyInfused now has created a simple three-step framework for local companies to dominate their competition. They have built and managed more than 100 websites and digital marketing campaigns for companies all over the globe.

Recently, Richardson moved the busi-



Contributed photo

Pictured from left are Matt Price, chairman of the board, Ponte Vedra Beach Division, St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce, First Horizon Bank; Molly Richardson, speaker and founder of TotallyInfused Digital Marketing; Aaron Mong and Tierney Anderson, both with Fields Auto Group, sponsor of Chamber at Noon; and Karen Everett, director, Ponte Vedra Beach Division, St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce.

ness back to her hometown, Jacksonville, to be closer to her parents.

Richardson holds a bachelor of science degree in civil engineering and a minor in software engineering. On the weekends, you can find her playing football for the Florida Avengers or spending time outdoors with friends and family.



Photo courtesy of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division
Intelligent Office joined the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce with a ribbon cutting and after-hours event Feb. 23.

Intelligent Office introduces new Nocatee location with ribbon cutting, after-hours

By Anthony Richards

For seven years, Clyde Yandell has been offering alternative options for companies to meet and perform their day-to-day business needs with his Intelligent Office in Jacksonville, and recently opened a second location in the

Nocatee community of Ponte Vedra.

He christened his new location at 90 Fort Wade Road, Suite 100 in Ponte Vedra with a ribbon cutting and after-hours networking event Feb. 23 as the

RIBBON continues on **Page 20**

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Food for the event was provided by Mangroves Catering in Ponte Vedra Beach.



Music was provided as part of the after-hours networking event.



Photos by Susan Griffin
Karina and Randy Coryell at the event.

Ribbon

Continued from 19

St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division welcomed the business as new members.

“The first thing we did was sign up for the Chamber,” Yandell said. “We have been a part of the Jax Chamber for years, and we know how important of a role being involved plays.”

According to Yandell, while the traditional ribbon cutting would have been great, he wanted to make sure he made

the best first impression he had, and the idea came about to have a joint ribbon cutting and after-hours.

“That was a good way for us to introduce ourselves to the St. Johns County of Commerce,” Yandell said.

Yandell’s other location is in downtown Jacksonville, but he lives near the Nocatee location and just felt that it was the right time to expand.

The COVID-19 pandemic made a lot of people reevaluate how they were doing things in their lives, and businesses owners were no different.

Although his Intelligent Office in

Jacksonville was being used as a tool for businesses, he now believes that the services his outfit offers match up right with the new thoughts being shared in the business world.

These services include offering an array of office space, meeting rooms, a virtual address and phone answering assistance.

“All of these functions were there before but have been enhanced by what all has happened the last couple of years,” Yandell said.

The Ponte Vedra location is roughly 6,000 square feet with 18 offices and two

conference rooms with support staff on duty to assist.

A wide range of businesses have taken advantage of the services his Intelligent Offices provide, from one-person startups to significant companies just looking for a place to house one of their representatives for a period.

According to Yandell, the option is one that can especially help a new business from an economic standpoint during its early stages.

“We’ve been very pleased with the market in Nocatee, and we’re still seeing growth in Jacksonville,” Yandell said.

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ScanManFL cuts ribbon, joins Chamber

By Anthony Richards

Making things more convenient when searching for options to get fingerprinted and notary service was the root behind the decision of Mike and Carla Resetar to open ScanManFL in Ponte Vedra Beach.

The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division held a ribbon cutting ceremony Feb. 17 for the new business at its location in the Village Professional Center at 13000 Sawgrass Village Circle, Building 3, Suite 13.

“Mike and I moved here five years ago from New Jersey,” Carla Resetar said. “I was a teacher, and he was in law enforcement, so we both had to get licenses to work down here, and it took a while.”

After that experience they both thought that there had to be a better way to help move along the process, and after retiring Mike created a business plan one day and the couple embarked on their current journey.

“Between the two of us, we have more than 60 years of public service,” Resetar said.

