# PONTE VEDRA (CORDER)

**April 21, 2022**Volume 53, No. 25
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PonteVedraRecorder.com

Not your average newspaper, not your average reader



First Coast Register



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Photo by Anthony Richards

Kids of all ages took part in a community Easter egg hunt hosted by Flagler Health+ Village at Nocatee April 14. See more photos from the festivities, including a visit from the Easter Bunny on page 10.







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



Visit our new website at www.pontevedrarecorder.com

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

### **BRIEFS**

### Beach cleanup at Guana Reserve is Saturday

A beach cleanup is planned for 9:30-11:30 a.m. Saturday, April 23, at the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve. Beach cleanups are held there every fourth Saturday of the month.

Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the GTM Research Reserve Visitor Center, 505 Guana River Road, Ponte Vedra Beach. Gloves and trash bags will be provided.

### **Community Hospice & Palliative Care** celebrates volunteers

April is National Volunteer Month, and Community Hospice & Palliative Care is dedicated to promoting and celebrating volunteerism.

Volunteers offer companionship and a listening ear to patients and family members. Community Hospice & Palliative Care has more than 800 volunteers who bring their many talents and educational backgrounds to help with pet therapy, veteran's projects, thrift shops, music therapy, bereavement outreach, patient and family support, spiritual care and

administrative duties and to make a difference in the community.

"Volunteers make up an integral part of Community Hospice & Palliative Care," said Dan Batty, manager of volunteer services. "They provide valuable support for every discipline within our organization. The COVID pandemic did not prevent our volunteers from finding ways to meet needs of our patients. Now that the restrictions have been lessened, our volunteers are excited to be getting back to volunteering in meaningful ways."

If you are interested in being a volunteer, go to Volunteer.CommunityHospice.com more information.

### Florida Theatre president is Newcomers Alumnae speaker

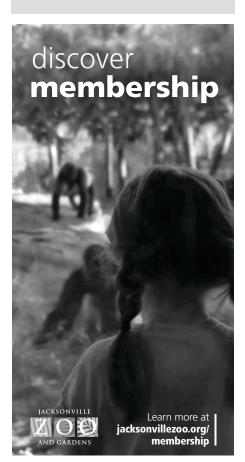
On April 6, the Newcomers Alumnae held their monthly luncheon at Marsh Landing Country Club and welcomed Numa Saisselin, president of the Florida Theatre. He gave an entertaining overview of the theater's almost 100-year history, starting

**BRIEFS** continues on Page 3

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### PONTE VEDRA

### **Newspaper Carriers Needed Dealer & Carrier Routes Available**

The Ponte Vedra Recorder is currently hiring reliable and dedicated Independent Contractors to distribute newspapers throughout the Ponte Vedra Beach, Nocatee & Beaches areas one day a week (Thursdays).

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### **Briefs**

Continued from 2

with the 1927 opening of the "palace of splendor."

Originally, a silent movie projection house with live stage shows and a large Wurlitzer pipe organ, the theater held several shows a day including a news reel, a comedy, a travelogue or cartoon, an overture by the live orchestra and a feature film.

The building, like the neighborhood, went through many physical changes and was purchased in 1981 by a nonprofit

corporation to repurpose the historic building for the good of the community.

Saisselin had stories of many past performing artists, including Elvis, whom many in the Newcomers Alumnae group remember seeing there. Also mentioned were the variety of performances now as the entertainment industry gets back to normal. He encouraged all to check the Florida Theatre's website (floridatheatre. com) and visit this architectural gem with the unique status as the last remaining movie palace in Northeast Florida.

Newcomers Alumnae luncheons are held the first Wednesday of every month, and they welcome new members throughout the year. Go to newcomersalumnaefl.wildapricot.org or email brookemeister@msn.com for more information.

### Hearing set for King Street bridge replacement

FDOT has scheduled a public hearing for Thursday, April 21, to discuss the transfer of jurisdiction of State Road 5A, locally know as King Street and Cathedral Place, from the state to the City of St. Augustine. Also included at this meeting will be the design plans for the King Street bridge replacement over the San Sebastian River.

The public hearing will be held at First United Methodist Church of St. Augustine, 118 King St., from 5 to 6:30 p.m., with public comments starting at 6 p.m.

The FDOT project team and the contractor will be available to answer questions about the many components of the project, including design schedule, proposed configuration of travel lanes, sidewalks, lighting and bridge rail.

No formal presentation has been scheduled. For more information, contact Justin Bellot at 386-758-3774, or via email at justin.bellot@dot.state.fl.us.



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### **COA plans centenarian luncheons** for St. Johns County Seniors

Council on Aging will honor St. Johns County centenarians and nonagenarians at two centenarian luncheons, scheduled

for 11:30 a.m. May 2 at River House, 179 Marine St., St Augustine, 11:30 a.m. May 19 at THE PLAYERS Community Senior

Center, 175 Landrum Lane, Ponte Vedra

If you or a loved one will be turning

### age 95 or better this year, contact Council on Aging to register to participate in the celebration nearest to you. In past years, the Social Security Administration had sent COA invitations directly to residents age 95 and up in St. Johns County. However, this year Council on Aging must rely upon members of the community to get the word out to all those eligible to



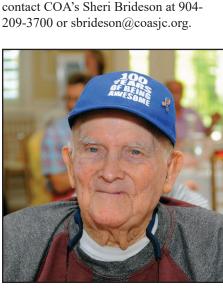
Advance registration is required as space is limited. Each honoree is invited to bring one guest to the luncheon. Tickets for additional guests may be purchased if space is available.

The local nonprofit was unable to hold the annual celebrations in 2020 and 2021 due to health concerns related to CO-VID-19

"We are thrilled to be able to resume hosting these very special events," said COA executive director Becky Yanni. "The entire community looks forward to the chance to recognize our St. Johns County elders and honor their exceptional lives."

Table sponsorships are needed to fund the luncheons and are available for a donation of \$250. Sponsorships include table recognition and one seat to attend the centenarian luncheon of your choice.

To register or to become a sponsor, contact COA's Sheri Brideson at 904-



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### **PVHS dance team earns national ranking**

### **By Anthony Richards**

This year's Ponte Vedra High School Splash Dance Team is regarded as one of the best squads in the nation following a top 10 finish at the National Dance Alliance High School Nationals competition.

The Sharks competed in three categories, placing 10th in both palm and gameday and 11th in jazz during the event held March 4-6.

According to head coach Brandi Ahmad, it was the first time Ponte Vedra had competed at the NDA Nationals, and joined other St. Johns County schools, such as Nease and St. Augustine, who they competed against in the same categories.

Ahmad was amazed at the respect that the programs had for each other, especially when Nease had wrapped up their routine and went over to help cheer on the Sharks during theirs.

"It's pretty cool to have that type of comradery and to see that support," Ahmad said. "It definitely helped my girls in their performance."

This is the fifth year the Sharks are competing on the national stage.

"It's amazing they have already done so much," Ahmad said. "We have only up to go from here. They are the closest team I've had, and they are super hard working."

As part of the competition, the Sharks went head-to-head against some of the most talented dance programs in the nation, which meant the margins for error were very small and it was the definition of a competitive environment.

An example of that is the fact that the Sharks just missed advancing to three finals after finishing 0.6 points shy of advancing to the finals in jazz as well.

Going into the event Ahmad had a sense after watching them perform throughout the year that this year's group seemed strongest in palm and gameday, so she made the call to focus on those at nationals. As a result, the group competed in palm for the first time at nationals, instead of in the traditional category of hip hop.

"They're really good at showcasing their strong technical skills," Ahmad said. "I felt palm just fit the makeup of this team more."

Unlike the palm and jazz portions of the event, where teams got to compete twice, Gameday differed because it was a true one-and-done performance scenario.

The fact that the group stood strong in the face of that pressure and were not shaken is something Ahmad is proud of.

"We laid it all out on the line," Ahmad said. "We were not expecting this, because we went up against teams that have won in the past."

One of the things that made the Sharks stand out was the choice they made with their music, by playing "We Will Rock You" during the routine instead of the common hip-hop arrangements.

"We like to play to our crowd, and we chose to do just that," Ahmad said.

Helping to get the team focused on the task at hand throughout the year was senior captains Lola Newman and Mandy Hansgen, who will be attending Auburn University and Florida State University, respectively next fall.

"It's been amazing to see these kids grow," Ahmad said.

Hansgen tore her ACL about a month into the school year but remained a presence with her leadership by attending events and being there for her teammates even though she was no longer able to compete.

"She has been our team inspiration this year," Ahmad said.

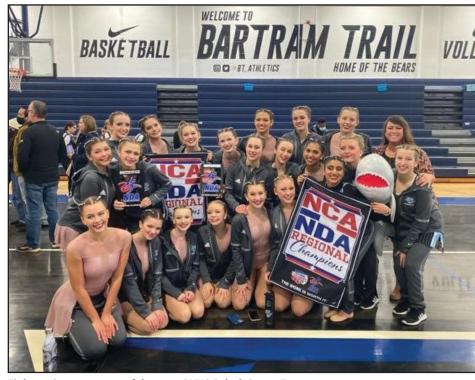
Part of that leadership includes passing the love of competitive dance to the next generation.

The team will do this by hosting its inaugural summer camp June 13-15, which is being put on after the annual Splashette camp in the fall was such a hit.



Photos courtesy of PVHS Splash Dance Team

The Ponte Vedra High Splash Dance Team placed in the top 10 at nationals.



Eight seniors were part of the 2022 PVHS Splash Dance Team.

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Chef Cassandra Cotoia is the owner of Empowered Foodie, which offers several different culinary experiences, including personal chef services, dinner parties and cooking classes for both adults and kids. She spent years honing her skills after learning her trade at the Culinary Institute of America and knows what makes a great meal. Learn more at empowered foodie.com.

### As told to Shaun Ryan

### Tell me about Empowered Foodie, what you offer and how people contact you for your business.

I started Empowered Foodie as a way to help busy people with complicated diets and meal plans enjoy healthy and delicious meals at home with their family. We believe you have to be nourished and nurtured before you can truly connect with those you love. Our services include weekly meal preparation, in-home cooking classes and dinner parties.

### You obviously love cooking and preparing meals. Tell me how you developed an interest in this field and about your education.

I originally began this company in New York at the beginning of the pandemic in 2020. TERRIBLE timing — or so I thought. What began as a desire to bring connection and joy to others through food took shape in a time of crisis. Families who were now home with their kids 24/7 were pulling their hair out while homeschooling and working from home.

Empowered Foodie quickly went from catered parties (my original plan) to meal prep and then to in-home private cooking classes for kids and adults. All of those parts of my business I enjoyed so much that when I re-opened my business here in Florida I decided to keep them all. I love being able to nourish others through food in all of these ways.

### Tell me a bit about your career as a chef. Did you hone your skills at restaurants or other venues for food preparation?

I was born in Vermont, but my parents moved to the Hudson Valley outside of Rhinebeck, New York, when I was 4. I grew up there and began working in food service at 16, and at 18 I enrolled in the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York.

I worked in various Hudson Valley restaurants for 14 years before becoming a private chef for a family in Westchester County for seven more years.

In 2020, I decided I wanted to step out on my own and created Empowered Foodie to offer personal chef services. Through a series of circumstances my husband and I were able to relocate down here to Ponte Vedra Beach in October of 2021. So I decided to move Empowered Foodie down to St Johns County with the hope of bringing that same element of connection to everyone here.

### What kinds of culinary creations do you most enjoy making in the kitchen?

I LOVE making Mexican food! Throughout my time in restaurants, I helped open and run an authentic Mexican restaurant and even became the executive chef there. It was an amazing time in my career, and I was so fortunate enough to work with so many talented people who taught me so much. I also am half Italian, so that is a true love of mine along with French food since it was part of my classic culinary school background.



### Do you have any secret recipes handed down to you through family or special dishes you have developed over time?

I most enjoy creating new things in the kitchen. Some of my specialties include my Almond-Sesame crackers (gluten free and dairy free), Pork Carnitas, My grandmother's chicken soup and meat sauce.

### What do you like best about living in this area?

Living here has been a dream realized. My husband and I dreamt for years about living near the ocean; the fact we are here is amazing to me. Everyone is super

kind and considerate. It has been a joy to settle into such a warm and welcoming place. Ponte Vedra Beach is so beautiful, and we feel truly lucky to be here.

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

In my free time I like exploring some of the local towns like St. Augustine. We are huge foodies so trying new restaurants is absolutely a must! I also love my profession so whatever I can do to educate myself on new techniques or flavors is something I am passionate about. I love my dog Maggie, and you can often find us walking the beach here on nice sunny days (which is most days thank goodness!)

### **Mineral City Celebration set for April 23**



A popular trip raffle and the presentation of the Rock of the Community Award will be among the highlights of the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach's Mineral City Celebration.

To be held April 23 at the Sawgrass Marriott Resort & Golf Spa, the annual charity benefit will feature a disco theme and include entertainment by the popular Boogie Freaks as well as cocktails, dinner and a silent auction.

