

PONTE VEDRA RECORDER

May 19, 2022
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75 cents

Not your average newspaper, not your average reader

PonteVedraRecorder.com



"Best Of" nominations begin Friday
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All About Pets
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INSIDE: CHECK IT OUT!
The Recorder's Entertainment EXTRA featuring TV listings, streaming information, puzzles and more!



COMING TOGETHER OVER PANCAKES

Residents came together and mixed fellowship with pancakes during the Inaugural Ponte Vedra Pancake Festival and Community Table May 14.

Photo by Anthony Richards

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Send us your news

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



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BRIEFS

Lutheran Church plans 'Rummage For Riches' sale

Lord of Life Lutheran Church will hold its third annual "Rummage for Riches" sale from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, May 21.

Lord of Life Lutheran Church is located at 276 Roscoe Blvd. North in Ponte Vedra Beach. For more information, go to LordofLifePVB.org.

CareerSource virtual hiring fair is May 19

Job seekers can consider work opportunities available from more than 30 employers throughout the region during the CareerSource Northeast Florida virtual hiring fair from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursday, May 19.

Job seekers must register to take part in the hiring event. Registration is open at bit.ly/mayvirtualhiringfair.

For more information about this and other events, go to careersourcenefl.com.

Shredding event planned in Nocatee

A community shredding event, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Palm Valley, will be held from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, May 21, at the Nocatee branch of Vystar. The event benefits local Rotary charities.

The cost is \$20 for the first bag or box. Donations for additional bags are optional. Cash is appreciated, though credit cards will be accepted.

BRIEFS continues on Page 3

WE'RE ALL EARS

Questions?
Comments?
Story Ideas?
Let us know how we're doing.

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Briefs

Continued from 2

The address for the Vystar branch is 100 Village Lake Drive, Ponte Vedra Beach.

Workshops planned for flood mitigation grant program

The City of St. Augustine will offer several open house workshops with Quality Engineering and Surveying to provide flood mitigation assistance guidance to residents and will also include a workshop specifically for

contractors.

The workshops will be held in The Alcazar Room of City Hall, 75 King St., at 4 p.m. Tuesday, May 24, for contractors, and 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. Wednesday, May 25, for residents.

As part of the application process, residents must provide three elevation and or reconstruction quotes from qualified elevation firms. However, many qualified firms were not able to participate last year.

Contractors who provide elevation, reconstruction or flood mitigation services are encouraged to attend the contractor workshop.

Following the resident workshop, Quality Engineering and Surveying staff will be available to schedule individual appointments and site visits with residents.

For questions in advance of the workshop, contact Zachary Gibbons, project coordinator, Quality Engineering and Surveying, at 225-698-1600 or by email at zgibbons@qesla.com.

St. Johns County to feature artwork by foster care community

May is National Foster Care Month, and to mark the occasion, St. Johns County officials invite the community

to view the “Celebrating Experience Through Diverse Voices” art exhibition.

The exhibit will feature challenges and triumphs experienced by the foster care community. The artists include children, parents and staff represented by Guardian Ad Litem.

The art display is free and open to the public now to May 31 in the Rotunda Gallery of the St. Johns County Administration Building, located at 500 San Sebastian View in St. Augustine.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

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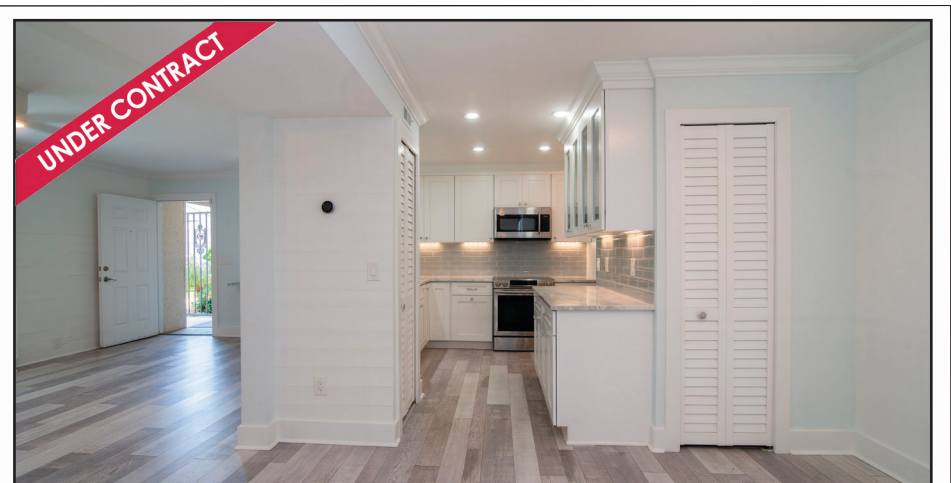
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Nominations begin May 20

2022

BEST *of the* **BEST**

of Ponte Vedra

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pontevedrarecorder.com

The Ponte Vedra Recorder, celebrating 53 years of community news excellence, will launch our fourth annual **BEST OF THE BEST of Ponte Vedra, 32081 & 32082.**

YOU, our valued readers, now have the chance to nominate your favorite businesses in various categories online. Online voting begins June 13th after nominations are complete.

HURRY, last day to nominate is June 12th!

www.pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2022

Send us your nominations for Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra



The Ponte Vedra Recorder will launch its fourth annual Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra contest, covering ZIP codes 32082 and 32081, on May 20.

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

Nominations can be made on the website at pontevedrarecorder.com/bestof2022.

Anyone can nominate a business or person, and there is no limit to the number of nominations each person can

submit.

Online voting will begin once nominations are complete. The nominees who receive the most votes will be named 2022 Best of the Best of Ponte Vedra. Nominations and voting are completely free and open to the public.

The Best Of platform on The Recorder's website will feature lists of nominees in an easy-to-use format. Nominees can participate in advertising packages that promote their entry by expanding their listing to feature additional details on the business.

Winners will receive a free framed

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

Winners will be notified by Ponte Vedra Recorder staff at the end of July.

For more information or to find out how to get your nominated business or product involved in promotions that will be going on throughout the contest cycle, contact your sales representative, email susan@pontevedrarecorder.com or call 904-686-3938.

MSD discusses starting police department

By Anthony Richards

The creation of the Ponte Vedra Beach Municipal Service District's own police department and whether it is a possibility was discussed during the most recent MSD meeting May 9.

Board treasurer Gary Jurenovich led the talk by presenting info he compiled that suggests a police department is feasible and laid out his plan which he believes the MSD should seriously consider.

"I believe the MSD is a premier community, and I'm just trying to keep it premier," Jurenovich said.

Having its own police department is not a new concept for the MSD, which had one in place prior to entering into a contract with the Sheriff's Office in 1990 to ensure deputies were on patrol and specially designated within the district 24/7.

However, within the past year the contract expired and after much back and forth between the two sides, the Sheriff's Office chose to turn down a contract presented by the MSD to extend the previous arrangement.

Since then, the MSD has resumed having extra patrol by paying off-duty Sheriff's Office deputies on top of the regular patrol already provided by the department

as part of the county.

Jurenovich pointed out that the cost for extra patrol continues to increase with each year that passes, stating that the MSD paid \$330,000 or \$30 per hour in their contract with the Sheriff's Office in 2020-2021. That amount raised to \$435,000 or \$40 per hour in 2021-2022 with off-duty deputy costs, and he expects the rate to rise to \$55 per hour beginning this month.

The contract at \$55 per hour would be \$598,000, which would be a \$268,000 increase in a two-year span.

According to Jurenovich, the increase in cost does not match the amount of extra patrol the MSD has been getting of late, as he stated under the former contract the MSD was receiving 208 hours of extra patrol per week and now that number is 62 hours per week.

"The MSD needs the visual of somebody driving around 24/7 like we used to have," Jurenovich said.

To improve the current situation, Jurenovich proposed that the MSD begin the process of starting its own police department by spending an estimated \$163,600 to purchase two Ford Explorer police interceptor patrol vehicles and equipping them with the proper lights, radios, graphics and radar (\$100,000) and pur-

chasing patrol equipment and cell phones for three eventual officers (\$33,600).

The last thing he proposed they do during the current fiscal year is enter into an interlocal agreement with the Sheriff's Office for frequency use (\$30,000).

He used the City of St. Augustine and the City of St. Augustine Beach as examples, stating that although they have their own police department, the municipality still maintains a working relationship with the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office, and that would be the case in the MSD as well.

"When you dial 9-1-1, someone is still going to show up," Jurenovich said.

After all the purchases, Jurenovich estimates that \$176,600 would be left over in the current budget to return to the taxpayers in 2022.

His plan continues into the fiscal year 2022-2023, where he proposed the MSD begin hiring a staff to operate their police department. He projected the staff would cost roughly \$385,300 to pay and insure a police chief and two officers.

He urged the board to look down the road and think about what path is best for the community's future.

"This board has always talked about accountability," Jurenovich said. "There have been 31 different off-duty officers.

We don't have the neighborhood police presence that we need. With this plan, the chief will report to this board."

MSD chairman Al Hollon disagreed with some of the numbers that were proposed by Jurenovich.

Jurenovich said that he would be happy to discuss any part of his plan further and it has been kept on the agenda to be discussed once again at a future meeting.

Trustee John Cellucci remarked that he is interested in hearing more and even hinted that he would like to eventually see it as a topic at a public workshop.

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Edwards & Ragatz, P.A.

Kate Wagner is the owner of Sawgrass Pet Resort, as she is a pet lover at heart. It was her passion for animals that led her to build and open the facility in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Kate Wagner

As told to Anthony Richards

Tell us a little about yourself and your background.