According to Resetar, that experience of service is something they pride themselves in and she believes the best way to reflect that is through their customer service.

“Public service is at the core of our business model and everything that we do,” Resetar said.

Some of the services offered include live scan fingerprinting, having a notary signing agent available, passport photos and providing various other print, fax, email or copy jobs as needed.

The Resetars are not just certified notaries, but also authorized by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement to fingerprint via Live Scan, which is a digital format of capturing fingerprints.

Anyone requesting fingerprinting is required to show two forms of valid identification at the time prior to any fingerprints being taken.

Once fingerprints are taken, they are sent to a specific state or federal agency to be processed.

ScanManFL’s office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Wednesday from noon to 8 p.m.

Evening and weekend hours can be scheduled by appointment, which includes taking the fingerprinting material mobile and going off site to provide the service for groups of 10 or more of a certain company or organization.



Courtesy of St Johns County Chamber Ponte Vedra Beach Division
The St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division held a ribbon cutting ceremony for ScanManFL Feb. 17.

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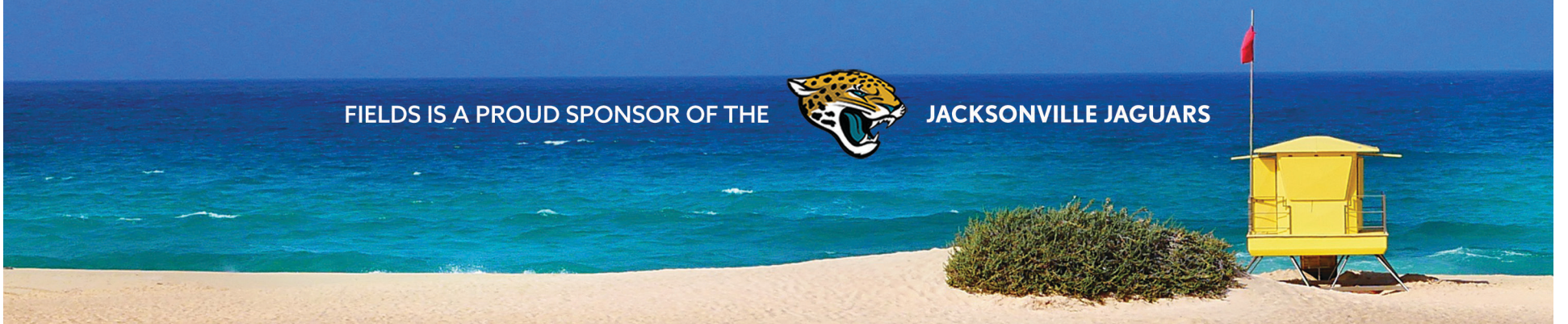
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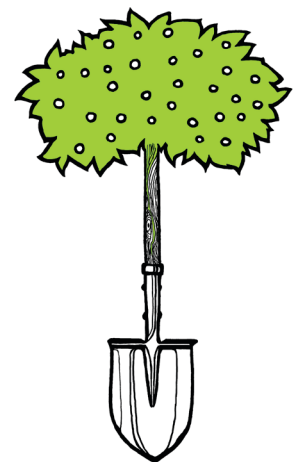


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Five ways to make your garden more successful

While growing a vegetable or flower garden can turn into a rewarding hobby, or even a passion, gardening also can be overwhelming - particularly when the results are less than stellar. The following guidance can make home gardens that much more successful.

1. Start small.

You may have visions of an expansive garden growing rows of crops or acres of flowers. But it is smart to start small and build on what you find successful, which includes plants that thrive in your lawn and garden.

2. Assess the soil.

Plants need nutrient-rich soil to encourage extensive root systems and produce strong, hardy plants, according to the gardening resource GrowVeg. Nourish soil with organic matter, such as manure, compost, shredded leaves, and natural mulch. Add this organic matter in the off-season to give it enough time to be incorporated into

the ground before spring.