The evening will also feature the selection of the winner of the club's annual trip raffle. The winner will receive his or her choice of an all-expenses paid trip for two to Hawaii, Costa Rica, Tuscany, Sonoma Valley or an Alaskan cruise. Raffle tickets are \$100 each or five for \$400 and may be purchased online at mineralcitycelebration.com/trips-overview.

#### **Rock of the Community Award**

A special highlight of the evening will be the presentation of the club's annual Rock of the Community Award to Ernie

A longtime Prudential Insurance executive, Bono has been an active philanthropist in the Jacksonville area. In addition to serving as a board member of Catholic Charities and Baptist Beaches Medical Center, he serves as vice president and secretary of the Tom Coughlin Jay Fund Foundation, where he has helped raise more than \$5 million for area families who have been impacted by childhood cancers. The Tom Coughlin Jay Fund will be one of the special charity beneficiaries of this year's Mineral City Celebration.

"Ernie Bono's record of giving back to the community makes him richly deserving of the Rock of the Community Award," said Lori Anderson, president of the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach.

The Mineral City Celebration is the signature annual fundraising event for



A Tuscan escape for two is among the trips available in the Ponte Vedra Beach Rotary Club's annual trip raffle. Tickets are available online at mineralcitycelebration.com/trips-overview.

the Rotary Club of Ponte Vedra Beach. Proceeds from the event have benefited more than two dozen local nonprofit organizations and charities, including the Beaches Dial-a-Ride program, Mission House, BEAM, HEAL, the Council on

Aging and many more.

The Diamond Sponsor of this year's event is The Coughlin Family. To learn more about the Mineral City Celebration sponsors, go to mineralcitycelebration. com/sponsorships.



Join us for a lively evening of fiesta, food and fun as we celebrate our **HEALTHY HERO**, **Mayo Clinic** Jacksonville! Your support means homeless and disadvantaged people at the Beaches Clinic receive the healthcare they need!

Tickets & Sponsorships: SulzbacherJax.org/Fiesta2022



For more information email AllisonWenzel@SulzbacherJax.org



**8 COMMUNITY NEWS**Ponte Vedra Recorder · April 21, 2022

## Dolphin Cove to honor three U.S. Navy veterans

Dolphin Cove will honor its military veterans at 10 a.m. Saturday, April 23, at the DeLeon Shores Park at 82 Dolphin Blvd. East.

The Military Appreciation Day ceremony is to recognize those in the Dolphin Cove neighborhood who have served or continue to serve in the United States Armed Forces.

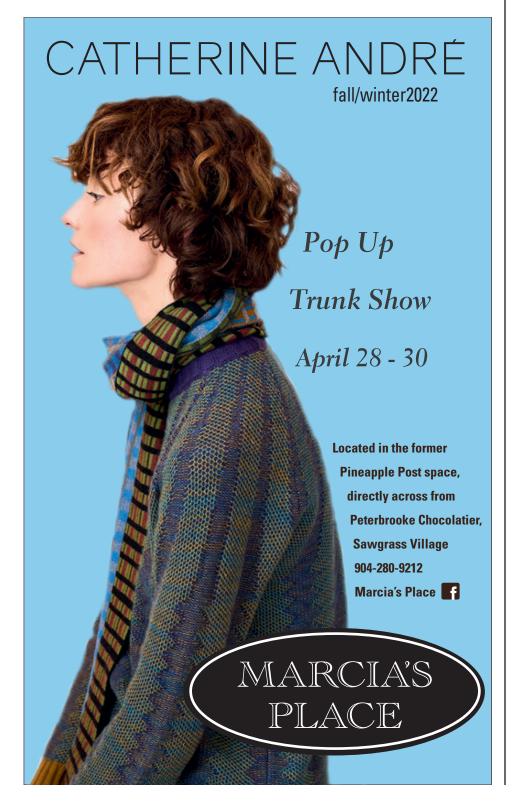
This year, three U.S. Navy veterans will receive a special tribute. They are: BMCM Malone S. Jones Jr., USN retired; FTC John H. Bernard, USN retired; and MMC SS DV James P. Work, USN retired.

Joining in the festivities will be the Nease High School NJROTC, Hope For

The Warriors, St. Johns County Fire and Rescue, the Sheriff's Office and more. Members of different armed forces will have displays and activities, and there will be a World War II Jeep display. Two food trucks are also expected to be present.

Organizers encouraged those who have experienced the loss of a veteran in the past two years to forward the name to dolphin.cove@outlook.com so that they may be honored during the ceremony.

Organizers also encourage others to volunteer or make donations toward these events. If interested, email dolphin. cove@outlook.com. They also encouraged people to fly their American flags.



# What's happening at the link

Here are a few upcoming events at the link, 425 Town Plaza Ave., Ponte Vedra:

#### **Author Talk**

Robert Swymer, author of "Surrender to Your Adversity," will speak at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 26. Admission is free.

"Surrender to Your Adversity" will be published on Monday, April 25. Swymer will have copies on hand for anyone who would like to purchase one and get it autographed.

The book offers lessons on creating resilience and purpose from dramatic and tragic struggles.

#### Mommy & Me

This kids' culinary class celebrating Mother's Day will be held from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Saturday, April 30. The cost is \$40 and it is open to both members and nonmembers. It is for children ages 5 to 13

The host is Corina Danielson.

Go to healthyinstructor.com/corinadanielson/upcomingclasses/thatsapasta1 to register and note allergies — even if you have none.

This is a fun, interactive "Mommy & Me" class. Participants will make pasta and sauce, and then enjoy it.

### **Earth Day Sidewalk Chalk Art**

Kids are invited to create some sidewalk art to express their love for the planet Earth. Participation is free. Time: 10 a.m. Saturday, April 23.

Register at: app.thelink.zone/tab/event/eventcard?id=recxtQL6uyCaGyfFS.

### Kid's Night Out: Earth Day

This Kid's Night Out Event for the month will include fun art activities and a movie. There will be specific crafts and activities to celebrate and learn about Mother Earth. It is for ages 4-12. The cost is \$50.

The event will be held 5:30 to 9 p.m. Saturday, April 23.

#### **Growth Business Workshop Series**

Sapna Foundation is offering the first session of its new Business Workshop Series starting Friday, April 29. The series is designed to help business owners and leaders build and grow the businesses of their dreams.

The foundation partnered with Point Northeast for this workshop series. They are a catalyst for helping leaders achieve business results and outcomes beyond expectations. Point Northeast, with more than 300 businesses in the United States and Canada, provides participants the expertise to assist any organization, with any issue.

Topics include:

- Create a Vision: How to Align Your Team on a Strategic Plan
- Talent Management: How to Hire, Retain and Build a Team to Soar
- Alignment & Accountability: How to Leverage a Proven Process for Success
- Drive Revenue & Create Healthy Financials: How to Build and Sustain Business Development and Build a Scorecard to Measure, Track and Predict
- Creative Problem Solving: Fresh Approaches to Growth, Innovation and Transformation
- Strategic Life Planning: How to Create Meaningful Results in Your Life

Instructors are innovation and business growth expert Sara Frasca, executive management and business consultant Michael Smith and talent executive, veteran, coach, and leader George Randle.

The six workshop sessions (four hours each) will be conducted monthly. Session times are 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Dates are April 29, May 27, June 24, July 29, Aug. 26 and Sept. 30.

All sessions will be hosted both inperson at the link or via Zoom.

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### Families line St. Augustine streets for Easter Parade

St. Augustine's Easter Parade prompted smiles all along the bayfront Saturday, April 16, in the Nation's Oldest City. Now in its 63rd year, the Easter Parade is the nation's second oldest. The St. Augustine Royal Family led the parade and were followed by floats, pirates, auto clubs, first responders, "Star Wars" characters and, of course, the Easter Bunny. Here are some highlights from the event.

Photos by Shaun Ryan





















### Easter fun for all ages

Flagler Health+ Village at Nocatee held an Easter egg hunt for the community April 14. The Easter Bunny was also present for children and families to take photos with.

Photos by Anthony Richards



**Kristin and Vivienne Schwartz** 



**Dominique and Reagan Brison** 



Children put soil in pots as part of a craft project at the event.



Claire and Connor sit with the Easter Bunny.



Suzanne Parrish, Jason Parrish, J.J. Parrish, Bryson Parrish and Dillon Blancas.



Keegan Butler, Noah Dearth and Kristian Butler



Ashley, Daphne, Travis and Nathanael Benson



Victoria, Eve and Sterling Brown



Children listen to instructions prior to the start of the Easter egg hunt.



### Nease NJROTC captures 3rd at national championships

Competing against the top 27 NJROTC drill teams across the country, Nease placed third at the 2022 Navy National Academic, Athletic and Drill Championships in Pensacola on April 1-2.

The Navy Nationals comprise a series of 10 events — personnel inspection, five drill, three athletic and one academic — where the cumulative scores are added to determine the overall national champion. Nease represented NJROTC Area-12, which covers the 60 NJROTC programs across Northern Florida and the state of Georgia, having won the Area-12 Drill Championship last month in Coffee County, Georgia.

Nease won first place in two events, the 16x100 relay and unarmed basic drill.

The team garnered eight additional



Cadet Kaitlyn Boggs leads the Nease NJROTC unarmed basic drill team to a first place finish during the Navy Nationals Academic, Athletic and Drill Championships.

trophies, including second place in personnel inspection, third place in overall athletics and pushups; fourth place in overall drill, unarmed exhibition drill and sit-ups; and fifth place in armed basic drill and academics.

Five cadets earned individual medals: Emmelie Neff finished second in sit-ups, Keegan Mapa took fifth in sit-ups, Emily Chang and Nicholas Gallego were 10th in female and male pushups, and Ben Prohofsky was 10th in academics.

"These young men and women persevered since August, practicing at 7:30 a.m.," said senior naval science instructor Capt. Scott LaRochelle. "Finishing third in the nation validated their commitment to excellence."

Nease has qualified and competed at the Navy Nationals every year since 2015 with this year being the team's best finish. Pace High School in Pensacola and Troy High School in Fullerton, California, placed top two.

"I couldn't be more proud of all of my teammates," said Battalion Commander Kaitlyn Boggs, commander of the freshly minted number one unarmed basic drill team in the nation. "Coming out on top in this event knowing the talent from other programs in California, Virginia, Texas and Florida makes this trophy even more special."



Contributed photos

Nease NJROTC's Drill Team poses with Rear Admiral Peter A. Garvin and their 11 hard-earned trophies at the Navy National Academic, Athletic and Drill Championships.



Battalion Commander Kaitlyn Boggs receives the first place overall unarmed basic trophy at the Navy National Academic, Athletic and Drill Championships.

Mon-Fri 10a-5p

Closed Sat & Sun



Nease NJROTC cadet Emmelie Neff performs one of her 315 total sit-ups to place second individually at the 2022 Navy National Academic, Athletic and Drill Championships in Pensacola on April 1.

INTERIORS







### Link holds membership appreciation event



Karen Gable, Truist vice president, branch leader III, retail banking, and Raghu Misra. **By Shaun Ryan** 

The link held its first membership appreciation night Thursday, April 14, as it approaches is first anniversary. Attendees enjoyed hors d'oeuvres, live music by member Dan Kuckel, a selfie station, a drawing for a high-end membership and opportunities to use the Flagler Health+ 360-degree Immersive Studio. There were also activities for the many children

In addition, co-founder Raghu Misra gave a presentation on the stage about the history of the unique facility in the heart of Nocatee. This multimedia portion featured the link's video wall.

The members present were polled on the value of the link and whether they had any recommendations for its future.

### One Family

When he's not singing and sharing stories with his audiences about his family and experiences, Kuckel is a U.S. Navy

family physician with Naval Hospital

He called the link a great place to socialize in Nocatee and a unique experi-

"What I love about this place is there are events like tonight where it is familycentric," he said.

Kuckel's family joined the link in September, the same month the doctor and his wife, Tara, launched a new business with a partner physician: Ponte Vedra House Call.

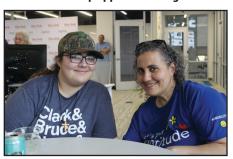
This unique approach to medicine brings the doctor to the patient's home.

"We take care of you in your home instead of your having to go to an urgent care or the ER," Tara Kuckel said. "For a lot of acute needs and things like that, we can see you in your home."

Among its many facets, the link is a new business incubator, something that fits the needs of startups like Ponte Vedra House Call. But the link is more



Briona Shetton and baby Zara attend the link's membership appreciation night.



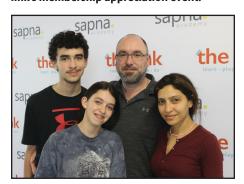
Cat, left, and Lydia D'burrh were among attendees at the link's membership appreciation event.

than that. It's a cultural, professional and educational hub that enriches the lives of local residents. Tara Kuckel has taken a yoga class there, and her children are considering the many summer camp options available to them.