Our family lives by a handful of mottos. One of our favorites is “Good people do good things, period.”

We also try to live our lives full of love, laughter, purpose and to be kind.

As an active family of four, Scott, my husband, is a dentist who owns Eccella Smiles in Jacksonville Beach.

We have two teenagers, Austin (15) and Leeli (13), plus two Weimaraners, one cat, two geckos and one snake.

How did you get involved with the Sawgrass Pet Resort and how long have you been a part of it?

I left the interior design industry in 2013 to become a full-time mom, but since animal rescue had always been a part of my life along with my affinity for Weimaraners (my spirit animal), I became the Southeast vice president for the Grayter Good Weimaraner Rescue.

My passion for animals propelled me to design, build and open Sawgrass Pet Resort.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

My mission is still the same, which is to provide a safe, active, recreational and healthy environment while improving the quality of life for your dog and to serve our local community.

As a small locally owned and operated business, we understand your pup is a part of your family and an extension of yourself.

We cater to the individual needs of your dog and the client/pup experience, meaning all dogs are not the same, and they require different engagement and enrichment.

What are the primary goals/services provided by the business?

We offer daycare, boarding, grooming, training, dog walking and dog bakery services.

You can add bedtime stories, personal playtime and body massages to any visit your pup has with us.

We have both outdoor and indoor play areas so that they can enjoy the sunshine, ocean air and birdwatching when the weather is lovely.

One of our SPR catchphrases is, ‘Dogs big and small, we love them all,’ and my team and I do love your pups.

We also sponsor dogs that are in need of adoption and try to educate people on rescue, fostering and adoption.

We run pet food drives and collect donations for our “Round Up For Rescue” fund and distribute those quarterly to our local rescues.

We are grateful to our loyal clients and community who have helped to support us and all of the locally owned and operated businesses over the past two years when so many have closed their doors.



Photo courtesy of Kate Wagner

Kate Wagner with her blue Weimaraner, Bella on the beach. The beach is one of Wagner's favorite places.

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

We love the Ponte Vedra Beach culture, along with its beautiful weather, beaches, clubs and all of our small local shops.

Ponte Vedra Beach is a close-knit community and a big dog community that we are lucky to call home.

Although our schedules are full, we try to balance our busy lives with beach walks and regular trips to the mountains to disconnect and reconnect.

Life is short, do what you love with who you love.

What do you like to do in your free time?

When I do have some free time to myself, I like to walk the beach with my blue Weimaraner, Bella.

She is an expert level “fisherwoman” and loves to run through the incoming tides to catch fish.

The only thing she likes more is the hummus at the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club.

If you see us and you’re not a fish or a chickpea, she probably won’t notice you, but wave hello anyway. #32082doglife

Community gathers for pancakes and fellowship

By Anthony Richards

Events that bring the community together are always special, but not many of them center around pancakes.

That is what made the Inaugural Ponte Vedra Pancake Festival and Community Table so unique and special for those



The St. Johns County Sheriff's Office deputies prepare pancakes. Their pancakes won the judges portion of the event's contest.

who attended the event hosted by Christ Episcopal Church.

All the attendees live within the Ponte Vedra community, which was the idea behind the event, to bring neighbors together and spark conversation with the hopes of building a tighter and stronger community.

Several tables were set up around the church's courtyard with different local organizations represented and cooking pancakes, often with their own creative twist to the recipe, to win the best pancake contest.

"This event has been about a month or two in the making, and there have been a lot of people involved to make it happen," said Joe Bove with Beaches Rotaract. "Good people, a good band and good pancakes."

Residents from Phillips Avenue, the first of the streets behind the church, had a booth featuring traditional pancakes but offered an array of toppings to choose from, which they called "grandma's recipe."

"We went with a simple and classic recipe, but you know that anytime grandma is in charge, you may get to load



Photos by Anthony Richards

Ponte Vedra Beach Rotary Club made cappuccino chocolate chip pancakes.

up on all kinds of stuff that you normally wouldn't have at your parents' house," Phillips Avenue resident Emily Schneider said. "We really decided to go all in for the kids vote."

The strategy worked, as the group was named the people's choice winner.

"The opportunity to bring everyone together cannot be passed up," Schneider said.

Coming up just short of the top position but garnering a lot of votes was the Ponte Vedra Beach Rotary Club, whose cappuccino chocolate chip pancakes

were a hit, as well as Christ Episcopal Church's men's bible study group and their Nutella-stuffed pancakes.

Christ Episcopal Church took a completely different approach by making waffles instead of pancakes and had several fruit toppings to go on top.

The St. Johns County Sheriff's Office won the portion of the contest that was voted on by the judges, who chose their pancakes, because despite going with a simple approach, the batter had a certain

PANCAKES continues on Page 10

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- Google Review

School Board member addresses library books

Controversial books in public school libraries has been a recent topic of public dialogue. St. Johns County School Board member Kelly Barrera addressed that issue in a recent conversation.

Q. Are local parents concerned that there are inappropriate or explicit books being made available in our public schools?

A. Yes, I have heard from many parents who feel strongly on this issue. In fact, I am one of them. Several years ago, I became aware of a sexually explicit book in my daughter's classroom, and I challenged it. Parents have every right to be aware of the types of books and materials being shared with their children in the public schools and challenge those materials if they believe them to be inappropriate. Our school district, along with many other local, state and national organizations and agencies are reviewing media collections and procurements.

Q. How can a parent find out what books are in their child's school library?

A. They can visit <https://sjcsd.follettdestiny.com> and click on the link for their child's school to search for a particular book.

Q. If a parent learns of a book or books with which they are uncomfortable, what are their options?

A. Parents have two options available to them. The first is to "self-select" books to which they wish to prevent their own child or children from having access. To do so, they complete the following form: <https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/media/wp-content/uploads/sites/127/2022/02/Individualized-School-Library-Access-Plan.pdf>

If a parent believes that the material in question should not be available to any St. Johns County Public Schools students, he or she can file a Reconsideration Form to alert the schools and other parents to what they found objectional and to suggest alternative materials for consideration: <https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/media/wp-content/uploads/sites/127/2021/11/Request-for-Reconsideration-1.pdf>

Q. How does the reconsideration process work?

A. Once a book is submitted for reconsideration, it is reviewed by the school's Media Advisory Committee comprised of a media specialist, administrator, teachers and parents. The person submitting the complaint has an opportunity to present to the committee, which makes a decision



regarding the book.

If the parent disagrees with the committee's decision, he or she may appeal it to the school district, where the review process is repeated. Once a decision is made at the district level, that decision may be appealed before the School Board, which makes the final determination.

Q. During the time a book is under reconsideration, is the book placed in quarantine?

A. When the school district pulls copies of the challenged book from the collection to provide each committee member with a copy to read, there are typically only a few copies of that book available.

In most cases, this process essentially creates a quarantine for many of the challenged books.

I can certainly appreciate how parents would want materials they find objectionable to be removed immediately. But the reconsideration process was created to ensure that books were fairly and thoroughly examined prior to removal.

In the past, some have tried to remove great works of literature such as "To Kill a Mockingbird" and "Huckleberry Finn" from school libraries because they found them objectionable. Our process ensures that parents have a means to remove sexually explicit or other inappropriate books while providing an opportunity for community and School Board input.

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Red Coats assist with new Sanctuary on 8th playground equipment

As Sanctuary on 8th Street celebrates its 30th anniversary this year, the organization was pleased to hold a ribbon cutting ceremony May 6 for new playground equipment at its location at 120 E. 8th Street.

The new equipment includes an Explorer Dome from KOMPAN that was purchased earlier this year and installed recently on the grounds of Sanctuary on 8th.

Similar equipment can be found at the Boone Park playground in Avondale,



Children play on the newly donated playground equipment at Sanctuary on 8th Street.

near St. Johns Avenue. The high-quality climbing equipment provides youth of all ages countless ways to be creative, get active and learn through play.

Funding from the Red Coats of THE PLAYERS Championship (past volunteer chairmen), and Springfield neighbor and long-time donor Diane Graese was critical in securing the new equipment.

UPS provided the mulch and volunteers to install a safety surface below the dome.

“We are grateful to the Red Coats, UPS, Diane Graese and all our supporters over the years who have helped make the Sanctuary a financially sound organization,” said Rick Carlidge, executive director for Sanctuary on 8th Street. “Without you, we wouldn’t have been able to invest in this wonderful equipment. Thank you to everyone who helped bring these smiles to our youths’ faces!”

Carlidge and members of the organization’s board of directors were at the ceremony and spoke about the project and answered questions from guests.



Photos courtesy of PGA Tour

The Red Coats of the THE PLAYERS Championship helped joined Springfield neighbor and long-time Sanctuary on 8th Street donor Diane Graese to fund new playground equipment for the organization.

“On behalf of THE PLAYERS Championship and all of our Red Coats, we are so excited to see how this new playground equipment is going to benefit youth for years to come,” said Jared Rice, executive director of THE PLAYERS. “As Rick shared, it was truly a community-wide effort in making this project a reality. We are honored to support Sanctuary on 8th Street’s efforts in positively impacting the lives of children and families in the community we call home.”

For 30 years, Sanctuary on 8th Street has provided a safe haven for the Spring-

field area children after the school day is over.

During those three decades, Sanctuary staff and volunteers have provided a continuum of services annually to more than 100 children ages 5 to 14. The programs encourage and empower these children and their families by ministering to their spiritual, physical, social and intellectual needs.

For more information about the organization, go to sanctuaryon8th.org, call 904-356-3588 or email rick@sanctuaryon8th.org.