3. Arm yourself with knowledge.

Do you know how deeply to plant seeds and how far apart to space plants? Are you aware of the sunlight needs of certain flowers or plants? If not, read the packaging and do your research so your plants have the best chance of not only sprouting, but also surviving.

4. Sit in your yard and observe.

Watch the way the sunlight dances over areas of your landscape. Take note of which areas get the most sun and shade. This will help you plan what to plant and where to plant it.

5. Choose hardy varieties.

Certain plants have been bred to thrive in your climate, including heat-tolerant plants for climates with sweltering summer sun. Consult with a local gardening center to figure out which plant zone you are in and which plants will do best within that zone.

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

KATHY'S GARDENING GUIDE: BUTTERFLY GARDENS

Photos provided by Kathy Esfahani



Butterfly Garden



Hibiscus

By Kathy Esfahani

"Butterflies are nature's angels. They remind us what a gift it is to be alive." — Robyn Nola



Kathy Esfahani

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

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

- Plant both larval host plants and adult nectar sources for butterflies in all stages on life
- Garden in full sun and partial shade
- Select a variety of plants that bloom at different times
- Use quality topsoil to ensure plants and flowers are enriched
- Include sweet-smelling plants such as

sedum and lavender

- Plant in groups. Butterflies are more likely to land in a bunch vs. a single plant
- Choose plants of mixed heights, colors, shapes and sizes
- Adding a shallow dish with water, rocks and even fruit will encourage butterflies to land!

Some of the most popular plants for caterpillars and butterflies: butterfly bush, fennel, milkweed, lantana, pentas, purple passion vine, black eyed susan, porterweed, sage, gaillardia, firebush, sunflowers and more!

Flower of the Week: Hibiscus

Email Kathy at kcg.pvr@gmail.com for any questions or gardening tips you would like to see in the future. For more information and ideas, visit Kathy's Creative Gardens & Nursery, 196 N. Roscoe Blvd. The phone number is 904-655-7373.

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Springing the Blooms set for Saturday

Beaches Museum will conduct its annual Springing the Blooms festival from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, April 2.

Horticultural exhibits, family-friendly activities and educational lectures will be featured throughout the museum's Pablo Historical Park and live children's music on the historic Foreman's House front porch. The Beaches Train Club will be running the Florida East Coast model train during this event.

Guest speakers will offer presentations in the Beaches Museum Chapel:

• 10:30 a.m. — Helping Monarch Butterflies on Their Journey

Terry DelValle is an emeritus extension agent with the University of Florida, IFAS. She was the agriculture program area leader and the homeowner horticulture extension agent at the Duval County Extension Office and coordinated the Master Gardener Program. She retired after 35 years but is still active with Extension and loves gardening.

• 11:30 a.m. — Vertical Gardening 101

JoAnne Krestul will discuss how vertical gardening is the most sustainable way

to grow your own produce in the convenience of your own home.

"I love learning about food ... especially fruits and vegetables and the incredible, positive impact they plan in helping our bodies work optimally at preventing inflammation and disease," said Krestul. "Growing our own food is my perfect fit and has become a passion, too. I will always love the ease and variety vertical gardening provides. Kale, anyone?"

This event is free, though pre-registration is required. Register for this event at beachesmuseum.org/events/springing-the-blooms-3 or call the museum at 904-241-5657.

Beaches Museum is located at 381 Beach Blvd., Jacksonville Beach.



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TruGreen, THE PLAYERS partner to donate \$10K to First Tee

By Anthony Richards

TruGreen and the PGA TOUR teamed up to not only give a \$10,000 donation to the First Tee of North Florida, but also provided a memorable TPC Sawgrass experience for many members of the organization during a ceremony March 16.

The check will go toward helping fund the construction of a new learning center at Blue Cypress Golf Course in Jacksonville.

The learning center is viewed as an instrumental next step in the growth of the Blue Cypress Golf Course and is expected to have an impact of benefiting more than 300 area children annually.