The link is located at 425 Town Plaza Ave., Ponte Vedra Beach. Its website is thelink.zone.



Rob and Melissa Swymer are seen at the link's membership appreciation event.



Jarrett, Mai, Mariam and Hazen Fisher gather for a family photo at the selfie station.



From left: Maria Isabel Montoya-Leonard, Karen Gable and Susanne Schuenke chat during the link's membership appreciation

For more information on Ponte Vedra House Call, go to Pontevedrahousecall. com. For information about Dan Kuckel's music, go to myownfamilydoctor.com.



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# For MORE business news, go to facebook.com/ThePVRecorder PAGE 13 THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2022

www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

### First Horizon: The New Name in Town

### By Felicia Cox,

Banking Center Manager at First Horizon Bank

Driving along A1A in the last few months, you may have noticed a change recently. IBERIABANK has a new sign, and a new name: First Horizon Bank.

The merger of equals created one of the leading regional financial services companies in the Southern United States with operations in 12 states. By combining banks, First Horizon is able to deliver the better-than-ever banking experiences. The synergies will enable the bank to offer financial services that customers expect on a greater scale through strategic investments in advanced technologies and expanded product offerings.

Clients will continue to be served through their respective banking center, websites, mobile apps, financial advisors and relationship managers.

While the name First Horizon is new to Ponte Vedra, it isn't new to banking. Founded in 1864, First Horizon is a long-standing and reputable financial institution with a history of strength and

stability. The company and its subsidiaries offer commercial, private banking, consumer, small business, wealth and trust management, retail brokerage, capital markets, fixed income, mortgage and title insurance services.

First Horizon has been recognized as one of the nation's best employers by Fortune and Forbes magazines and a Top 10 Most Reputable U.S. Bank.

First Horizon's goal is to be the most respected regional financial services company and has made a commitment to invest nearly \$4 billion to broaden access to financial resources in underserved and low-to-moderate income communities.

Increasing home ownership, building up small businesses, fostering community development, strengthening communities and supporting supplier diversity are all part of First Horizon Bank's five-year commitment to invest in community goals.

While the sign on the building may be different, the people, service and community involvement with which customers are familiar remain the same.



Photo by Anthony Richards

IBERIABANK's location along State Road A1A recently changed its name to First Horizon after the two banks merged.

### O-Ku welcomes spring with debut of rooftop access to bar and dining

New Jax Beach sushi restaurant O-Ku opened its beachside rooftop to the public on Tuesday, April 5, in time for guests to enjoy spring al fresco dining.

O-Ku's second floor boasts ocean views, including the iconic Jax Beach pier, and offers both covered bar seating and outdoor dining tables. The rooftop is available during regular operating hours, 5-10 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis after checking in with the

Guests can enjoy a fresh and innovative take on traditional Japanese sushi and cuisine, paired with a signature cocktail. While most menu items are available on the rooftop, including Chef Specialties, Signature Nigiri and Makimono, select menu items are not available upstairs, including the Tobanyaki.

For downstairs seating, reservations are recommended and continue to be accepted through OpenTable.

The Jacksonville Beach location was inspired by the original Charleston location and is similar to O-Ku locations in Nashville. Tennessee; Atlanta, Georgia; Charlotte and Raleigh, North Carolina; and Washington D.C. It opened in early February. The modern Japanese restaurant offers rare and unique

dining options with sashimi and specialty rolls, sourcing seafood from the finest fish markets in Tokyo and Hawaii, among others

"We are thrilled to finally share our rooftop with the Beaches," said Jessica Moyer, general manager of O-Ku Jack-



O-Ku is a new sushi restaurant in Jacksonville Beach.



Photos by Andre W. Cebulka and provided by O-Ku Jacksonville

O-Ku recently opened its beachside rooftop to the public.

sonville Beach. "We know how excited the community is to dine beachside and we are just as happy to be inspired by this beautiful beach view and neighborly reception. We hope everyone will stop by in the coming weeks to take advantage of this amazing spring weather." With the summer peak season approaching, O-Ku is still currently hiring for all positions. Hiring information can be found on The Indigo Road Hospitality Group's career page.

For more information, go to theindigoroad.com. **14** BUSINESS WEEKLY Ponte Vedra Recorder · April 21, 2022

### **Benchmarks of Success**



### Glasser named chief medical officer at Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville

Theodore Glasser MD

Theodore "Ted" Glasser MD, internist, has been appointed in the newly created

position of chief medical officer at Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville, the health system's flagship hospital, effective April 4.

He is the first hospital-specific CMO for an adult hospital in the Baptist Health system. In this role, Glasser will focus on the effectiveness of clinical care, liaising between the administration and medical staff and ensuring that patients receive the highest standard of medical care. He will report to Timothy G. Groover MD, system CMO, Baptist Health.

Glasser has a 26-year history with Baptist Health having joined the health system in 1996 as the first full-time hospitalist. He oversaw the growth of the Baptist Primary Care hospitalist group to serve the system's adult hospitals.

Throughout his tenure, he has held multiple leadership positions with increasing responsibilities, including as the medical director of inpatient services with Baptist Primary Care, chief of staff at Baptist Jacksonville, chairman of the Department of Medicine and section chief of Internal Medicine, among others.



### League of Cities recognizes St. Augustine vice mayor

The City of St. Augustine's Vice Mayor Nancy SikesKline Kline the Florida League of Cities

for the fifth consecutive year as a "Home Rule Hero" for her hard work and advocacy efforts during the 2022 Legislative Session. Sikes-Kline worked throughout the session to promote local voices making local choices, protecting the home rule powers of Florida's municipalities and advancing the League's legislative agenda.

Home rule is the ability for a city to address local problems with local solutions with minimal state interference. Home Rule Hero Award recipients are local government officials, both elected and nonelected, who consistently respond to the league's request to reach out to members of the legislature and help give a local perspective on an issue



### Willis to join Community Foundation executive team

Wanda J. Willis has been selected for the newly-created position of vice president,

civic leadership for The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida.

Willis has a long, local career in devel-

opment and community leadership, most recently as director of community engagement and inclusion for the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens. Prior to that, she held several leadership positions at Edward Waters College (now University) including assistant vice president of institutional advancement. She was also the director of development for major gifts for Florida State College at Jacksonville's Foundation.

She joined The Community Foundation on Tuesday, April 19, and is part of the executive team, with primary responsibilities for the organization's current and prospective civic leadership initiatives.

Willis holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Augusta State University in Augusta, Georgia, and a master's degree in management from St. Mary's University in Winona, Minnesota.

She and her husband live in Jacksonville.

### **Accordant announces new president**

Accordant has announced that Pamela Ronka Maroulis is the new president of the health care management consulting firm. Accordant founder Betsy Chapin Taylor will continue serving as the organization's chief executive officer.

Maroulis has been a principal consultant with Accordant for more than two years and will continue her consulting and speaking work with select clients. She brings more than 28 years of philanthropy experience, including major gift cultivation, campaign management, grateful patient programs, physician engagement and culture alignment. She holds accreditation as a certified fundraising executive.

Accordant was founded almost eight years ago. It has served more than 150 organizations representing more than 550 hospitals, as well as other health-related causes.

For further information, go to AccordantHealth.com.



### Kubart named Betty Griffin Center development director

The Betty Griffin Center has promoted longtime employee Kenlie Kubart to



the position of development director at the nonprofit organization.

Kubart, who has served as event coordinator at the Betty Griffin Center since 2016, will be responsible for fundraising activities, including grant writing, sponsorships and donor relations activities.

A resident of St. Augustine, Kubart previously served as the director of fundraising for the Delta Gamma sorority, interned at the University of North Florida Office of Parent and Family programs and worked as a marketing manager in the hospitality industry before joining the Betty Griffin Center staff.

Kubart received an associate of arts degree from St. Johns River State College in 2014 and a bachelor of science degree in communications and public relations from the University of North Florida in 2016. During her tenure at Betty Griffin Center, she has also completed several training courses on domestic violence and sexual abuse in areas including primary prevention, Green Dot Bystander Training, advocacy core training and youth mental health first aid.

### Jacksonville Symphony appoints associate conductor

The Jacksonville Symphony has announced that Kevin Fitzgerald will serve as associate conductor beginning in the 2022-23 season.

Fitzgerald has garnered many accolades, establishing himself among the list of today's rising young conductors. He served as one of two conducting fellows at the 2021 Tanglewood Music Center and was a 2020 and 2021 recipient of the prestigious Career Assistance Award from the Sir Georg Solti Foundation, U.S. Fitzgerald was also the sole American selected to participate in the 2018 Tanglewood Music Center Conducting Seminar.

Fitzgerald's debut with the symphony will be on Sept. 23, when he conducts the Community Open House performance. He will also conduct for a variety of Pops, Coffee and Symphony in 60 concerts along with a classical performance in the 2023-24 season.

### Nursing home advocate receives state recognition

JoAnne Moore of Ponte Vedra has been honored as the First Coast Council Ombudsman of the Year for her volunteer work with residents of nursing homes and other long-term care settings.

Moore volunteers with the Florida Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program — a federally mandated advocacy organization created to protect long-term residents' health, safety, welfare and rights.

Ombudsmen advocate on behalf of residents and work to resolve complaints that may arise to improve the quality of life in long-term care facilities.

Moore became a certified ombudsman in 2019. She has conducted 39 assessments and has completed 51 hours of training.



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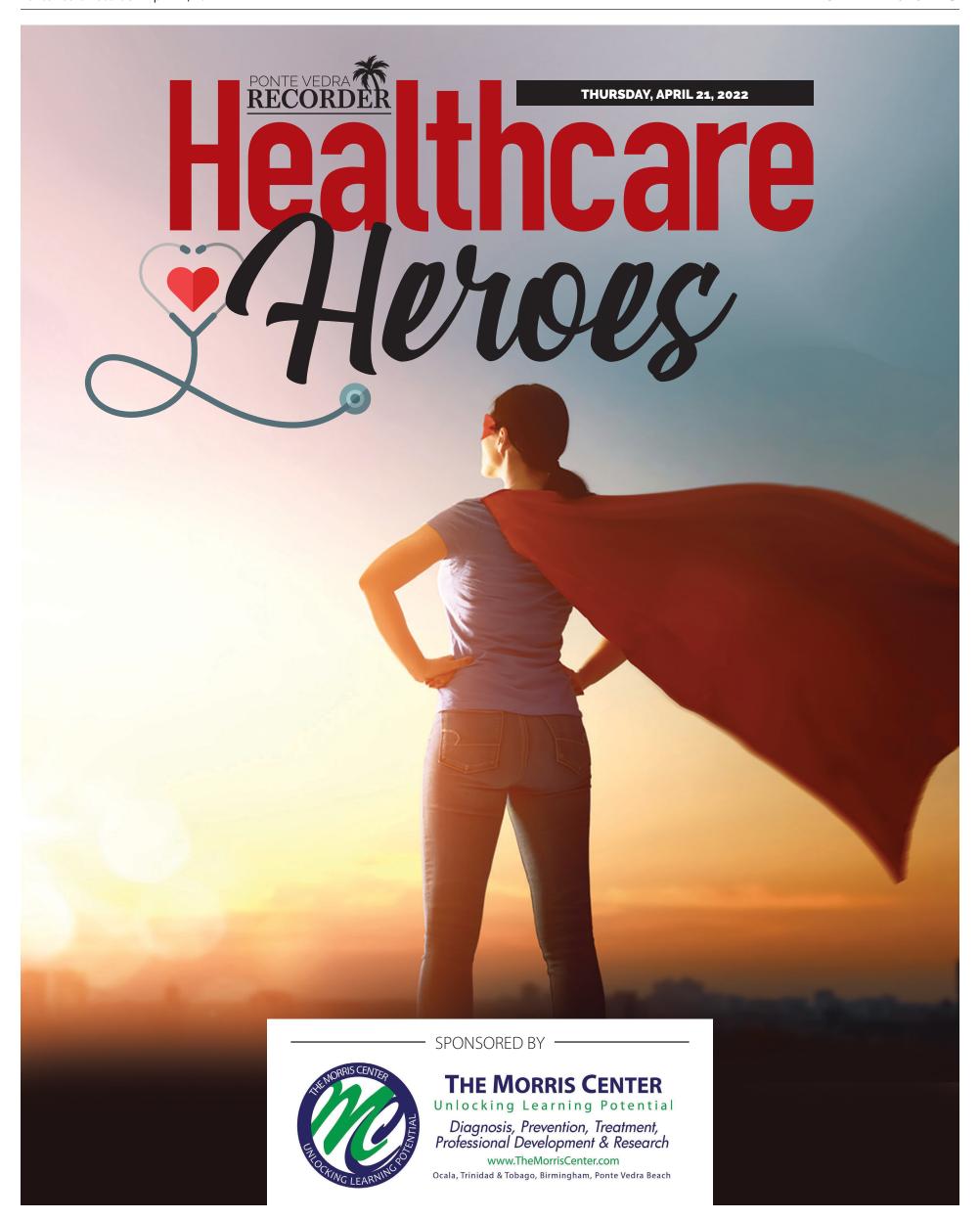
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**16** HEALTHCARE HEROES



Dr. Tim Conway speaks at The Morris Center's St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce After Hours event Sept. 22.