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Photos by Anthony Richards

Roughly 1,500 slabs of bacon were cooked for the event.



Several tables had toppings to put on their pancakes, including the booth setup by Christ Episcopal Church.



Residents from Phillips Avenue celebrate after their pancakes won the people's choice contest.

Pancakes

Continued from 7

flavor that stood out, which made their pancakes delicious even without toppings.

“Our guys came up with the classic pancake, but we added vanilla and cinnamon into the batter,” Lt. Josh Underwood said. “We had a blast.”

A line of tables butted up against each other to create a 100-foot-long table that sat in the middle of the courtyard, where residents of all ages could sit down and

mingle.

“It’s even better than I had hoped,” said Jack Parker, one of the people who helped turn the idea into a reality. “All these people have brought so much energy. People have just been having fun, and that was the main idea behind it.”

Pancakes and waffles were not the only breakfast food at the event, as 1,500 slabs of bacon were also cooked earlier in the morning prior to the event.

According to Parker, the feedback was so positive that they have already started talking about doing it again next year.

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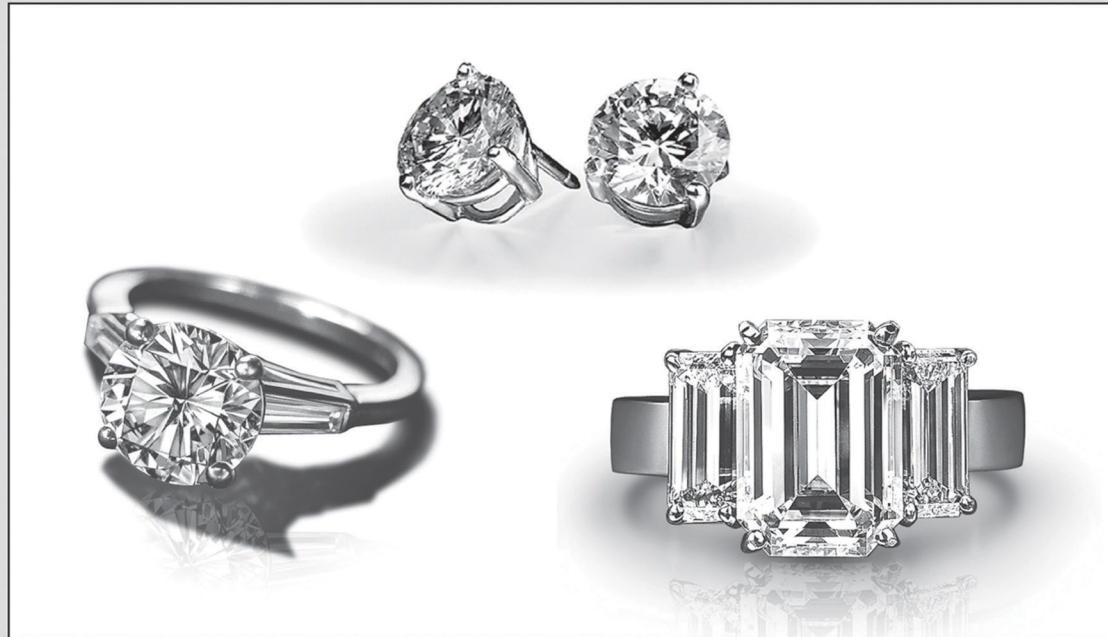
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4.01ct	Round	GIA & AGS	0 Ideal	G	VS ₂	\$ 125,000	\$ 89,000
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ACTING FOR THE FUN OF IT

Nocatee drama camp embraces child's creative side

By Anthony Richards

Sheri Lahris has been involved in the acting industry for decades, but what she enjoys most is anytime she gets the opportunity to work with children.

Her passion for teaching the art of acting led to her partnering with the First Coast Cultural Center introducing the Nocatee Drama Camp for the first time this summer.

The camp will be held on Mondays and Fridays throughout June and July from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at Care Connect+ located at the Flagler Health+ Village in Nocatee.

"I have 35 years in the business, and in the '90s I worked for Disney and MGM Studios," Lahris said. "I worked with the Mickey Mouse kids and on 'Saved by the Bell.'"

Some of the actors and actresses she has worked with include Macaulay Culkin, Keri Russell and Ryan Gosling.

According to Lahris, the majority of drama camps take a progressive approach with the goal of adding new elements that will eventually lead up to a performance at the end of camp.

However, her camp will be different because it will not end with a performance, and as a result parents can sign their children up for either the entire

camp or pick and choose which days during the two months work best with their summer schedules.

"Kids don't have a lot of time to do make-believe and just be creative with their friends," Lahris said. "This will allow them to explore that side."

The camp is open for children ages 8 to 17.

Parents have asked Lahris in the past why she prefers such a wide age range, and her answer has remained the same.

"If you're watching any film or show, you can see that there are all ages performing in them," Lahris said. "It's fun to watch the interactions between the different age groups."

She believes that not having a performance will take some of the pressure off of the children and allow them to put all their focus into properly learning the skill of acting and do so while not forgetting to have fun.

"Kids are just naturals," Lahris said. "As adults we may not want to say of do something, but kids just say what their thinking."

Some of the fun exercises where children can showcase their creativity include saying their phone number as if they were mad at someone or as if they had won the lottery.

Such exercises can have a huge impact on helping traditionally shy children become more comfortable and open.

According to Lahris, it has been documented that many actors and actresses would be classified as shy or introverts in their everyday lives, using Johnny



Photos courtesy of First Coast Cultural Center

Sheri Lahris is partnering with the First Coast Cultural Center to hold a drama camp in Nocatee this summer.

Carson, former host of "The Tonight Show," as an example.

"I always find it amazing that in the first couple of classes kids will be shy, but then they feel more comfortable and begin to come out of their shell."

Parents can register their children in the camp by going to firstcoastcultural-center.org and clicking on "art camps" under the "programs" tab. The camp can be found by scrolling down and then clicking on the "info and registration" box beneath the camp description.



Parents can scan the QR code with their phone to register for the First Coast Cultural Center's Nocatee Drama Camp.

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New playground designed for children of all abilities

St. Johns County Parks and Recreation has announced the addition of its first-ever, all-inclusive playground, made possible by a community partnership. At the Field of Dreams Playground at Aberdeen Park, all children will have the opportunity to play regardless of their physical abilities.

The new all-inclusive playground expansion is customized with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible play. It includes an all-inclusive whirl, ADA swings, a sensory dome, musical pieces and cantata chimes for sound. The play areas are wheelchair-accessible with wide paths and ramps.

The playground is surrounded by mature trees and offers shaded areas and a pavilion nearby. Children of all abilities can experience endless creative play through motion, sensory and socialization that encourages everyone to come together.

The all-inclusive playground was made possible through the collaboration of St. Johns County Parks and Recreation, Northwest Tower Committee, the Field of Dreams Board of Directors, members of the Creeks Athletics Association, parents, coaches and volunteers.

Aberdeen Park is located at 1401 Shetland Drive in St. Johns.



Contributed photos

A new playground in St. Johns gives children the opportunity to play regardless of their physical abilities.

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2022 SUMMER Events

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Sports Camp @ St. Paul's Gym, 215 5th St. N., Jacksonville Beach Runs June 6 through July 29! 8 Sessions. Sign-up for the day, the week or the whole summer! Sports camp is open for girls and boys 5 years old through rising 6th graders. Hours: 8am-3pm Extended Care: 3pm-6pm Cost: Sports Camp \$150 per week 8:00am-3:00pm. Extended Care 3pm-6pm \$50 per week. Single Day Rates: Monday-Thursday \$35 per day. Friday -\$35 pizza party and T-shirt		
Tommy Hulihan's Summer Basketball Camp 9am-12pm 2 Sessions for boys currently in 2nd-4th grade: June 6 -10 and June 27 -July 1 2 Sessions for boys currently in 4th-7th grade: June 20 -24 and July 11 -15	Beaches Basketball Summer League Dates: May 28-July 30 Cost: \$150. Deadline to register Mon. May 1. (after this date price increase, if space available.) Open to girls and boys 3 years old through 5th grade (use current grade).	Basketball Skills Training Basketball Training including Individual as well as small group training. Also, Shooting School and our Player Development Programs. TBA

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- The Discovery School: June 6-10, June 13-17, June 20-24, June 27-July 1, July 11-15
- The Bolles School Ponte Vedra: ALL CAMPS FULL
- Jewish Community Alliance: June 13-17, July 11-15, July 25-29
- Jacksonville Country Day: June 20-24, July 5-8, July 25-29
- San Juan Del Rio (Julington Creek): July 5-8, July 18-22



Dancers to present original production of 'Cinderella'



Photo by Julie Abella Photography
Dancers Annabelle Hucke and Jake Karger will perform as Cinderella and the Prince in 'Cinderella' on June 8 at Lewis Auditorium.

"Cinderella," a new, original dance production, will be presented by Zoika's Dance on June 8 at Lewis Auditorium in downtown St. Augustine.

This fresh retelling of the classic fairy tale combines classical ballet with contemporary dance genres including tap, hip hop, contemporary, jazz and ballroom dance. Performances will be at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Lewis Auditorium is located at 14 Granada St. Tickets are \$20 and \$30 and may be purchased online at zoikasdance.com.

Director and choreographer Zoika Garcia has called upon the talents of professional dancers to join the young cast. Among the professionals joining the cast are Amaani Grant (hip hop, contemporary, tap), Katherine DeAcutis (hip hop) and Jenne Vermes (tap and contemporary), as well as Alex Rubio and Christie Woodson, members of professional tap ensemble Noise Complaint.