"I'm always super grateful for local support like that," said 18-year-old Alanis Santiago Maldonado, who is a First Tee of North Florida member that attended the presentation. "It's important that continues."

Several members of First Tee of North Florida were present during the check presentation held at TPC Sawgrass and were able to tour the facility, including a behind-the-scenes look at the clubhouse and performance center on site.

According to Ron Castillo, director of programming at the First Tee of North Florida, one of the most treasured moments of the day was when the members were able walk onto the famed island green at the course's 17th hole.

"The donation was obviously great but being able to be hands-on and be on site like that is a big thing for them," said Marissa Croft, brand manager with TruGreen, which is in its second year as the PGA TOUR's official lawn care treatment provider.

The presentation was initially scheduled to take place during the week of the 2022 PLAYERS Championship but had to be pushed back due to the inclement



Photo courtesy of PGA TOUR

TruGreen and the PGA TOUR teamed up to give a \$10,000 donation to the First Tee of North Florida during a check presentation March 16.

weather that delayed the tournament and the festivities surrounding it on multiple occasions.

However, everyone involved was able to make the most out of situation and additional opportunities were created for the members during their visit as a result.

"It actually worked out in a way," Castillo said. "Having it during the week of the tournament, like originally planned, would have been great but they wouldn't have gotten the opportunity to get the access they did because there would have been the event going on."

Businesses receive Nights of Lights awards

Local business owners, residents and guests riding the Old Town Trolley, Nights of Lights tours have voted for the top three hospitality businesses that displayed elaborate holiday lighting during the Ninth Annual Light Up the Night! contest.

The City of St. Augustine's Nights of Lights is world-renowned for millions of sparkling lights stretching for nearly 20 blocks with the event held from Nov. 27,

2021, to Jan. 31, 2022.

The international visitor and local business experience started more than 28 years ago and is consistently voted as one of the Top 10 "Best Holiday Lighting Displays in the World" and "Best Places To Spend Christmas In The U.S." along with additional acclaims by domestic and international publications and online travel sites.

This year's Nights of Lights Visitors

Choice Awards honors and prizes were presented to first-place winners at the Hilton St. Augustine Historic Bayfront and Kanti Patel, chief executive officer and president of Jalaram Hotels Inc., along with Scott Dial, general manager and his engineering team. Second place went to winners at the Renaissance St. Augustine Historic Downtown Hotel and Vik Patel, chief operations officer of Jalaram Hotels

Inc., along with the management and engineering teams. Third place went to Casablanca Inn On The Bay and the Tini Martini Bar with Victoria Lege, general manager, and Margaret Griggs, front office manager, along with their engineering team.

The winning properties featured elaborate illumination displays from more than 100,000 to 1.1 million lights and a variety of festive, holiday designs.

Businesses and owners receiving top votes for lighting displays received customized trophies and \$5,000 in complimentary advertising campaigns, cash, and public recognition.




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In the Arts

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Joan Osborne at Ponte Vedra Concert Hall on April 7

Singer/songwriter Joan Osborne's latest work, "Radio Waves," is a 13-song album, a unique, hand-picked assortment of her favorite and most captivating live appearances culled from 100-plus radio station performances over her 25-year career.

In support of the album release, Osborne is touring around the United States, including an intimate performance at Ponte Vedra Concert Hall on Thursday, April 7. Tickets are on sale now at [Ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com).

Following the 2020 release of her critically acclaimed "Trouble and Strife," Osborne canceled her touring plans and spent the lockdown like many others — visiting backburner projects and sorting through the contents of old, dusty shoeboxes.

"Most of my life's work has disappeared without a trace," Osborne said. "I've made 10-plus studio albums, but the vast majority of the songs I've sung hundreds and thousands of times over decades of touring across the globe, has never been recorded."