File photos

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

### Morris Center serves Ponte Vedra community

For more than 30 years, The Morris Center has offered leading transdisciplinary team clinics (in Ocala; Trinidad and Tobago; and Birmingham, Alabama) and newly opened in summer 2021 at Ponte Vedra Beach.

Services include OT, speech and language, clinical psychology, recreational therapy and neuropsychology transdisciplinary team assessment and treatment options.

The Morris Center clinics provide a range of services for all neurodevelopmental disorders and learning difficulties including dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, sensory processing disorder, AD/HD, autism, downs syndrome, language disorder, phonological disorder,

and other challenges to learning and the development of functional abilities to each person's full potential.

Serving a national and international clientele, from ages 2 to more than 70, The Morris Center's team of health care heroes are able to help make large and long-lasting gains in skills and abilities. Clients have called this "life changing."

A free consultation with Dr. Tim Conway or members of his The Morris Center clinics' teams helps determine the needs and best services possible to fit families' budgets, logistics and timing for services, too

For further information, call 904-834-2482 or email TMCPVB@MorrisCenters.com.

### How to identify 5 common learning disabilities

Students are often told that hard work is the path to success. Individuals who have learning disabilities may have to work even harder than their peers to be successful. The Learning Disabilities Association of America says learning disabilities occur due to neurobiological and/or genetic factors that alter the way the brain functions. This can affect one or more cognitive processes related to learning and interfere with various skills, potentially preventing a person from acquiring the same amount of knowledge as others of the same age. There are many learning disabilities, and the following are five of the most common, according to LD Resources Foundation Inc., a nonprofit organization that helps find solutions to those who are affected by learning disabilities.

- 1. Dyslexia: This learning disability can impede a person's ability to read and comprehend text. Students may have trouble with phonemic awareness, or the way to break down words. Similar problems with phonological processing, or distinguishing between similar word sounds, can occur as well.
- 2. ADHD: Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder is marked by behaviors that make it difficult to pay attention and stay on task. The Masters in Special Educa-

tion, a resource for finding work and study in special education concentrations, says there is debate over whether ADHD is a learning disability. But there is no denying that ADHD can impede success in school settings.

- 3. Auditory processing disorder/language processing disorder: APD affects how sounds are processed and interpreted by the brain, advises WebMD. A person may not be able to recognize slight differences between the sounds in words and may not be able to distinguish the direction sounds are coming from. That's challenging in a classroom setting. LPD is a form of APD that affects how one attaches meaning to sound groups that form words, sentences and so on. An audiologist can diagnose APD.
- 4. Dyscalculia: LD Resources Foundation says dyscalculia makes it challenging to understand even basic mathematical concepts, such as time, measuring and estimating. A person with dyscalculia may have difficulty following order of operations. And since math skills build on one another, a student with dyscalculia can quickly fall behind.
- 5. Dysgraphia: A person with dysgraphia may not be able to write legibly. He or she may take a long time to write, hold writing implements improperly and/



Students who have learning disabilities often find they face difficulty in succeeding with their school work.

or struggle with putting thoughts onto a page.

Additional symptoms of learning disorders include failing to tell left from right, difficulty recognizing patterns, lack of coordination, difficulty doing tasks with the hands and challenges associated with concepts of time. Educators and health care providers often collaborate to help those with learning disabilities get the services they need to be successful in the classroom.

### Ascension St. Vincent's set to open new hospital in July

### **By Anthony Richards**

The construction of Ascension St. Vincent's hospital located on County Road 210 near Interstate 95 in St. Johns is continuing on schedule and is expected to be opening in the next couple of months.

"First and foremost, let me just say how excited we are to be adding this new option to this great community," said James Machado, regional president of Ascension St. Vincent's Southside and Ascension St. Vincent's St. Johns County. "St. Johns County is one of the fastest-growing counties in the state and we know that there's clearly a need for more hospital beds here. Construction is almost complete, and we will be opening later this summer in July."

According to Machado, the hospital will be 150,000 square feet and have 56 beds. The property will also have an adjacent medical office building that will contain clinics of various health specialties

"This is a \$175 million capital investment in the community and we're expecting to create about 500 new jobs," Machado said. "In fact, we're in the hiring process right now and have many great jobs still open of all skill levels for those who are looking for a new oppor-



tunity to serve others in the health care space."

There are many factors that can come into play to delay a project's construction timetable, but Ascension St. Vincent's has been fortunate to not have any major problems creep up during the process.

This is something Machado believes has been possible thanks to the strong relationships the organization has developed with the community and its corporate groups.

"We're grateful for all of our partners who have done everything possible to ensure this important work remains on schedule as much as possible, especially our facilities partner, Medxcel," Machado said. "Fortunately, thanks to our dedicated teams and collaboration, our timeline for opening hasn't had to shift significantly."

As July and its opening approaches, there is a sense of excitement that Machado has felt anytime he gets the chance to

**ASCENSION** continues on Page 20



James Machado

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**18** HEALTHCARE HEROES Ponte Vedra Recorder · April 21, 2022

### **New Technology in Heart Health**

### By Anthony Magnano, M.D.,

Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside

We are making advancements in cardiovascular care every day. Our team of cardiologists at Ascension St. Vincent's is privileged to have access to cuttingedge treatments and technology as we are always working to stay on the forefront. We collaborate with the top cardiology centers across the country, engage in research, and participate in the latest clinical trials. New advances can sometimes be life-saving or life-changing for our patients.

Knowing your available treatment options can make a huge impact in your quality of life. Here are some recent developments.

### Wearable Heart Monitoring Technology

One emerging trend over the past few years has been the advancement of athome wearable heart monitors. Wearing personal technology, like portable medical-grade EKG devices, can help doctors detect and monitor heart rhythm irregularities sooner, which can sometimes help make a diagnosis or even prevent a stroke. But not all technology is created equal. For example, a less-complex heart rate monitor and one that is built to be an EKG-grade device may show differing results.

Self-screening with these apps can help you become more aware of your heart health. One important point is to be perfectly still, preferably with arms supported on a table or desk when making recordings. This technique minimizes movement artifacts and yields a much higher quality tracing. Another important point is to have your doctor review any tracings of concern, especially if you are seeing irregularities, as the automatic interpretations are not always correct.



#### New Generation of Stroke Prevention in AFib Patients: Left Atrial Appendage Occlusion and the WATCHMAN Device

Atrial fibrillation, or AFib, is a common heart rhythm condition that can increase stroke risk by five-fold, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This stroke risk arises because of a pouch in the heart called the left atrial appendage. Here, blood can form clots when the top chambers of the heart are fibrillating rather than contracting normally. Historically, the only way to prevent this risk was to put AFib patients on warfarin. Today, we have new oral anticoagulants that are safer and easier to use without need for close monitoring or dietary restrictions.

While anticoagulation is still the first line approach for most patients, unintended bleeding can become problematic for certain individuals. If the left atrial appendage is surgically removed or occluded, then this risk of stroke is removed without the added bleeding risks of anticoagulation. The WATCHMAN device typically can be placed in less than a half hour through a vein in the leg and allows doctors to reduce stroke risk without putting patients at risk for increased bleeding.

New left atrial appendage occlusion devices are being evaluated in clinical trials at Ascension St. Vincent's and other sites around the world. In one trial, we are evaluating whether the WATCHMAN device is a good first-line therapy for AFib patients who are not having bleeding problems, as compared with conventional blood thinners. If approved, it has the potential to revolutionize the way we treat AFib. It will give patients the choice between using a blood thinner medication every day or having a one-time procedure with the WATCHMAN.

### Cutting-Edge Treatment for Heart Valve Disease: TAVR Therapy

More than 5 million Americans are diagnosed with heart valve disease each

year. Left untreated, advanced valve disease can be deadly. It can cause heart failure, stroke, blood clots or death due to sudden cardiac arrest, when the heart stops beating. Previously, patients needed open heart surgery to replace diseased valves. However, major surgery may not be an option for certain high-risk patients who cannot handle the physical toll.

Ascension St. Vincent's was the first in the region to offer patients trancatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR). TAVR is innovative because it allows the doctor to replace the valve through the femoral artery in the thigh. This is a significant benefit because patients often have a shorter hospital stay and quicker recovery. While initially designed for patients too sick or frail to have surgery, a recent clinical trial completed at Columbia University Medical Center found the TAVR may be effective for low-risk patients as well.

#### **Take Control of Your Heart Health**

With the advanced treatments available today, our patients are living longer and enjoying the activities they love. The important thing is to always work with your doctor to find the right treatment plan for you. We only mentioned a few of the exciting advances here, but there are many more in all aspects of cardiovascular care. If you are overdue for your annual check-up or have noticed an increase in symptoms, don't wait. See your doctor. Your heart will thank you for it.

Dr. Anthony Magnano is a Ponte Vedra resident and Chief of Cardiology at Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside. For more information on Dr. Magnano and his specialty treating Atrial fibrillation, visit Healthcare. ascension.org or call 904-388-1820.

# Partnership enhances virtual care, connect patients with emergency physicians

Telescope Health and Flagler Health+ have announced a partnership that virtually connects patients to emergency and family physicians for on-demand telehealth visits.

The partnership is expected to provide quality, convenient, accessible health care to Northeast Florida residents.

As part of the partnership, Telescope Health will use emergency and family care physicians to treat patients with nonemergent conditions virtually using the Flagler Health+ Anywhere platform.

The partnership also includes a dedicated team of care coordinators who are available to connect patients to a primary care physician or specialist, arrange follow-up appointments, locate in-person care and check people into a nearby emergency room if needed.

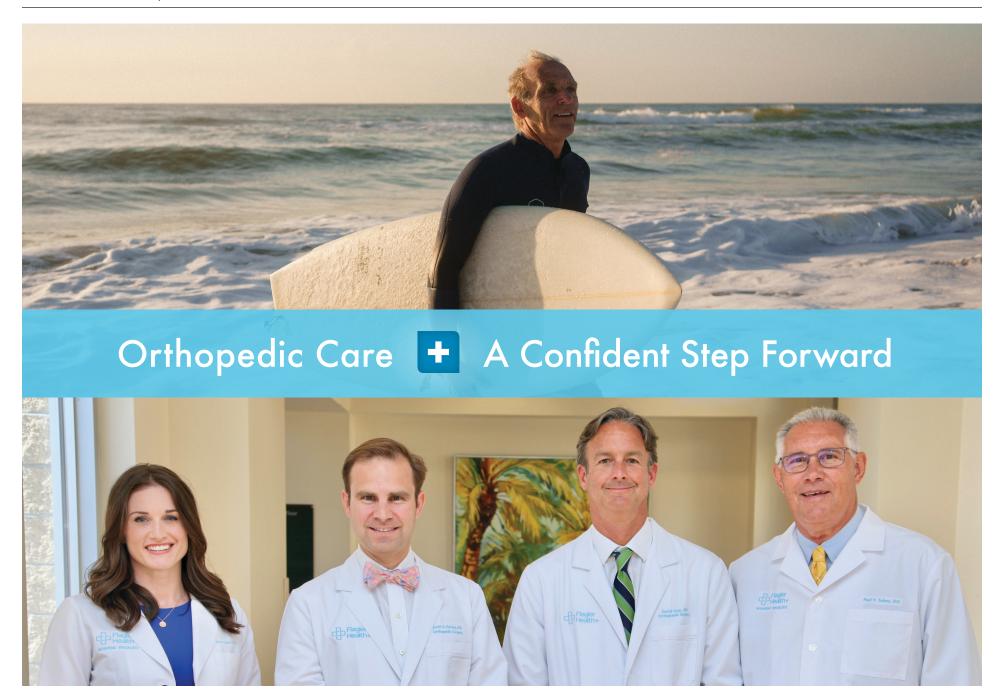
"Together with Flagler Health+ we are able to better serve the community by connecting more people to our doctors, allowing patients to be seen quickly and effectively via their smart phone, a computer or at a kiosk location," said Dr. Matthew Thompson, COO of Telescope Health. "Not all telemedicine is created equal, and our goal is to create an experience equivalent to an in-person visit but without the wait."

Flagler Health+ Walk-in Clinics are open inside select Publix Super Market locations during pharmacy hours and feature devices that patients and doctors can use to enhance their virtual visit. Smart

devices like blood pressure cuffs, dermascopes, thermometers and high-definition cameras can help physicians make a more accurate diagnosis when needed. Patients have the added convenience of picking up their prescriptions at the Publix pharmacy within minutes of their visit.