The role of Cinderella's stepmother will be portrayed by professional ballroom and musical theater dancer and actor Christina Cruz. She will be joined onstage by professional ballroom dancer Clay Mitchell. The King and Queen will be portrayed by St. Augustine performers Tommy Bledsoe and Joy D'Elia. Cinderella and the Prince will be portrayed by local dancers Annabelle Hucke and Jake Karger.

"We are thrilled to tell this beautiful fairy tale through the language of dance," Garcia said. "And we are very excited to include so many vibrant, contemporary dance styles along with classical ballet. It is exciting for both the audience and the dancers."

Garcia, a former professional ballet dancer from Cuba, also plans to share "Cinderella" with members of the community who might not otherwise have the chance to attend. She has partnered with local nonprofit, Fostering Connections, to provide a block of tickets for local foster children and their foster parents to attend the shows. Local financial sponsors of the production are making this possible.

For information on sponsoring, go to zoikasdance.com/sponsors.



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Kirk Reed
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Sofia Chepenik
Clemson University
Caroline Cavendish
Dickinson College
Jacob Hauser
Flagler College
Jack Hooper
York College

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Mark Flakus
University of North Florida

SOCCER

Lauren Ferranti
Sewanee: The University of the South

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| Ball State University | Hampden-Sydney College | Southern Methodist University | University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill |
| Bates College | Harvard University | St. John's University (New York) | University of North Florida |
| Baylor University | High Point University | St. Thomas University | University of Notre Dame |
| Belmont University | Husson University | Stanford University | University of Oregon |
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| Berry College | Johnson & Wales University (Providence) | Stevenson University | University of Richmond |
| Boston College | Kalamazoo College | SUNY College at Cortland | University of Rochester |
| Boston University | Kenyon College | Syracuse University | University of San Diego |
| Bridgewater State University | Lakeland University | Tallahassee Community College | University of San Francisco |
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| Florida Institute of Technology | Pfeiffer University | University of Kansas | |
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Training with dogs and owners in mind

Leash & Beyond set to begin offering group classes this summer

By Anthony Richards

In many ways, dogs are like children and there reaches a point where proper structure and training are needed.

Lee Talmage opened Leash & Beyond K9 Solutions roughly two years ago to help local pet owners who are looking to train their dog.

Private single classes are held throughout the year, but group classes will also be offered for the first time beginning in June.

The classes will be held on Sundays and consist of four-weekly sessions.

The first session will be June 5 to July 10, followed by sessions August 7-28, Sept. 4-25, and Oct. 2-23. No classes will be held June 19 (Father's Day) and July 3 (Independence Day weekend).

According to Talmage, the sessions are not just about training the dog but also largely deal with training their owners as well.

He has years of experience working

closely with dogs, both as a K9 handler in law enforcement and helping train dogs for military missions in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

"COVID happened and that's when I moved to Florida and started my business," Talmage said. "In private sessions, we've trained just over 250 dogs locally since we've been open."

The group classes will be broken down into a pair of categories called basic and basic advanced.

"Basic is for dogs that have really no previous training and needs to learn the foundation of everything," Talmage said. "The advanced means that your dog knows some commands and we can start adding in duration and distance to those commands, where maybe your dog's not standing in front but is 20 feet away and you're trying to tell him something."

Leash & Beyond's motto is, "If you can dream it, you want it, we can train it," which is reflected in Talmage's approach of focusing on certain behaviors or skills that an owner wishes to work on.

The most popular aspect owners want to improve is their dog's off-leash control.

"We are in such a dog-friendly environ-

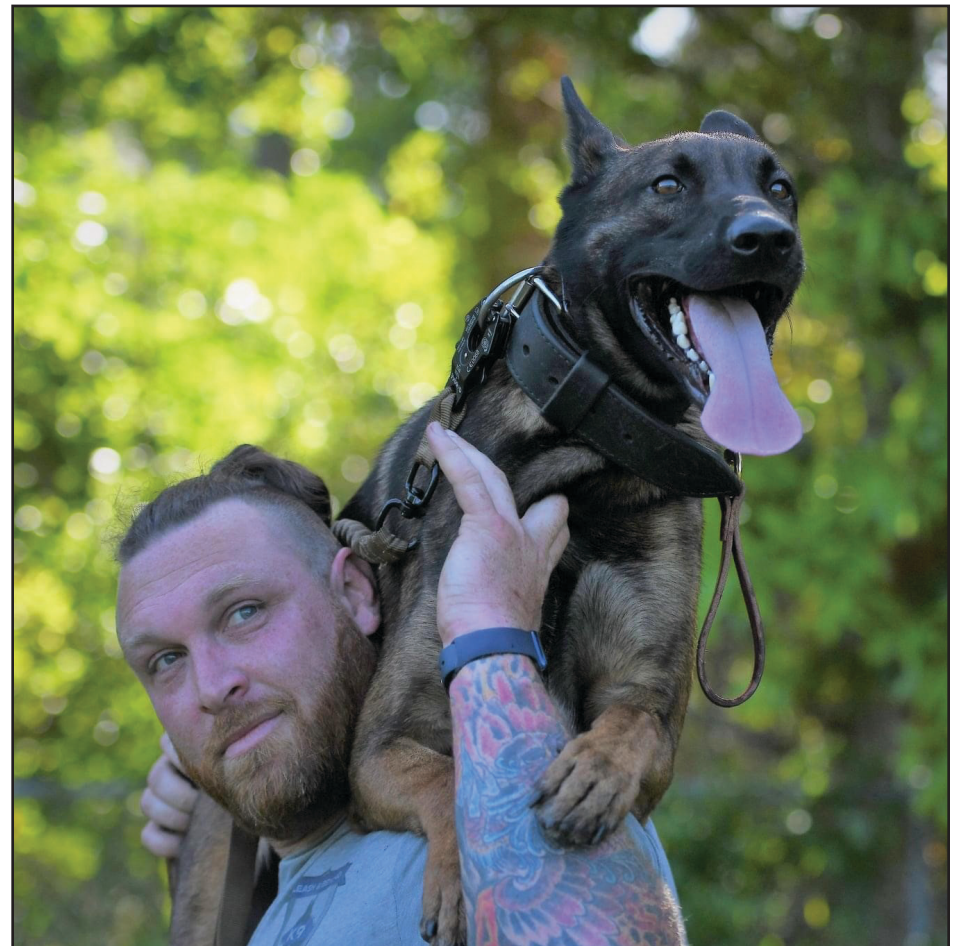


Photo courtesy of K9's In Focus Photography

Lee Talmage opened Leash & Beyond K9 Solutions roughly two years ago to help local pet owners who are looking to train their dogs.

TRAINING continues on **Page 22**

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Myths about pet food

By Erika Pitkat DVM, HelloVet

Choosing a pet food can be overwhelming. Holistic, organic, human-grade, raw, no carb, grain-free. These are all buzz words or phrases that can suck you into purchasing pet food that may not be best for our four-legged family members. Some of the information available on the internet is not reliable or true. Here are some guidelines to help you choose a diet for your pet.



1. A pet food label does not tell you how good the food inside the bag really is.

The Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) does not allow references to the quality or grade of an ingredient, so claims on a label should not be taken as fact.

2. Many ingredients such as corn or wheat have been marketed as “bad” or “allergenic” ingredients in pet food.

Pet food manufacturers, in fact, use these ingredients as a nonfat energy source, and carnivores are able to digest the starches in grains. Dry kibble should be composed of 40%-60% starch and composed of 18%-25% protein for dogs and 26%-32% for cats, according to AAFCO guidelines.

3. Manufacturers must list ingredients they have used to make the food, but that does not mean that the food doesn't have trace ingredients mixed into the food during manufacture or transportation.

Prescription hypoallergenic diets have a high price tag, but they are manufactured on separate production lines dedicated to one particular protein or ingredi-



ent. There is no cross-contamination of these prescription diets.

4. Byproducts are not inherently bad for animals.

Some byproducts are nutrient-rich organ meats, B-vitamin and fiber-laden residues left after milling barley or corn, or fiber that is essential for intestinal health.

5. Home-cooked diets are all the rage but require time, proper food handling, proper storage and care to balance the diet with all essential amino acids and nutrients.

If in doubt, ask your veterinarian or consult a veterinary nutritionist at acvn.org. A wonderful online guide can be found at secure.balanceit.com/ez/?rotator=NewEz. Please note this

website is for healthy adult pets.

6. One other note on pet food manufacturers: Advertising and marketing do not make quality pet food. Research and development do.

Investigate which pet food companies “create” their foods based on guidelines and which food companies actually test their diets to ensure palatability, safety and efficacy. Which companies do you see constantly on social media trying to convince you their food is best? Take these pet food companies with a grain of salt. Assess which pet food is easiest for your pet to digest, is one that they want to eat and makes your pet feel their best every day.

References: aaftco.org, acvn.org, vet-street.com


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Ways to give back for pet lovers

By Anthony Richards

There are several opportunities for pet lovers of all ages to volunteer and do their part to help care for local cats and dogs as they look for a new home.

With summer quickly approaching, many teenagers will be looking for ways to get service hours and the St. Johns County Pet Center and St. Augustine Humane Society are avenues to explore.



There are plenty of programs a volunteer can get involved with, including working as a recovery tech.

The pet center is looking for volunteers that will help as caregivers, with duties that include walking, bathing and socializing with the animals.

A volunteer application can be found by going to co.st-johns.fl.us/animalcontrol/help or further information can be found by calling 904-209-6190.