What Osborne found buried deep within her closets were relics of those lost performances, time-capsule live recordings spotlighting her lightning-in-a-bottle dynamism. The tracks of "Radio Waves" cover a wide range in style and source material, exhibited in the album's bookends, starting with "Saint Teresa" from a KCRW session in 1995 and ending on a take of Sly and the Family Stone's "Everybody is a Star" performed at KROQ in 2002.

Consistent throughout "Radio Waves"

are Osborne's big-time silky voice, soulful and smooth instrumentation from the likes of veteran accompanists Andrew Carillo and Jack Petruzzelli and a keen ear for heart-lifting song selections.

Inspiring, stylistic choices span classics like Stevie Wonder's "Love's in Need of Love Today" and Bob Dylan's "Make You Feel My Love," as well as deeper cuts such as Bill Withers' "Same Love That Made Me Laugh" and Toshi Reagon's "Real Love."

Throughout her 25-year, multi-Grammy nominated career, Osborne has never been an artist confined to one space. She has utilized her incredible voice through her own songs while also becoming one of her generation's finest interpreters. "Radio Waves" is a living document of that.

Osborne's performance at the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall is set for 8 p.m. Thursday, April 7. Doors open at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$40-\$50 and can be purchased at The St. Augustine Amphitheatre box office and at [ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com).

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.

Proof of a negative COVID test within 72 hours is required for this event. In the absence of the negative test, proof of vaccination may be accepted.

For more information, go to pvconcerthall.com/events/detail/joan-osborne.

Butterfield exhibit to celebrate "Planet Earth"

Butterfield Garage Art Gallery is hosting its second annual Open Community Art Project as a way to celebrate art in the community. Butterfield Garage invited the entire community to exercise their creative chops around the theme of "Planet Earth," featuring the beauty of the planet and protecting its environment, in the gallery's "Celebrating eARTh" exhibition.

Beginners to well-known local artists have responded, and this upcoming exhibit displays the results from that open call. All entries will be on display in the gallery during the month of April in celebration of Earth Day.

The exhibit's opening reception will take place on Friday, April 1, and the exhibit run April 1-30. The gallery is open daily from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and will be open on First Friday until 9 p.m.

Butterfield Garage Art Gallery is located at 137 King St., St. Augustine.

Cactus & Plants Watercolor Workshop
w/ Teresa Cook
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Sports



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Sharks continue to make strides even in defeat

Fight until the end against Bears in Rivalry on the River

By Anthony Richards

The Ponte Vedra Sharks are continuing to grow the chemistry of their team with each game that passes and that even includes after a 13-8 loss to Bartram Trail in the Second Annual Rivalry on the River hosted by The Bolles School March 26.

Despite the loss, the Sharks continued to fight until the very end and demonstrated the resilience head coach Jen Conway is wanting to see as the regular season comes to an end in the next month.

“It didn’t feel like we were down five goals, because they kept the effort going

throughout the whole game, which is what we ask for,” Conway said. “They are really starting to gain the confidence out there and a trust in each other.”

Lily Mosser led the Sharks offensively, with her quick shot that found the back of the opposing net four times during the contest.

“I’ve really worked on driving to the goal and not being scared to take on the defender,” Mosser said.

Only a sophomore, Mosser is one of many talented young players the Sharks have on a roster that only has two seniors, Kenzie Conway and Sarah James.

“If you saw us play our first game, we did not look like this,” Mosser chuckled. “We take it game by game, but we’ve definitely seen the improvement. I feel like we’re playing much more as a team.”

According to junior and Vanderbilt

commit Anna Taraboletti, having such a young team meant that there were a lot of new girls on the team at the start of the year and although it has taken some time to develop relationships, the squad has become more familiar with their new teammates.

“A lot of our team hadn’t played together before this year,” Taraboletti said. “We started off a little rocky (this season), but we know what it takes to get to state and we’re getting to that point.”

Taraboletti found her groove late with consecutive goals in the final five minutes of the game, but it was too late for a serious comeback to be mounted.

However, playing toe-to-toe against a

tough team like the Bears is something Conway believes the Sharks can build upon moving forward.