"We have seen tremendous growth in the demand for telehealth services since we launched our first offering nearly three

PARTNERSHIP continues on Page 20



### Complete Orthopedic and Sports Medicine Care in Your Neighborhood. That's the Power of +.

The physicians at Flagler Health+ Village at Nocatee are your Orthopedic and Sports Medicine specialists. Not only are we conveniently located in your neighborhood, we have award-winning care and top surgeons offering world-class treatment for joint care, trauma care and sports injuries. With onsite imaging including MRI and CT, your care is more convenient than ever.

### **Specialties include:**

Hand Elbow Musculoskeletal Injuries
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Shoulder Sports Medicine Back Conditions



**20** HEALTHCARE HEROES



Photo courtesy of Ascension St. Vincent's

Construction on the new Ascension St. Vincent's hospital has continued on schedule and is expected to be complete in July.

### **Ascension**

Continued from 17

interact with the community.

**Partnership** 

Continued from 18

This excitement only solidifies the fact that they made the right decision when choosing which area would be best and see the most impact from getting a new

However, having a presence in the area is nothing new to Ascension St. Vin-

years ago," said Flagler Health+ Presi-

nering with like-minded organizations

like Publix and now Telescope Health

that share our passion for strengthening communities, improving health and

delivering customer value serves as a

St. Johns County and beyond."

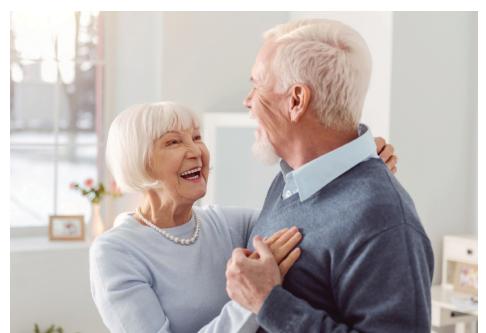
pink eye and more.

solid foundation for bringing innovative

products and services to the residents of

dent and CEO Carlton DeVooght. "Part-

"We've been in St. Johns County for decades through our Mobile Health Outreach Ministry and various clinics," Machado said. "A few years ago, we also opened one of our health centers on County Road 210. But there's certainly a different level of excitement when you're opening a new hospital. Right now, too many St. Johns County residents are having to leave the county if they need care at a hospital. We're thrilled to be able to increase access to convenient, high quality, compassionate care."



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Virtual on-demand care is available for patients two years old and older who are experiencing ailments such as cold symptoms, allergies, sinus problems, earaches,

Kiosks are located inside Publix locations at Nocatee Town Center, Moultrie Square, Bartram Market, Beach Village, Cobblestone Village and Mission Trace, and the Shoppes at Beachwalk clinic is opening soon.

As part of the Flagler Health+ community schools partnership, walk-in virtual care is also available inside The Webster School and South Woods Elementary School. Telehealth visits are also available on-demand on the Flagler Health+ Anywhere App.

To learn more about Flagler Health+ telehealth services, go to flaglerhealth. org/telehealth.

To learn more about Telescope Health, go to TelescopeHealth.com.

4060 SAN PABLO PKWY, JACKSONVILLE, FL 32224

# Weavers support match donation for suicide prevention campaign

Here Tomorrow has launched a "Match to Reimagine Suicide Prevention" campaign with the goal of raising \$4 million to help expand access to mental health services in Northeast Florida over the next three years.

Both the Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Fund and the J. Wayne Weaver Fund have pledged to match contributions up to \$500,000 for a total of \$1 million.

Likewise, Here Tomorrow founder Joe Kenney will also match donations up to \$1 million. The multi-year challenge grant will run through December 31, 2024.

"Wayne and I are proud to support this new, grassroots effort," Delores Barr Weaver said. "We are impressed that Here Tomorrow is using a collaborative model with peer supports. Cutting wait times and providing timely access is a tremendous service to the people they are serving. Clearly, the community need is great, and we hope many people will join in to make the campaign a success."

Here Tomorrow is a nonprofit organization serving the Beaches communities and Northeast Florida with a mission to prevent suicide by building a community where mental healthcare is acceptable and accessible.

"We are beyond grateful to receive these grants from Wayne and Delores Weaver," Kenney said. "We are tripling the size of our peer support team. We have reimagined suicide prevention, launched our service model, and seen unbelievable results over the past year."

Founded in January 2021, Here Tomorrow uses a peer support model to offer same-day mental health support to those in crisis. Recovery peer specialists provide immediate support and systematic follow-up phone calls over the course of a year.

"Change is a process," Here Tomorrow Executive Director Hannah Hackworth said. "People thinking about seeking professional help and those who love them need support, answers to their questions, and someone to listen who truly understands."

Hackworth and Kenney developed the core service model in consultation with international suicide prevention expert, Paul Quinnett.

Currently, Here Tomorrow is serving 529 community members: 460 "friends" (people experiencing hopelessness) and 69 family members (people worried about the safety of a loved one).

"The CDC tells us suicide is the most preventable form of death," Hackworth said. "We are filling a critical gap in the existing system of care by providing real help to people at-risk for suicide and their families through same-day peer mental health support and timely access to outpatient mental health care."

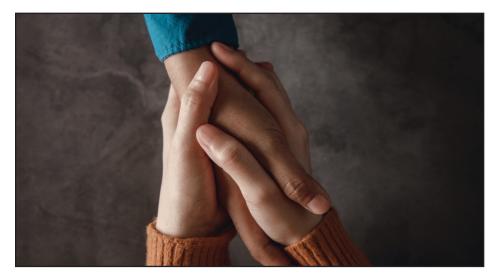
Kenney's connection to Here Tomorrow stems from personal loss. In April 2019, his son Gary, 30, died by suicide.

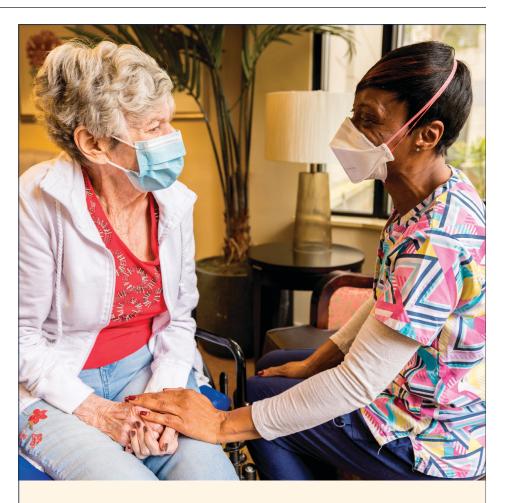
Prior to his son's death, Kenney did everything he could to help Gary who was battling severe depression. When they needed help the most, Kenny found a healthcare system that was not equipped to advise him or help him keep Gary safe.

"I couldn't find any help here; I didn't know where to go or what to do—and I know everybody," Kenney said. "When we opened our doors, I thought, if Here Tomorrow can ensure that one son, one father, one brother, or one sister is here with us tomorrow, it will all be worth it," Kenney says. "We are now talking daily with people who are seriously contemplating suicide and offering real help when the stakes could not be higher."

If you or someone you love is experiencing hopelessness and contemplating seeking help, contact Here Tomorrow by calling 904-372-9087 or emailing hello@heretomorrow.org. There is no cost for the support and follow-up services provided by Here Tomorrow.

For more information and resources or to donate, go to heretomorrow.org.





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**22 HEALTHCARE HEROES** Ponte Vedra Recorder · April 21, 2022

# Baptist Health signs first participants for brain aneurysm study

Research to assess the hereditary probability of brain aneurysms in families

Baptist Health of Northeast Florida has recruited the first patients for its research study funded by the State of Florida to assess the hereditary probability of brain aneurysms.

Theresa Coppa of Jacksonville and her three children are the first people to sign up to participate in the study which aims to recruit patients and first-degree family members

The Familial Brain Aneurysm Study is intended to help researchers determine to what extent a family's history of brain aneurysms can play in determining the likelihood of their occurrence in later generations as well as genetic markers of it.

The findings may be used to advance the use of screening during routine medical exams, and finding alternatives for screening options in patients who may be at risk.

"Today, we know that if you have two first-degree relatives (mother, father, siblings) with a brain aneurysm, your risk of having an aneurysm increases from 4% to 8%," said Ricardo Hanel MD, neurosurgeon and co-medical director of Baptist Stroke & Cerebrovascular Center, and the principal investigator of the study. "With this study, we aim to understand better the epidemiology of familial aneurysms in Florida and, at the same time, understand the genetic markers for intracranial

aneurysms that may provide new targets for future screening processes and therapies and potentially help us save lives."

According to the Brain Aneurysm Foundation, an estimated 6.5 million people in the United States have an unruptured brain aneurysm — or 1 in 50 people. A brain aneurysm is a weak spot on a blood vessel in the brain that

bulges and fills with blood, like a bubble. Unruptured brain aneurysms often have no symptoms.

Finding the aneurysm, and when appropriate, treating it before it bursts, is a good stroke prevention measure.

Coppa was diagnosed with an unruptured aneurysm about a year ago and underwent successful treatment. She is participating in the study to help protect her kids.

"I want to find out if there is a genetic component to this," she said. "We have breast cancer and diabetes in the family and can watch for those. If we find out there's a genetic trait to aneurysms, they'll know to watch out for it."

Coppa's son, Zachary, said, "It's just that peace of mind to know if you have it or not, and if there is a genetic link, there are things you can do."

Her other son, Connor, added, "I'm grateful to have a chance to possibly help others in the future. I hope the study provides a better understanding of aneurysms as a whole, how they may affect a bloodline, and whether genetics plays a part or if it truly is random."

A patient who has been diagnosed with an intracranial aneurysm and at least one first-degree family member (mother, father, sibling, children) must agree to participate in the study to be enrolled. There is no limit to the number of firstdegree relatives who can be enrolled and screened

It's an easy process: every participant will fill out a survey and give a blood sample. Family members also will undergo vessel imaging — the patient will have already undergone this process during their initial diagnosis. There is no cost to the participants.

Baptist Health first announced the study in September 2021 upon receiving a \$250,000 grant from the State of Florida.

Olivia and Phil Hoblit, founders of the Trinity Love Hoblit Foundation for brain aneurysm awareness, helped significantly in advocating for the study's funding. The foundation annually donates funding for neurological research, training and treatment for brain aneurysms, strokes and other cerebrovascular conditions to the Sty Neuroscience Institute at Wolfson Children's Hospital and Baptist Neurological Institute.

Working closely with the Trinity Love Hoblit Foundation, Sen. Aaron Bean, Rep. Wyman Duggan and Rep. Clay Yarborough supported and secured the original state funding of the study and lead the effort in securing additional funding during the 2022 legislative session.

The current state appropriations are awaiting Gov. Ron DeSantis' signature.

"We are thankful to Gov. DeSantis and the entire Northeast Florida legislative delegation for recognizing the importance of this research, which will improve our ability to help patients before aneurysms impact their lives," said Dane Bennett, director of government relations, Baptist Health.

Further study funding will come from a new partnership between the Trinity Love Hoblit Foundation and Amelia Island's Luna Fine Art Gallery. The gallery, located in the Courtyard & Springhill Suites by Marriott Amelia Island, is part of The Hive, the social responsibility program started by Kim and Julian MacQueen, owners and founders of Innisfree Hotels.

The gallery will feature local artists and host exhibits with all gallery commissions being donated to the Trinity Love Hoblit Foundation.

If you or a first-degree family member (mother, father, sibling) been diagnosed with a brain aneurysm, you may be a good candidate for this study. Contact (904) 388-6518, Ext: 58762 for more information.



### Company to offer a la carte home health care services

This month, the founder of Jackson-ville's Beaches Activists Movement, Althea Lachicotte, will officially launch Moore Boutique LLC, a company designed to provide personal services and medical care directly to clients in their homes at the Beaches.

As a personal a la carte company, Moore Boutique will offer many services needed or requested including sitters, shoppers, nutritionists, physical therapists, hair stylists, low impact exercise therapists, manicurists, dog walkers and more

Additionally, the company offers a range of services provided by home health aides, certified aides, licensed practical nurses and registered nurses for injured or recovering patients and patients undergoing life transitions.

At the clients' request, Moore Boutique will provide an initial physical assessment of the client by a heath care advisor. Periodic visits from the health care advisor will take place to examine patients and review patients' conditions to ensure they are progressing and receiving proper

care

Moore Boutique plans these services to provide a way for ill or debilitated persons, including seniors in the Jacksonville Beaches area, to live comfortably in their own homes and provide their relatives with peace of mind.

As an a la carte company, Moore Boutique also will offer a variety of different concierge services.

"For seniors who are having difficulty living in their environment, their family members must spend countless hours to assist their parents or grandparents in getting proper care in their home," said Lachicotte. "Family members can rely on Moore Boutique to take care of those needs — a one-stop company with reliable, professional personnel."

Moore Boutique's services will be available to clients located in Ponte Vedra Beach, Atlantic Beach, Neptune Beach, Jacksonville Beach.