Certain guidelines are in place for volunteers ages 14-17, including requiring a parent be present. Background checks will be required for all volunteers older than 18.

Walk-in volunteers are not accepted, so a registration must be completed prior to getting started.

Not only are there opportunities to volunteer at the pet center, but volunteers are also always welcome at the various list of animal rescue organizations that the center works closely with, such as Wags & Whiskers Pet Rescue, Inc. and Feline Canopy of Care, both in St. Augustine.

The St. Augustine Humane Society also has several positions and programs for residents to volunteer their time, including its wellness or spay/neuter clinics, dog training program, pet food



Photos courtesy of St. Augustine Humane Society

Volunteers play a vital role in the operations and success of the St. Augustine Humane Society.

pantry or as an assistant on the events and fundraising side of things.

“We have a wonderful staff, but we’re reliant on our volunteers,” said Lynn Washington, volunteer coordinator and community relations director with St. Augustine Humane Society.

According to Washington, the St. Augustine Humane Society has a ratio of about three volunteers for every one paid staff member.

The various programs allow for people to pick which best fits with their interest and skill sets or just works best with their everyday schedule and availability.

“We try to make sure that our volunteers have a compassion for animals, which is why my job is to find out feeds a volunteer’s soul,” Washington said.

Volunteers fluctuate in the time they are allowed to help with some able to do more based on their current life situation.

“We have one volunteer who has been here about eight years and volunteers four days a week,” Washington said. “On any given day, we have about six to eight volunteers.”

The humane society’s clinics offer a low-cost option for veterinary treatments with a focus on preventive care, while

the food pantry brings in more than 1,900 pounds of donated pet food each month.

A volunteer form can be found by going to staugustinehumanesociety.org and clicking the “volunteer” option under the “get involved” tab.

If there are additional questions or uncertainty regarding which program to volunteer with, a general volunteer application is also available to fill out.

Another way to help animals in need of a home is by joining the non-profit organization called Friends of St. Johns County Pet Center.

As the name implies, the group consists of local pet lovers that came together to help promote animals that are currently looking for a home by spreading the word on Facebook.

The organization consists of 10,000 followers and not only does the group promote adoptions, but they also raise their share of monetary donations that in turn are given to the pet center to directly help the cause.

Various members within the group are known for creating fundraisers on Facebook for special occasions, such as their birthday or other holidays.



The St. Augustine Humane Society’s pet food pantry is another opportunity for local pet lovers to give back.



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Tips on finding a good training facility

By Chanin Rivera

If you are like most pet parents, you love your dogs, you spoil your dogs and you think of them as just another member of the family. At least, we hope you do.

At the same time, it sure would be nice if they didn't pull you down the street when you take them for a leash walk, right? When guests come to your home, how awesome would it be if your dog didn't bark like mad and then jump all over them?

We all know that training our dogs to be good household citizens is very possible. However, most of us don't do it because we simply do not have the time to invest in the hours of training it takes to produce those desired behaviors.

That is why "board and train" programs have become so popular — especially over the summer when most of us are doing a little bit of traveling and would be paying to board our pets anyway.

"Board and train" programs are tailored to exactly what you wish your dog to be trained to do. These programs allow you to enroll your dog in a boarding/training facility for about three weeks. During that time, at least at the most reputable facilities, your dog will be trained to reach the goal behaviors and have a ball doing

it — daily play group with other dogs included.

However, not all training programs are equal. While there are many amazing facilities out there, owners should research them all to find the best fit for them and their dogs.

Here are some tips that we suggest to help you in your evaluation process. Find out the facts:

1. Are there customer reviews of the facility and are they positive or negative?

2. Are you able to meet with a trainer face-to-face to discuss your dog's individual needs and, at the same time, get a feel for the cleanliness of the facility, before enrolling your dog?

3. If you enroll your dog, how often will you receive communication about your dog's progress? Will you receive pictures of your dog engaged in training on a regular basis?

4. Will you and your family receive private lessons, at no extra charge, following your dog's completion of the program to ensure that your dog's new skills easily transition into your own home?

5. Does the training facility have a policy offering you refresher lessons for life in case those are needed from time to time?

While it is important to get the answers



Photo provided by Beaches Jet Set Pets

to those question, perhaps the most important tip we can give dog owners is to simply follow your gut. When you meet the trainers and staff at any given facility, you will know intuitively if they are the kind of people who genuinely have love and affection for the dogs in their care.

Investing in three weeks of training may be the best thing you can do for you

and your dog — so you can enjoy each for a lifetime.

Chanin Rivera is head trainer at Jet Set University, Beaches Jet Set Pets. For more information, go to www.jetsetpets.net, call 904-383-8043 or email Info@jetsetpets.net.



Carolyn Smith, executive director of the St. Augustine Humane Society, explains how pets are given veterinary care at the facility.



Photos by Shaun Ryan

Members of the PVPV/Rawlings Early Act Club present a check for \$2,340 to the St. Augustine Humane Society. At right is Hannah Shearer, donor relations officer for the nonprofit.

PVPV/Rawlings students make donation to Humane Society

Once again, students in the PVPV/Rawlings Early Act Club have raised money to help pets stay healthy and happy in their forever homes.

"One of their last service learning projects for the year was to help raise awareness for the animals in our St. Johns County community," said Amy Thompson Brim, gifted resource teacher and Early Act Club adviser.

The club, affiliated with the Ponte Vedra Beach Rotary Club, is made up of 120 fourth and fifth graders. Last

year, the students held a very successful contest between classrooms at the school to raise money for the St. Augustine Humane Society. That project was called Pennies for Pets.

This year, they gave it a new name: Funds for Furry Friends.

The students raised \$2,340 through donations from classrooms at PVPV/Rawlings. To encourage giving, the school provided an incentive: the winning class for every grade level would receive a Popsicle party and a kickball game.

On Friday, May 6, several club members gathered at the Humane Society to present their donation.

Donations such as those made by PVPV/Rawlings students are critical to the success of the nonprofit, which does everything it can to help pets remain in their homes. That means low-cost veterinary treatment, because one of the most common reasons animals are relinquished to shelters is that some families simply cannot afford to keep and care for a pet.

The Humane Society offers spay and neuter and dental surgery. The facility has x-ray machines and high-quality surgery and prep spaces, which the students had an opportunity to tour. The nonprofit also operates a pet food pantry.

The Humane Society, located at 1665 Old Moultrie Road in St. Augustine, is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. The phone number is 904-829-2737, and the website is staughumane.org.

Training

Continued from 18

ment, especially in this area,” Talmage said. “Everyone wants to be able to take their dogs to the beach and have their dogs off-leash and know that if they call their dog, they are going to come back to them. They want that reassurance.”

However, he also makes sure to remind owners to know the situation before letting their dog be off leash even after the proper training.

“Not every environment is suitable,” Talmage said. “Just because you can control your dog, does not mean that they (other owners) can control theirs. Don’t put your dog at risk.”

Socialization is another key aspect that Talmage works on both in the group and one-on-one classes.

“Most people think socialization is teaching their dog how to go play with another dog, but that’s not necessarily true socialization,” Talmage said. “We take it a step further, because you want confidence that your dog is not going to lunge every time they see another dog while walking down the street. You want your dog to know that they can go play with a dog, but only if you tell them to. When it’s time to move along, they need to ignore that dog or those people.”

Any dog no matter the size or breed can take part in the training.

“We’ve had dogs that are just three pounds, and it goes all the way up to dogs that are 170 pounds at just 13 months old,” Talmage said. “We do it all.”

Talmage admitted that there is a certain challenge to training a variety of dogs, which requires a certain level of adaptability.

“Just like people, every dog is different and will learn at a different pace or in a different manner,” Talmage said. “You have to read the dog and see how they are perceiving the information and cater it to that specific dog.”

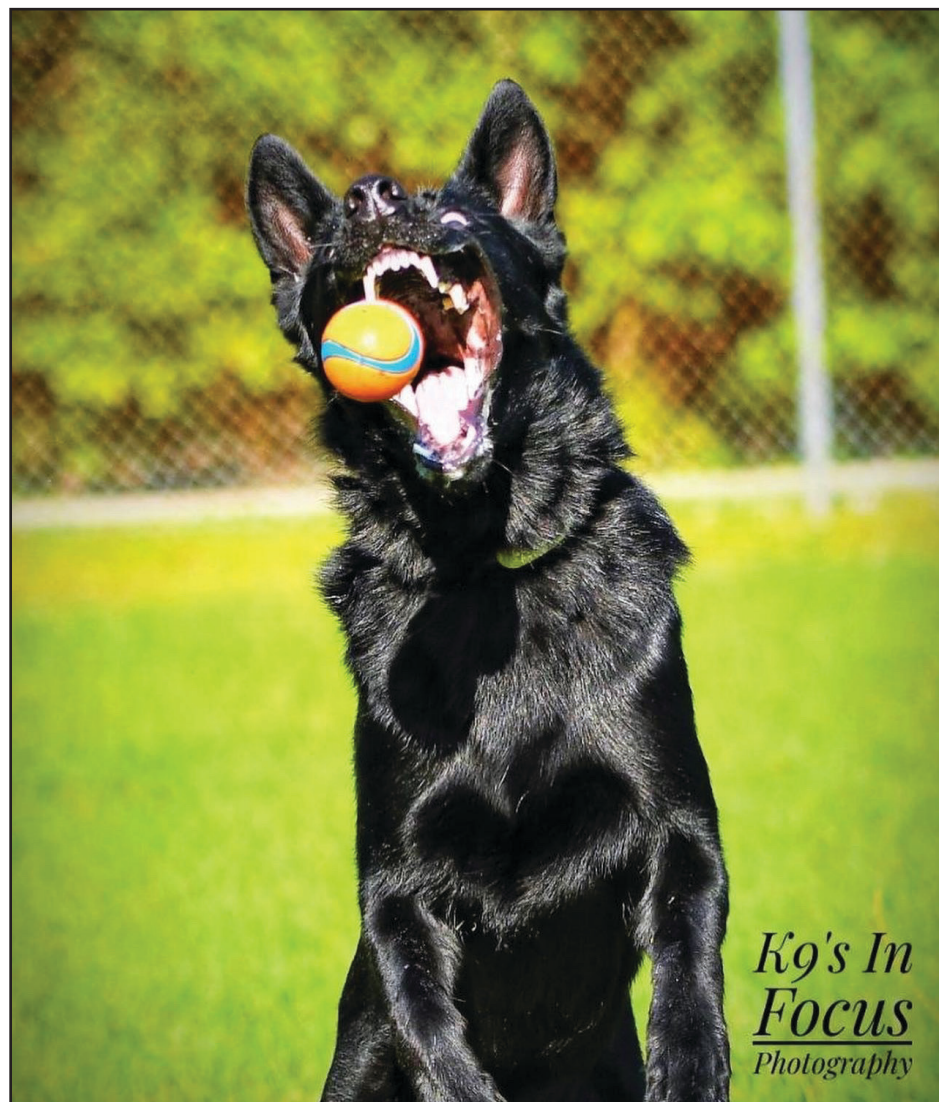
The size of the group classes will be capped at 10, to make sure each person and dog are getting the attention and direction needed.