“We have tough games scheduled because we want to be challenged,” Conway said. “A lot of people get caught up on the record and ranking but seeing that progression through a season is much more important to me. That growth through the season is the most fun for me and the reason why I coach.”

Another bright spot for the Sharks was the play of junior goalie Ava Lamanna, who faced a bevy of shots and stood tall on several occasions with some acrobatic saves on the day.



Photo by Anthony Richards
 Ponte Vedra’s Lily Darnell leaps to corral a faceoff against Bartram Trail’s Izzy Difato.

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Ponte Vedra's Maddox Johnson is pressured by Dylan Davis of Nease during a March 22 matchup between the rivals.



Ponte Vedra's Nolan Parlette corrals a shot in the dirt by Nease's Gavin Gmeiner.

Photos by Anthony Richards

Sharks return from spring break with route of rival Panthers

By Anthony Richards

Everything is beginning to click for the Ponte Vedra High boys lacrosse team following a convincing 17-1 road victory against rival Nease March 22.

It was the first game for both teams after spring break and Sharks' head coach Chris Polanski was proud of the way his group responded from the layoff.

"We put our emphasis on fundamentals," Polanski said. "The talent on our team is insane when we just slow down and play our game."

Complementing the Sharks' explosive offensive output was a stellar performance in goal by senior Nolan Parlette, who allowed just the one goal on the night and was seeing the ball well, whether it was snagging a shot midair or corraling a ball on a hop.

Although the Sharks were in command

of the contest from the start following an 8-0 first quarter, Polanski and his squad believe they have even more potential inside of them.

"We always want to keep pushing," Polanski said. "One of the unique things about this team is that we have two captains, but about eight to 10 leaders."

One of those leaders is senior defensive midfielder Dylan Dean, who has experienced a difference in the makeup and feel surrounding this year's squad.

"Chemistry is something we were missing last year," Dean said. "There's no classes here. Everyone does their part and we're all moving toward a common goal."

With the win over the Panthers, the Sharks improved to 9-2 on the season and bounced back nicely from a 14-10 loss to Roswell (Georgia) prior to spring break.

The Sharks were riding a five-game winning streak before the loss and hope that beating the Panthers will spark another run with five games remaining in the regular season.

"We always knew we've had it within us," Dean said. "Our goal this year has been to bring back the fear teams across the state had for us when we won the state title in 2019."

The Panthers' best offensive surge of the night came when C.J. Miller made a late run down the right side and finished it off with a shot in the back of the net with two seconds left in the first half.

The goal brought the Panthers' faithful in attendance to their feet and provided a positive to build upon despite trailing 11-1 at halftime.

However, it proved to be the lone goal for the Panthers on the night, and the sec-

ond half was much of the same with the Sharks controlling possession and able to capitalize on their scoring chances.

Ponte Vedra senior Brendan Nace put an exclamation point on the night with a highlight reel goal where he drove to the net and scored using a nifty behind-the-back shot.

At halftime, the Nease athletic program presented the family of the late Brian Martin Bourke, also known as "Double B," with a check for \$7,330 that was raised through a T-shirt campaign.

Bourke passed away in November and had become a beloved member of Nease High School and the local community over the years as the school's parking lot coordinator.

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Photo courtesy of Jacksonville Amateur Golf Association
Fred Seely was named the first "FRIEND of JAGA" as the nonprofit organization announced its newly created fundraising initiative March 29.

JAGA looks to grow impact with "FRIENDS" campaign

In keeping with its desire to elevate its impact, effectiveness and scholarship giving, the Jacksonville Area Golf Association is embarking on its first-ever fundraising campaign called "FRIENDS of JAGA".

Funds raised will be used to meet the growing costs and demands associated with running a nonprofit, to support and enhance the impact, look and capabilities of JAGA, and allow the organization to further grow.

At the end of the year, a portion of proceeds from the program will be earmarked for JAGA's scholarship program, and potentially other entities it has close ties to.