For more information, go to client@ mooreboutique.com or call 904-913-



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**24** HEALTHCARE HEROES



Contributed photos

Baptist Health contributed 200 pallets of medical supplies to help ease the suffering of the Ukrainian people. The relief effort was organized by the Living Stream Church, multiple Jacksonville Rotary Clubs, Rotary International District 6970 and Global Outreach Charter Academy.

# Baptist Health contributing medical supplies to Ukraine relief efforts

Baptist Health contributed 200 pallets of medical supplies worth more than \$500,000 to Ukraine relief efforts organized by the Living Stream Church, multiple Jacksonville Rotary Clubs, Rotary International District 6970 and Global Outreach Charter Academy.

Global Outreach Charter Academy was founded by Ukrainian immigrants in 2009 with a mission to expose Jacksonville students to various languages and cultures. It currently serves 1,500 students in the Arlington area. Living Stream Church's congregation is primarily composed of Ukrainian nationals who immigrated to the United States seeking religious asylum two decades ago after the fall of the USSR.

The medical supplies will be sent to

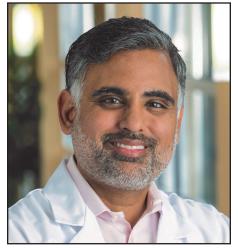
Ukraine and distributed to medical facilities treating Ukrainian citizens fleeing war zones.

"We have all watched with sadness the pain and suffering of Ukrainian people over the past weeks. Baptist Health is honored to help the medical teams who are working tirelessly to treat their patients under very trying circumstances. Our prayers are with them," said Michael A. Mayo, president and CEO, Baptist Health.

"We are pleased to support these relief efforts for Ukraine," added Rick Tresmond, vice president and supply chain officer. "Our hearts are with the medical teams and the brave VOLUNTEERS ensuring these items reach their destination."



A truck is loaded with supplies for people in Ukraine.



Dr. Saumil Oza

# Ascension St. Vincent's enrolls atrial fibrillation patients in clinical trial

Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside is enrolling local patients in a global clinical trial studying a new artificial intelligence-based software that could revolutionize the way atrial fibrillation is treated. The hospital is one of the first three U.S. hospitals to enroll patients in the Tailored-AF trial studying Volta

Medical's VX1 software to treat cardiac arrhythmias.

Volta VX1 is a new medical AI software designed to help cardiologists identify cardiac abnormalities in patients undergoing ablation treatment for persistent, drug-resistant AF. It is cleared by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration

and CE-certified by the European Union.

Atrial fibrillation, characterized by an irregular heartbeat, can lead to more serious health issues such as heart failure and stroke. During ablation, a specialized cardiologist — an electrophysiolo-

# Colorectal cancer survivor publishes memoir

"One drop of blood changed my life," says Teresa Davis-Mills, colorectal cancer survivor, colon health advocate and author of "I'm Not Sh\*ttin You," which details her fight with humor and heart.

Davis-Mills saw the first drop of blood but refused to think of it as a symptom, self-diagnosing that it would disappear in time. Time became weeks, then months. She didn't appreciate the value of a doctor-recommended colonoscopy as a preventive screening.

She does now.

When Davis-Mills finally made an appointment for the test, she was diagnosed with stage 2B colon cancer. Today, her mission is to share her story to encourage others not to make the same mistake she did by postponing her first recommended colonoscopy.

Early symptoms of colorectal cancer can be subtle or silent.

The American Cancer Society now recommends the baseline screening be moved from age 50 to 45 due to an increased diagnosis of cancer in younger people age 18 to 50. Black men and women are at high risk and have the highest diagnoses and mortality rates from colorectal cancer — about 20% higher than whites, according to the American Cancer Society. Those of

Eastern European descent, such as Ashkenazi Jews, are at high risk, too.

Colonoscopy is an effective visual tool for doctors to assess, diagnose and treat a patient all at the same time while looking inside the colon. Colorectal cancer is the second most common cause of cancer-related deaths for men and women combined. Its diagnoses have steadily increased by 2% annually for almost 20 years for those under age 50.

Davis-Mills addresses colonoscopy as the "gold standard" for colorectal cancer prevention.

important."

"As a physician, it is my hope that her story encourages other people to make cancer screening a priority for themselves and their families and friends who love them," said Leiah Walrod MD. "Colorectal cancer screening is one of the most unglamorous of all cancer screenings. But, as Teresa's story shows us, it is every bit as

Colorectal cancer staging and survival rates, according to the American Cancer Society, include: stage 1 — 90% survival rate in first five years of diagnosis, stage 4 — only 14% survival rate within first five years of diagnosis.

Davis-Mills' compelling cancer story is told with humor and heart. The book is available on Kindle or paperback on Amazon.

### Tria

Continued from 24

gist — inserts catheters through the blood vessels into the heart to burn or freeze the tissue causing abnormal electrical signals in the upper chamber, or atrium. The procedure creates scarring that restores a normal heartbeat.

The VX1 system analyzes electrical signals measured during the procedure and identifies abnormalities in real-time. The international, randomized, controlled Tailored-AF clinical trial will evaluate the outcomes of VX1-guided ablation versus standard ablation.

"This technology has already transformed how I treat patients with this type of atrial fibrillation," said Dr. Saumil Oza, cardiologist at Ascension St. Vincent's Riverside. "I've been able to treat patients who have previously not been helped by a standard ablation. It can also improve outcomes because we can precisely pinpoint the optimal ablation locations for each patient."

One of the hospital's first trial patients, Steven Preiss, age 67, said he's relieved after having the procedure.

"Now, I can walk around no problem," he said. "I'm not gasping for breath, my heart's not racing, and it's really good now. I feel 100 percent better. This experience means the world to me."

Ascension St. Vincent's is actively recruiting patients from across Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia for the trial. Potential patients may call 904-308-5761 to learn more, see if they qualify and schedule an appointment.



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Ponte Vedra Recorder · April 21, 2022 REAL ESTATE SPOTLIGHT 27

# Real Estate Spotlight PAGE 27 · THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2022 Real Estate Www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

# Housing prices rise as more moderate market begins to take hold

Although sellers remained firmly in the driver's seat as the first quarter of 2022 came to an end in March, several factors point toward a more moderate and stabilizing real estate market in Northeast Florida

The sellers' market continues to be buoyed up by a restricted active inventory of single-family homes, condominiums and townhouses on the First Coast. A combined total of 2,676 homes were available at the end of March, 7.5% fewer than in February.

"The upside is the number of new listings is 3,144, up 14% in March compared to February," said Mark Rosener, president of the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors. "This is in line with a normal uptick of new listings hitting the market in the spring season. This trend should continue over the next several months,

which will make it a little easier for buyers to find a home that meets their needs."

Rosener said the additional inventory may be due to older millennials seeking to improve on their residences.

"There are signs that older millennials are looking to upgrade or upsize from their current homes, which is creating some additional inventory in first-time homebuyer price ranges," he said. "However, these listings are quickly absorbed by the younger millennials who are looking to purchase a home for the first time."

The combined median sales price of single-family homes, townhouses and condos in Northeast Florida in March was \$350,000 with single-family homes alone climbing to \$370,050, a 4.7% increase. Meanwhile, the median sales price of single-family houses, condos and townhomes combined was \$350,000, a



4.5% increase over February and a 25% increase from last year at this time.

"The median price of single-family houses, condos and townhomes continues to move upward," Rosener said. "The moderate month-over-month increase is in line with the median price trend since November of 2021 and is more evidence that pricing in our market is beginning to return to a more stabilized level. Increasing mortgage interest rates are now putting pressure on the home affordability index that dipped to 92 over the region in March, he said.

Sales remained brisk with only 15 days on the market as the median, a 7%

increase from this time last year.

Homes that closed or are under contract pending a closing are in line with historic seasonal trends with closed sales up 22.5% over closings in February and pending sales up 4.3%, Rosener said.

"When compared to March of 2022, both closed and pending sales are down considerably as the first quarter of 2021 was inflated by pent up demand created by the COVID pandemic," he said. "All these factors continue to point to a slow movement toward a more moderate and stabilizing real estate market in Northeast

MARKET continues on Page 30





### Realtors construct wheelchair ramps for housebound amputee and disabled wife

Approximately 60 real estate professionals from the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors (NEFAR) helped an amputee, who had recently suffered from a heart attack, and his disabled wife, who has survived two strokes, gain access to their Southside home when they built two permanent wheelchair ramps March 23.

Using supplies provided by Builders Care, the charitable arm of the Northeast Florida Builders Association, the NEFAR members, working under the direction of NEFAR's Community Affairs Task Force, attached a front deck to a ramp in the front of the home and built a sizeable deck and ramp in the rear of the property,



so the couple can enjoy their backyard.

The Realtors also painted the trim on the house and plan to replace the home's shutters at a later date.

The couple, Dana and Karen Sword. are both confined to wheelchairs and have been housebound for the past eight

"We expected a little ramp to get out the door; we didn't expect all this," said Dana Sword, referring to the two large decks that were also built on the front

WHEELCHAIR continues on Page 29



**NEFAR Realtors Anita Vining and Clay Hall** of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices in San Marco participated in the wheelchair ramp building event sponsored by the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors March 23.



Member of the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors join Dana and Karen Shore on their new wheelchair ramp.

### **New Construction**



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### Real estate company collects donations for Ukrainians

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty is collecting supplies and donations to help support relief efforts for the citizens of Ukraine.

The company's Ponte Vedra/Nocatee office is assisting St. John Paul II Catholic Church Nocatee by serving as a donation drop off location.

Residents are welcome to bring donations to the company's office, 333 Village Main St., Suite 670, in the Sawgrass Village Shopping Center in Ponte Vedra Beach. Donations also may be purchased online and shipped directly to the branch office.

Donated items will be transported to distribution centers at the Poland-Ukraine border. The following items are requested:

headlamps (with batteries), red light headlamps (with batteries), sleeping pads, sleeping bags, power banks, thermal underwear, warm socks, fleece jackets, tactical pants, knee pads, gloves, raincoats, bandages, Ibuprofen/ painkillers/analgesics, alcohol wipes, medical gloves, activated carbon, gauze sponges, common cold medicine, wipes, diaper rash cream and diapers (all sizes), antiseptic medicine, baby formula and

garbage bags.

"We are proud of Ponte Vedra/ Nocatee team and community for their commitment to provide desperately needed supplies to the citizens of Ukraine," said company CEO Kevin Waugaman. "We are extremely grateful to

St. John Paul II Catholic Church Nocatee for the opportunity to support their efforts and good work."

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



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Florida Network Realty



### Wheelchair

Continued from 28

and back of the house. "We couldn't get out the door before without me hopping on one leg and pulling the wheelchairs behind me. The ramps make it so we can get out of the house. This impacts us greatly."

NEFAR's Community Affairs Task Force has several other charitable events planned this year including a visit to ReThreaded on May 5, where members of the real estate community will deconstruct old leather seats so the materials

can be used to make handmade items to be sold by the nonprofit. Also planned is a community-wide river and ocean cleanup event July 23.



**NEFAR Community Affairs chairpersons** Margarita Cavanagh and Christina Welch.



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### Market

Continued from 27

Florida."

In St. Johns County, the March median price of single-family homes leapt to \$558,700, a 15.9% increase the month before. Active inventory showed a 7.2% drop from February to 492 homes, slightly less than a one-month supply. All sellers — 101.3% — received their asking price with 41.7% of homes closing over list price. The median days on the market was 17, and 58 was the home

affordability index, a 13.4% decline from when it registered at 67 in February.

In Duval County, the March median price of single-family housing was \$330,000, up 6.5% since February 2022. The median days on the market was 15, with 41.8% of sales closing above asking price and 100.7% of sellers receiving list

Active inventory for the county was 1,184 homes, a decrease of 10.5% from last month and slightly less than a onemonth supply. The Home Affordability Index registered at 98, down 5.8% from





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### Congratulations to our March Leaders!



Diana McKee **Ponte Vedra Beach** 



Will Landay & Rachael Ridaught **Ponte Vedra Beach** 



James Valenti **Ponte Vedra Beach** 



John Richardson **Nocatee** 



**Dan Gregory Team** Nocatee



Matt & Naomi Wilkinson **Nocatee** 



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Water to preserve view lot! Screened lanai with hot tub. Open floorplan, gourmet kitchen. Wood look tile in main areas. 4 BR + Extended Office / 5th BR, 3 BA, 2,822 SF MLS 1161655 \$975,000

Matt & Naomi (904) 234-5014



THE COLONY AT TWENTY MILE THE COLONY AT TWENTY MILE

Water to preserve view lot! Kitchen with large food prep island open to dining nook and family room. Wood look tile in main areas. 4 BR + Office, 3 BA, 2,665 SF MLS 1163059 \$930,000

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| Name          |     |            |                    |  |
|---------------|-----|------------|--------------------|--|
| Parent's Name |     | Home Phone |                    |  |
| Address       |     |            |                    |  |
| City          |     | State      | Zip                | Age                                      |
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# In the Arts

Send your arts news to news@pontevedrarecorder.com

THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2022 • PAGE 33

www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

### Photographer to be featured at Butterfield Garage

The Butterfield Garage featured exhibitor in May will be photographer Juliana Romnes, who will present an artist talk at the gallery at 6 p.m. during the First Friday Art Walk on May 6.