His fiancée, Leann, helps with the business handling the administrative side of things, which includes preparing to launch a line of all-natural dog treats within the next year, as they attempt to branch out into the dog care world beyond just training.

They are currently working on finding a permanent brick-and-mortar location that provides the necessary space needed to hold classes.

Until then, sites for the group classes will be at various locations, such as parks, beaches or pet-friendly stores in the area.

For more information or to register for the classes, call 531-210-2086.



*K9's In
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Photo courtesy of K9's In Focus Photography

Any dog no matter the size or breed can take part in the training.



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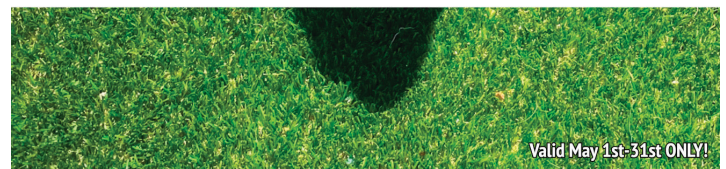


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Essential summer skin care tips

Protecting and caring for skin should be part of people's year-round health care regimens. Such an approach can help people look their best and also uncover any minor issues before they escalate into something more significant.

National Geographic says adults can carry eight pounds and 22 square feet of skin on their bodies. Skin guards a person from harmful chemicals, protects the body against extremes in temperature and prevents internal organs and other components from evaporating. The skin also guards against harmful sunlight.

Skin care is not seasonal, though efforts to protect the skin may need to be stepped up during the summer. The American Academy of Dermatology says one in five Americans will develop some form of skin cancer in their lifetimes. In the summer, ultraviolet radiation levels are elevated and people often wear less clothing that exposes more of their skin. According to Dr. Ron Shelton, a board-certified dermatologist and assistant professor of dermatology at Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York, the bulk of sun damage to the skin happens in the

summer. These skin wellness tips can help protect the skin and keep it looking its best when the mercury rises.

Lighten up

Choose lightweight products for summer usage. This includes cleansers, makeup and oil cleansers. For instance, rather than an oil cleanser, choose a gentle, foaming option. Thicker products mixed with increased perspiration and humidity may lead to clogged pores and inflammation.

Lather on sunscreen

Sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or more is recommended to protect the skin from UV damage. But it's easy to forget to apply sunscreen. However, using a lightweight moisturizer with SPF built in reduces product usage and time spent caring for skin.

Utilize vitamin C serums

Hyperpigmentation can occur in summer. According to Omer Ibrahim, a board-certified dermatologist and codirector of clinical research at Chicago Cosmetic Surgery and Dermatology, vitamin C serum can improve the appearance of fine lines, help with collagen production and also prevent hyperpigmentation.



Drink more water

Higher temperatures and increased perspiration can lead to dehydration. That may cause headaches, dry skin and even lightheadedness. Drink at least eight eight-ounce glasses of water every day.

Stay in the shade

In addition to using sunscreen daily, try to stay out of the sun as much as possible when UV rays are at their strongest, which is between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. In addition, wear clothing that offers sunscreen protection.

It's important to care for the skin daily, but especially so during the summer.



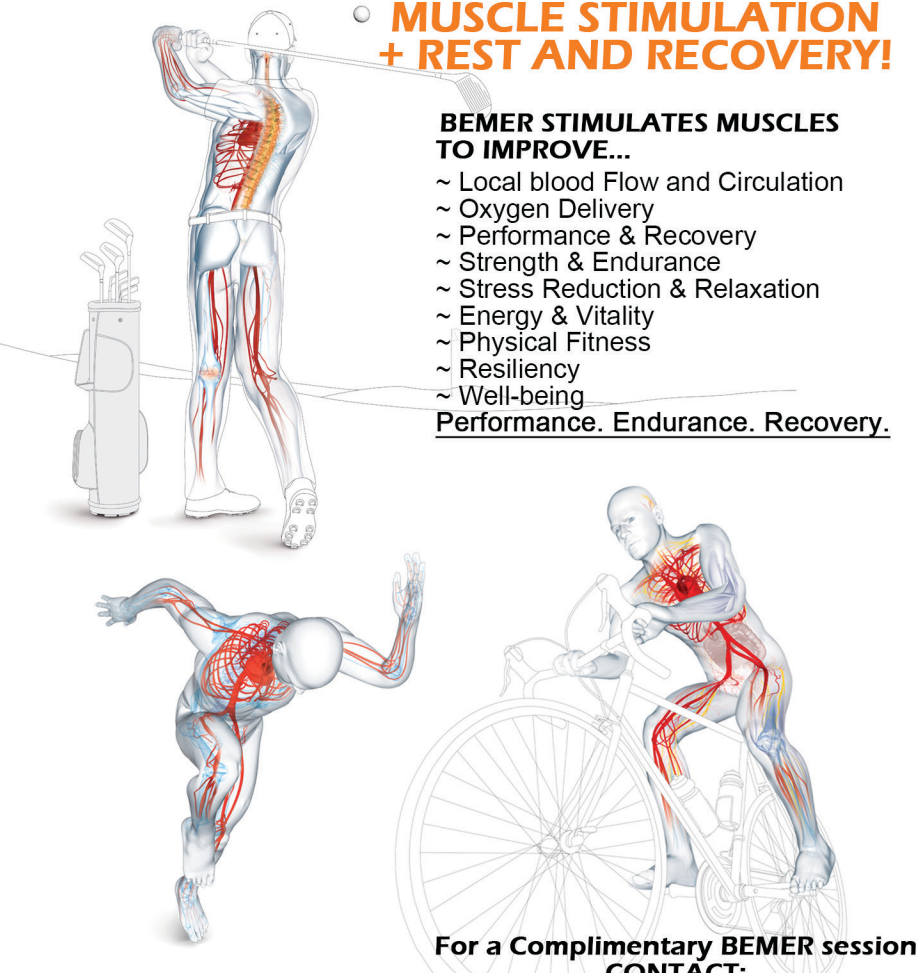
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Business Weekly

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THURSDAY, MAY 19, 2022

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Truist holds ribbon cutting, Before Hours with Chamber



Truist Bank held a ribbon cutting ceremony during a St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division Before Hours event that it hosted at its Nocatee location May 11.

Photos by Susan Griffin

LEFT: Karen Gable, vice president and branch leader at Truist Bank in Nocatee, is surrounded by staff members as she cuts the ribbon during a ceremony with the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Ponte Vedra Beach Division May 11.

RIGHT: Karen Gable shares a few words to the crowd on hand during the special event at the Truist location in Nocatee May 11.



Benchmarks of Success



First Coast Cultural Center names programs manager

Toni Thomas has been named the programs manager at First Coast Cultural Center. She will be responsible for ensuring the consistent achievement of the center's mission while overseeing and continually assessing the nonprofit's activities.

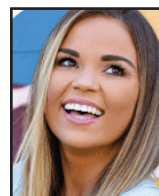
She will develop, plan and evaluate classes and programs in arts education, camps and workshops and will coordinate

the Sound Connections Music Therapy program and Kick StART afterschool arts enrichment programs and services.

She will also oversee artist memberships, the gift market and exhibits and develop and manage grants and funding sources and more.

Thomas holds a master of arts degree in women's studies from the University of Florida and a bachelor of arts degree in political science from the University of Central Florida. She and her family reside in Ponte Vedra Beach. For further information, contact Toni Thomas at tthomas@

firstcoastculturalcenter.org or 904-280-0614, ext. 1206.



Beck leads virtual master class for women in business

The Happy Co., a leading producer and distributor of nootropic, functional beverage products with a focus on health and wellness, recently held an exclusive virtual master class to empower women in business.

Ponte Vedra resident and one of The

Happy Co.'s top leaders, Brittany Beck, was selected to lead a training session at the event due to her entrepreneurial success with the company.

Hosted by Taylor Worre, vice president of field development, the event featured Beck alongside two others. Topics ranged from practical business skills to thought-provoking strategies applicable to brand partners at all stages of growing their business with The Happy Co.