"Since its founding in 1954, JAGA has made significant contributions to the growth and promotion of golf while providing financial assistance to hundreds of college-bound students in Northeast Florida," Adams said. "For the most part, this success has been achieved with limited solicitation appeals to Jacksonville-area businesses and individuals. The leadership of JAGA feels very strongly that the time is right to be proactive and do what most other golf and non-profit

organizations do and that is grow their business and their impact by seeking new means of financial support."

Anyone who wishes to become a "FRIEND of JAGA" may do so by committing to a minimum gift of \$25. Those who contribute \$100 or more will receive one premium Coreline personalized bag tag. Additional donations would be much appreciated.

The announcement of the campaign was made March 29 and on behalf of JAGA's Executive Committee, JAGA president Jeff Adams honored one of North Florida's most recognized and respected members of its golf community, Fred Seely, as the first person to be named a "FRIEND of JAGA."

Among Seely's many contributions to area golf, include being a three-term president of JAGA (1983, 2016, 2017) and founder of the Underwood Cup.

"I'm happy to become the first person to publicly pledge my support for the FRIENDS program," Seely said. "I believe in what JAGA stands for and fully appreciate the need for JAGA to launch this fundraising effort for the greater benefit of JAGA and those it serves."

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THEME: ROMANTIC COMEDIES

- ACROSS**
1. "We all fall down" prelude
 6. Zedong of China
 9. W of gridiron's WR
 13. Short for betwixt
 14. Second-largest bird, by height
 15. "The Taming of the ____"
 16. Godfather's family
 17. Make a choice
 18. Bridal veil fabric
 19. "Like Rock Hudson's and Doris Day's talk
 21. *Katherine Heigl wore 27 of these
 23. Dumbo's big one
 24. Gift for the naughty
 25. "I Was a Male ____ Bride" starring Cary Grant
 28. Inauguration ball, e.g.
 30. Eyelid drooping
 35. Half of binary code
 37. Ruptured
 39. PayPal money
 40. Part of colliery
 41. Avoid, as in taxes
 43. "The Sun ____ Rises"
 44. "Colorful" announcement
 46. Fifty-fifty
 47. Bit of slander
 48. Rookie
 50. Tolstoy's Karenina
 52. Hitherto
 53. Hammer part
 55. Canada's neighbor
 57. *Sleepless in which city?
 61. *Drew Barrymore has never been what?
 64. Don't mention it
 65. Akira Kurosawa's 1985 movie
 67. Erasable programmable read only memory
 69. Seize a throne
 70. Gold medalist Nathan Chen's turf
 71. Smooth transition
 72. Post-deductions
 73. "But I heard him exclaim, ____ he drove out of sight, Merry

- Christmas..."
74. Sound like Wilbur
- DOWN**
1. 20s dispenser
 2. Type of meet
 3. Sound reproduction quality
 4. Expatriate
 5. German POW camp, slangily
 6. Garfield's cry
 7. Unit of electric current
 8. One up
 9. "____ Afraid of Virginia Wolf?"
 10. Novelist Murdoch
 11. Expunge
 12. Bo Peep's females
 15. Gracefully slender
 20. Perform on a dais
 22. Eminem's genre
 24. Wagon train, e.g.
 25. *Julia Roberts played a pretty one
 26. Old and feeble
 27. Extend subscription
 29. *It's crazy and stupid?
 31. South American tubers
 32. *Who did Harry meet?
 33. Question in dispute
 34. Like small distance
 36. Belgrade native
 38. *She starred in "I Dream of Jeannie"
 42. Boredom
 45. A-one
 49. Slippery reef dweller
 51. Appraise
 54. Like a haunted mansion
 56. Colorado skiing destination
 57. Render speechless
 58. Facilitate
 59. Adjoin
 60. Suit material
 61. Leg joint
 62. "Cogito ____ sum"
 63. Brooding
 66. Acronym, abbr.
 68. NYC art museum's nickname, with the

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