Romnes grew up along the eastern coast of Florida and found it a constant source of inspiration. During the past five years, she developed a routine of taking early morning beach walks, photographing along the way.

'These rejuvenating walks were the perfect opportunity to slow down and pay close attention to my surroundings," she said. "Beaches are fluid spaces, constantly changing with the seasons, tides, wind and weather. I enjoy capturing fleeting moments and subtle details with my camera before they disappear."

The results move between abstraction

Each photograph is printed by the artist in editions of 10, using archival pigment inks and archival matte paper. She has traditionally exhibited smaller prints at Butterfield; however, for this display, she is showcasing larger prints of scenes captured over the past year.

Romnes developed an interest in photography at a young age. Her father, a high school photography instructor, had a strong influence on this interest. She went on to study photography at the Southeast Center for Photographic Studies at Daytona State College, eventually graduating from the University of Central Florida with a bachelor's degree in photography.

Romnes has also worked for more than 25 years in arts administration and received a master's degree in nonprofit management from the University of Central Florida. She held numerous positions at the Southeast Museum of Photography in Daytona Beach during a 20-year period, working her way from work study student to museum director.

Currently, Romnes is the gallery coordinator at Arts on Douglas, a division of the Atlantic Center for the Arts in New Smyrna Beach, where she exhibits her work and was recently honored with a solo exhibition.

Her photography has also been shown in group exhibitions at Snap!Space, Orlando; the St. Augustine Art Association, where she has won numerous awards; and the W.B. Tatter Gallery in St. Augustine, among others.

In 2021, her photographs were published in Cadence, the 2021 anthology from the Florida State Poet's Association.

Romnes has been exhibiting her photography at Butterfield Garage since 2020.

Contributed photos



**Morning Flight** 



Float

A roundup of musical acts appearing soon at local venues.

#### **PONTE VEDRA CONCERT HALL**

1050 A1A North, Ponte Vedra Beach Purchase tickets at the St. Augustine Amphitheatre box office or ticketmaster.com.

For further information about each act, go to pyconcerthall.com/events.

- **Tab Benoit** 7:30 p.m. April 16.
- Steve Hackett 7 p.m. April 19. Former Genesis guitarist. This is a new date for a rescheduled performance.
- Don Felder 8 p.m. April 20. Former Eagles singer/songwriter.
- Colin Hay 8 p.m. April 24. Former Men at Work frontman, songwriter and vocalist. This is a new date for a rescheduled
- Houndmouth 8 p.m. April 28. With special guest Sam Filiatreau.
- Béla Fleck & Abigail Washburn 8 p.m. April 29.
  - Madeleine Peyroux 8 p.m. May 8.
- Five For Fighting 8 a.m. May 11. With String Quartet.

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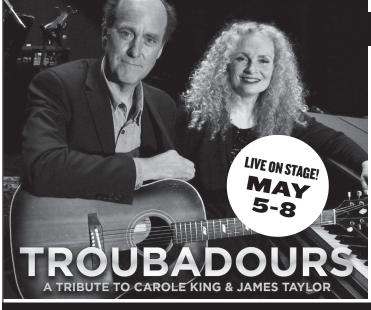
1340C A1A South, St. Augustine Box office hours are 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Saturdays. Tickets sold at the box of-

only. A valid ID is required for all box office transactions and ticket purchases must be made in person.

Tickets may also be purchased at ticketmaster.com.

For further information about each act, go to theamp.com/events.

- **Bon Iver** 6:30 p.m. April 14. With special guest, Dijon.
- ullet Beartooth: The Below Tour Part 2  $-\!\!\!-$  6p.m. April 19. With Silverstein, The Devil Wears Prada and ERRA.
- Planet Band Camp featuring Three Days **Grace** — 6 p.m. April 21. With Black Veil Brides, Ice Nine Kills and more.
- Styx 7:30 p.m. April 22. With special guest Night Ranger.
- **Billy Strings** 5:30 p.m. April 29, 30 and May 1. Performances over three nights.
- Adam Lambert 7 p.m. May 4. Tours as lead singer with Queen.
  - Rex Orange County 7 p.m. May 5.
- **Koe Wetzel** 7:30 p.m. May 6. With special guests Tim Montana & Dylan
- **Primus** "A Tribute to Kings" 8 p.m. May 7. With special guest Battles. Primus will perform Rush's "A Farewell to Kings" in its entirety.
- John Fogerty 7 p.m. May 8
- Yacht Rock Revue 8 p.m. May 14



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### Vande Berg is the powerhouse behind Romanza Festivale

St. Augustine's Romanza Festivale of Music and The Arts is coming up quickly — April 29 to May 15 — and organizers are working diligently to bring it all together.

The festival presents daily events featuring dozens of concerts, shows, exhibits and much more at locations throughout the Nation's Oldest City. Dozens of talented arts and cultural nonprofit organizations will be featured. Most events are free.

It takes a lot of people collaborating to present dozens of events over 17 days to create Romanza Festivale, but it takes a force of nature to plan, coordinate, create a schedule, find venues, work the budget and make it all run smoothly. That force of nature is Kathleen Vande Berg.

A native of Iowa, Vande Berg graduated from college with a degree in applied music, organ performance with minors in music education and English. For 30 years she taught in all educational levels from preschool to college in New Jersey, New York, Virginia, Georgia and Florida. Since retiring from the White Plains, New York, Public Schools in 2003, she has been active in the cultural life of St. Augustine.

Vande Berg and her husband, Dr. James Vande Berg, are residents of the Westminster St. Augustine community where she serves as chair of the PlayReaders Committee, is a member of the Social Committee and is currently presenting a series of organ recitals during the Lenten/Easter season. She was

named the 2020 Volunteer of the Year for Westminster.

Kathleen Vande Berg conducts the St. Augustine Chamber Singers, accompanies the North Florida Women's Chorale and serves as music director and organist at St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church. As chair of the Romanza Festivale of Arts and Culture for the last eight years, Vande Berg has planned this year's Festivale, featuring more than 35 events.

She also serves on the board of the Epicentre Alliance for the Performing Arts as secretary. She is the recipient of the ROWITA award, was an EWLI International Women's Day honoree and knighted by the Menorcan Easter Society for outstanding community service.



**Kathy Vande Berg** 

### Headliners and performing artists announced for Romanza Festivale

### Multitude of free daily events and exhibits offered over two weeks

Romanza Festivale of Music and the Arts, the renowned professional performance series with art, music and culture in historic St. Augustine, is celebrating its 11th year and includes more than 35 events and exhibits by dozens of independent nonprofit organizations and talent.

From Friday, April 29, until Saturday, May 15, daily concerts, plays, dance showcases, art exhibits, opera, wine events and more will be featured.

Performance and musical headliners confirmed for this year include Regina Torres in "Trouble in Tahiti" by Leonard Bernstein, soul vocalist Akia Uwanda, Romanza Dance Kaleidoscope, Mama Blue's Concert Special for Mother's Day, and the Music of Albert Syeles – An Evening Musicale.

According to Festivale Director

Kathleen Vande Berg, the uniqueness of this year's event is the live performances with seven chamber music concerts, three musicales, historic Lincolnville location performances, and opera, with theater and individual acts around the Nation's Oldest City.

FESTIVALE continues on Page 35





INTHEARTS 35 Ponte Vedra Recorder · April 21, 2022

### **Cultural Center seeks funding for music therapy program**



First Coast Cultural Center and its Sound Connections Music Therapy program are seeking funding to continue helping children with disabilities from six public schools in St. Johns County.

The schools are Cunningham Creek Elementary, Valley Ridge Academy, PVPV/Rawlings, Ocean Palms Elementary, along with The Webster School and Osceola Elementary, which are Title I

According to Donna Guzzo, First Coast Cultural Center's executive director and CEO, it is imperative for funding and contributions to continue the Sound Connections Music Therapy program. Some funding has gone away due to the pandemic and donors re-focusing their giving to homelessness or food pantries.

Since 2006, program classrooms have been donated for students in preschool to fifth grade to participate in music therapy, however income to compensate

therapists, supplies and trainings must be generated for continuation of services.

For a reasonable fee, children and teens can work individually with a board-certified music therapist to maximize their potential through engaging music experiences. Clinic therapists provide a wide range of services including adapted piano, guitar and ukulele lessons, among others for more than 400 children in Exceptional Student Education classrooms.

"The impact of music on these students is evident," said Candice Sirak, who serves the two Title I schools. "They respond and relate to the music, and even on days when they don't want to do 'work,' they happily join in music therapy and accomplish the same goal. They find it easy to work on social skills while dancing or playing instruments. They seem more focused after a session and are ready to learn. Many of these students don't have resources outside of school, and it is so gratifying to see them flourish because of the additional resources we provide."

"We have reached out to several foun-

dations that have helped us in the past," said Guzzo. "We have reached out to the school district to inquire about grants or other possibilities to facilitate the program, since we are servicing as early as Head Start. We are waiting to hear back as deadlines are approaching on July 1 to have therapists funded and placed for the 2022-23 school year.

Guzzo said that, without additional funding, some changes will have to be made, and the children will be impacted.

"An alternative is to hold the classes as an afterschool enrichment program for 90 minutes per class, only once a week, and have it be a self-funded program paid for by parents while hiring part time therapists for each semester," she said. "Only parents in the northwest part of St. Johns County and in Ponte

Vedra Beach responded affirmatively."

Guzzo holds a wide variety of fundraisers each year to support Sound Connections Music Therapy and additional programs and services with the major event each winter.

At a recent membership drive, guests learned about music therapy and were encouraged to donate. Also, the nonprofit's popular Holiday Shoppes during the Christmas season and the upcoming 3rd Annual Beaches A Celebration of the Arts gala event on May 15 help to benefit educational programs at First Coast Cultural Council.

For more information, contact Guzzo at dguzzo@firstcoastculturalcenter.org or 904-280-0614, ext. 1201.

Kids' Night Out, May 6 6-9pm, ages 4-11 Extreme Portrait & Abstract Sculpture in Clay



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### **Festivale**

Continued from 34

Well-known performers featured in and around the Festivale and attraction dates will include A Classic Theatre. First Coast Opera, Florida School of the Arts, River City Jazz Ensemble, Sam Pacetti, St. Augustine Art Association Plein Air Art and Exhibit, St. Augustine Community Chorus, among many more.

Romanza Festivale is the only local event that showcases all of the arts, culture and heritage. It is an annual collaboration by dozens of organizations and businesses in St. Augustine. Most events are free of charge and open to the public.

For general information, performers, schedules and locations, go to romanzafestivale.com.

Romanza Festivale is funded in part by the St. Johns County Tourist Development Council; the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural; and Florida Council on Arts and Culture.





**36** IN THE ARTS

Ponte Vedra Recorder · April 21, 2022



Contributed photo

Acclaimed Russian pianist Ilya Yakushev will present a concert to benefit Ukrainian refugees.

### Pianist to give benefit concert for Ukrainian refugees

Acclaimed Russian pianist Ilya Yakushev will present a concert to benefit Ukrainian refugees at 4 p.m. Sunday, April 24, at St. Paul's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church. Doors open at 3:15 p.m. and seating is first come, first served.

Admission is free, but donations will be accepted to benefit Ukrainian refugees through the United Nations World Food Programme.

The church is located at 465 12th Ave N., Jacksonville Beach

A reception follows the concert with an art exhibit by Keith Doles.

Anyone who cannot attend the Beaches Fine Arts Series concert but who wishes to make a donation, may do so by mailing a check to BFAS with "Ukraine" in the "memo/for" area.

Beaches Fine Arts Series issued a statement condemning the unprovoked war in Ukraine and on the Ukrainian people.

"We stand with members of the artistic community around the world who seek peace, friendship and cultural understanding, including Russian artists and all institutions who actively work towards this shared understanding on the global stage," the statement reads. "May we all look for ways to create peace in our communities — embodying the courage and hope of the Ukrainian people — and work together to achieve this goal.

The World Food Programme is the food-assistance branch of the United

Yakushev has performed in various prestigious venues worldwide, including

Great Philharmonic Hall (St. Petersburg), Victoria Hall (Singapore), Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall (New York), Davies Symphony Hall (San Francisco) and Sejong Performing Arts Center (Seoul, Korea).

His performances with orchestra include those with the Mariinsky Theatre Orchestra, St. Petersburg Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, BBC Concert Orchestra, Boston Pops, Rochester Philharmonic, Utah Symphony and many others. His critically acclaimed duo with cellist Thomas Mesa is in great demand.

Winner of the 2005 World Piano Competition, Yakushev received his first award at age 12 as a prizewinner of the Young Artists Concerto Competition in his native St. Petersburg. In 1997, he received the Mayor of St. Petersburg's Young Talents award, and in both 1997 and 1998, he won First Prize at the Donostia Hiria International Piano Competition in San Sebastian, Spain.