More than 500 women from across the country tuned in to the event.

— Compiled by Shaun Ryan

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In the Arts



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www.PonteVedraRecorder.com

Beaches event celebrates arts, area artists

Sold-out gathering raises money for First Coast Cultural Center

By Shaun Ryan

The Surf Club at the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club took on a tropical Hawaiian character Sunday, May 15, for the third annual Beaches, A Celebration of the Arts event.

The sold-out fundraiser and awards ceremony featured dinner, entertainment, a silent auction for exotic trips and live artist demonstrations. A benefit for the First Coast Cultural Center, it raised more than last year's \$85,000; a preliminary estimate for this year's event was \$90,000.

But at the heart of the event was recognition for those who keep the arts alive in the community despite the familiar challenges artists face.

"Artists always struggle," said Jorge Rivera, recipient of the Chairman's Award. "They've struggled from early times when the first caveman said, 'Hey, I like that art in your cave; can you come to my cave and do that?'"

Rivera promotes the arts and culture via his online TV program, the "St. Augustine Tonight Show."

"I meet so many people who bring me to tears or sometimes leave me gasping for air at how amazing their lives have been, how long they've worked at this that they love so much," he told the audience. "I hope I can keep promoting all these wonderful people who are in our

BEACHES continues on Page 27




Photos by Shaun Ryan

Dr. Arun Gulani, left, congratulates Jorge Rivera on winning the Chairman's Award at Beaches, A Celebration of the Arts on Sunday, May 15. Also pictured are co-chair Dr. Suparna Gulani, center left, and First Coast Cultural Center Executive Director Donna Guzzo.



Artist Eugene Quinn gives a live painting demonstration on the beach outside The Surf Club at the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club during Beaches, A Celebration of the Arts on Sunday, May 15.

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Guests were treated to an elegant dinner at The Surf Club at the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club.

Beaches

Continued from 26

community and make us who we are.”

Entertainment for Sunday night’s event was by Prince Pele’s Polynesian Revue, which featured authentic Pacific Island music and hula dancing, as well as a fire dance and lots of humor.

Featured artists were Eugene J. Quinn and Piedad Camacho.

Quinn took up a spot on the beach and painted a seascape live as guests looked on. With degrees in fine art and art history to his credit, he’s been painting professionally for the past 20 years. He has had galleries in Massachusetts and opened a studio in Jacksonville Beach in 2016. In 2019, he expanded into a beach house at 237 5th Ave. South and 3rd Street, where he paints, teaches and exhibits his work.

Though he does commissions, portraits, abstracts and more, Quinn especially enjoys painting outdoors.

Camacho, who comes from Colombia, is a fashion designer who in 2005 applied her knowledge of fabric and color to creating art. In her own unique style, she works with a natural fiber called fique, which is native to South America and is used in rope and packing.

She is self-taught and has a special interest in nature, often creating images of trees and flowers.

The focal point of Sunday’s event was the awards ceremony.

Volunteer of the Year was Charlotte Chastain, who has offered live art demonstrations, volunteered at events and edited the Cultural Center’s many newsletters and other marketing materials.

The winner of the Emerging Artist Award was Claire Weaver, a high school senior who has set her sights on a career in the arts. Other nominees were painter and clothing designer Teresa Cook, photographer Joe Desiderio and Camacho.

The winner of the Ron & Hilah Autrey Education & Advocacy Award was artist Enrique Mora. Other nominees were painter Ellen Diamond, FemArt Gallery founder Kimberly Miller and Rivera.

The winner of The Art of Giving Award was photographer, painter and writer Steven G. “Jerry” Norton. Other nominees

were Art With a Heart in Healthcare and the St. Johns Cultural Council.

The winner of the Community Impact Award was Art With a Heart in Healthcare, which provides personalized fine art experiences that enhance the healing process for patients and their families. Other nominees were Miller, Norton and Rivera.

The winner of Irene Lazzara’s Beaches, A Celebration of the Arts Award was Ellen Diamond. Other nominees were Art With a Heart in Healthcare, Norton and Rivera.

The First Coast Cultural Center, located at 3972 3rd St. South, Jacksonville Beach, offers exhibits, classes, workshops, afterschool art enrichment programs and music therapy to students with disabilities in pre-K through grade five. Music therapy is offered at Valley Ridge Academy, PVPV/Rawlings Elementary, Ocean Palms Elementary, Cunningham Creek Elementary, the Webster School and Osceola Elementary.

Honorary co-chairs for the Beaches event were Drs. Arun and Suparna Gulani. Sponsors included The Lazzara Family Foundation, Ron and Hilah Autrey, Gulani Vision Institute, Pivot, Claude Nolan Cadillac and Tom Bush.



Photos by Shaun Ryan

The entertainment for the Hawaiian-themed event included a fire dance.



Ellen Diamond, third from left, received Irene Lazzara’s Beaches, A Celebration of the Arts Award.



Entertainment was provided by Prince Pele’s Polynesian Revue.



Charlotte Chastain was recognized as the Volunteer of the Year for her work with the First Coast Cultural Center. She stands next to Cultural Center Executive Director Donna Guzzo. Looking on from left are emcee Steven Strum and Callie Johnson, community connections manager for the nonprofit.



Piedad Camacho shows off one of her fiber works of art at Beaches, A Celebration of the Arts.

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Sports



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BEING THERE NO MATTER WHAT

Jay Fund continues mission with golf classic

By Anthony Richards

The Tom Coughlin Jay Fund held its annual Jay Fund Golf Classic May 16, which included a dinner and social May 15.

“You begin to understand what this is all about in terms of what these families are presented with when they have child with cancer,” Coughlin said. “The more we can raise, the more we can help.”

Current and former athletes from across the sports world took part in the event, as a sign of support for Super Bowl-winning coach Tom Coughlin, who spent years of his career as head coach of the Jacksonville Jaguars.

The event always brings Coughlin back to when they first started the foundation years ago, and he takes pride in how far it has grown.

“At our very first tournament, I think we made \$36,000 and we thought we were doing well,” Coughlin said. “From

the very beginning the objective was always that whatever we raise, we are going to spend it so that it’s out there, and that’s pretty much what we’ve been able to. Last year we helped 692 families and paid over 2,700 bills for over \$2.6 million.”

The Rhett family is currently battling cancer and receiving assistance from the Jay Fund. They were featured during the dinner.

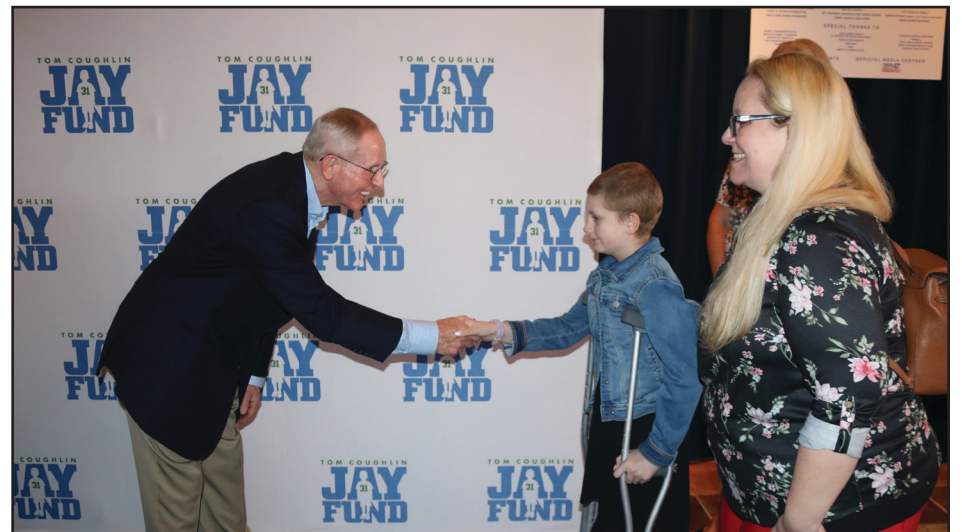
“The worst thing in the world as a parent is hearing the news that your child has cancer,” Coughlin said. “Your emotions are just distraught, and that’s where we come in.”

“We’ve been associated for about a year now, after our son Rhett went into remission with brain cancer,” Fischer said. “We had just moved down from Washington D.C., and the first thing that happened once we got here was that the Jay Fund reached out.”

Being in the Navy, Fischer was not stateside when he first heard of the news, which is even more of a reason why he is thankful for the Jay Fund being there with support.

“We’ve failed four different chemos, and he’s now on a different kind of treatment that is a little more experimental,” Fischer said.

“Most people don’t drive to work every

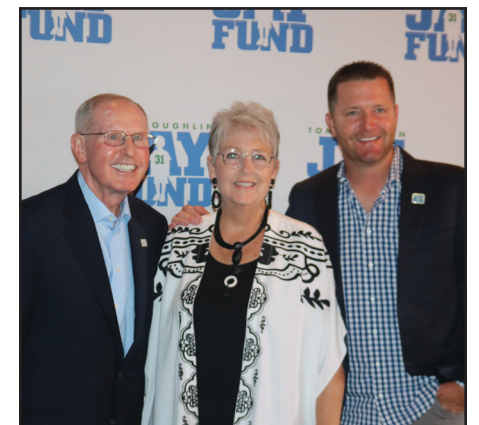


Photos by Anthony Richards

Tom Coughlin started the Jay Fund years ago with the mission of helping families and children battling cancer.



Tony and Angie Boselli.



Tom Coughlin with former Jacksonville Jaguars kicker Josh Scobee and his mother.