In 1998, he received a national honor, The Award for Excellence in Performance, presented to him by the Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation in Moscow. Most recently, he became a recipient of the prestigious Gawon International Music Society's Award in Seoul, Korea.

Yakushev attended the Rimsky-Korsakov College of Music in his native St. Petersburg and subsequently came to New York City to attend Mannes College of Music, where he studied with legendary pianist Vladimir Feltsman.

### **CANVAS, STAGE AND MORE**

### Community Chorus plans Masterworks Concert

St. Augustine Community Chorus returns with its Masterworks Concert at 7 p.m. May 14 at Ancient City Baptist Church, 27 Sevilla St., St. Augustine.

In "Emerging Light," the chorus will add its collective voices to a masterworks concert celebrating rejuvenation.

The chorus will perform from parts 2 and 3 of "The Messiah." Handel's work includes familiar pieces such as "The Hallelujah Chorus" and "Worthy is the Lamb." This is an opportunity to hear some rarely performed but equally moving pieces.

In the prelude to "The Messiah," the concert will include more modern

works. The singers will be accompanied by a chamber orchestra.

This is a Romanza Festivale concert. For tickets and information, go to staugustinecommunitychorus.org.

### Young performers to be featured in talent showcase

First Coast Future Stars will hold a concert featuring 11 talented young residents of the First Coast from 3:30 to 6 p.m. April 23 at Maharlika Hall and Restaurant, 14255 Beach Blvd. Ste E, Jacksonville.

Featured performers are Charlotte Apostol, Portia Apostol, Julianna Carangue, Nathan Elwood, Gemma Matthews, Alexa Meriwether, Amara Powell, LeeAnn Purvis, Kian Sanchez, Alec Webster and Emery Williams.
Admission is \$15 at the door and includes light refreshments.

### Cummer exhibits art from collection, loans

The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens announces "Revolve: Spotlight on the Permanent Collection," a dynamic exhibition of works from the permanent collection in conversation with loans from global contemporary artists working across media. The exhibit runs through Nov. 13.

The exhibition is presented as part of the museum's ongoing celebration of its 60th anniversary year. Since its opening in 1961, the museum's permanent collection has grown from 60 objects bequeathed by founder Ninah Cummer to more than 5,000 objects.

"Revolve: Spotlight on the Permanent Collection" pairs works by artists in the collection with those of contemporary artists, including Tiffany Chung, Titus Kaphar, Amy Sherald, Monir Shahroud Farmanfarmaian, Juan Fontanive, Mildred Thompson, Jean-Ulrick Désert, Pat Steir, Ben Durham, Yeesookyoung, Lalla Essaydi and Calida Garcia Rawles.

This exhibition is sponsored by the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens, and Ronald and Karen Rettner are presenting sponsors.

For more information, go to cummermuseum.org.

Ponte Vedra Recorder · April 21, 2022 SPORTS 37

# S OO I S NEW ON THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2022 • PAGE 37

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### 'Lightning line' leads Sharks past Panthers for district title

### **By Anthony Richards**

The offenses for Ponte Vedra and Nease found their rhythm in the second half of the District 2-2A boys lacrosse championship, and it was the Sharks that set the pace en route to a 12-7 victory April 13.

The Sharks led 4-1 at halftime, as both defenses and goaltenders reigned supreme during the first half.

"They (Nease) have a great goalie in (senior) Gavin Koors, and it can be deflating when you get good looks after good looks and the goalie just keeps making saves," Ponte Vedra head coach Chris Polanski said.

However, the teams combined to score 14 goals in an explosive second half that saw the Sharks secure the district title behind strong offensive outings from juniors Corey Bloss and Maddox Johnson, who help anchor the Sharks' "lightning line."

"Coach did a great job before the season of putting all the big guys on a line and all the smaller guys on another line," Johnson said. "We call it 'thunder and lightning,' and both lines are really bonding, and it's developed some strong connections."

What makes the lightning line so dangerous is the speed that each player possesses across the field, which presents problems for opposing defenses.

"Corey and Maddox have been playing together since they were very young, and much like other players on the team, they can be very streaky," Polanski said. "When they are feeling it, it's like 'oh my gosh.' It is fun when those two get in their groove."

Despite being only up by three goals at

the halftime break, the Sharks knew that if they continued to play their game the shots would begin to find the back of the net.

"We had a lot of open shots in the first half, but they just weren't landing," Johnson said. "With every shot we take, we're calibrating, and finally our shots started landing and we were able to pull ahead."

While Koors did his part to keep the Panthers in the game by making some great saves, it was senior Nolan Parlette who was up to the challenge at the other end as well.

"We're very fortunate where we have two of the best goalies in the state," Polanski said. "Nolan is our senior leader and our rock. We can really suck the air out of teams when Nolan is just snatching up passes left and right and able to turn and hit someone 60 yards on a rope up the field and generate offense. Nolan is just a special player."

The Sharks will need that reliable play in goal moving forward if they hope to make a deep postseason run, as they will be sure to face some potent offenses along the path.

Leading the stingy defensive effort for the Sharks in the title game was senior Joey Luczak, who were able to stay in system and hold their ground even when the Panthers were able to push back and cut into the lead during the second half.

Winning the district title provided a sense of redemption and relief, especially for the senior class, after the Sharks lost in overtime in the championship against Creekside a year ago.

"This game was definitely one of our best performances," Luczak said. "We



Photos by Anthony Richards

The Nease Panthers celebrate one of their six second half goals.



The Ponte Vedra Sharks defeated rival Nease to win the 2022 District 2-2A boys lacrosse championship.

were all over the field with our heads on a swivel. I think we've really come together with our communicating and are just really playing as one."

Luczak believes that the district title could be the start of something special for the Sharks.

"I came to Ponte Vedra my sophomore year with my best friend, and our goal was to win a state championship every year," Luczak said. "Sophomore year got but short by COVID and last year was cut short in districts, so now this year I'm really just ready to get after it."

### Sharks outscore opponents 39-5 en route to district title

### **By Anthony Richards**

The Ponte Vedra girls lacrosse team showcased their ability to focus on the task at hand with a convincing 17-4 win over Fletcher in the District 2-2A Championship April 13.

Despite playing under an interim head coach and dealing with several outside distractions in recent weeks, the squad was able to come together and achieve one of their goals heading into the season.

Winning a district title is always special for everyone involved, but especially

for defender Kenzie Conway, who is the lone senior on this year's team.

"With everything that has happened this year, I am very proud of how the team came together," Conway said. "I think each of us took our own role and we succeeded as a team, which is really exciting."

The result in the title game was very similar to when the Sharks faced the Senators about a week prior to cap the regular season, a contest the Sharks won 15-1 April 8.

As the season has gone, the Sharks have continued to make strides and see

improvement as the team's plethora of young players have developed relationships with fellow teammates throughout the year.

That progressive growth is one thing that has Conway so excited and looking forward to the state playoffs right around the corner.

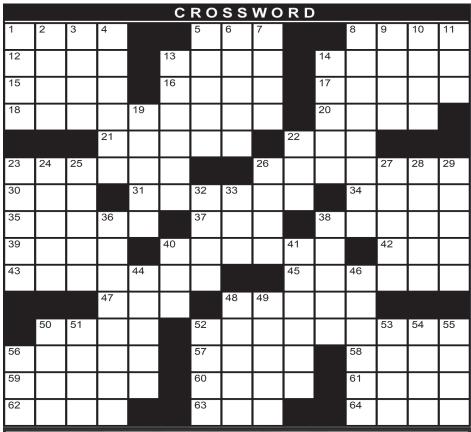
"From the beginning of the year, we've gotten better with every single practice and game," Conway said. "We just continue to put our best effort forward. We're just going one step at a time, and next up is regionals and then hopefully onto states."

With their district title performance against the Senators the Sharks secured the No. 3 seed in Region 1-2A and will host sixth-seeded Creekside High at 7 p.m. April 22.

If the Sharks play defense like they did during the district tournament, the state playoffs could be a memorable one indeed.

Junior goalie Ava LaManna stood tall in net and her defense in front of her proved up to whatever challenge they faced against the Senators and Sandal-

**DISTRICT** continues on **Page 38** 



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#### ACROSS

- 1. Urban haze
- 5. Da. oui, or si. e.g.
- 8. Drug-induced state
- 12. UK art museum
- 13. Molten rock
- 14. Hip-hop or classical, e.g.
- 15. Sportscaster Andrews
- 16. Angle between branch and offshoot
- 17. Bioweapon
- 18. \*Reaper inventor
- 20. Muslim holy man
- 22. \*The invention of hand sanitiz-
- er centered on alcohol as this
- 23. Stitched again
- 26. Decipherable
- 30. United Nations labor agency,
- 31. Armed robber, on an Indian subcontinent
- 34. Heart of the matter
- 35. Impertinent
- 37. Be in arrears
- 38. Belgian port city
- 39. European erupter
- 40. Popular women's magazine 42. Back then
- 43. Make a new sketch
- 45. Canine's coat
- 47. Digital audiotape, acr.
- 48. Corner joint
- crazv
- 52. \*Ground beef steak inventor
- 56. Nordic glühwein
- 57. Substance abuser
- 58. Kind of testimony
- 59. Soft twilled fabric of silk or
- 60. Casanova, e.g.
- 61. Anger on road
- 62. Flock's affirmation
- 63. Short for ensign 64. NBA shot

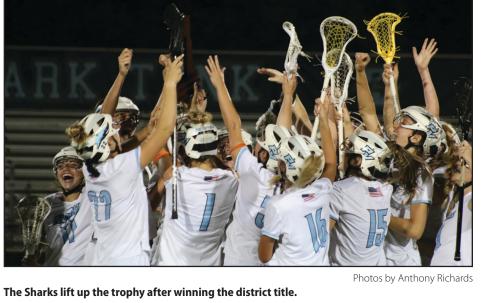
- DOWN
- 1. Flower part
- 2. Painter Chagall 3. Ear-related
- 4. DNA sequence
- 5. Vertical coordinate axis
- 6. Put out on a curb
- 7. \*Poliomyelitis vaccine inventor
- 8. \*Life-saving maneuver inventor 9. Machu Picchu group
- 10. Sinister
- 11. Pecking mother
- 14. Romantic Norwegian com-
- 19. Disturbing public peace
- 22. Acquire
- 23. Early one
- 24. Carry away, in a way
- 25. \*Edison invented things for its reproduction
- 27. Flesh of fish

- 28. Foot-forward squat
  - 29. Glorify
  - 32. \*First commercial revolver inventor
  - 33. Harry Potter's mail carrier
  - 36. \*Knitted sweater with open front inventor
  - 38. #4 Down matter, pl.
  - 40. Back of the boat
  - 41. Withdraw from working life
  - 44. Frustration, in print
  - 46. Pergolas
  - 48. \*Wide-mouth jar inventor
  - 49. Intestinal obstruction
  - 50. Undesirable location
  - 51. Ruptured
  - 52. Certainly
  - 53. Russia's mountain range
  - 54. Indian music
  - 55. Big Bang's original matter
  - 56. Geological Society of America

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### District

Continued from 37

wood Saints in the district semifi-

The Sharks only surrendered five goals combined in the two district tournament games they played.

"I feel like I've taught the younger girls some lessons and hopefully have helped pave the way for them in these upcoming years," Conway said. "It's an honor to be a captain on this team."



Ponte Vedra junior Madison Purdy chases after a ball against Fletcher in the district championship

### **Bolles student-athletes commit** to colleges, universities

Ponte Vedra Beach residents Hansen Englert and Ryan Anderson were among nine Bolles student-athletes representing six different sports who were honored on April 13 for committing to a particular college or university to continue their athletic and academic careers. See the complete list of student-athletes below.

Family, friends, classmates, coaches and faculty gathered in McGehee Auditorium on the San Jose Campus to celebrate this achievement. Athletic Director Matt Morris welcomed everyone, and coaches introduced their respective athletes.

The following Bolles student-athletes were honored:

### Girls' Basketball

Cortney Smith, Ave Maria University

#### **Football**

Hansen Englert, Wofford College Myles Johnson, Sewanee: The University of the South

### **Boys' Lacrosse**

Tanner Furyk, Sewanee: The University of the South

### **Boys' Swimming**

Louie Body, US Air Force Academy



Bolles student-athletes who have committed to colleges or universities include, from left, Cortney Smith, Hansen Englert, Myles Johnson, Tanner Furyk, Louie Body, Ryan Anderson, Jonathan Lorbeer, Emily Rohan and Shania Espada.

### **Boys' Track & Field**

Ryan Anderson, University of Chicago Jonathan Lorbeer, Charleston Southern University

### **Girls' Track & Field**

Emily Rohan, Boston College

#### **Volleyball**

Shania Espada, LaGrange College

Forty-two student athletes were honored in prior ceremonies this school year for a total of 51 college athletic commitments from Bolles student-athletes in 2021-22.

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