JAY FUND continues on Page 30



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Photos courtesy of Jules Bohanon

Nease freshman Alexa Bohanon won the first girls field state title in program history with her gold medal in the javelin throw.

Tracking state titles

Panthers, Sharks bring back gold medals

By Anthony Richards

Gold was the favorite color of several Nease and Ponte Vedra track and field athletes, who won state champions in their respective disciplines during the state meet at the University of Florida in Gainesville May 14.

The Panthers had a total medal count of seven with four of them gold in Class 4A.

Senior Cyrus Ways set a blistering time of 36.26 to win a state title in the boys 300-meter hurdles.

However, the Penn State commit did not stop there and won a second gold in the boys 110-meter hurdles, posting a time of 13.53 and showcasing his versatility in the process.

He was joined by fellow senior Rheinhardt Harrison, who also ended his already record-setting high school career on a high note with a gold medal in the boys 800 meters with a time of 1:48.62.

The victory was just the latest for the University of Oregon commit, who won a

pair of state titles at last year's state meet.

It was not just the boys side ladder where the Panthers found success, as freshman Alexa Bohanon won a state championship in the girls javelin throw.

It was a significant victory, not just because of how young Bohanon is, but because she became the first Panther to win a girls gold medal since 1984 and the first ever girl in program history to win a state title in a field event.

The Sharks had three podium finishes, highlighted by junior Nathan Lebowitz winning the Class 3A boys discuss championship with a throw of 177 feet and 3 inches.

Junior Henry Gainer grabbed a pair of runner-up finishes in boys pole vault, clearing 13 feet and 9.25 inches, and boys javelin with a distance of 175 feet and 7 inches.

All the podium finishers for the Sharks came in field events.



Ponte Vedra junior Nathan Lebowitz won the Class 3A boys discuss championship.



Nease seniors Cyrus Ways (left) and Rheinhardt Harrison (right) combined to win three gold medals at the state meet. Creekside High coach Ricky Fields coached both and Alexa Bohanon as part of the St. Johns Striders club team in middle school.

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CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10
11				12		13				14	
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47	48				49				50	51	52
55					56					57	
59					60					61	
62					63					64	

- ACROSS**
1. Scream loudly
 5. Antidepressant (abbr.)
 8. The bill in a restaurant
 11. Oblong pulpits
 13. Adult female chicken
 14. Abnormal breathing
 15. Financial obligations
 16. Belonging to a thing
 17. Winged
 18. Peoples
 20. College hoops tournament
 21. An informal body of friends
 22. Region of the world
 25. In an early way
 30. Connected by kinship
 31. Type of tree
 32. Official order
 33. Foundation for an idea
 38. Small, faint constellation
 41. Book lovers
 43. Vegetable
 45. Cabbage variety
 47. A way to heal
 49. Illuminated
 50. Dish that features a stick
 55. Insurance-related costs (abbr.)
 56. Solid water
 57. Soldier's gear
 59. "Uncle Buck" actress Hoffmann
 60. Former measure of length
 61. Arabic name meaning "spring"
 62. Doctors' group
 63. Actress Susan
 64. Appropriate
- DOWN**
1. Cool!
 2. Hebrew unit of measure
 3. Swedish rock group
 4. College army
 5. Black eye
 6. One who stopped working
 7. Teach a value
 8. Rhythmic patterns
 9. "MASH" actor Alda
 10. "Friday Night Lights" director
 12. Midway between south and southeast
 14. Indian musical pattern
 19. Fulfill a desire
 23. Water soaked soil
 24. Brass instrument
 25. Before
 26. Popular color
 27. Peyton's little brother
 28. Partner to cheese
 29. Put onto
 34. "Much ___ about nothing"
 35. A way to mend
 36. Anger
 37. Soviet Socialist Republic
 39. Mobilized
 40. Resembles an earlobe
 41. Cut of meat
 42. Nigerian people
 44. Recently
 45. Square stone building at Mecca
 46. Adhere to orders
 47. Adventure story
 48. Marine bivalve mollusk
 51. Retrospective analysis (abbr.)
 52. Actor Pitt
 53. Tibetan village
 54. A way to change by heating
 58. A beam of sunshine

SUDOKU

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

Here's How It Works:
 Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

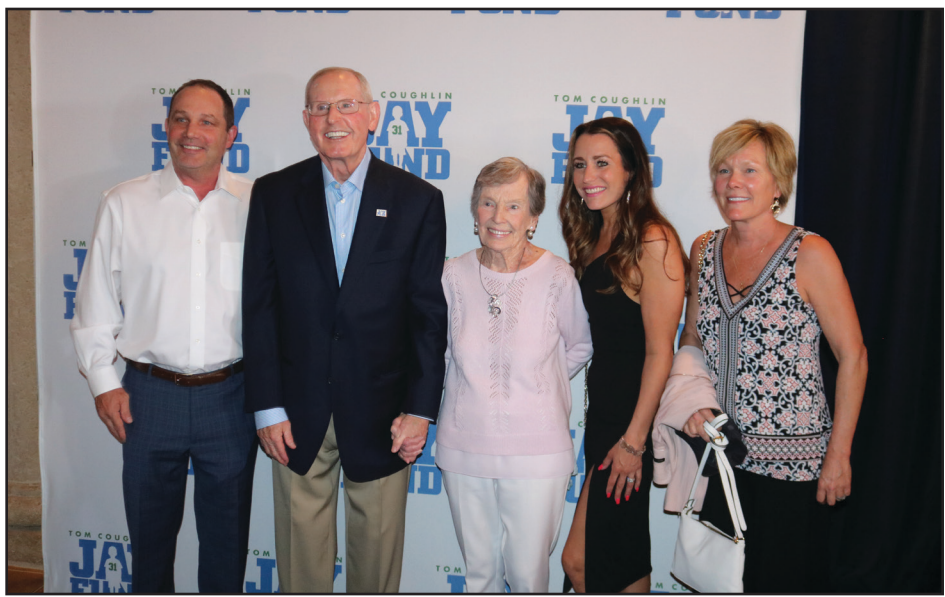


Photo by Anthony Richards

Tom Coughlin shares a moment with the family of Jay McGillis, who played for him at Boston College and helped inspire the idea for the foundation.

Jay Fund

Continued from 28

day wondering if they're going to get a phone call saying 'Hey, your kid stopped moving again,'" Fischer said.

Parents are often engrained to be there for a child, but unlike when they are learning to walk and fall, a parent cannot just pick them up and have everything be all right when it is cancer they are dealing with. It can present a very helpless feeling for parents.

"The purpose is to just be there for them, so that they can be there for the sick child," Coughlin said. "A child can detect stress, so when they figure out that the parents are stressed and that he is the reason, that is not good for their health or for the opportunity for them to get

better." The Jay Fund's support is shown in a variety of ways. As they provide financial, emotional and physical support for not just the child battling cancer, but their entire family.

According to Fischer, one of the ways they have helped him, and his wife Ashley emotionally is by helping set up conversations with other parents who have been through similar situations, so that they can have a better understanding of what they are up against.

"The Jay Fund's motto is to 'Be there,' and that's exactly what they do," Fischer said.

Some of the sports celebrities present included recently named Pro Football Hall of Famer Tony Boselli and University of Michigan head football coach Jim Harbaugh.

Ponte Vedra's Gabriel Wong wins National Senior Games Gold Medal

Gabriel Wong of Ponte Vedra Beach has emerged from the 2022 National Senior Games with a gold medal in pickleball, winning the men's singles 75-79 age group, after a come-from-behind win in the semifinal match.

Wong trailed Ken Willingham, of Dallas, Texas, 14-10 and scored the next six points for the win, 16-14. Dillingham won a consolation bracket match against John Lightbody, for a return match against Wong.

The two split the first two games with Wong winning the first 11-9. Willingham took the second game, 11-5 and Wong won the final game 11-5. Wong held a 7-4 lead and outscored Dillingham 4-1 to the final, serving out the last two points with a 9-5 lead.

While it was the first matchup between the two on the pickleball courts, Wong

and Dillingham were regular opponents on the tennis courts in Texas.

"We've played tennis against each other many, many times," said Wong, who lived in Dallas from 1998 to 2014. "He completely gave up tennis and now plays only pickleball."

Wong, the 2020 Florida Senior Games Male Athlete of the Year, won two tennis matches earlier in the week before retiring in a match on Friday, after the first set, to get in some pickleball practice at the Convention Center. He won the first match against the second-seeded opponent, 6-4 and retired for the loss.

"I've never felt so good about a loss before," he said.

The 2022 National Senior Games continue in the Greater Fort Lauderdale Area through May 23. For daily updates, go to nsga.com/2022Daily.

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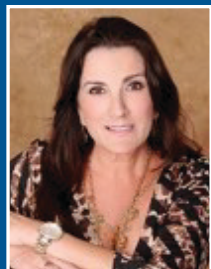
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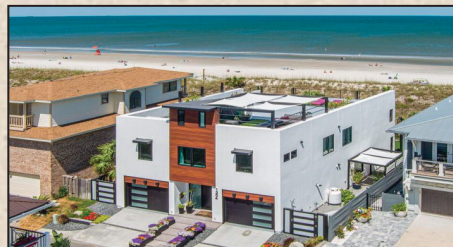


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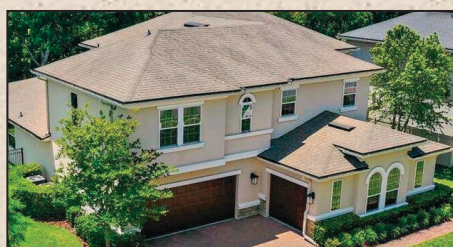
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